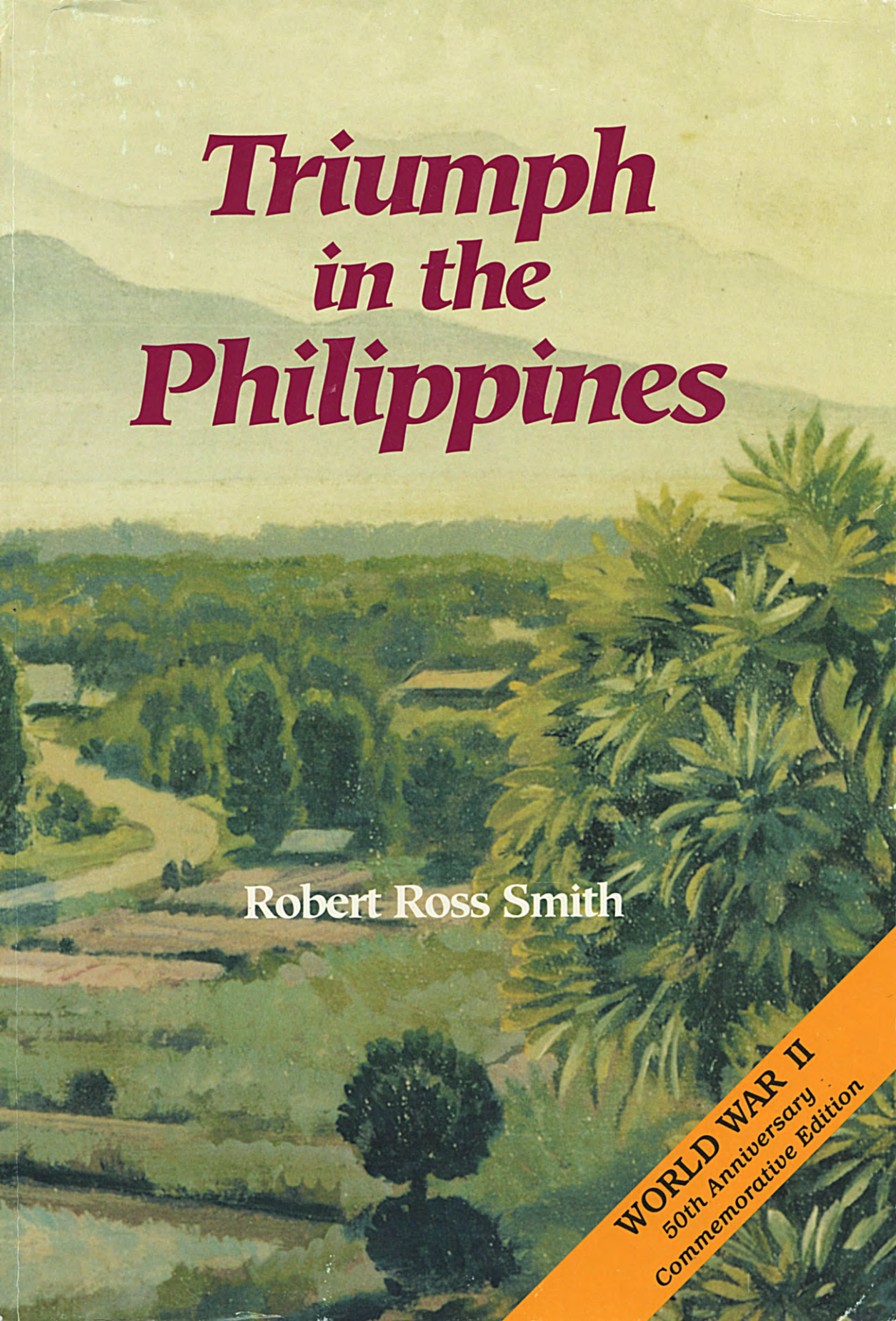
Triumph in the Philippines



Robert Ross Smith

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50th Anniversary
Commemorative Edition

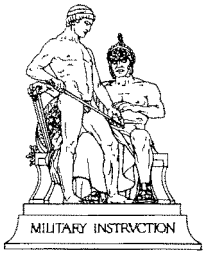
UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II

The War in the Pacific

TRIUMPH IN THE PHILIPPINES

by

Robert Ross Smith



CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY

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. . . to Those Who Served

Foreword

From the moment of his departure from the Philippines in 1942, General MacArthur was determined to return to the islands and restore the freedom of the Philippine people. Capture of the main island of Luzon in 1945 substantially realized this goal. How his armies accomplished it forms the body of the story unfolded in this volume.

In some respects the Luzon Campaign repeated the pattern of Japanese conquest three years earlier, although with action on a much larger scale and for a much longer period. Unlike the Japanese conquest, the operations of 1945 involved a fierce month-long battle for Manila, the only such protracted action by U.S. forces in a big city during World War II. It also involved a complicated and costly reduction of three mountain positions into which the Japanese withdrew, in one of which there was still a substantial core of resistance when Japan surrendered.

Within the broad scope of this work, covering the intensive operations of two armies for seven months, the author has necessarily concentrated on what is most instructive and significant to the outcome. The clarity, thorough scholarship, and careful mapping of this volume should make it especially useful for the military student, and all who read it will benefit by the author's forthright presentation of this dramatic and climactic story of U.S. Army operations in the Pacific war.

JAMES A. NORELL
Brigadier General, USA
Chief of Military History

Washington, D.C.
15 March 1961

The Author

Robert Ross Smith received a B.A. and M.A. in American History from Duke University. A graduate of the Infantry Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1943, he served on the staff and faculty of the Special Services School at Washington and Lee University and then, for two years, was a member of the G–3 Historical Division at General Douglas MacArthur's General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area. He presently holds a reserve commission as a lieutenant colonel of Infantry.

Mr. Smith has been with the Office of the Chief of Military History, either as an officer on active duty or as a civilian, since January 1947. His first book in the series THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II, *The Approach to the Philippines,* was published in 1953. He is currently working on his third volume for the series, The Riviera to the Rhine. Mr. Smith's other works include an essay in *Command Decisions* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1959, and Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1960); an article on tactical supply problems in *Military Review;* the article on the Pacific phase of World War II in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; and an account of the Battle of Ox Hill (1 September 1862) in *Fairfax County and the War Between the States,* a publication of the Fairfax County (Va.) Civil War Centennial Commission.

Preface

Triumph in the Philippines is the story of the largest joint campaign of the Pacific phase of World War II. Devoted principally to the accomplishments of U.S. Army ground combat forces and to the operations of major organized Philippine guerrilla units that contributed notably to the success of the campaign, the volume describes the reconquest of the Philippine archipelago exclusive of Leyte and Samar. The narrative includes coverage of air, naval, and logistical activity necessary to broad understanding of the ground combat operations. The strategic planning and the strategic debates leading to the decision to seize Luzon and bypass Formosa are also treated so as to enable the reader to fit the Luzon and Southern Philippines Campaigns into their proper perspective of the war against Japan.

For the forces of General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area the reconquest of Luzon and the Southern Philippines was the climax of the Pacific war, although no one anticipated this outcome when, on 9 January 1945, Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger's Sixth Army poured ashore over the beaches of Lingayen Gulf. Viewed from the aspect of commitment of U.S. Army ground forces, the Luzon Campaign (which strategically and tactically includes the seizure of Mindoro Island and the securing of the shipping lanes through the central Visayan Islands) was exceeded in size during World War II only by the drive across northern France. The Luzon Campaign differed from others of the Pacific war in that it alone provided opportunity for the employment of mass and maneuver on a scale even approaching that common to the European and Mediterranean theaters. The operations of Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger's Eighth Army, both on Luzon and during the Southern Philippines Campaign, were more akin to previous actions throughout the Pacific, but the southern campaign, too, presented features peculiar to the reconquest of the Philippine archipelago.

Triumph in the Philippines began as the joint effort of two authors, myself and a former colleague, Dr. M. Hamlin Cannon. Before completion of the manuscript's first draft, Dr. Cannon accepted another position and the task of completion and revision fell upon my shoulders. I had access to Dr. Cannon's draft chapters, which proved valuable guides to research and which helped me avoid many pitfalls. A detailed discussion of all source material is to be found at the end of the volume in The Sources: A Critical Note. For this preface it is sufficient to state that the only limitation on access to or use of records concerned questions that could be shown to have

an obviously and directly adverse effect upon national security and national policy.

In 1957 the Office of the Chief of Military History made it possible for me to revisit the battlefields of Luzon. This permitted me to make many important revisions based upon an invaluable firsthand examination of much of the terrain involved in the Luzon Campaign and enabled me to complete substantive work on the volume early in 1958.

It is impossible to list all who made significant contributions to the preparation of *Triumph in the Philippines,* but it is incumbent upon me to single out those who provided help and guidance above and beyond the call of duty. Heading the list are the nearly eighty officers or former officers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force whose time and patience in reviewing all or parts of the manuscript produced valuable information and many provocative ideas. It was especially gratifying to find busy men in important posts taking pains to submit comments—for example, the Honorable Hugh M. Milton II, former Under Secretary of the Army and during the Luzon Campaign the Chief of Staff, XIV Corps. Similarly, General George H. Decker, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, and formerly Chief of Staff, Sixth Army, on Luzon, provided a collection of papers that proved especially valuable in analyzing the problems of XI Corps during the return to Bataan.

Within the Office of the Chief of Military History grateful acknowledgment goes to Dr. Stanley L. Falk, whose skill as research assistant, especially in the field of enemy materials, eased my burden and saved countless hours of digging. Thanks are also owing Dr. Louis Morton, formerly Chief of the Pacific Section and Deputy Chief of the World War II Branch, and Dr. Kent Roberts Greenfield, formerly Chief Historian, Department of the Army, both of whom gave valuable guidance and advice. I also acknowledge my debts to the General Reference Branch, Office of the Chief of Military History, and to the World War II Records Division, National Archives and Records Service, for their aid in locating and obtaining source material. Miss Mary Ann Bacon undertook the editing of the manuscript; Mrs. Marion P. Grimes was the copy editor. The task of preparing the maps that so admirably supplement the text was in the capable hands of Mr. Billy C. Mossman, who also prepared a research draft for part of Chapter XXVIII. Mrs. Norma Heacock Sherris made the excellent selection of photographs. Mr. Nicholas J. Anthony compiled the Index.

Acknowledgment of assistance by no means implies that the individuals or organizations concerned either approve or disapprove the interpretations set forth in the volume, nor should the contents of the volume be construed as representing the official views of the Department of the Army. I alone am responsible for interpretations made and conclusions drawn and for any errors of omission or commission.

Washingon, D.C.
15 March 1961

ROBERT ROSS SMITH

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PART ONE

PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

CHAPTER I

The Debate Over Luzon

The Strategic Background

Pacific Strategy

In January 1945, after more than three years of war, United States forces returned to the island of Luzon in the Philippines, where in 1942 American troops had suffered a historic defeat. The loss of the Philippines in May of that year, following the disaster that befell the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, had rendered obsolete and inoperable American prewar plans for action in the Pacific in the event of war with Japan.[1] By the late spring of 1943 the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (who, by agreement of the U.S.-British Combined Chiefs of Staff, were responsible for the conduct of the war in the Pacific) had developed a new strategic plan for the defeat of Japan. The plan was neither sacrosanct nor immutable—it was not intended to be. Nevertheless, its underlying concepts governed the planning and execution of operations in the Pacific during a year and a half of debate over the relative priority of Luzon and Formosa as primary objectives of an Allied drive into the western Pacific.[2]

The plan was premised upon the concept that the Allies might very well find it necessary to invade Japan in order to end the war in the Pacific. The Joint Chiefs of Staff foresaw that intensive aerial bombardment of the Japanese home islands would be prerequisite to invasion, and that such bombardment would have to be co-ordinated with combined air, surface, and submarine operations aimed at cutting Japan's overwater lines of communication to the rich territories she had seized in the Netherlands East Indies and southeastern Asia. The Joint Chiefs believed that the Allies could best undertake the necessary bombardment of Japan from airfields in eastern China, and they decided that to secure and develop adequate air bases in China, Allied forces would have to seize at least one major port on the south China coast. The Allies would require such a port to replace the poor overland and air routes from India and Burma as

[1] See Louis Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines* (Washington, 1953), a volume in the series UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II, for the opening phases of Japan's attack in the Pacific and a description of prewar plans with especial reference to the Philippines. Morton's general volume in the same series on the Pacific theaters, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years* (Washington, 1962), covers the prewar plans in more detail.

[2] See JCS 287/1, 8 May 43, and JPS 67/4, 29 Apr 43, both entitled Strategic Plan for the Defeat of Japan, and associated papers in OPD ABC 381 Japan (8–27–42) Secs. 1 and 2. See also Morton, *Strategy and Command, passim.*

the principal means of moving men and matériel into China.

To secure a port on the China coast, and simultaneously to cut Japan's lines of communication to the south, the Allies would have to gain control of the South China Sea. Gaining this control, the Joint Chiefs realized, would in turn involve the seizure and development of large air, naval, and logistical bases in the strategic triangle formed by the south China coast, Formosa, and Luzon. But before they could safely move into this triangle, the Joint Chiefs decided, the Allies would have to secure air bases in the southern or central Philippines from which to neutralize Japanese air power on Luzon. The Allies would also need staging bases in the southern and central Philippines from which to mount amphibious attacks against Luzon, Formosa, and the China coast.

In accordance with these 1943 plans, Allied forces in the Pacific had struck westward toward the strategic triangle along two axes of advance. Air, ground, and naval forces of the Southwest Pacific Area, under General Douglas MacArthur, had driven up the north coast of New Guinea to Morotai Island, lying between the northwestern tip of New Guinea and Mindanao, southernmost large island of the Philippine archipelago. Simultaneously, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander of the Pacific Ocean Areas, had directed the forces of the Central Pacific Area in a drive through the Gilberts, Marshalls, and Marianas to the Palau Islands, some 500 miles east of Mindanao.[3] *(Map 1)*

[3] Nimitz' Pacific Ocean Areas included the North, Central, and South Pacific Areas, of which only the Central Pacific Area was active after the spring of 1944.

The Importance of Formosa

Studying various plans for Allied entry into the strategic triangle, the Joint Chiefs and their subordinate advisory committees concluded that Formosa constituted the most important single objective in the target area.[4] The island possessed so many obvious advantages and was located in such a strategically important position that most planners in Washington believed the Allies would have to seize it no matter what other operations they conducted in the western Pacific. Until they seized Formosa, the Allies would be unable to establish and secure an overwater supply route to China. Formosa, therefore, seemed a necessary steppingstone to the China coast. Moreover, Allied air and naval forces could sever the Japanese lines of communication to the south much more effectively from Formosa than from either Luzon or the south China coast alone. Furthermore, from fields in northern Formosa, the Army Air Forces' new B–29's could carry heavier bomb loads against Japan than from more distant Luzon.[5]

Many planners considered Formosa such a valuable strategic prize that they devoted considerable attention to the possibility of bypassing all the Philippines in favor of a direct assault upon Formosa. Discussion of this proposal waxed and waned in Washington during much of 1943 and 1944 despite the fact

[4] See the sources cited in note 1, above, and also JCS 713, 16 Feb 44, Strategy in the Pacific; JCS 713/1, 10 Mar 44, Future Opns in the Pacific; and associated sources in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43).

[5] Northern Formosa, affording some good airfield sites, lies 300-odd nautical miles closer to Tokyo than the best airfield areas of northern Luzon.


SITUATION IN THE PACIFIC
15 December 1944
JAPANESE - CONTROLLED AREAS
Bypassed Japanese-held islands not indicated
STATUTE MILES
U. S. S. R.
ALEUTIAN IS
KURIL IS
OUTER MONGOLIA
CHINA
KOREA
JAPAN
RYUKYU IS
BONIN IS
Marcus I
Wake
INDIA
BURMA
FRENCH INDOCHINA
THAILAND
Formosa
MARIANAS IS
Luzon
PHILIPPINE IS
Samar
Leyte
Guam
Yap
Ulithi Is
Mindanao
Palau Is
MARSHALL IS
CAROLINE ISLANDS
MALAY
Talaud Is
Morotai I
BORNEO
Biak I
NEW GUINEA
BISMARCK ARCH.
SOLOMON IS
GILBERT IS
NETHERLANDS INDIES
AUSTRALIA

MAP 1

that the strategic outline plan for the defeat of Japan called for the seizure of bases in the southern or central Philippines before going on into the Luzon–Formosa–China coast triangle. Such discussions found the War and Navy departments internally divided. Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, Chief of Naval Operations, and Navy member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was a leading advocate of plans to bypass the Philippines. On the other hand, Admiral Nimitz and other ranking naval commanders in the Pacific favored at least reoccupying the southern or central Philippines before striking on toward Formosa. These officers believed it would be impossible to secure the Allied line of communications to Formosa until Allied land-based aircraft from southern Philippine bases had neutralized Japanese air power on Luzon.[6]

General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and Army member of the Joint Chiefs, played a relatively inactive part in the debate until late 1944, but at one time at least seemed inclined toward bypassing both the Philippines and Formosa in favor of a direct invasion of Kyushu in southern Japan. Some officers high in Army counsels, including Lt. Gen. Joseph T. McNarney, the Deputy Chief of Staff, strongly advocated bypassing the Philippines on the way to Formosa. General Henry H. Arnold, Army Air Forces member of the Joint Chiefs, also appears to have maintained through much of 1943 and 1944 that it might prove desirable to bypass the Philippines.[7] Other Army planners, including those of the chief logistician, Lt. Gen. Brehon B. Somervell, commander of the Army Service Forces, favored taking the entire Philippine archipelago before making any move toward Formosa or the China coast. In the field, General MacArthur stood adamant against bypassing any part of the Philippines, a stand in which he had the support of most other ranking Army officers in the Pacific.[8]

In March 1944 the Joint Chiefs had directed MacArthur to be ready to move into the southern Philippines before the end of the year and to make plans to invade Luzon during February 1945. Simultaneously, they had ordered Nimitz to prepare plans for an assault against Formosa in February 1945.[9] These directives, which left in abeyance the relative priority of Luzon and Formosa,

[6] Memo, King for Marshall, 8 Feb 44, sub: CINCSWPA Despatch (*sic*) C–121702 Feb 44, and other documents in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (28 Jun 43); JCS Memo for Info 200, 7 Mar 44, sub: Sequence and Timing of Opns CenPac Campaign (a rpt by Nimitz), and associated sources in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Secs. 3–A and 4; Supplementary Min, JCS 145th and 150th Mtgs, 8 Feb and 7 Mar 44; Min, JCS 151st Mtg, 11 Mar 44; Min, JPS 125th Mtg, 2 Feb 44; Rad, Nimitz to King and MacArthur, 4 Jul 44, CM–IN 2926.

[7] Memo, Marshall for King, 10 Feb 44, OPD ABC 384 Pacific (28 Jun 43); Memo, Col Charles K. Gailey, Jr. (ExecO OPD), for Maj Gen Thomas T. Handy (ACofS OPD), 22 Feb 44 (reporting McNarney remarks), and associated materials in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 3–A; JPS 418/1, 23 Mar 44, Basic Decision Which Will Give Strategic Guidance for ... the War in the Pacific, OPD ABC 384 Pacific (8 Mar 44); Rad, Marshall to MacArthur, 23 Jun 44, CM–OUT 55718; Supplementary Min, JCS 150th Mtg, 7 Mar 44.

[8] Memo, Somervell for Handy, 15 Jul 44, sub: JCS 924, and associated papers in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 3–A; Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–3302, 20 Jun 43, CM–IN 13149; GHQ SWPA, Estimate of the Situation and Rough Draft RENO Plan (RENO I), 25 Feb 43, photostat copy in OCMH files; Min, JPS 134th, 157th, and 159th Mtgs, 8 Mar, 28 Jun, and 26 Jul 44.

[9] JCS 713/4 12 Mar 44, Future Opns in the Pacific, OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 3–A. See also Robert Ross Smith, *The Approach to the Philippines*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1953), ch. I.

ostensibly settled the question of re-entry into the Philippines, but in mid-June the Joint Chiefs themselves reopened the question of bypassing the archipelago.

Developments in the Pacific, Asia, and Europe between mid-March and mid-June 1944 tended to support those planners who wanted to bypass the Philippines. The U.S. Army had acquired new intelligence indicating that the Japanese were rapidly reinforcing their bastions throughout the western Pacific, including Formosa. Thus, the longer the Allies delayed an attack on Formosa, the more the operation would ultimately cost. Army planners suggested that the Allies might be able to reach Formosa during November 1944 if the Joint Chiefs immediately decided to bypass the Philippines. Moreover, the Joint Chiefs were beginning to fear an imminent collapse of Chinese resistance—some planners felt that the only way to avert such an eventuality would be the early seizure of Formosa and a port on the China coast without undertaking intermediary operations in the Philippines.[10] The Joint Chiefs were probably also stimulated by the success of the invasion of Normandy in early June and by the impending invasion of the Marianas in the Central Pacific, set for 15 June. At any rate, on 13 June, seeking ways and means to accelerate the pace of operations in the Pacific, and feeling that the time might be ripe for acceleration, the Joint Chiefs asked Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur to consider the possibilities of bypassing all objectives already selected in the western Pacific, including both the Philippines and Formosa.[11]

Neither Nimitz nor MacArthur gave the Joint Chiefs any encouragement. Both declared that the next major step in the Pacific after the advance to the Palaus-Morotai line would have to be the seizure of air bases in the southern or central Philippines. The Joint Chiefs' subordinate committees, examining the theater commanders' replies and undertaking new studies of their own, reaffirmed the concept that the Allies would have to move into the central or southern Philippines before advancing to either Formosa or Luzon. Like MacArthur and Nimitz, the advisory bodies saw no possibility of a direct jump to Japan. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, apparently with some reluctance, agreed.[12]

Meeting with President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Pearl Harbor in late July 1944, both MacArthur and Nimitz again emphasized that MacArthur's forces would have to be firmly established in the southern or central Philippines before any advance to either Formosa or Luzon could take place—on this point almost everyone was agreed. MacArthur then argued persuasively that it was both necessary and proper to take Luzon be-

[10] JCS 713/8, 13 Jun 44, Future Opns in the Pacific, OPD ABC 384 Formosa (8 Sep 43) Sec. 1–C; Rad, JCS to MacArthur and Nimitz, 13 Jun 44, CM–OUT 50007; Rad, Marshall to MacArthur, 23 Jun 44, CM–OUT 55718.

[11] Rad, JCS to MacArthur and Nimitz, 13 Jun 44, CM–OUT 50007. See also Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943–1944*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1959), ch. XXI.

[12] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, CX–13891, 18 Jun 44, CM–IN 15058; Rad, Nimitz to King and MacArthur, 4 Jul 44, CM–IN 2926; Rad, Marshall to MacArthur, 23 Jun 44, CM–OUT 55718; Min, JPS 157th, 158th, and 159th Mtgs, 28 Jun and 12 and 21 Jul 44; JPS 404/5, 23 Jun 44, Future Opns in the Pacific, and related papers in OPD ABC 384 Formosa (8 Sep 43) Sec. 1–C and OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 4; see also Smith, *Approach to the Philippines*, pp. 451–52.

fore going on to Formosa, while Nimitz expounded a plan for striking straight across the western Pacific to Formosa, bypassing Luzon. Apparently, no decisions on strategy were reached at the Pearl Harbor conference.[13] The Formosa versus Luzon debate continued without letup at the highest planning levels for over two months, and even the question of bypassing the Philippines entirely in favor of a direct move on Formosa came up for serious discussion within Washington planning circles again.[14] The net result of the debate through July 1944 was the reaffirmation of the decision to strike into the southern or central Philippines before advancing to either Formosa or Luzon. The Joint Chiefs still had to decide whether to seize Luzon or Formosa, or both, before executing any other major attacks against Japan.

[13] No evidence that strategic decisions were reached at Pearl Harbor is to be found in *contemporary* sources. See Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–15589, 1 Aug 44, CM–IN 496; Memo, King for Marshall and Arnold, 9 Aug 44 (quoting parts of a letter on the Pearl Harbor Conference from Nimitz to King, dated 31 Jul 44), OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 4; Ltr, Lt Gen Robert C. Richardson, COMGENPOA, to Marshall, 1 Aug 44, OPD Personal File on Gen Marshall. See Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, *I Was There* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1950), pp. 247–52. Leahy participated in the conference; Richardson was MacArthur's host in Hawaii.

Some writers state that a basic decision *not* to bypass the Philippines was reached at Pearl Harbor. See, for example: Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger and Milton MacKaye, *Our Jungle Road to Tokyo* (New York: The Viking Press, 1950), pp. 165–66; John Gunther, *The Riddle of MacArthur* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), pp. 9–10; Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, An Intimate History* (rev. ed.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), pp. 809–10. Others say that a decision to take Luzon was made by the President at Pearl Harbor. See, for instance, Clark Lee and Richard Henschel, *Douglas MacArthur* (Henry Holt and Co., Inc., 1952), pp. 170–71. None of the foregoing authors participated in the conference.

[14] See, for example, Min, JPS 160th Mtg. 2 Aug 44.

Luzon Versus Formosa

The Views Presented

General MacArthur was a most vigorous adherent of the view that the Allies would have to secure Luzon before moving any farther toward Japan. Contrary to the views the Joint Chiefs of Staff held, MacArthur believed that Luzon was a more valuable strategic prize than Formosa. He declared that the Allies would need to reoccupy the entire Philippine archipelago before they could completely sever Japan's lines of communication to the south. MacArthur also believed that an invasion of Formosa would prove unduly hazardous unless he provided air and logistical support from Luzon. Finally, he suggested, if the Allies took Luzon first they could then bypass Formosa and strike for targets farther north, thus hastening the end of the war. The Luzon-first course of action, he averred, would be the cheaper in terms of time, men, and money.[15]

In addition, MacArthur considered that bypassing part of the Philippines would have the "sinister implication" of imposing a food blockade upon unoccupied portions of the archipelago. (MacArthur's argument here would not have stood up too well under close scrutiny, for his own current plans called for seizing a foothold in southeastern Mindanao, jumping thence to Leyte in the east-central Philippines, and then going on to Luzon, initially bypassing most of

[15] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–3302, 20 Jun 43, CM–IN 13139; Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, CX–13891, 18 Jun 44, CM–IN 15058; Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–15689, 3 Aug 44, CM–IN 2479; RENO I, 25 Feb 43; GHQ SWPA, Basic Outline Plan for MUSKETEER (Philippine) Opns (MUSKETEER I), 10 Jul 44.

the large islands of the Visayan group, the bulk of Mindanao, and the Sulu Archipelago.[16] Of course, the bypassing under MacArthur's plans would not have lasted as long as would have been the case had Formosa, rather than Luzon been the target.) MacArthur had a more cogent argument, and one that was bound to have some influence upon planning in Washington. The reoccupation of the entire Philippine archipelago as quickly and early as possible was, MacArthur said, a national obligation and political necessity. To bypass any or all the islands, he declared, would destroy American honor and prestige throughout the Far East, if not in the rest of the world as well.

Just as General MacArthur was the most vigorous proponent of Luzon, so Admiral King was the most persistent advocate of the Formosa-first strategy. King believed that the seizure of Luzon before Formosa could only delay the execution of more decisive operations to the north. He also argued that the capture of Formosa first would greatly facilitate the subsequent occupation of Luzon. Moreover, King pointed out, the Allies could not secure and maintain a foothold on the China coast until they had seized Formosa. Finally, he suggested, if the Allies should bypass Formosa, then the principal objective in the western Pacific should be Japan itself, not Luzon.[17]

MacArthur believed that the plans to bypass Luzon were purely Navy-inspired.[18] Actually, the War and Navy Departments were as internally split during the Luzon versus Formosa debate as they had been earlier over the question of bypassing all the Philippines. For example, at least until mid-September 1944 General Marshall leaned toward the Formosa-first strategy and like Admiral King had expressed the opinion that Japan itself, rather than Luzon, should be considered the substitute for Formosa. Most Army members of the Joint Chiefs' subordinate committees held similar views, and until September consistently pressed for an early decision in favor of Formosa. Army Air Forces planners, meanwhile, expressed their interest in Formosa as a site for B–29 bases.[19]

Admiral Nimitz, the ranking naval officer in the Pacific, went on record until late September as favoring Formosa first. However, there are indications that his staff did not enthusiastically share his views, and there are grounds to believe that Nimitz grew steadily more lukewarm toward the idea of seizing Formosa. Nimitz had been at variance with Admiral King on the question of bypassing the entire Philippine archipelago, and it is possible that his support of the Formosa-first strategy stemmed at least in part from deference to King's judgment. A hint of Nimitz' attitude is apparent in the fact that his staff was preparing plans to seize Okinawa, as a substitute for

[16] MUSKETEER I, 10 Jul 44; MUSKETEER II, 29 Aug 44; MUSKETEER III, 26 Sep 44.

[17] See the sources cited in note 6, above, and also JCS 713/10, 4 Sep 44 (memo from King for the JCS), and associated papers in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5; Min, JCS 171st and 172d Mtg, 1 and 5 Sep 44.

[18] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–15689, 3 Aug 44, CM–IN 2479.

[19] JPS 414/10, 29 Jun 44, Future Opns in the Pacific, and associated sources in OPD ABC 384 Formosa (8 Sep 43) Sec. 1–C; JCS 713/14, 7 Sep 44, Proposed Directive, and connected materials in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5; Min, JCS 171st–173d Mtgs, 1, 5, and 8 Sep 44; Min, JPS 160th, 162d, 163d, 165th, and 167th Mtgs, 2, 10, 16, and 28 Aug and 2 Sep 44.

Formosa, well before such an operation gained serious consideration among high-level planners in Washington.[20]

The next ranking naval officer in the Pacific, Admiral William F. Halsey, commander of the Third Fleet (and until 15 June 1944 commander of the South Pacific Area as well), steadfastly opposed the Formosa-first plan. He wanted to go to Luzon and bypass Formosa in favor of seizing Okinawa. In this connection Halsey relates a classic story concerning a discussion between his chief of staff, Vice Adm. Robert B. Carney, and Admiral King. King, propounding his Formosa plan to Carney, who was arguing in favor of Luzon, asked, "Do you want to make a London out of Manila?" Carney's reply was: "No, sir, I want to make an England out of Luzon."[21]

Most of the other senior Army and Navy officers on duty in the Pacific also favored the Luzon-first strategy and advocated bypassing Formosa. Lt. Gen. Robert C. Richardson, commanding U.S. Army Forces, Pacific Ocean Areas, strongly advised against Formosa. So, too, did MacArthur's air commander, Lt. Gen. George C. Kenney, and the Southwest Pacific Area's naval commander, Vice Adm. Thomas C. Kinkaid. But among the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the summer and early fall of 1944 only Admiral William D. Leahy, the President's Chief of Staff, favored going to Luzon instead of Formosa, and this stand represented a reversal of Leahy's earlier thinking on the subject.[22]

It is noteworthy that, with the possible exception of Nimitz, the ranking Army and Navy commanders in the Pacific—the men responsible for executing or supporting the operation—were opposed to the seizure of Formosa. In general, they favored a program calling for the capture of Luzon and a subsequent jump to Okinawa or Japan. In the face of this opinion of the commanders on the spot, the consensus of most high-ranking Army and Navy planners in Washington—with Leahy and General Somervell as outstanding exceptions—was that the Formosa-first course of action was strategically the sounder and, therefore, the most desirable course for the Allies to follow in the western Pacific.

The Washington planners, however, had to give careful consideration to many factors other than ideal strategy. Study of these factors brought the Luzon versus Formosa debate to a climax in late September 1944.

Tactical and Logistical Problems

Perhaps the most influential event helping to precipitate the climax was a drastic change in the target date for the initial invasion of the Philippines. Until mid-September 1944, General MacArthur's plans had called for the first

[20] Rads, Nimitz to King, 18 and 24 Aug 44, CM-IN 16755 and CM-IN 22182; Rad, Nimitz to Arnold, 5 Sep 44, CM-IN 4996; Memo, unsigned but prepared by Col William L. Ritchie of OPD, who had just returned to Washington after talking with most of the ranking Army and Navy commanders in the Pacific, circa 15 Aug 44, sub: Notes for Discussion With General Marshall (hereinafter cited as Ritchie Notes for Marshall), and related sources in OPD 384 Pacific (1-17-43) Sec. 5; Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey and Lt. Comdr J. Bryan, III, *Admiral Halsey's Story* (New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1947), p. 195.

[21] Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, p. 195.

[22] Ritchie Notes for Marshall; George C. Kenney, *General Kenney Reports, A Personal History of the Pacific War* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1949), p. 371; Leahy, *I Was There*, p. 259; Rad, Richardson to Marshall, R-28617, 22 Aug 44, CM-IN 19958.

entry into the Philippines to take place in southeastern Mindanao on 15 November, while the major assault into the archipelago would occur at Leyte on 20 December. On 15 September, with the approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, MacArthur canceled preliminary Mindanao operations in favor of a direct jump from the Palaus-Morotai line to Leyte on 20 October.[23]

Soon after this change of schedule, MacArthur informed the Joint Chiefs that he could push on from Leyte to Luzon on 20 December, two months earlier than the date currently under consideration for an invasion of either Luzon or Formosa. This new plan, MacArthur suggested, would permit the Allies to execute the Formosa operation on the date already selected, but, he reiterated, the prior seizure of Luzon would render unnecessary the occupation of Formosa.[24]

MacArthur's new schedule contained much to recommend it to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. His proposed sequence of operations—Leyte on 20 October, Luzon on 20 December, and Formosa, possibly, on 20 February 1945—would permit the Allies to maintain steady pressure against the Japanese. On the other hand, should the Allies drop Luzon out of the sequence, the Japanese would have ample time to realign their defenses during the interval between the Leyte and Formosa operations. Moreover, eliminating Luzon could in no way accelerate the advance to Formosa — logistical problems would make it impossible for the Allies to mount an assault against Formosa under any circumstances before late February 1945.

While MacArthur's proposals were gaining some favor in Washington, especially among Army planners, Nimitz' proposals for advancing to Formosa and the south China coast were losing ground.[25] Plans developed in Washington had long called for the seizure of all Formosa, after which amphibious forces would strike on westward to secure a port on the mainland. But Nimitz' latest plans provided for simultaneous assaults in southern Formosa and in the Amoy area of the China coast. Nimitz proposed to occupy the bulk of Formosa only if such a step proved necessary and feasible after he had established a firm bridgehead at Amoy.

Army planners quickly decided that Nimitz' new plans possessed major drawbacks. The Japanese would hardly allow Allied forces to sit unmolested in southern Formosa. Instead, the Japanese would mount strong counterattacks from northern Formosa with troops already on the island and with reinforcements staged in from China. Occupying and defending one beachhead on southern Formosa and another at Amoy would involve problems far different from those the Allies had encountered previously in the Pacific. So far during the war, the Japanese had usually been hard put to move air and ground reinforcements

[23] For the events leading up to this change in plans, see M. Hamlin Cannon, *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1954), ch. I.

[24] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–18103, 21 Sep 44, CM–IN 19803.

[25] The discussion of tactical and logistical problems in the remainder of this subsection is based generally upon: Min, JPS 162d, 165th, and 167th Mtgs, 10 and 28 Aug and 2 Sep 44; OPD, Draft Appreciation of a Plan of Campaign, circa 1 Sep 44, and associated sources in OPD 381 Strategy Sec Papers (4 Sep 44); Memo, Handy for Marshall, circa 5 Sep 44, sub: Opns in the Western Pacific, and related documents in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5; Min, JCS 171st and 172d Mtgs, 1 and 5 Sep 44.

against the island perimeters Allied amphibious task forces had seized. In the southern Formosa–Amoy area, on the other hand, the Allies would not have the protection of distance from major Japanese bases they had enjoyed in earlier campaigns. The Allies did not have sufficient aircraft in the Pacific to continually neutralize all existing Japanese airfields within range of southern Formosa and Amoy. In addition, experience in the Pacific had demonstrated that Allied air and naval forces could not be expected to forestall all Japanese efforts to move strong reinforcements across the narrow strait between China and Formosa.

Having considered these factors, Army planners swung to the opinion that a southern Formosa–Amoy operation would be impracticable. They believed that it would inevitably lead to protracted, costly campaigns to secure all Formosa and large areas of the adjacent China mainland as well. Major ground campaigns of such scope could only delay progress toward Japan and would prove an unacceptable drain upon Allied manpower resources.

Further study of the manpower needed for the southern Formosa–Amoy operation revealed additional difficulties. Army intelligence estimates of Japanese strength in the Formosa-Amoy region, for example, were far higher than those Nimitz' staff had produced. Army planners therefore believed that the southern Formosa–Amoy campaign would require many more combat units than Nimitz was planning to employ. Furthermore, according to various estimates made during September, Nimitz would lack from 77,000 to 200,000 of the service troops needed for the campaign he proposed.

Planners studied a number of suggestions for securing the necessary service forces. One thought, originating with the Navy, which was seeking ways to accelerate the Formosa target date, proposed taking service units from the Southwest Pacific Area. But MacArthur's command was already short of service troops. To remove any from his area might jeopardize the success of the Leyte operation and would certainly immobilize his forces in the central Philippines until long after Nimitz had secured the southern Formosa–Amoy region. Although the southern Formosa–Amoy and Luzon operations would each require about the same number of U.S. combat troops in the assault phase, MacArthur could count upon hundreds of thousands of loyal Filipinos to augment both his service and his combat strength. No similar source of friendly manpower would be available on Formosa.

By mid-September 1944 so few service units were available in the United States that the only way Army planners could see to solve the service troop shortage for Nimitz' proposed operation was to await redeployment from Europe. Army planners and the Joint Logistic Committee both estimated that Nimitz could launch the southern Formosa–Amoy campaign even as early as 1 March 1945 only if the war in Europe ended by 1 November 1944, thereby permitting timely redeployment of service units to the Pacific. And even if the Allies could effect such an early redeployment from Europe, logistical planners still felt that Nimitz would be unable to move against Formosa by 1 March 1945 unless the Joint Chiefs of Staff immediately decided to cancel the Luzon operation, thus providing for an expeditious and unbroken

build-up of the resources required to execute Nimitz' campaign. On the other hand, the logistical experts were convinced, MacArthur could move to Luzon before the end of 1944 regardless of developments in Europe. Army planners, not as optimistic as they had been a few months earlier about an early end to the war in Europe, pointed out that it would be illogical to schedule the southern Formosa–Amoy operation on the presumption of a German collapse by 1 November 1944. Events were to prove this argument sound.

Army planners saw other combined logistical-tactical disadvantages in Nimitz' plan. They believed, for instance, that the campaign would tie down so many troops, ships, landing craft, and planes that an invasion of Luzon, assuming Formosa came first, could not take place until November 1945. By the same token any other major step toward Japan, such as the seizure of Okinawa, would be equally delayed. A hiatus of this length would be unacceptable for tactical reasons alone. In addition, the Luzon-first course, it appeared, would be far safer logistically than the southern Formosa–Amoy undertaking. As Army Service Forces planners pointed out, the Allied lines of communication to Luzon would be shorter and easier to protect than those to Formosa. The logisticians predicted that the Allies would find it especially difficult to safeguard the lines of communication to Formosa if Luzon remained in Japanese hands.

Other aspects of the logistical problems attained disturbing overtones. Admiral Leahy, for example, believed that although the Formosa-first course of action might ultimately hasten the end of the war in the Pacific, the capture of Luzon and the bypassing of Formosa would prove far cheaper in terms of lives and other resources. By mid-September he, as well as most Army planners, were favoring what promised to be the longer course at the lesser cost. General MacArthur, meanwhile, expressed the opinion that the Formosa-first strategy would cost not only more lives but also more time. He was prepared to guarantee to the Joint Chiefs that he could secure the most strategically important areas of Luzon—the Central Plains–Manila Bay region—within four to six weeks after initial landings on the island.

General Marshall also began to show misgivings about the cost of the southern Formosa–Amoy operation vis-à-vis Luzon, although he remained convinced that the Formosa-first course was strategically the more desirable. Admiral Nimitz expressed no strong opinion on the relative cost of the two campaigns, but, "backing" into the problem, stated that the occupation of Luzon after Formosa need not delay the pace of the war in the Pacific. If Formosa came first, Nimitz pointed out, MacArthur's task on Luzon would be considerably eased and, presumably, less costly. Admiral King, on the other hand, declared himself convinced that the Formosa-first course would save time and, therefore, reduce casualties over the long run. By late September 1944 King alone among the high-level planners seems to have retained a strong conviction along these lines.

While the discussions over tactical and logistical problems continued in Washington, the Allied position in China had been steadily deteriorating. In mid-September Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell, commanding U.S. Army forces in China,

Burma, and India and Allied Chief of Staff to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, reported to the Joint Chiefs that Japanese offensives in eastern and southeastern China were overrunning the last air bases from which the China-based U.S. Fourteenth Air Force could effectively support invasions of either Luzon or Formosa. Chiang's armies were unable to either hold or recapture the air bases.[26]

This news had an obvious impact upon the thinking of both the ground and the air planners in Washington. The Army Air Forces had intended to expand their airfields in eastern China as staging bases for B–29's flying against targets in Japan, Korea, Manchuria, and Formosa, and to base on these fields much of the tactical bombardment preceding the actual invasion of Japan. The east China fields now appeared irretrievably lost, and the Allies could not afford to expend the manpower necessary to retake and hold them. The need for the seizure and development of a port on the China coast was therefore deprived of much of its urgency since the Allies had needed such a port primarily to open a good supply route into China for the development of air bases. By the same token, one of the principal reasons for seizing Formosa—to secure a steppingstone to the China coast—became much less compelling.

This line of thinking forced naval planners to reconsider the southern Formosa–Amoy plan. To most Navy planners a move to Formosa without the concomitant seizure of a mainland port would prove unsound, because Formosa lacked the anchorages and ports required for the large fleet and logistical bases the Allies needed in the western Pacific. Inevitably the question arose: If it were no longer feasible or desirable to seize and develop a port on the south China coast, was it feasible or desirable to occupy any part of Formosa? Since early September 1944 Army planners had been answering that question with an emphatic "No."[27]

The loss of existing and potential air base sites in eastern China, together with the limitations inherent in Nimitz' plans to occupy only southern Formosa, weighed heavily with Army Air Forces planners. There was no question but that B–29's could operate more effectively against Japan from northern Formosa than they could from northern Luzon, the Mariana Islands, or western China, but the big bombers could accomplish little more from southern Formosa than they could from the other base areas. Indeed, Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas lay closer to Tokyo than Nimitz' proposed base area in southern Formosa, and the two islands of the Marianas would be far more secure from Japanese air attacks. Even northern Luzon, some 200 miles further from Tokyo than southern Formosa, had some advantages over southern Formosa — it had more room for B–29 fields and would be safer from air attack. Finally, assuming that Nimitz could meet the most optimistic target date for the invasion of southern Formosa — 1 March

[26] Rad, Stilwell to Marshall and MacArthur, CFBX–22674, 16 Sep 44, CM–IN 15768. See also, Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Stilwell's Command Problems*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1955).

[27] Memo, Hull for Handy, 2 Sep 44, sub: Pacific Strategy, and OPD, Draft Appreciation of a Plan of Campaign, circa 1 Sep 44, both, with associated sources, in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5; Min, JCS 172d Mtg, 5 Sep 44.

1945—B–29's could not begin operations from that island until the late spring or early summer. The Army Air Forces was already planning to initiate B–29 operations from the Marianas before the end of 1944. In brief, by mid-September the Army Air Forces had lost interest in Formosa and had begun to see eye to eye with other Army elements on the disadvantages and drawbacks of the southern Formosa–Amoy scheme.

An obvious political consideration may have had a bearing on the ultimate decision in the Luzon versus Formosa debate. General MacArthur's argument that it would be disastrous to United States prestige to bypass any part of the Philippines could not be dismissed. Perhaps more important, Admiral Leahy took the same point of view. By virtue of his intimate contact with President Roosevelt, it must be presumed that his colleagues of the Joint Chiefs of Staff gave Leahy's opinion careful consideration.

Decision

Whatever the political implications involved, the Joint Chiefs decided the Formosa versus Luzon question primarily upon its military merits. By the end of September 1944 almost all the military considerations — especially the closely interrelated logistical problems concerning troops and timing — had weighted the scales heavily in favor of seizing Luzon, bypassing Formosa, forgetting about a port on the China coast, and jumping on to Okinawa. Admiral King was the only member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, if not the only prominent military figure as well, who still maintained a strong stand in favor of bypassing Luzon and executing the southern Formosa–Amoy operation.

Realizing that the military and political factors had undermined his position, King took a new, negative tack in the debate by raising objections to the Luzon operation per se. He argued that the Luzon campaign as MacArthur had planned it would tie up all the Pacific Fleet's fast carrier task forces for at least six weeks for the purposes of protecting the Luzon beachhead and Luzon-bound convoys and neutralizing Japanese air power on both Luzon and Formosa. To pin down the carriers for so long would be unsound, King averred, and he therefore declared MacArthur's plan unacceptable to the U.S. Navy.[28]

Alerted by his deputy chief of staff (Maj. Gen. Richard J. Marshall, then in Washington on official business), General MacArthur was able to provide Army planners with ammunition to counter King's last-ditch arguments.[29] MacArthur informed the Joint Chiefs that his only requirement for carriers after the initial assault on Luzon would be for a small group of escort carriers to remain off the island for a few days to provide support for ground operations until his engineers could ready a field for land-based planes at the invasion beaches. MacArthur continued by pointing out that only the first assault convoys

[28] Memo, King for Marshall, 23 Sep 44, OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5.

[29] Rads, R. J. Marshall to MacArthur, 26 Sep 44, CM–OUT's 37000 and 37001. The first radio informed MacArthur of the nature of King's arguments, told MacArthur what Army planners needed to counter King's objections, and cautioned MacArthur to make no reference to the first radio in replying to the second. The second radio, signed by R. J. Marshall, was actually a formal request for information sent by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to MacArthur.

would be routed through dangerous waters north of Luzon and consequently require protection from the fast carrier task forces. Resupply and reinforcement convoys would come through the central Philippines under an umbrella of land-based aircraft from the island of Mindoro, south of Luzon, and would need no carrier-based air cover. Thus, MacArthur declared, he would have no long-term requirement for the fast carrier task forces, which he could quickly release so that Nimitz could employ them elsewhere. MacArthur concluded with the counterargument that the fast carriers would be tied down to a specific area much longer during the proposed southern Formosa–Amoy operation, especially if Luzon remained in Japanese hands, than would be the case for the Luzon invasion.[30]

This exchange took much of the wind out of King's sails. Next, Admiral Nimitz withdrew whatever support he was still giving the Formosa plan, for he had concluded that sufficient troops could not be made available for him to execute the southern Formosa–Amoy campaign within the foreseeable future. Accordingly, at the end of September, he threw the weight of his opinion behind the Luzon operation, proposing that plans to seize Formosa be at least temporarily dropped. Simultaneously, Nimitz presented for King's consideration a planned series of operations designed to maintain steady pressure against the Japanese and carry Allied forces speedily on toward Japan: MacArthur's forces would initiate the Luzon campaign on 20 December 1944; Central Pacific forces would move against Iwo Jima, in the Volcano Islands some 650 miles south of Tokyo, late in January 1945; and the Central Pacific would next attack Okinawa, 850 miles southwest of Tokyo, and other targets in the Ryukyu Islands, beginning on 1 March 1945.[31]

King accepted Nimitz' recommendations, with one last reservation. King felt that the hazards involved in routing the Luzon assault convoys into the waters between Luzon and Formosa were so great that approval for such action should come directly from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He raised similar objections to plans for having the Pacific Fleet's fast carrier task forces operate in the same restricted waters. The other three members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, however, agreed to leave the decision on these problems up to Nimitz and MacArthur, a settlement that King finally accepted.[32]

After King's eleventh-hour change of position, the Joint Chiefs were able to attain the unanimity that their major strategic decisions required. On 3 October 1944 they directed General MacArthur to launch the invasion of Luzon on or about 20 December and instructed Admiral Nimitz to execute the Iwo Jima and Okinawa operations on the dates he had proposed. Nimitz would provide naval cover and support, including fast and escort carriers, for the invasion of Luzon; MacArthur would provide Nimitz with as much air support as he

[30] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–18496, 28 Sep 44, CM–IN 26358.

[31] Conf Notes, Rear Adm Forrest P. Sherman (Nimitz' planning chief) and Rear Adm Charles M. Cooke (King's deputy chief of staff), 27 Sep 44, OPD Exec Files 17, Binder 3; JCS 713/18, 2 Oct 44, Future Opns in the Pacific (a memo by King to the JCS), OPD 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 5. Nimitz personally presented his views to King at a secret conference in San Francisco over the weekend of 29 September–1 October 1944.

[32] JCS 713/18, 2 Oct 44; Rad, JCS to MacArthur, Nimitz, and Stilwell, 3 Oct 44, CM–OUT 40782.

could from Luzon for the attack on Okinawa. The two commanders would co-ordinate their plans with those of B–29 units in the Pacific and India and with the plans of General Stilwell and the Fourteenth Air Force in China.[33]

The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not formally cancel the Formosa operation. Instead, they left in abeyance a final decision on the seizure of that island, but thereafter the occupation of Formosa as an operation of World War II never came up for serious consideration at the higher levels of Washington planning councils.

The Joint Chiefs had not reached their decision to take Luzon, bypass Formosa, and, in effect, substitute Okinawa for Formosa, either lightly or easily. From the beginning of the Luzon versus Formosa debate they had believed the seizure of Formosa and a port on the south China coast, bypassing Luzon, to be the best strategy the Allies could follow in the western Pacific. In the end, however, the Joint Chiefs had had to face the facts that the Allies could not assemble the resources required to execute that strategy, at least until after the end of the war in Europe, and they could not seriously consider delaying the progress of the war in the Pacific until Germany collapsed. In the last analysis then, logistical considerations alone would have forced the Joint Chiefs to the decision they reached in favor of Luzon, although other military realities, and possibly political factors as well, had some influence upon the outcome of strategic planning for operations in the western Pacific.

For the Allied forces of the Pacific theaters, the Joint Chiefs' directive of 3 October 1944 ended months of uncertainty. The die was cast. Luzon would be taken; Formosa would be bypassed. United States forces would recapture the entire Philippine archipelago in a consecutive series of advances, just as General MacArthur had been planning ever since he had left Corregidor in March 1942.

[33] *Ibid.* The B–29's operated under the direct control of the JCS, with General Arnold acting as the executive agent of the JCS.

CHAPTER II

The Plan for Invasion

The Concept

Until September 1944 General MacArthur's plans for the reconquest of the Philippines, though changed often in detail during the weary months since March 1942, all called for a campaign divided into four phases. First would come seizure of a foothold in the southern Philippines, on southeastern Mindanao, in order to establish air bases for the support of the second phase. (*See map, p. 20.*) This would be a move into the central Philippines at Leyte, where MacArthur would develop major air and supply bases from which to stage and support the advance to Luzon. After the third-phase operations on Luzon had proceeded to the point at which necessary planes, ships, troops, and supplies could be released, fourth-phase attacks would begin for the recapture of those islands in the southern Philippines that had been bypassed during the first three phases.[1]

MacArthur eliminated the first-phase operations when, in mid-September 1944, the changing situation in the western Pacific made it possible for him to move directly to Leyte, bypassing Mindanao. The new three-phase campaign began with landings on small islands in Leyte Gulf on 17 October.[2] (*See Map 1.*) Three days later the U.S. Sixth Army, Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger in command, sent the X and XXIV Corps ashore on the mainland. The rest of MacArthur's plan remained essentially unchanged. Luzon would come next, to be followed, when the means became available, by the occupation of the bypassed southern islands. Some of the operations in the southern islands were designed not only to liberate Filipinos but also to secure base sites from which to launch attacks on British Borneo and the Netherlands East Indies.[3]

From the first, General MacArthur's plans for the invasion of Luzon called for the main effort to be made at Lingayen Gulf, on the west-central shore of the island. The choice was practically inevitable, for Lingayen Gulf, where the Japanese had made their major landings in 1941,[4] provides direct access to the

[1] The concept of the four-phase plan for the reconquest of the Philippines, together with the timing and selection of targets, is to be found in a series of plans covering the conduct of the war in the Southwest Pacific produced at MacArthur's headquarters from RENO I of 25 February 1943 through MUSKETEER II of 29 August 1944, copies to be found in OPD files and précis in collection of GHQ SWPA Historical Record Index Cards, in OCMH files.

[2] For details of the change in plan and of the Leyte landings, see Cannon, *Leyte*, chs. I and IV.

[3] MUSKETEER III, 26 Sep 44. For the planning of specific operations in the southern Philippines and the Indies, see below, ch. XXX.

[4] Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines*, pages 51–61, 123–38, describes the Japanese landings of 1941.

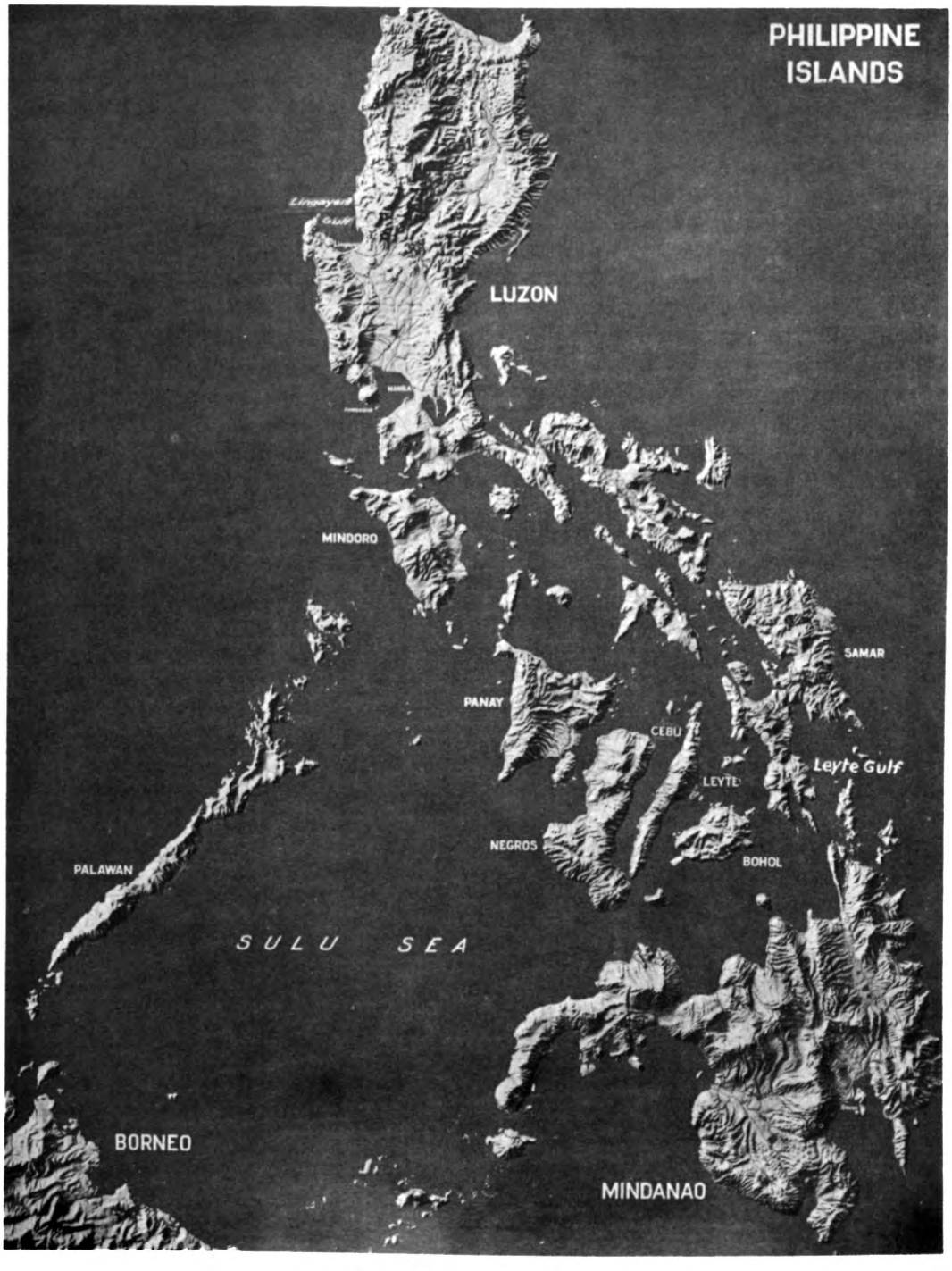
most important military objective on Luzon, the Central Plains–Manila Bay region, and boasts the best and most extensive stretches of good landing beaches on the island. Although Lingayen Gulf itself is something of a defile, being less than twenty miles across at its narrowest point, all other approaches to the vital Central Plains–Manila Bay area lead through still worse defiles—easily defensible isthmuses and tortuous mountain passes, coastal strips flanked by the sea on one side and mountains on the other, and narrower water approaches such as the 12-mile-wide entrance to Manila Bay. Lingayen Gulf gives direct access to Luzon's best railroad and highway network, running south through the Central Plains 120 miles to Manila. Finally, the region inland from the gulf's southern shores—although not the immediate beach area—provides ample maneuver room for large military forces. Similar space cannot be found elsewhere on Luzon except at Aparri, 175 miles northeast of Lingayen Gulf on Luzon's northern shore at the end of the Cagayan Valley. The southern end of the Cagayan Valley is separated from the northeastern corner of the Central Plains by fifty miles of rugged, mountainous terrain.

General MacArthur directed General Krueger's Sixth Army, supported by the Allied Air Forces and Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific Area, to seize and secure a beachhead on Lingayen Gulf and then drive south through the Central Plains in order to take Manila and open Manila Bay. Operations to complete the occupation of Luzon would follow the execution of the Sixth Army's initial missions, but plans for the later maneuvers MacArthur left for future determination. Air and logistical bases for the support of subsequent operations against Japan would be constructed on Luzon, and the lawful government of the Philippine Commonwealth would be re-established in its capital city, Manila.[5] The political implications of the last section of MacArthur's directive could hardly have been lost on the planners, who realized that the Luzon Campaign was not to be undertaken for purely military reasons. The political objectives of the campaign, as well as the American appetency to avenge on the ground the defeat of 1941–42 undoubtedly influenced planning and would just as surely influence the conduct of operations.

General MacArthur made tentative plans for a number of subsidiary operations along Luzon's extensive coast line, many of them scheduled for execution at points where the Japanese had landed in 1941. MacArthur's planners designed the secondary attacks both to provide support for the main effort at Lingayen Gulf and to keep the Japanese off balance. The operations would take place either before or after the Lingayen assault as the occasion demanded and if their execution proved necessary and feasible.[6] All of them, in comparison with the assault at Lingayen Gulf, would present knotty problems—terrain, air and naval

[5] GHQ, SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 14–31 Oct 44.

[6] MUSKEETER III, 26 Sep 44; GHQ SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44; GHQ SWPA Staff Studies: MIKE I (Lingayen Gulf), Edition No. 2, 7 Oct 44; MIKE II (Dingalan Bay), 4 Oct 44; MIKE III (Vigan), 23 Nov 44; MIKE IV (Nasugbu and Balayan Bays), 7 Nov 44; MIKE VI (Batangas and Tayabas Bays), 2 Jan 45; and MIKE VII (Zambales coast), Edition No. 2, 14 Jan 45. All in OPD ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43), various sections. *GHQ SWPA OI 74, 13 Oct 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File*, 13 Oct 44; GHQ SWPA OI 80, 20 Nov 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 20 Nov 44.


PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
Lingayen Gulf
LUZON
MANILA
MINDORO
SAMAR
PANAY
CEBU
LEYTE
Leyte Gulf
NEGROS
BOHOL
PALAWAN
SULU SEA
BORNEO
MINDANAO

support, and logistics; all of them would be carefully examined by MacArthur's planners before they were undertaken.[7]

MacArthur originally intended to send his Lingayen-bound assault convoys north along the eastern coast of Luzon, west around the northern tip of the island, through Luzon Strait, and then south down the west coast to the gulf.[8] This scheme required air cover by land-based planes operating from some northern Luzon field that would have to be captured well before the Lingayen assault convoys sortied from Leyte Gulf. General MacArthur's planners, led by Maj. Gen. Stephen J. Chamberlin, the Assistant Chief of Staff G–3 at GHQ SWPA, accordingly had to give serious consideration to the seizure of an air base site at Aparri. For a time, Chamberlin also thought it might prove necessary to establish land-based air strength at Legaspi, on the eastern tip of the Bicol Peninsula, Luzon's southeasternmost extension. Legaspi-based planes could supplement convoy cover to be provided by escort carriers (CVE's) and could also help support the ground forces at Lingayen Gulf until land-based aircraft could be sent forward to fields along the gulf's shores.

MacArthur, on Chamberlin's advice, soon dismissed the Legaspi plan from consideration. The operation posed such logistic problems that its execution might delay the Lingayen Gulf assault for a month. Furthermore, Chamberlin had decided, the additional air support that could be provided from Legaspi probably would not be needed.[9] The Aparri operation likewise created grave logistical problems, since it called for the efforts of a corps containing two reinforced divisions. The corps would have to hold an isolated perimeter 600 miles from the nearest Allied air bases (at Leyte) but only 300 miles from major Japanese air concentrations on southern Formosa, and much closer to Japanese fields on Luzon, for a month or more before the Lingayen assault.[10]

Yet MacArthur had to give continuing consideration to the Aparri operation. Admiral King, for one, believed that until Japanese air strength on Luzon could be completely neutralized it would be unsafe to route assault convoys around the island unless land-based fighters were operating from Aparri.[11] Admiral Kinkaid, MacArthur's naval commander, agreed with King, and went on to raise other objections to the proposed northern route. Kinkaid was especially worried about weather conditions off northern Luzon, where severe typhoons were known to occur around 20 December, the date MacArthur had set for the Lingayen assault. Although he had previously opposed sending the Lingayen-bound convoys through the confined waters around the Visayan Islands, reconsideration prompted Kinkaid to recommend that the assault shipping employ the Visayan route, where the seas were more protected and

[7] See, for example, the examination of proposals for operations in southern Luzon in ch. XII, below.

[8] MUSKETEER III, 26 Sep 44, and other plans cited previously in this section.

[9] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–14608, 8 Jul 44, CM–IN 6202; WD Telecon, Handy (in Washington) and Maj Gen John E. Hull (Chief, Theater Gp OPD, in Brisbane, Australia), 7 Aug 44, CM–OUT WD–TC–797.

[10] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–51429, 2 Nov 44, CM–IN 1749; MUSKETEER III, 26 Sep 44.

[11] Rad, Marshall to MacArthur, 31 Oct 44, CM–OUT 55075.

where air cover could be provided by Allied Air Forces planes operating from Mindoro Island.[12]

General Chamberlin had already made a thorough study of the Visayan route and had recommended sending resupply and reinforcement convoys to Lingayen Gulf through the Visayans and up the west coast of Luzon. MacArthur, approving this recommendation, decided to establish land-based aircraft at the southwestern corner of Mindoro, 150 miles south of Manila, before the assault at Lingayen Gulf in order to provide air cover for the follow-up shipping and to increase the scale of air operations against Luzon.

Admiral Nimitz, responsible for supporting the invasion of Luzon with carriers, surface combat vessels, and amphibious shipping, was also interested in the Visayan route. Accordingly, when representatives of MacArthur and Nimitz conferred on plans early in November they quickly agreed that the assault convoys would be routed through the Visayans and that only the fast carrier striking forces of Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet, which was to provide strategic cover and support for the invasion of Luzon, need operate off northern Luzon. Aparri, under this new concept, would not be taken unless a completely adverse air and naval situation developed between the time of the Mindoro attack and the invasion at Lingayen Gulf.[13]

[12] Interview, author with Kinkaid, 25 Jun 51, notes in OCMH files; Comments of Lt. Gen. Stephen J. Chamberlin (Ret.), 20 Jan 57; Comments of Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid (Ret.), 15 Jan 57.

[13] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–18496, 28 Sep 44, CM–IN 26358; Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–51429, 2 Nov 44, CM–IN 1749; Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–51706, 7 Nov 44, CM–IN 6425.

Changing the Target Dates

MacArthur decided early in November that Mindoro would be the only major operation to precede the assault at Lingayen Gulf. It was not, however, until the last day of the month that GHQ SWPA finally settled the dates for the two operations.

In conformity with the Joint Chiefs' directive, MacArthur had scheduled the Mindoro attack for 5 December and the Lingayen Gulf operation for 20 December. A number of developments within the Southwest Pacific Area forced the theater commander, with manifest reluctance, to consider changing the dates. First, operations on Leyte were consuming more time and effort than anticipated. The Japanese had sent such strong reinforcements to Leyte that on 10 November General MacArthur had to ask Admiral Nimitz to make available another infantry division from Central Pacific resources to execute an amphibious flanking attack on Leyte's west coast during the first week of December.[14]

Lt. Gen. Richard K. Sutherland, MacArthur's chief of staff, advised the theater commander that the movement of the new division to Leyte and the execution of the flanking operation would tie up so much shipping and so many escort vessels that the Lingayen invasion would have to be postponed at least a week beyond the scheduled date of 20 December. This delay, Sutherland pointed out, would mean that the assault convoys heading for Lingayen Gulf would have

[14] This was the 77th Infantry Division, which had originally been part of Sixth Army Reserve for the Leyte operation but which had been released to Nimitz' control, without having been committed on Leyte, on 29 October. See Cannon, *Leyte*, pp. 276–77.

to sail through Visayan waters under a full moon, a meteorological consideration that would force Admiral Kinkaid to request still further postponement of the Luzon invasion.[15] Moreover, Kinkaid's Allied Naval Forces did not have enough assault shipping and escort vessels to execute both the Mindoro landing and the amphibious flanking operation at Leyte during the first week of December.[16] For these reasons alone, it would probably be necessary to reschedule the Lingayen Gulf and Mindoro operations.

Next, heavy rains and Japanese air attacks had so slowed airfield construction at Leyte that it was impossible to find room on the island for the planes required for air defense and support of ground action there, let alone those needed to support advances to Mindoro and Luzon. General Kenney, the Southwest Pacific's air commander, in mid-November informed MacArthur that it would be 1 December at least before enough planes could be based on Leyte to cover the jump to Mindoro, and that it would be the 15th before those aircraft could neutralize all Japanese fields within fighter and medium bomber range of the Mindoro beaches.[17]

Kenney's estimates, coming as they did on top of Sutherland's and Kinkaid's discouraging reports about the shipping situation, proved a real blow to MacArthur, for the 5 December date for Mindoro had been predicated on the assumption that the Allied Air Forces would have control of the air over the central Visayans by that time. Despite the increasingly adverse outlook, MacArthur was not yet ready to change the Mindoro and Lingayen dates, but he was soon subjected to additional pressure from Admiral Kinkaid.

Kinkaid could not send assault shipping and escort vessels into the restricted Visayan waters unless air control was assured, for to do so, he felt, would invite disastrous and unjustifiable naval losses. Halsey's Third Fleet carrier groups had left Philippine waters and could not, in any case, provide close support for an advance to Mindoro, and Kinkaid was reluctant to send any of his Seventh Fleet escort carriers into the confined waters of the Visayans. So concerned was Kinkaid with the potential strength of Japanese air reaction to the Mindoro and Lingayen operations that he proposed to MacArthur that the two be canceled as currently planned in favor of a step-by-step advance through the many islands of the central Visayans, moving forward land-based aircraft with each step. Kinkaid was by no means wholeheartedly in favor of this slow method of advance, but he felt that only by proposing such a sweeping change in plans could he persuade MacArthur to reconsider the scheduled dates.[18]

Kinkaid, like Kenney, thought that the Mindoro operation ought to be postponed at least until 15 December, but it

[15] Rad, Sutherland to MacArthur and Krueger, C–52192, 15 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 25 Nov–1 Dec 44.

[16] Cannon, *Leyte*, p. 276.

[17] ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, Notes on Love III (Mindoro) Conf at Hq Sixth Army, 16 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 28 Sep–20 Nov 44; Rad, MacArthur to Nimitz and Marshall, CAX–11669, 16 Nov 44, CM–IN 16704; Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 10–11. See Cannon, *Leyte*, pp. 185–88, 306–07, for further information on airfield construction at Leyte.

[18] Memo, Kinkaid for MacArthur, 30 Nov 44, CofS GHQ SWPA File, ANF 116, précis in collection of GHQ SWPA Hist Rcd Index Cards in OCMH files; Interview, author with Kinkaid, 25 Jun 51; Kinkaid Comments, 15 Jan 57; Chamberlin Comments, 20 Jan 57.

soon became apparent to Kinkaid that even that date could not be met unless CVE support were made available to cover the assault. For one thing, airfield construction on Leyte continued to fall behind schedule. For another, airfield facilities at Leyte were such, and many of Kenney's pilots so inexperienced, that land-based planes from Leyte could not risk constant night take-offs and landings during the period of the Mindoro assault. Therefore, land-based planes would be unable to cover the assault convoys or the Mindoro beaches during the first and last hours of daylight, the two most critical times of the day. Weighing all these factors Kinkaid, who had already been under considerable pressure from General Chamberlin to provide CVE's for the Mindoro operation, finally and with misgivings decided to send a small force of CVE's to Mindoro with the assault convoys. He organized a covering force of 6 CVE's (replacing most of their torpedo and dive bombers with fighter planes) and, for escort and antiaircraft roles, added 3 old battleships, 3 cruisers, and 18 destroyers.[19]

Other naval and air support problems also forced MacArthur to give consideration to changing the dates. MacArthur wanted the Third Fleet's fast carrier groups to conduct an extensive series of strategic air strikes to support both the Mindoro and the Lingayen landings. Halsey was willing to provide the desired support to enable MacArthur to meet the 5 December target date for Mindoro, but recommended a more than 15-day interval between Mindoro and Lingayen. The inadequacies of land-based air support at Leyte, the Third Fleet commander pointed out, had made it necessary for the carriers to remain in Philippine waters an unconscionably long period—the fleet was in great need of repairs, rest, replenishment, pilot replacement and recuperation, and general servicing.[20]

Admiral Nimitz likewise felt that MacArthur's schedule did not take fleet requirements sufficiently into account. Knowing that the Third Fleet's need for rest would be even greater after the invasion of Luzon, especially if MacArthur's Mindoro and Lingayen dates were not postponed, Nimitz had already sought approval from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to change the target dates for Iwo Jima and Okinawa, originally set for 20 January and 1 March, respectively, to 3 February and 15 March. The Joint Chiefs, recognizing the close interdependence of operations in the Southwest and Central Pacific Areas, agreed to Nimitz' recommendations.[21]

Nimitz pointed out to MacArthur that with an adequate rest period before Mindoro the Third Fleet could return to Philippine waters to neutralize Japanese air power on Luzon for a considerable period. Without such rest, the fleet's operations would be so limited in scope that it simply could not meet MacArthur's requirements for carrier-based air support. Nimitz, accordingly, also recommended that the Mindoro and

[19] Rad, Kinkaid to King, 0235 27 Nov 44, CM–IN 26547; Kinkaid Comments, 15 Jan 57; Chamberlin Comments, 20 Jan 57.

[20] Rad, MacArthur to Nimitz and Marshall, CAX–11669, 15 Nov 44, CM–IN 16704; Rad, MacArthur to Kinkaid, Halsey, and Nimitz, CX–54038, 27 Nov 44, CM–IN 7958; Rad, Halsey to Nimitz, 0400 29 Nov 44, CM–IN 29593.

[21] Rad, Nimitz to King, 2040 17 Nov 44, CM–IN 16705; Rad, Nimitz to MacArthur, 0200 17 Nov 44, CM–IN 16045; Rad, Nimitz to MacArthur, 0502 25 Nov 44, CM–IN 25078; Rad, Nimitz to Halsey and King, 0324 29 Nov 44, CM–IN 29579.

Lingayen target dates be postponed until adequate land- and carrier-based air power could be made available for the proper support of both operations.[22]

In the face of the recommendations and estimates from Sutherland, Kenney, Kinkaid, Halsey, and Nimitz, General MacArthur, with far more reluctance than enthusiasm, decided to postpone the Mindoro and Lingayen target dates. On 30 November he set the Mindoro date forward ten days, to 15 December.[23]

Postponements were not over insofar as the Lingayen Gulf operation was concerned. MacArthur wanted to follow the formula of a 15-day interval between Mindoro and Lingayen Gulf, but he found this impossible. First, he had to consider the fact that Admiral Kinkaid would object to sailing the Luzon assault convoys through the Visayans under the full moon of late December, and would undoubtedly ask postponement of the Lingayen attack well into January. Naval planners also pointed out that moon and tide conditions at Lingayen Gulf itself would by no means be as favorable for amphibious operations on 30 December as they would be a week to ten days later. And from Kinkaid's point of view an additional delay in the invasion of Luzon would probably be necessary to give his Allied Naval Forces adequate time for rest, replenishment, loading, and rehearsals between the Mindoro and Lingayen assaults.

Air support problems again had a major influence on the decision. Kenney informed MacArthur that the continued slow pace of airfield construction at Leyte would make it impossible for the Allied Air Forces to meet a Lingayen Gulf target date of 30 December. Seeking a method to help overcome the construction difficulties at Leyte, Kenney recommended that a much larger air base than originally planned be established in southwestern Mindoro, and the additional construction that he proposed could not be completed by 30 December. The Southwest Pacific's air commander, and other planners as well, also pointed out that a longer interval than fifteen days between the Mindoro and Lingayen operations would probably be required to assure the complete neutralization of Japanese land-based air power on Luzon.[24]

In the end, MacArthur selected 9 January as the date for the Lingayen assault, a final postponement that provides another illustration of the interdependence of MacArthur's and Nimitz' operations.[25] Many of the combat vessels and most of the amphibious shipping the Southwest Pacific needed for the Luzon invasion would have to be borrowed from resources under Admiral Nimitz' control. The ships could not be returned to the Central Pacific in time for Nimitz to meet an Iwo Jima target date of 3 February, and again the necessary period for repair and replenishment of the carrier striking forces would also have to be moved forward. Therefore, the Central Pacific commander had to reset Iwo Jima

[22] Rads, Nimitz to MacArthur, 0502 25 Nov 44 and 2349 29 Nov 44, CM–IN's 25078 and 29598.

[23] Rads, MacArthur to Marshall, C–54164 and CA–54167, 30 Nov 44, CM–IN 306 (Dec) and CM–IN 29666 (Nov).

[24] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–54164, 30 Nov 44; Kenney, *General Kenney Reports*, pp. 478–79; Comdr Luzon Attack Force (Kinkaid) Action Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–4 (this document is simultaneously the report of the ANF SWPA, the Seventh Fleet, Task Force 77, and the Luzon Attack Force and is hereinafter cited as Luzon Attack Force Action Rpt); Kinkaid Comments, 15 Jan 57.

[25] Rad, MacArthur to Marshall, C–54164, 30 Nov 44.

for 19 February, a change that simultaneously forced him to postpone the invasion of Okinawa to 1 April.[26]

These were the last changes Nimitz had to make in his schedule, and MacArthur, when he set Mindoro for 15 December and Lingayen Gulf for 9 January, had made what he expected to be his final changes. The dates were as firm as Allied planners could make them—only the Japanese could force further changes.

Tactical Plans

The Intelligence Basis

When, in mid-October, General MacArthur directed the major subordinate commands within the Southwest Pacific to begin preparations for the Luzon operation, he assigned the bulk of his U.S. Army ground combat and service forces to the undertaking.[27] Likewise, most of Kenney's Allied Air Forces and practically every ship and landing craft of Kinkaid's Allied Naval Forces would participate.[28] No one expected the Mindoro operation to turn into a major battle. The island was known to have a weak Japanese garrison, and there didn't seem to be much likelihood that the enemy would attempt major counterattacks once Allied forces were ashore. On the other hand, intelligence indicated that the Luzon operation promised to be the biggest and toughest yet to take place within the Pacific. Every scrap of information that Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby, MacArthur's intelligence chief, was able to gather during the waning months of 1944 served to confirm that view.

The Southwest Pacific's intelligence estimates concerning Japanese strengths, dispositions, capabilities, and intentions on Luzon were reasonably accurate from the start of planning. The abundance of information must be attributed in large measure to the efforts of guerrillas on Luzon, an island that was becoming a veritable hotbed of guerrilla resistance, both American-led and Filipino-led, even before Lt. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright's surrender at Corregidor in May 1942. Carefully nurtured by MacArthur's headquarters, especially after mid-1943, the guerrilla organizations had grown steadily in strength and effectiveness not only as sabotage units but also as valuable sources of information. The Leyte invasion in October 1944 gave great encouragement to the guerrillas, who redoubled their efforts in preparation for the invasion of Luzon, which they realized could not be too far off. Throughout 1944 supplies of all types had been sent to the guerrillas, first by submarine and later by airdrop and clandestine interisland transportation. After the establishment of the Allied base on Leyte, the flow of supplies increased by leaps and bounds. The guerrillas themselves estab-

[26] Rad, Nimitz to King, 0215 3 Dec 44, CM-IN 2908. For further information on setting the target date of the Okinawa operation, see Roy E. Appleman, James M. Burns, Russell A. Gugeler, and John Stevens, *Okinawa: The Last Battle,* UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1948), pp. 19, 28.

[27] This subsection is based primarily upon the following general sources: G–2 GHQ SWPA, DSEI's, 12 Oct 44–9 Jan 45, filed in the G–3 GHQ Jnl Files for the corresponding dates; G–2 GHQ SWPA, Monthly Summaries of Enemy Dispositions, Oct, Nov, and Dec 44, filed in the G–3 GHQ Jnl Files for 31 Oct, 30 Nov, and 31 Dec 44, respectively; G–2 GHQ FEC, The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines, *passim,* copy in OCMH files; G–2 Sixth Army, Summary of Info Affecting MIKE I, 30 Oct 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 14–31 Oct 44.

[28] See app. A–1 for organization of the Southwest Pacific Area.

lished a network of radio communications that soon came to be sustained and, to some extent, controlled by MacArthur's headquarters, which also sent into Luzon special intelligence parties to develop new sources of information and provide guerrilla efforts with more effective direction.

In the end, one of the major difficulties Southwest Pacific intelligence agencies had was not obtaining information from Luzon but rather sifting the plethora of guerrilla reports, which attained every conceivable degree of accuracy and detail. Once sifted, the information had to be evaluated and correlated with that received from other sources such as radio intercepts, captured documents, and prisoner interrogations.

When detailed planning for the advance of Luzon began, General Willoughby could not know that the Japanese would choose to make a stand at Leyte —nor, as a matter of fact, did the Japanese. Thus, Willoughby expected the Japanese to make their principal defensive effort on Luzon. In mid-October he estimated that a total Japanese garrison of nearly 121,000 men, including four infantry divisions and three independent mixed brigades (each about half the size of a standard Japanese infantry division), was on Luzon, and he anticipated that the Japanese would strongly reinforce the island before the Allies could reach it. He also assumed that Sixth Army would encounter the main Japanese defenses in the militarily important Lingayen Gulf, Central Plains, and Manila Bay areas. He expected the Japanese to deploy strong forces along the Lingayen shores and in successive delaying positions down the Central Plains.

When the Japanese began sending strong reinforcements to Leyte, Willoughby had to make many revisions in his Luzon estimates. He noted the shifting of units on Luzon to take over the areas vacated by the forces sent to Leyte, and he kept track of new units arriving on Luzon. In mid-December he estimated that the Japanese had on Luzon a tank division, 5 infantry divisions, 6 independent mixed brigades, and 2 separate infantry regiments, thereby identifying all the major Japanese ground force units already there or soon to reach the island. He had also found out that large numbers of naval troops and Japanese Army Air Force units were on the island, and he had identified the commanders of most of the major units.

Willoughby estimated that a large and potentially dangerous concentration of Japanese forces held the region immediately east, northeast, and southeast of Lingayen Gulf, a concentration that could seriously threaten the Allied beachhead or the left flank of Allied forces moving south down the Central Plains toward Manila. He further estimated that the Japanese would deploy strong forces to defend the Clark Field area, a well-developed air center lying seventy miles south of Lingayen Gulf and about fifty miles north of Manila. General Willoughby was also concerned about Japanese strength in southern Luzon, below Manila, and deduced that the Japanese expected a major Allied effort along the island's southern coast. Finally, he devoted considerable attention to Bataan Peninsula "as possibly the site of a historically repetitive delaying action." [29]

In detail, Willoughby estimated that the Japanese would have at least two

[29] G–2 GHQ SWPA, DSEI 1017, 7–8 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 8 Jan 45.

infantry divisions in position to defend Lingayen Gulf and environs, and, until the first week in January, he anticipated that the Japanese would defend all the gulf's beaches strongly. He insisted that the Japanese could mount strong and rapid counterattacks against the Allied beachhead, possibly employing as a spearhead the tank division, which, he thought, the Japanese would hold mobile in the Central Plains. He further estimated that the Japanese might build up a strong central reserve of infantry units not committed to specific defense roles but rather held ready to counterattack at any point during the early stages of the operation.

As time passed and more information concerning the Japanese became available from Luzon, Willoughby raised his October estimates of Japanese strength. As of late December, in his final estimate before the assault, he reckoned that the Japanese garrison numbered about 152,500 troops of all categories.

The estimates concerning Japanese ground forces presented only one important aspect of the Southwest Pacific's intelligence problem—the task of determining Japanese air and naval strengths and capabilities was equally important and, probably, much more difficult. Southwest Pacific intelligence agencies believed that the Japanese would commit all their available air strength in counterattacks against Allied forces while they were moving toward Luzon and while the ground forces were establishing the beachhead. Willoughby assumed that the Japanese would maintain their Philippine air strength at 400–500 planes, the bulk of them based on Luzon. Furthermore, he expected that despite the best efforts of Allied land-based and carrier-based aircraft, the Japanese could have 300–400 planes on Luzon as of 9 January.

The Japanese could easily reinforce their air garrison on Luzon from Formosa, China, the Indies, and the Ryukyus; they could also stage in planes from the homeland. For instance, the Japanese could move 400–500 planes to Formosa from the home islands within a week after the Allied assault at Lingayen Gulf and, with planes based at such nearby bases and on Luzon, could mount daily attacks with 150 planes for a period of at least ten days.[30]

Estimates of Japanese naval capabilities and intentions changed drastically, of course, after the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Although the Allies had anticipated strong naval counterattack against Luzon, they now knew that the Japanese Navy was incapable of a major, sustained action. The Japanese could bring together a respectable but unbalanced force if they chose to concentrate the scattered elements of their fleet, but the force would be no match for the one the Allies could assemble. Nevertheless, Allied intelligence agencies considered it likely that the Japanese might risk some ships in hit-and-run raids, and it was known that the Japanese had large combat vessels based in Indochina waters, within easy sailing distance of Luzon and Mindoro. The only other naval threat seemed to be that posed by small suicide

[30] In addition to the sources cited in note 27, above, information on air intelligence estimates is derived from: AAF SWPA, Intel Summary 252, 30 Dec 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 30 Dec 44; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, 31 Jul 45, pp 5, 10–12, copy in OCMH files; AAF SWPA OI 73, 17 Oct 44, and amendments thereto, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 17 Oct 44; ANF SWPA Opn Plan No. 17–44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–2 Dec 44; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, II, 27, 30.

craft, coveys of which the Japanese were known to be hiding along Luzon's southern and western coasts.[31]

Ground Force Plans

The task confronting the Southwest Pacific planners was clear. They had to allot sufficient forces to the Luzon operation to overcome a strong Japanese garrison that they believed would be reinforced before 9 January; secure a beachhead against possible determined opposition at the beaches; drive south through the Central Plains against anticipated strong defenses; protect the beachhead against expected counterattack; and secure the Central Plains–Manila Bay area in four to six weeks, the period within which General MacArthur had promised the Joint Chiefs he could secure that strategically important region. In addition, sufficient naval and air strength, both land- and carrier-based, had to be assembled to counter whatever air and naval threat the Japanese could pose.

Changes in the intelligence estimates were reflected by corresponding changes in the size of the force General MacArthur assigned to the Luzon operation. In October, in accordance with Willoughby's estimates at that time, MacArthur allocated to General Krueger's Sixth Army, responsible for the Lingayen invasion, the I Corps, consisting of the 6th and 43d Infantry Divisions, and the XIV Corps, containing the 37th and 40th Infantry Divisions. Also assigned to the Sixth Army for reserve and follow-up roles were the 25th Infantry Division, the 11th Airborne Division, the 158th Regimental Combat Team (a separate organization not part of any division), the 13th Armored Group (initially consisting of a tank destroyer, an engineer, and two tank battalions), and the separate 6th Ranger Infantry Battalion. Supporting elements for all these units included 13 nonorganic field artillery battalions of various calibers, 2 chemical mortar battalions, 2 other tank battalions, the bulk of 5 engineer boat and shore regiments, 4 amphibious tractor battalions, and 16 engineer aviation battalions. The total assault force numbered approximately 191,000 men, of whom 131,000 were classified as combat troops. Base service troops to come forward with the initial echelons brought the total to 203,000.[32]

Simultaneously, MacArthur assigned Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger's Eighth Army the task of executing a subsidiary landing on Luzon, the troops ultimately to pass to Sixth Army control. The forces thus allocated included XI Corps headquarters, the 32d Infantry Division, and the separate 112th Cavalry and 503d Parachute Regimental Combat Teams (RCT's) together with supporting units. For General Headquarters Reserve MacArthur set aside the 33d and 41st Infantry Divisions.[33]

With the new estimates in hand it became evident that the Sixth Army would need additional forces. Therefore, GHQ SWPA laid plans to ship to Luzon within two months after the assault the 33d, 38th, 41st, and 77th Infantry Divisions and the 1st Cavalry Division, in addition to the units already allocated to the Sixth and Eighth Armies. The 77th Division

[31] CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 5, 48–49; Luzon Attack Force Action Rpt, pp. 4, 7, 48; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 28–30.

[32] GHQ SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44.

[33] *Ibid.*; GHQ SWPA Staff Study MIKE II, 4 Oct 44.

was used on Leyte, and the 41st never reached Luzon. The rest of the foregoing units were employed on Luzon, as was the bulk of the 19th and 34th Regimental Combat Teams of the 24th Infantry Division.[34]

Thus, the ground force commitment to Luzon grew larger than General MacArthur had contemplated in October. At one time or another he committed to Luzon 2 army headquarters, 3 corps headquarters, 10 divisions, and 5 regimental combat teams.[35] Armored units assigned to the Sixth Army aggregated more tanks than an armored division. One well-organized guerrilla unit approximated the size and effectiveness of a U.S. infantry division, less supporting arms, while at least two others attained something near the strength and usefulness of infantry regiments.[36] In all, including effective guerrilla forces, MacArthur employed the equivalent of nearly fifteen divisions in the reconquest of Luzon.

For operations in the Southern Philippines Campaign—the responsibility of the Eighth Army—U.S. Army ground forces remaining available after the initial assignments to Luzon were the X Corps headquarters, the Americal Division, the 24th Division less two regimental combat teams, and the 31st and 93d Infantry Divisions—of which the 93d was deemed suitable only for garrison duties. Ultimately, the 24th Division's two RCT's were reassigned to the Eighth Army from Luzon, as were the 40th and 41st Divisions, the 503d Parachute RCT, and various supporting units. Some large guerrilla units were also available in the southern Philippines, especially on Panay, Cebu, and Mindanao.[37]

The principal combat-ready Australian units available to General MacArthur at this time comprised an army headquarters, two corps headquarters, the equivalent of six infantry divisions, and an armored brigade. MacArthur had once planned to use a two-division Australian corps in the Philippines, but ultimately most of the Australian units replaced U.S. Army units in eastern New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Bismarck Archipelago. Australian forces also undertook the recapture of Borneo.[38]

While it did not equal the strength of U.S. Army ground forces committed in central Europe, the Luzon Campaign was by far the largest of the Pacific war. It entailed the use of more U.S. Army ground combat and service forces than did operations in North Africa, Italy, or southern France and was larger than the entire Allied commitment to Sicily.[39] It far outclassed the Japanese effort of 1941–42, which had totaled little more than the equivalent of four divisions.[40]

[34] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CX–52617, 21 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 15–25 Nov 44; GHQ SWPA OI 84, 19 Dec 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 19 Dec 44; Eighth Army FO 13, 8 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 12 Jan 45. For the employment of the 77th Division, see Cannon, *Leyte*. For the assignment of the 19th and 34th RCT's to Luzon, see below, chs. XII and XVII. The employment of the 41st Division is described below, chs. XXX–XXXII.

[35] Subsequent information on the commitment and deployment of major ground units available in SWPA is based upon G–3 GHQ SWPA, Monthly Summaries of Opns, Jan–Jun 45, copies in OCMH files.

[36] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 3. See also below, chs. XX, XXIII, XXVIII.

[37] See below, chs. XXX–XXXII.

[38] See apps. A–2 and A–3.

[39] The U.S. commitment in North Africa stayed below 7 divisions; in Sicily, the Allies used approximately 12 divisions; and the U.S. Army commitment to Italy remained below 9 divisions.

[40] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines, passim*.

The Sixth Army's plan for the Lingayen assault called for the amphibious attack to be launched across the gulf's southern beaches, a significant decision in that these beaches were not the best along the gulf's shore.[41] The southern beaches have little protection from the weather and are backed by fish ponds, rice paddies, and many tidal streams of varied widths and depths. These obstacles severely limit maneuver in the immediate beach area and channel movement along a relatively few narrow corridors of egress from the shore line to the Central Plains. By far the best beaches at Lingayen are those on the eastern shore, where the Japanese had landed in December 1941. But information available to General Krueger indicated that the Japanese maintained strong defenses along the east side of the gulf, taking advantage of high ground overlooking that shore. Insofar as could be ascertained from guerrilla sources, the southern beaches were weakly defended. Moreover, the southern shore boasted an airstrip that the Sixth Army might be able to rehabilitate rapidly. Finally, since the southern beaches were relatively poor, especially in regard to exits, a landing there might well achieve a considerable degree of tactical surprise.

Taking into consideration the exit problem, yet desiring to get ashore quickly as strong a force as possible, Krueger decided to land on a broad front. Thus, he would send ashore the maximum number of troops the southern beaches could hold and the maximum strength that could push inland without creating unmanageable bottlenecks along the few exits. He directed his two corps to land abreast, with the I Corps on the left, or east, and the XIV Corps on the right. Each corps would put two divisions, each less one RCT, ashore abreast. One RCT (or its equivalent) of each division would remain afloat in reserve until 10 January.[42]

The two corps' initial missions were identical: to seize the beachhead area within their respective zones; to protect the Sixth Army's flanks; and to maintain contact with each other. Both corps would be prepared to push rapidly inland to secure a crossing over the Agno River, which, originating in mountains far northeast of the landing beaches, swept in a broad arc twenty to twenty-five miles inland across the Central Plains and emptied into the southwestern corner of Lingayen Gulf. Krueger figured that once the Sixth Army was on the Agno and its flanks were secure, it would be ready to drive on south to secure Manila and Manila Bay.

Expecting some congestion on the beaches, Krueger decided to hold his army reserve—the 25th Infantry Division, the 158th RCT, and the 13th Armored Group—afloat until 11 January. Since the greatest threat would probably develop on the army's left, Krueger directed the 158th RCT to go ashore on the 11th along the I Corps' extreme left and be ready to block the coastal corridor on the gulf's eastern shore so as to hold back any Japanese counterattack from the north. Sixth Army prepared a number of alternative plans for the em-

[41] The remainder of this subsection is based generally upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 6–9; Sixth Army FO 34, 20 Nov 44, *ibid.*, I, 117–39; I Corps FO 1, 25 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 9 Dec 44; XIV Corps FO 1, 30 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 2–5 Dec 44.

[42] See app. A–3.

ployment of the 25th Division, most of them anticipating that the division would probably be committed in the I Corps' zone, where the 13th Armored Group was also to land and prepare for both defensive and offensive action.

To General Krueger, the task of seizing and securing a beachhead entailed gaining control of all the terrain enclosed within the limits of an "Army Beachhead Line," a semicircle with a radius of roughly fifteen miles from the center of the landing area. The factors determining the location of the Army Beachhead Line are perhaps best described by the Sixth Army's own report:

> Sufficient depth was essential to secure the landing beaches against fire from hostile long range artillery. In addition to providing space for initial air installations, dispersion of supply dumps, and deployment of large forces, it was highly desirable that the Army Beachhead include the main access roads leading to the south across the Agno River as well as an adequate lateral road net to facilitate ready shifting of forces when the time came to break out of the beachhead. It was important that this area also include the road net emanating from Pozorrubio and Binalonan [roughly seventeen miles east] to permit the concentration of our own armor in that area, while at the same time denying the area to our enemy. As the final consideration, the Sixth Army flanks [had to] be anchored on the high ground along the coastal defiles at Port Sual [to the west] and in the Rosario-Damortis area [to the northeast].[43]

The Naval and Amphibious Plan

Admiral Kinkaid's Allied Naval Forces was responsible for transporting the Sixth Army to Lingayen Gulf and establishing it ashore. This mission included the protection of the assault convoys, the transport and cover of reinforcement and resupply echelons, preparation for possible surface engagements with elements of the Japanese Navy, and mine sweeping and preliminary bombardment at Lingayen Gulf before the arrival of the assault convoys bearing the Sixth Army.[44]

These tasks were beyond the capability of the Allied Naval Forces as constituted.[45] Kinkaid had barely enough amphibious means under his permanent control to mount a one-division assault; he had no battleships for preliminary bombardments; he had no CVE's for escort and ground support missions; he lacked destroyers and destroyer escorts for the proper protection of large assault convoys; and he had insufficient mine sweepers to undertake the extensive sweeping at Lingayen Gulf that available information indicated might be necessary. Adequate means would have to come from resources under Admiral Nimitz' control, and, in accordance with the Joint Chiefs' instructions to support the Luzon invasion, Nimitz furnished the necessary combat vessels and amphibious attack ships.

Once the means were assembled, the naval and amphibious organization for Luzon followed a pattern long since established in the Southwest Pacific. At the top was Admiral Kinkaid, simulta-

[43] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 8.

[44] GHQ SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44.

[45] The general sources for the remainder of this subsection are: Luzon Attack Force Action Rpt, pp. 3, 7–13, 18–20, 48–51, and an. A, Organization, pp. 1–14; Comdr III Amphib Force (Vice Adm Theodore S. Wilkinson) Lingayen Gulf Opn Rpt, pp. 1–7, 15–18; Comdr VII Amphib Force (Vice Adm Daniel E. Barbey) Lingayen Rpt, pp. 5–6, 26–27; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 14–15; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 4, 48–49.

neously the commander of the Allied Naval Forces, the U.S. Seventh Fleet, and the Luzon Attack Force. The Allied Naval Forces was the Seventh Fleet plus the few Australian and Dutch vessels assigned to MacArthur, while the Luzon Attack Force was the Allied Naval Forces augmented by the ships borrowed from Admiral Nimitz.[46] Kinkaid divided Luzon Attack Force into various combat components, over some of which he retained direct control.[47] The rest he assigned to two subordinate amphibious forces commanded by Vice Adm. Daniel E. Barbey and Vice Adm. Theodore S. Wilkinson.

Barbey (known as "Uncle Dan, the Amphibious Man," in the Southwest Pacific Area) had long experience as the commander of the Seventh Fleet's VII Amphibious Force. For Luzon his command was designated Task Force 78 (the San Fabian Attack Force) and was responsible for putting the I Corps ashore. Admiral Wilkinson, whose normal command was the III Amphibious Force of Halsey's Third Fleet, commanded Task Force 79 (the Lingayen Attack Force) and was responsible for putting the XIV Corps ashore. Each task force was further subdivided into amphibious task groups, each of which was to land one infantry division.[48]

The amphibious landing plan presented few unusual features. The landing hour was set for 0930 on 9 January, a bit later in the day than normal, and there were variations in the composition and timing of the assault waves of each amphibious group, or, perhaps better, each assault infantry division. Kinkaid set the hour for 0930 both to provide greater visibility in the landing area and to make allowances for tidal conditions. An earlier landing would set forces on shore in the face of a strong ebb tide, low tide being approximately 1050; a later hour might redound to the advantage of the Japanese. Assault waves were made up of LVT's (Landing Vehicles, Tracked) or LVT (A)'s (Landing Vehicles, Tracked, Armored) and the timing of succeeding waves varied from one division beach to another.[49]

While the amphibious command structure was the same as that previously employed in the Southwest Pacific, it differed from that normally employed in the South and Central Pacific Areas. Control of all air, land, and sea forces of the Southwest Pacific was vested in General MacArthur. Directly under him, commanding the invasion until ground force commanders could assume control ashore, was Admiral Kinkaid. The transfer of control from naval to ground commanders passed from the bottom up. Thus, when an infantry division commander assumed control ashore he passed from the control of the task group commander to that of the next higher naval echelon, the task force. When the corps commander went ashore, he passed from the control of the amphibious task force commander to that of Admiral Kinkaid. Kinkaid retained command of both naval and

[46] Eleven Australian vessels, including two heavy cruisers and two destroyers, participated in the Luzon invasion. At the time of the assault, the Netherlands contribution to the Allied Naval Forces was represented only by a few submarines, which played no direct part.

[47] See app. A–4.

[48] See app. A–5.

[49] See app. B.

ground elements until Krueger went ashore, reporting only to MacArthur until Sixth Army headquarters was functioning on land. As a practical matter, Kinkaid issued no orders to the ground forces without prior consultation with General Krueger.

Admiral Wilkinson, more familiar with another system of amphibious command, suggested that he command the "joint expedition," that is, the landing operation proper, while Kinkaid retained "over-all" command not only of the amphibious operation but also of all other Allied Naval Forces activities—those of submarines and detached surface groups, for example—not directly involved in the invasion. Wilkinson's proposals called for the creation of a separate command and staff, that of the "commander, joint expeditionary force." This system had worked well in the South and Central Pacific Areas, where carrier and battleship forces not directly associated with a landing had operated under the same fleet commander as had the amphibious attack forces.[50] Admiral Kinkaid saw no necessity for an extra headquarters during the Luzon invasion. Halsey's Third Fleet, while it was to provide general cover and support, was not under Kinkaid's control. Therefore, Kinkaid turned down Wilkinson's suggestion with the observation that since so much of the Allied Naval Forces would be an integral part of the proposed "joint expeditionary force," Kinkaid could retain tighter control over the amphibious operation with a single headquarters than would be possible under Wilkinson's system.

Operating essentially as a fast carrier task force under Halsey, and comprising the bulk of the U.S. Navy's most modern battleships, carriers, cruisers, and destroyers, the Third Fleet's missions in support of the Lingayen invasion principally concerned strategic air support operations. However, in the unlikely event the Japanese should assemble sufficient surface elements to precipitate a major fleet action, Admiral Halsey would reorganize his vessels for surface action. In this connection, it is interesting to note that despite the near shambles at Leyte Gulf in October, necessary naval co-ordination at the time of the Lingayen assault could be accomplished only by co-operation between MacArthur and Nimitz. Again no provision was made for unified command in case of an emergency.

The Air Cover and Support Plan

Unlike Admiral Kinkaid, General Kenney had sufficient resources in the Southwest Pacific to undertake the bulk of the air missions necessary for the support of the Lingayen invasion, but he could not bring those resources to bear.[51] The fact was that the Allied Air Forces

[50] See, *inter alia*, Philip A. Crowl and Edmund G. Love, *Seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1955).

[51] This subsection is based principally upon: GHQ SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44; AAF SWPA OI 73, 17 Oct 44; ANF SWPA, an. G, Air Plan, to Opn Plan No. 17–44, 20 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–2 Dec 44; Fifth Air Force OI 7, 26 Oct 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 31 Oct 44; Ltr of Agreement G–3 GHQ SWPA and Plans Off Pacific Fleet (Sherman) for MacArthur, Nimitz, Arnold, *et al.*, sub: Co-ordination of Opns (FIVESOME Agreement), Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–15 Nov 44; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 3–8, 11–12, 24–31, 48–51.

could not deploy enough land-based aircraft at fields within range of Luzon, the southern Philippines, Formosa, and other Japanese air base areas to furnish the required minimum essential support of various types. For this reason MacArthur had to borrow CVE's from the Central Pacific, make arrangements with Nimitz for Third Fleet cover and support and the help of land-based aircraft of the Central Pacific Area, arrange with the Joint Chiefs of Staffs for support by B–29 units in the Pacific and China, and co-ordinate his plans with the China-based Fourteenth Air Force.

Kinkaid's CVE-based planes had varied missions in connection with the Lingayen assault, many of which they would execute in co-operation with the land-based planes of the Allied Air Forces. The CVE's would provide cover for the assault and reinforcement convoys, undertake air strikes at the objective area in conjunction with the preassault mine sweeping and bombardment, help the Allied Air Forces forestall Japanese overland and overwater movements toward Lingayen Gulf, and provide close air support for ground operations ashore until relieved of that responsibility by Kenney's land-based planes.

In turn, the Allied Air Forces' principal missions included striking southern Luzon before the assault in conjunction with Third Fleet carrier operations to the north, helping the CVE's to protect assault convoys, augmenting CVE-based aircraft efforts to stop any Japanese attempts to move troops toward Lingayen Gulf by land or sea, bombing Japanese air bases and other installations in the southern Philippines and the Indies, helping guerrilla saboteurs disrupt Japanese communications on Luzon, and, finally, making reconnaissance and photographic missions.[52] Within a week after the Lingayen assault, Kenney's land-based aircraft were to relieve the CVE-based planes of further responsibility for the support of ground operations on Luzon, a mission that required the rapid construction of airstrips in the Lingayen Gulf area.

Kenney delegated responsibility for the execution of the bulk of these missions to the U.S. Fifth Air Force, commanded by Maj. Gen. Ennis C. Whitehead. The other major components of the Allied Air Forces—the Thirteenth Air Force under Maj. Gen. St. Clair Streett, and the Royal Australian Air Force Command under Air Vice Marshall William D. Bostock—were to help insofar as their deployment and other assignments permitted. The last two would be more intimately concerned with the reconquest of the southern Philippines and Borneo.

Many of the Allied Air Forces search and reconnaissance missions would be flown by land-based aircraft of the Allied Naval Forces, operating under Kenney's control. Also under the operational control of the Allied Air Forces were U.S. Marine Corps air units — then in the process of moving forward from the Solomon Islands and Bismarck Archipelago — which Kenney had placed under Whitehead's command. Palau-based bombers of the Seventh Air Force, under Nimitz' control, were also to hit targets on Luzon at times and places determined by Kenney. The Fourteenth Air Force

[52] In addition to the sources listed in note 51, information on Allied Air Forces missions is derived from: AAF SWPA, OI's 73/3, 21 Nov, and 73/8, 27 Dec 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 17 Oct 44; Thirteenth Air Force OI 15, 8 Nov 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 13 Nov 44.

would conduct searches over Formosa and the South China Sea and bomb Japanese air and port installations along the China coast. Land-based planes in the rear areas of the Pacific would continue to neutralize Japanese airfields on bypassed islands.

There was some difficulty selecting profitable targets for the supporting B–29's of the Twentieth Air Force—the XX Bomber Command in China and India and the XXI Bomber Command on the Mariana Islands. MacArthur and Nimitz wanted the big bombers to pay special attention to Japanese port and air installations on Formosa and in the Ryukyus, but General Arnold, the commander of the Army Air Forces, did not consider airfields suitable B–29 targets. As it worked out, the B–29 plan called for strikes against aircraft depots and factories in Japan immediately before and after the Lingayen assault, together with attacks against port installations in northern Formosa. The first series was designed to forestall the Japanese sending any planes southward from the home islands and the second to prevent the Japanese from assembling reinforcement convoys at Formosa. Finally, the XX and XXI Bomber Commands were to undertake an extensive reconnaissance program over the western Pacific and Japan, the program to be accompanied by light, harassing bombing.[53]

The principal missions of the fast carrier task groups of Halsey's Third Fleet were to destroy Japanese air and naval forces in the Ryukyus, Formosa, south China coast, and northern Luzon areas before the Lingayen assault, and to prevent Japanese air and naval interference with the assault. Specifically, the carrier-based aircraft were scheduled to strike Formosa, the Ryukyus, and the Pescadores (between Formosa and the south China coast) on 3 and 4 January, then refuel and move to new positions on the 5th in order to blanket Japanese airfields in northern Luzon on 6 January, and strike Formosa and the Ryukyus again on 7 and 9 January.[54]

One important, albeit tentative, change was proposed for this schedule before 9 January.[55] Fearing that Japanese surface forces might sortie from bases at Singapore and in Indochina after the CVE's and other surface combat vessels borrowed from Nimitz had returned to the Central Pacific, General MacArthur suggested that after the Lingayen assault the Third Fleet move into the South China Sea to strike Japanese naval and air concentrations along the coast of the mainland. If such a move could not be undertaken, the Southwest Pacific commander pointed out, it might be necessary to hold the borrowed resources at Luzon longer, thus again delaying Nimitz' invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

[53] Rad, MacArthur to Arnold, CX–51561, 5 Nov 44, CM–IN 4769; Rad, MacArthur to Nimitz and Arnold, CX–52470, 19 Nov 44, CM–IN 18735; Rad, Nimitz to MacArthur, Halsey, and Arnold, 2255 20 Nov 44, CM–IN 21078; Rads, Arnold to MacArthur, Nimitz, Wedemeyer, *et al.*, 17 Nov, 26 Nov, 19 Dec, and 22 Dec 44, CM–OUT's 64579 and 68829 Nov, 79536 and 80998 Dec.

[54] An. C to Third Fleet Opn Plan No. 24–44, 28 Dec 44, and 2d Carrier TF (TF 38, the Third Fleet's fast carriers) Opn Order No. 5–44, 27 Dec 44, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–3 Jan 45.

[55] The story of this change is based principally upon: Memo, ACofS G–3 GHQ SWPA for MacArthur, 25 Dec 44, sub: Protection of Amphibious Assault . . . Movement to Lingayen Gulf, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 25 Dec 44; Rad, MacArthur to Halsey, CX–54435, 6 Dec 44, CM–IN 7977; CINCPAC–CINCPOA Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 4, 11–12; Halsey and Bryan, *Admiral Halsey's Story*, pp. 241–42.

The waters into which MacArthur suggested the Third Fleet sail had been unchallenged by Allied naval forces other than submarines since the loss of H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and H.M.S. *Repulse* to Japanese aircraft in December 1941. Moreover, the South China Sea was ringed by Japanese fields estimated to hold well over 1,000 planes, the operations of which would not be as severely handicapped by the bad weather to be expected during January as would those of carrier-based aircraft.

Nevertheless, Nimitz and Halsey fell in quite happily with the idea. Halsey had been anxious to press the war closer to the Japanese for some time, and Nimitz, too, felt that successful operations in the South China Sea might well have grave adverse psychological effects on the Japanese, simultaneously boosting Chinese morale. Furthermore, the Japanese combat vessels known to be based in Indochina, together with concentrations of cargo and transport ships along the western shores of the South China Sea, promised lucrative targets for carrier-based air attacks. Finally, the sortie might help mislead the Japanese as to the direction of the main attack. Accordingly, Nimitz directed Admiral Halsey to be ready to move the fast carriers into the South China Sea after Southwest Pacific forces had made a successful assault at Lingayen Gulf.

As was the case for naval elements, the invasion of Luzon involved no provisions for centralized air command, except in the immediate Lingayen Gulf area.[56] Again, for forces of the Southwest Pacific, the joint control was vested in General MacArthur, who by virtue of his position would control both CVE-based and land-based aircraft through Kinkaid and Kenney, respectively. However, all land-based and CVE-based planes operating in the Lingayen Gulf area before the assault would be controlled by the Advance Commander Support Aircraft, reporting to Kinkaid through the naval officer in control of the preliminary bombardment and mine sweeping groups. Upon the arrival of the Luzon Attack Force, control over these planes would pass to the Commander Support Aircraft Luzon, another naval officer reporting directly to Kinkaid, who would remain in general control of air operations in the area until the Allied Air Forces took over.[57]

For the rest, the CV-based and land-based planes from Admiral Nimitz' command had to be controlled by co-operation between Nimitz and MacArthur, just as MacArthur had to make arrangements with the Joint Chiefs for B–29 support and could exercise control over Fourteenth Air Force activities only by co-operation. The execution of the air plan, as it was finally evolved, entailed the efforts of nearly fifteen major air commands, both Army and Navy, directing the activities of both carrier-based and land-based aircraft, operating in separate theaters and across theater boundaries, and reporting to higher headquarters through widely differing channels. The task facing the planners was difficult, to be sure, but after three years of experience with such a complicated air organization the planners were well aware of what was required and of

[56] See app. A–6.

[57] An. G, Air Plan, to ANF SWPA Opn Plan No. 17–44, 20 Nov 44; Comdr Air Support Control Units, Seventh Fleet, Rpt of Support Aircraft Opns MIKE I, 20 Jan 45, G–3 Jnl File, 17 Jan 45.

what each air echelon was capable. Thus, in the end, an air plan was developed with remarkably little fuss, considering the problems involved. There can, however, be no evading the fact that the task of co-ordinating air, ground, and naval plans and operations would have been considerably simplified had a different command arrangement existed in the Pacific.

The Logistical Plan

Organization and Responsibility

The United States Army Services of Supply, Southwest Pacific Area, was to provide the necessary supplies for the ground forces and most of the air echelons that General MacArthur committed to the Luzon operation.[58] The Allied Naval Forces was responsible for its own logistics—although in case of emergency it could draw upon Services of Supply stocks — while the Allied Air Forces would provide its elements with specialized items of air force equipment. The Allied Air Forces was also responsible for emergency air supply operations, for which it would draw stocks from the Services of Supply. The supporting forces under Admiral Nimitz' control would draw their own supplies and equipment through various Army and Navy channels in the Central Pacific Area. From S-day—as MacArthur designated the invasion target date—on, the Sixth Army was responsible for all other logistical operations on Luzon until it was relieved of those duties by the Services of Supply, on or about S plus 35. On the same date, the Services of Supply was to relieve the Allied Naval Forces of the responsibility for transporting men and equipment to Luzon.

In general, the logistical program for the Luzon Campaign presented few unusual features except an extreme decentralization of logistical responsibilities during the staging and assault phases, when the corps and, to a lesser extent, the divisions had abnormally heavy logistic duties. In the plan, logistical operations ashore on Luzon would be divided into three phases. First, under Sixth Army's general direction, the corps and divisions were to be responsible for all aspects of supply and construction except for the duties assigned to the Allied Air and Naval Forces. Second, with the Allied Naval Forces continuing to hold overwater transportation responsibilities, an Army Service Command would relieve the corps and divisions of many logistical burdens. The lineal descendant of a similar organization employed by the Sixth Army at Leyte, the Army Service Command, operating under the control of Headquarters, Sixth Army, would assume logistical responsibility in the Lingayen Gulf area on S plus 6. At that time it would take over the control of most of the logistical support agencies already ashore, such as the shore parties built around engineer boat and shore regiments previously assigned to divisions. The third and final phase would begin on or about S plus 35, when the Services of Supply was to assume responsibility for all logistical operations (except combat supply activity), taking over the control of the Army Service Command and its subordinate echelons.

[58] This and the next subsection are based generally upon: GHQ SWPA OI 73, 12 Oct 44; USASOS LI 73/SOS, 4 Nov 44, and LI 73/21/SOS, 21 Jan 45, both in G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 4 Nov 44. Sixth Army Admin Order 16, 23 Nov 44, and amendments thereto, in Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 136–39; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 51–58, 113.

The supply plan called for assault units to reach Lingayen Gulf with sufficient supplies and equipment of all types to last ten days. At the same time combat echelons would bring with them two units of fire for all weapons. By S plus 12 a month's supply of most items of equipment and five units of fire for combat organizations would have been built up in the Lingayen Gulf area. Within two months after the invasion, the Services of Supply would ship forward to Luzon a three-month supply of matériel for some 203,000 troops, including fifteen units of fire for artillery and mortars and ten units of fire for all other weapons.[59]

General Problems

The big problem in staging and supporting the Luzon invasion was the same one encountered in most other operations in every theater throughout the war—insufficient shipping.[60] For Luzon, specifically, the lack of ships caused two significant shortages in the forward area. First, the assault units, finding it necessary to allot most of their available cargo space to troops and general supplies, had to leave behind in the staging areas many of their assigned vehicles.[61] A general shortage of engineers would also develop during the initial stages of the operation, since it was impossible to send forward with the assault convoys all the required engineers and equipment. This shortage was overcome relatively early in the campaign as resupply convoys, often involving a return trip by ships of the assault echelons, brought forward more Engineer units and equipment.

The shipping that reached Lingayen Gulf in the first two convoys—one on S-day and one on S plus 2—consisted of three principal categories: the naval assault shipping functioning mainly as troop carriers but having secondary cargo-carrying capacities; naval assault vessels, whose primary function was transporting bulk cargo and vehicles but which also carried some troops; and merchant-type cargo ships involved mainly in resupply operations. Of the first group, 84 vessels arrived at Lingayen Gulf through S plus 2. There were also 216 naval and merchant-type cargo ships. Twenty-five more of these types were scheduled to arrive on S plus 4, and an aggregate of 71 merchant ships would reach the gulf by S plus 60.

In setting up a timetable for dispatching ships to Luzon, the Sixth Army and the Allied Naval Forces had to plan for a discharge rate of about 5,000 deadweight tons per day during the first month, and had to take into account the potential demands of the tactical situation ashore as well as the availability of

[59] The World War II unit of fire was the amount of ammunition one weapon or one organization would normally use in one day, and was figured in terms of rounds or tons per weapon or organization. At this writing the wartime term "unit of fire" has no exact equivalent in U.S. Army usage, and three different terms are presently employed for ammunition requirements and expenditures. The Southwest Pacific's unit of fire at the time of the Lingayen Gulf assault included: M1 rifle, 100 rounds; 81-mm. mortar, 240 rounds; 105-mm. field artillery howitzer, 300 rounds; 155-mm. howitzer, 150 rounds.

[60] In addition to the sources listed in note 46, general sources used in the preparation of this subsection include: Luzon Attack Force Action Rpt, pp. 16–19, 77–79, and an. A, Org, pp. 4–12; Sixth Army Rpt on Luzon Campaign, IV, 3, 7–8, 11, 18, 22; III Amphib Force Lingayen Gulf Rpt, Encl G, Logistics, pp. 1–3; 4th ESB Rpt Luzon, pp. i–iii, 1–2.

[61] The 40th Division, for example, left about one-third of its vehicles on New Britain. Comments of Maj Gen Rapp Brush (Ret.) (formerly CG 40th Div), 28 Dec 56.

escorts. Each headquarters, basing its arguments on experience at Leyte, came up with an entirely different time schedule for the arrival of resupply convoys, and the area of disagreement became so wide that at one time early in November all planning came to a near standstill.

The principal point at issue was whether to schedule a convoy for S plus 1. Krueger argued that congestion at Leyte had been caused by dividing ships of a once-scheduled A plus 1 convoy between A-day and A plus 2 echelons, but Admiral Kinkaid replied that if an A plus 1 convoy had been sent to Leyte the confusion already existing there would have become complete chaos, since much of the shipping scheduled to be unloaded on A-day was not discharged as planned. Moreover, Kinkaid pointed out, he did not have sufficient escort vessels to execute the Sixth Army's plan. The solution finally agreed upon called for a combined S-day and S plus 1 convoy to reach Lingayen Gulf on S-day but with no effort to be made to start discharging the S plus 1 convoy until 10 January. Other echelons were to arrive on S plus 2, S plus 4, S plus 8, S plus 12, and so on.[62]

Except for artillery ammunition and light, portable bridging equipment, the Services of Supply had little difficulty meeting supply quotas. A theaterwide artillery ammunition shortage prompted General Krueger to direct artillery commanders to control expenditures carefully. He enjoined them to make accurate calculation of fire data and to hold unobserved fire to the minimum.[63] The shortage was gradually overcome, especially after resupply began to arrive from the United States and after the cumulative effect of the program of careful expenditure began to make itself felt. The shortage of light bridging equipment was not alleviated until very late in the campaign. At first, a slow rate of discharge created a shortage of heavy bridging equipment inland from the beachhead, but as the equipment was unloaded the problem diminished.

One other supply problem deserves special mention, that concerning civil administration and relief. With the Japanese taking everything they could possibly carry with them as they moved into defensive positions, the civilian population of Luzon began to run dangerously low on food and medical supplies. Government at the local and national levels, completely reorganized since 1941, was approaching a state of chaos. The problem was vast, yet could not be allowed to interfere with tactical operations.

To help the Sixth Army and its components with a civil affairs and relief program, MacArthur activated and attached thirteen Philippine Civil Affairs Units (PCAU's) to the various echelons of the command. Bearing some resemblance to military government units being employed in Europe, many of the PCAU's were partially staffed by expatriate Filipinos from the United States. Their responsibilities included super-

[62] The story of the solution of the convoy-scheduling problem is to be found in a series of radios among Sixth Army headquarters at Leyte, a Sixth Army planning group in GHQ SWPA at Hollandia, and ANF SWPA. These messages, most of them exchanged during the first week of November, are located in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–15 Nov 44, or in Sixth Army Rear Echelon G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–11 Nov 44.

[63] Ltr, Krueger (to subordinate units), 4 Dec 44, sub: Sp Instructions to FA Comdrs in M–1 Opn, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 6–8 Dec 44.

vising the distribution of relief supplies, setting price ceilings and directing the retailing of consumer goods, re-establishing schools and medical facilities, and reconstituting local governments. Since the vast majority of the Luzon Filipinos were loyal, the PCAU's could expect co-operation.

Each PCAU boarded ship with the maximum quantity of relief supplies it could squeeze into the cargo space allotted it. GHQ SWPA provided for a bulk shipment of 4,000 tons of relief supplies to reach Lingayen Gulf on S plus 18, and within another month and a half some 16,000 more tons would arrive on Luzon. Suitable captured Japanese supplies would be distributed to the needy, and in an emergency the PCAU's could call upon the Sixth Army or the Services of Supply to provide food and medical supplies.

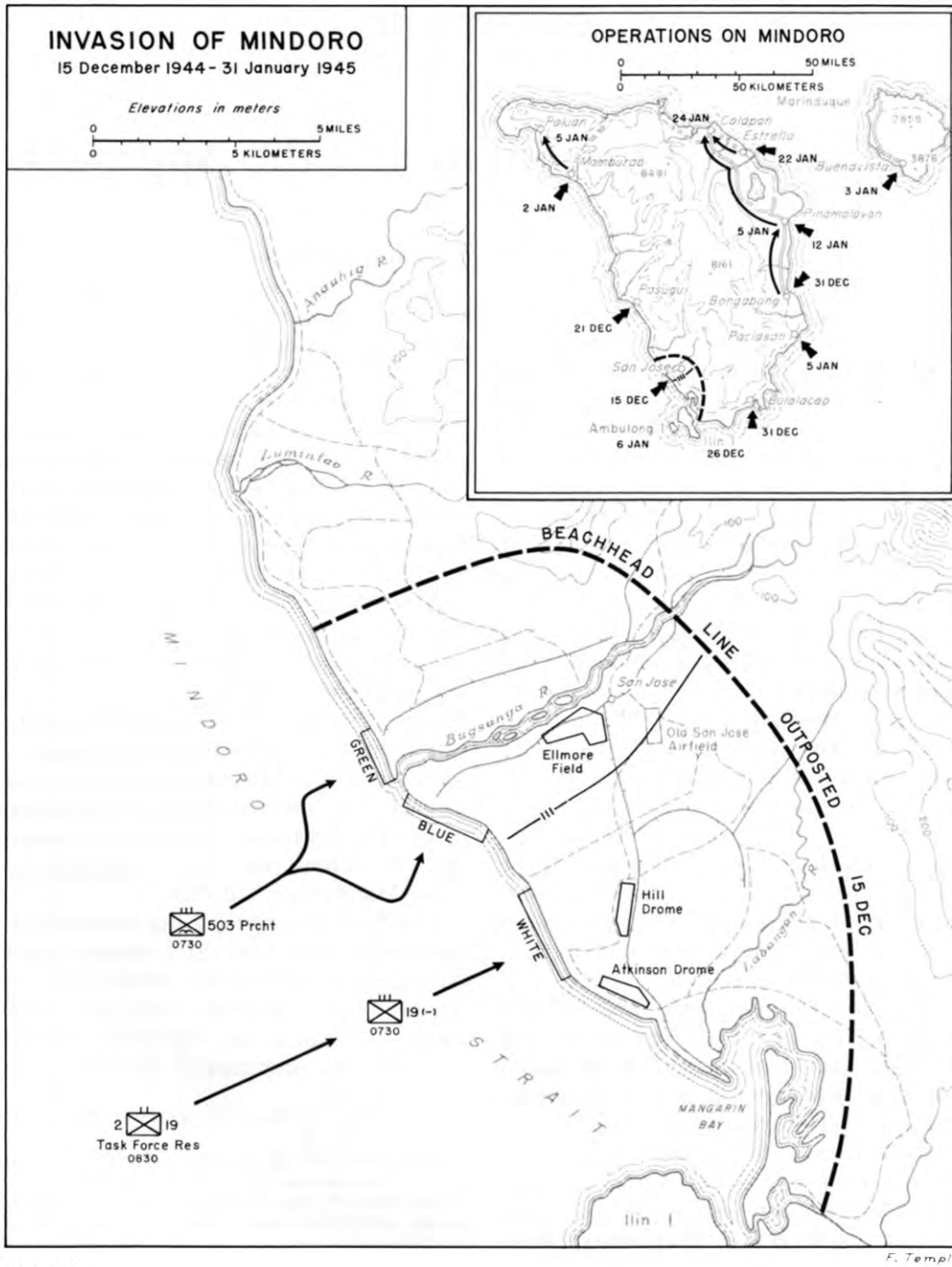
For the combat forces, the most pressing assault logistical requirement would be the unloading, stockpiling, and delivery of essential supplies and equipment. No provision was made for centralized control of these operations during the assault phase — such would not come until the Army Service Command assumed logistical responsibilities in the Lingayen Gulf area. Instead, the responsibilities were decentralized at the division level, the actual work to be undertaken by shore parties built around engineer boat and shore regiments attached to each division. Shore party operations would be supplemented by the activities of Navy beach parties, control over which was even more decentralized. In general, the beach parties would direct unloading traffic and, in co-operation with the shore parties, select beaches for supply discharge.

The next major logistical requirement involved construction. A great deal of road and bridge construction would be necessary in the beachhead area, and airfields would have to be built quickly in the region so that the supporting CVE's could be released on schedule. The first airfield construction project was to provide a field by S plus 6 to accommodate two fighter groups and a night fighter squadron. By S plus 15 a second field was to be ready, tripling or quadrupling the capacity of the first. The I and XIV Corps were responsible for beginning work on all construction projects; the Army Service Command would take over on S plus 6.

Other major construction projects to be undertaken by the Army Service Command included petroleum storage and distribution facilities, warehouses, hospitals, docks and jetties, and, in general, all the base facilities necessary to the support of the 203,000 troops for whom supplies were to be brought forward. A Naval Service Command, operating initially under Sixth Army control, would prepare a PT (Motor Torpedo) boat base, some naval shore installations including repair facilities, and a seaplane base.

Evacuation of sick and wounded from the front lines to the beachhead was at first the responsibility of the two corps. The Allied Naval Forces, during the early phases of the operation, would send casualties to rear areas on assault shipping, and the Allied Air Forces would undertake air evacuation as airfields became available. Until adequate fixed hospitalization could be established on Luzon, most casualties would be moved to hospitals run by the Services of Supply on Leyte.

Thus, the logistical plan called for extreme decentralization of operational responsibilities during the assault phase, decentralization that would be followed by an orderly passage of responsibility to centralized direction first under the Army Service Command and then under the Services of Supply.



F. Temple

MAP 2

CHAPTER III

Preliminary Operations and the Approach

Airfields on Mindoro

Getting to the Objective

The first step of the Luzon Campaign involved the seizure and development of air base sites in southwestern Mindoro in order to provide land-based air cover for convoys moving toward Lingayen Gulf and to permit the Allied Air Forces to broaden the base of its attack against Japanese air power on Luzon. Mindoro is none too pleasant a place. An ovoid about half the size of New Jersey, the island is very mountainous though it has some coastal plains along the east, northeast, and southwest shores. Throughout much of Mindoro rain is a daily occurrence even in the "dry" season. Humidity is high, the climate enervating, and malaria and other tropical diseases prevalent. Third-ranking in size among the Philippines, Mindoro is for the most part undeveloped and has fewer natural resources and less favorable terrain than many of the other islands.

The best airfield sites, MacArthur's planners knew, were located in the northeast, but that section of the island has poor flying weather and was dangerously close to Japanese air concentrations on Luzon. Therefore, the planners elected to secure a beachhead and airfield sites near San Jose, in the southwest corner. (*Map 2*) Mangarin Bay, Mindoro's best anchorage, lay nearby.[1]

The Allies accurately estimated that the Japanese garrison on Mindoro numbered some 1,000 troops. The men were under the control of the Japanese *8th Division* on Luzon, but the combat troops — two provisional infantry companies—came from the *105th Division*, likewise on Luzon. Also present were about 200 survivors of ships sunk off Mindoro on the way to Leyte, some Japanese Army Air Force engineers, ground crews of a couple of Japanese Naval Air Service units, and a handful of other service troops. The *8th Division* organized a *Marauding Unit* of 110 troops and sent it from Luzon to northern Mindoro shortly after 15 December, or U-day as the Mindoro target date was known. The reinforcements did nothing to put the Japanese on Mindoro in position to defend the island against the force MacArthur had sent.[2]

MacArthur assigned responsibility for the operation to General Krueger's Sixth Army, supported by the Allied Air and Naval Forces. Krueger, in turn, delegated the job to an especially created headquarters designated the Western

[1] GHQ SWPA OI 74, 13 Oct 44, G–3 GHQ SWPA Jnl File, 13 Oct 44.

[2] Sixth Army FO 33, 20 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 21–30 Nov 44; Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 12, Operations on Mindoro, *passim*; WVTF Hist Rcd, 15 Dec 44–31 Jan 45, an. 2, Intel Rpt, pp. 7–9, 12.

Visayan Task Force, and placed this unit under Brig. Gen. William C. Dunckel. The principal combat components of the force were the 19th Regimental Combat Team of the 24th Division and the separate 503d Parachute RCT. Scheduled to jump at Mindoro, the 503d was reassigned to the task of making an amphibious landing abreast of the 19th RCT when planners found that not enough space was available on Leyte to accommodate the troop-carrying aircraft necessary to lift the parachutists.

Other combat components of the Western Visayan Task Force included the 3d Battalion of the 21st Infantry of the 24th Division, which was to execute feinting operations against southern Luzon from Mindoro; an antiaircraft artillery group; and an engineer boat and shore regiment. Since rapid construction of airfields was a primary mission, the task force included a large proportion of airfield engineers — four U.S. Army battalions and a Royal Australian Air Force works squadron — and other service troops. To help unload assault shipping at Mindoro, Krueger detailed 1,200 men from various X and XXIV Corps units on Leyte as stevedores. These men were to return to Leyte once their task was finished.[3]

Air support plans were similar to those for Luzon, albeit on a smaller scale, and included operations by Allied Naval Forces CVE's, the Allied Air Forces, the Seventh Air Force, Halsey's Third Fleet, and the B–29's. Land-based planes of the Fifth and Seventh Air Forces would neutralize Japanese fields from Manila south on Luzon; the Third Fleet's planes would cover the fields north of Manila. To accomplish its share in this program, the Third Fleet planned two series of strikes on Luzon, one from U minus 1 through U plus 1 and the other from U plus 4 through U plus 6.[4]

Admiral Kinkaid delegated command of the amphibious phase of the operation to Rear Adm. Arthur D. Struble, the commander of Task Group 78.3, the Mindoro Attack Group. Cruisers and destroyers of Task Group 77.3 (the Mindoro Close Covering Group) together with CVE's, old battleships, cruisers, and destroyers of Task Group 77.12 (the Mindoro Heavy Covering and Carrier Group) would be in support.[5]

The supply plan was similar to that for the Lingayen invasion. The total force to be supplied at Mindoro included 12,000 ground combat troops, almost 6,000 ground service units, and approximately 9,500 Allied Air Forces troops. Aircraft would at first operate under control of the Fifth Air Force's 310th Bombardment Wing headquarters[6] and planes were to be flying from Mindoro by U plus 5, when a strip was to be ready to accommodate one fighter group. Before the assault at Lingayen Gulf, engineers would expand the Mindoro

[3] Sixth Army FO 33, 20 Nov 44; Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 8–14; Sixth Army Admin Order 15, 23 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 21–30 Nov 44. Most of the stevedoring troops came from the 306th Infantry, 77th Division, which had just reached Leyte. See Cannon, *Leyte*, p. 277.

[4] AAF SWPA OI 74, 30 Oct 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 7 Nov 44; Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, pp. 235–41; Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 18–20; Rads, Arnold to MacArthur and Nimitz, 26 Nov and 13 Dec 44, CM–OUT's 68838 and 76699; 2d Carrier TF Opn Order No. 4–44, 7 Dec 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–22 Dec 44.

[5] TG 78.3 Mindoro Rpt, pp. 1–5; TG 77.3 Mindoro Rpt, p. 1.

[6] Not desiring to move its own headquarters forward nor to set up a special headquarters, the Fifth Air Force used the bombardment wing headquarters to control all air activities at Mindoro during the early phases of the operation.

facilities to accommodate another fighter group, a light bomber group, a tactical reconnaissance squadron, and two commando fighter squadrons. Allied Naval Forces PT boats were to begin operations from Mindoro on U plus 1.[7]

The Western Visayan Task Force staged on the east coast of Leyte and departed Leyte Gulf on 12 December aboard the ships of Task Group 78.3.[8] (*See map, p. 20.*) During the night of 12–13 December the convoys transited Surigao Strait, between Leyte and Mindanao, and headed westward into the Mindanao Sea, Task Group 77.12—the escort carriers—moving to the van. Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet carriers had left Ulithi, in the western Carolines, on the 11th and had started hitting targets in northern Luzon on the morning of the 14th.

Struble's forces steamed on through the Mindanao Sea unmolested until the afternoon of 13 December. Japanese Army and Navy planes had had the three groups under surveillance since 0900, but had not attacked pending receipt of information on the force's destination. In midafternoon ten Japanese Navy planes, including three designated as suicide bombers — the dread kamikazes —flew up from a field on Cebu and found the Allied force off the southeastern corner of Negros Island.

Unobserved by lookouts and undetected by radar, which nearby land masses blanketed, one kamikaze flew in low over the water and crashed with a mighty roar on the light cruiser *Nashville*, Admiral Struble's flagship. Combined explosions from the plane's bomb and ship's ammunition wrecked the flag bridge, the communications office, and the combat information center. Over 130 men were killed outright, including General Dunckel's chief of staff, the 310th Bombardment Wing's commander, Admiral Struble's chief of staff, and Task Group 78.3's communications and medical officers. The wounded, numbering about 190, included Dunckel, who was painfully but not seriously injured and burned.

Struble and Dunckel quickly transferred to the destroyer *Dashiell*, which also took aboard some of the members of both officers' staffs. The rest of the staffs and the wounded sailed back to Leyte on the *Nashville*, protected by the destroyer *Stanley*. Later in the afternoon another kamikaze so damaged the destroyer *Haraden* that it, too, had to return to Leyte. Casualties aboard the *Haraden* were approximately 15 killed and 25 wounded.

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[7] Sixth Army Admin Order 15, 23 Nov 44; USASOS LI 74/SOS, 1 Nov 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 4 Nov 44; Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 13–16.

[8] The rest of this subsection is based primarily on: Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 13, 18–21; TG 78.3 Rpt Mindoro, pp. 5ff.; TG 77.12 Rpt Mindoro, *passim*; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 101, Battle of Mindoro, pp. 1–9; Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, pp. 235–37; Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate, eds., "The Army Air Forces in World War II," vol. V, *The Pacific: MATTERHORN to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953) (hereinafter cited as Craven and Cate, *AAF V*), pp. 396–97. Additional information on kamikaze operations in this subsection and in the rest of this chapter is derived from: Samuel Eliot Morison, "History of United States Naval Operations in World War II," vol. XIII, *The Liberation of the Philippines: Luzon, Mindanao, the Visayas: 1944–1945* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1959) (hereinafter cited as Morison, *The Liberation*), pp. 23–26, 29–31, 33–36, 43–48, 98–119, 125–26, 133, 138–140. Originally, it was anticipated that *Triumph* would be published before *The Liberation*. As events turned out, *The Liberation* was in print first, permitting the present author to take advantage at the last moment of deeper research into U.S. Navy materials and Japanese sources than he could or needed to undertake for *Triumph*.

The Japanese, having decided that Panay, Cebu, or Negros would be the target of the Allied invasion force, had ambitious plans for renewing air attacks on the 14th, but few materialized. The Japanese wasted too much time looking for the convoy off Panay and Negros, and were diverted by Allied Naval Forces movements off the west coast of Leyte, movements that concerned resupply of Sixth Army units on Leyte. Meanwhile, Halsey's Third Fleet planes kept the Japanese air garrison on Luzon occupied, and during the day Struble's CVE-based planes knocked down about thirty Japanese aircraft before they could close with the Mindoro-bound force.

On the morning of the 15th, as the Allied groups started moving in to the Mindoro beaches, 25 Japanese planes from the Clark Field center on Luzon and 12 to 15 from the Davao area of southeastern Mindanao attempted to resume the attack. Struck by Third Fleet aircraft even before they got off the ground, many of the Luzon-based planes never reached the Mindoro area. Allied Air Forces P–38's (which arrived over Mindoro from Leyte about 0800 to assume the air cover duties of the CVE's), and CVE-based planes still operating at Mindoro shot down eight of fifteen kamikazes that attacked shipping off the island on the 15th. Nonetheless, Japanese air operations during the day met with some success. Kamikazes so damaged two LST's (Landing Ships, Tank) that the Allied Naval Forces later had to sink them. Ammunition exploding aboard the LST's damaged the destroyer *Moale* as it tried to rescue survivors and fight fires. An LSM (Landing Ship, Medium), the destroyer *Howerth*, and the CVE *Marcus Island* received lesser damage from kamikazes, but continued operations.[9] Casualties totaled 7 killed and about 20 wounded.

In accordance with plans, the CVE's had started to withdraw upon the arrival of Allied Air Forces land-based planes, but in midafternoon word came that weather conditions over eastern Leyte would prevent land-based aircraft from providing air cover the rest of the day. Task Group 77.12 thereupon slowed its speed and, late in the afternoon, returned to a support position off Mindoro in order to provide air cover on U plus 1.

Meanwhile, the 19th and 503d RCT's landed, and, despite a few harassing raids by Japanese aircraft, unloading proceeded far ahead of schedule. Admiral Struble was able to depart with the bulk of the ships of Task Group 78.3 at 1900, leaving Rear Adm. Russell S. Berkey of Task Group 77.3 in charge off Mindoro.

The next morning, 16 December, a slow tow convoy of small tankers, barges, and LCT's (Landing Craft, Tank), with accompanying destroyers, hove to off Mindoro, having suffered the loss of one small Army tanker sunk and a destroyer damaged by kamikazes on the way.[10] Berkey's force left about 0700, and the CVE's resumed their withdrawal about 1100, when Allied Air Forces planes showed up from Leyte. Poor weather conditions again forced an early retirement of land-based aircraft, and CVE planes had to maintain some cover over Mindoro all day. The three echelons of Admiral Struble's force finally got back

[9] Morison, *The Liberation*, page 29, states that the destroyer damaged was the *Ralph Talbot*. In describing the day's attacks, pages 29–31, he does not mention the damage to the LSM.

[10] Morison, in *The Liberation*, page 31, does not mention damage to the destroyer, and implies that the Army tanker was only damaged.

to Leyte on the 17th with no further damage.

To the north, Halsey's planes had again struck Luzon on 16 December, and the carriers had started retiring eastward to refuel in preparation for the second series of attacks beginning on the 19th. Late on the morning of the 17th a vicious typhoon began lashing the Third Fleet and did not blow itself out until evening of the 18th. Continued bad weather forced Admiral Halsey to cancel the strikes scheduled for 19–21 December, and on the 21st the fleet retired to Ulithi to repair storm damage and start preparations for its operations in support of the Lingayen Gulf landings.

Through the 16th, Japanese air attacks had cost forces of the Southwest Pacific Area 2 LST's and 1 small Army tanker sunk; 1 light cruiser and 1 destroyer severely damaged; and 1 CVE, 3 destroyers, and 1 LSM slightly damaged. The Japanese had also inflicted almost 390 casualties—about 155 men killed and 235 wounded — the majority of them Allied Naval Forces personnel. The CVE's had lost 9 planes and Halsey's carriers had lost 27 to the Japanese. The typhoon through which the Third Fleet had sailed resulted in the loss of about 790 men. It also sank 3 destroyers, wrecked 200 planes, and damaged 28 ships, 9 so severely that they were out of action for weeks.

On the other hand, according to the claims of the Allied Air Forces, the Allied Naval Forces, and the Third Fleet, about 450 Japanese planes had been destroyed in the air or on the ground in the Philippines since the 1st of December. The Third Fleet claimed about 270 Japanese aircraft, Struble's CVE's got another 70, Allied Air Forces planes at least 80, ship-based and shore-based antiaircraft weapons 15, and approximately 15 more were destroyed during kamikaze attacks. Japanese air power in the Philippines had been literally decimated, and reinforcements had to be flown in from the home islands and Formosa. Finally, Admiral Halsey's planes had sunk 33 Japanese ships of various sizes and types in Luzon waters, while the Allied Naval Forces had destroyed a small freighter off Mindoro.

For the Allied Naval Forces, the Third Fleet, and the Japanese, the invasion of Mindoro had indeed been costly. Ashore on that island the story was far different. The landing was unopposed and through 16 December the Western Visayan Task Force suffered no casualties in ground operations.

The Air Build-up at Mindoro

The 19th and 503d RCT's began landing at 0730 on 15 December and by late afternoon had outposted a final beachhead line lying seven miles inland. Troops secured the San Jose airstrip, a prewar emergency landing field roughly five miles inland, against no opposition.[11] Beach conditions were almost ideal, and an observer from the 2d Engineer Special Brigade, watching the unloading, was prompted to report that the "operation was really just a maneuver" for shore party units.[12]

Since expansion of the San Jose strip was not feasible, engineers quickly began surveys for a better site and soon found

[11] WVTF Hist Rcd, Opns Rpt, pp. 1–2; Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 16–18; 19th Inf Rpt Mindoro, p. 1.

[12] Ltr, Asst ACofS S–2 2d ESB to CG 2d ESB, 19 Dec 44, Sub: Obsns of Landing on Mindoro Island, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 21 Dec 44–1 Jan 45.

one about three miles south of the field. By midafternoon the 1874th Engineer Aviation Battalion and No. 3 Airdrome Construction Squadron (RAAF) had begun work on the new site, ultimately called Hill Drome. The field was ready as scheduled on 20 December, on which day Fifth Air Force P–38's and P–61 night fighters began arriving; P–47's reached the field from Leyte three days later. Meanwhile, engineers began work on another strip called Ellmore Field, about two miles northwest of Hill Drome. This second field was ready for limited use on 23 December and for continuous dry-weather operations on the 28th, a week ahead of schedule.[13]

The first runway was barely operational in time to be of use in helping to turn back new Japanese counterattacks.[14] On or about 20 December the Japanese Naval Air Service in the Philippines, which had executed the bulk of the attacks against Mindoro so far, was reinforced by some fifty planes flown in from Formosa, bringing its operational strength to about seventy-five planes at bases within easy range of Mindoro. With this force—augmented by a few Japanese Army Air Force planes —the Japanese renewed air attacks on 21 December,[15] the day before ships of an Allied resupply convoy were scheduled to reach Mindoro. About twenty kamikazes attacked the convoy, so damaging two LST's that they later had to be abandoned, and inflicting lesser damage on two destroyers and a Liberty ship.[16] The 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, en route to Mindoro in this convoy lost 6 men killed and 32 wounded; U.S. Navy losses were about 70 men killed or wounded; the Japanese lost 7 planes in kamikaze attacks and 3 others to shipboard antiaircraft fire.

In the meantime the Japanese *Southwestern Area Fleet,* with headquarters at Manila, had organized a small surface striking force of two cruisers and six destroyers and had ordered it to Mindoro to bombard the Allied beachhead and sink whatever Allied shipping it could find unprotected in the area.[17] The Japanese had no intention of making a major action out of this raid; the best they could hope for was to delay for a little Allied development of the Mindoro air base.

The striking force sortied from Camranh Bay, Indochina, about 1300 on 24 December and was discovered early the next day by Allied submarines operating in the South China Sea. Forewarned

[13] Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 17–20; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 397–98.

[14] The story of Japanese air and naval counterattacks is based primarily on: Sixth Army Rpt Mindoro, pp. 21–23; WVTF Hist Rcd, an. 2, Intel Rpt, *passim*; TG 78.3 Rpt Mindoro, *passim*; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 398–401; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 101, Battle of Mindoro, pp. 8–13; No. 5, *4th Air Army* Operations, 1944–1945, pp. 61–65, 73–74; The Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee (JANAC), *Japanese Naval and Merchant Shipping Losses During World War II By All Causes* (Washington: Navy Department, 1947) (hereinafter cited as JANAC *Japanese Shipping Losses*), pp. 20, 78; an exchange of radio msgs dated 27 and 28 Dec 44 among Sixth Army, WVTF, Fifth Air Force, and Seventh Fleet, all to be found in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 21 Dec 44–1 Jan 45.

[15] There were some isolated attacks between the 15th and 21st. On the 18th, for instance, a kamikaze destroyed one PT, and in a conventional bombing run a Japanese plane lightly damaged another PT. Morison, *The Liberation*, p. 34.

[16] Morison, *The Liberation*, page 35, accounts for only one destroyer damaged in this action.

[17] The carrier *Unryu* was apparently scheduled to participate, but was sunk off Formosa on 19 December by a U.S. Navy submarine. Two more Japanese cruisers were orignally assigned to the action but were left behind as being too slow. Additional information on the Japanese naval action comes from Morison, *The Liberation*, pages 37–43.



LANDING UNOPPOSED ON WHITE BEACH, MINDORO

by the submarines, Allied Naval Forces reconnaissance seaplanes began tracking the Japanese force, and about 1930 on the 26th reported that the vessels were within easy range of the Allied Air Forces' base at Mindoro. In preparation for the impending action, General Kenney had hurriedly reinforced the Mindoro air garrison, and 105 planes were ready to fly against the Japanese naval force—13 B–25's, 44 P–38's, 28 P–47's, and 20 P–40's.

Except for a few P–61's, which were searching for Japanese aircraft, none of the Mindoro-based planes was equipped for night operations. They therefore had to use running and landing lights to guide each other and to locate the Japanese ships sailing on toward Mindoro under cover of bad weather. Despite air opposition, about 2300 on the 26th the Japanese fleet units began to bombard the beachhead and airfield areas, where they caused little damage. After some forty minutes of such shelling, the Japanese vessels withdrew northwestward at high speed, still under attack by Allied Air Forces planes.

Offshore, the Japanese had sunk a Liberty ship and an Allied Naval Forces PT boat.[18] The Allied Air Forces had lost 26 planes: 3 B–25's, 7 P–38's, 10 P–47's, and 6 P–40's. Many of these aircraft were not lost to Japanese action but crashed as they tried to find some place to land. The bombardment prevented landings at the Mindoro strips and many pilots, finding their planes running low

[18] Morison, *The Liberation*, pages 40–41, states that the PT's damage came from bombing by a U.S. Army plane, and that Army aircraft also added to the damage inflicted upon the Liberty ship.

on fuel, headed through the darkness and heavy weather toward Leyte fields only to crash on the way. The Allied Air Forces—at first making somewhat larger claims[19]—had helped to sink one destroyer to which an Allied Naval Forces PT boat gave the *coup de grâce*. The Mindoro-based planes also severely damaged the weather decks and guns of the two cruisers and had not permitted any of the other Japanese ships to escape unscathed.

On 28 December Japanese aircraft resumed kamikaze and conventional attacks against Allied shipping at Mindoro and against shipping on the way to and from that island. From that date through the 4th of January 1945, the planes succeeded in sinking 3 Liberty ships, including one carrying air force ammunition; a tanker carrying aviation gasoline; two LST's, a destroyer, and two LCM's. Three other Liberty ships were so badly damaged that they had to be run aground to prevent sinking. For a time the loss of cargo of the Libertys and the tanker inhibited airfield construction and air operations at Mindoro. In addition to these sinkings or beachings, the Japanese also inflicted severe damage upon a Liberty ship, a destroyer, a PT tender, and two PT boats, while another destroyer, an LCI, a mine sweeper, and an oiler suffered lighter damage as direct or indirect results of kamikaze operations. Attacking the Mindoro airfields during the night of 2–3 January, Japanese planes destroyed 15 P–38's and 7 A–20's. During the period 28 December through 4 January, the Japanese lost some 50 aircraft in the Mindoro area. Thereafter, Japanese air strikes in the region virtually ceased; the Japanese were occupied with Allied convoys moving toward Luzon.

Ashore at Mindoro the Western Visayan Task Force, beginning on 19 December, instituted a series of patrol actions along the southern, western, and northwestern shores of Mindoro to hunt down Japanese stragglers, secure areas where the Japanese might land reinforcements from Luzon, and set up and protect radar stations and ground force observation posts, some of which were established on small offshore islands.[20] Mindoro guerrillas guided and gave support to most of the Allied patrols and also played a large part in various mopping-up operations all over the island. While the 19th and 503d RCT's were thus spreading out, the rest of the 21st Infantry reached Mindoro to reinforce the beachhead. General Krueger, fearing possible Japanese reinforcement moves from Luzon, had dispatched the 21st to Mindoro just after the Japanese naval raid.

On 1 January control of the Western Visayan Task Force passed from the Sixth Army to Eichelberger's Eighth Army, which continued to mop up and patrol. By the end of January Western Visayan Task Force ground operations associated with the seizure and securing of the air base had cost 16 men killed, 71 wounded, and 4 missing, exclusive of the casualties resulting from Japanese air attacks. Total casualties for the Allied land, sea, and air forces of the Southwest

[19] The Fifth Air Force originally claimed to have sunk or set afire at least four Japanese troop transports.

[20] The remaining material on Mindoro ground operations is based principally on: WVTF Hist Rcd, Opns Rpt, pp. 2–7; *ibid.*, Intel Rpt, pp. 4–9; 19th Inf Rpt Mindoro, pp. 1–2; 503d Prcht Inf S–3 Per Rpts Mindoro. The casualty figures are derived from a study of all pertinent sources, which provide contradictory and irreconciliable figures.

Pacific directly concerned with establishment of the southwestern Mindoro air base, including those from kamikaze operations, numbered about 475 men killed and 385 wounded. On Mindoro, the Japanese lost about 170 men killed and 15 taken prisoner. Japanese casualties in the air and naval counterattack operations are unknown.

Work continued apace at the Mindoro airfields throughout the period of the Japanese raids, and the facilities were greatly expanded.[21] General MacArthur decided to add more medium bombers and fighters to the Mindoro air garrison for better support of operations on Luzon, and temporarily canceled plans to establish a base for troop carrier and cargo planes on Mindoro. At the same time, he directed the Allied Air Forces to construct heavy bomber fields on Mindoro from which to launch strikes against the southern Philippines, Formosa, and the northern Indies. Work began on the first of two bomber fields on 2 January, but neither was ready in time to provide support for the move to Luzon.

Nevertheless, a sizable air garrison existed on Mindoro by 9 January. Major Allied Air Forces units included 3 fighter groups, 2 medium bomber groups, 2 night fighter squadrons, 3 tactical reconnaissance squadrons, a photographic squadron, and an air-sea rescue squadron. While none of the units was up to strength in either planes or pilots, the total was stronger than the minimum General Kenney had deemed necessary for proper support of the Lingayen invasion.

Insofar as the invasion of Luzon was concerned, the principal value of the Mindoro operation was the establishment of the air bases. In addition, the island was used to good purpose to stage diversionary activities designed to focus Japanese attention on southern Luzon. Later in the campaign for the recapture of the Philippines, Mindoro became a staging base from which to mount many operations against smaller islands to the north, northeast, and east in order to make the water passages through the central Visayan Islands safe for small ships moving to Luzon. Larger operations for the recapture of major islands during the Southern Philippines Campaign were also staged from Mindoro.

By the time the Sixth Army was ashore on Luzon, it had become obvious that, whatever the cost, the establishment of an air base at southwestern Mindoro had been well worth the effort. The value of the fields was proved time and time again as Mindoro-based planes interdicted Japanese communications on Luzon, struck Japanese shipping in Philippine waters, provided cover for convoys moving to Luzon, and flew direct support missions for ground forces on the latter island. The support value of the base would be enhanced during operations in the Southern Philippines Campaign and, once the heavy bomber strips were ready, by many indirect strategic support missions.

It seems safe to assume that without the Mindoro airfields, MacArthur would not have been able to move to Luzon when he did. Certainly, without those fields his forces would have found the

[21] The remainder of this subsection is based upon: Rad, MacArthur to Krueger and Kenney, CX–55211, 21 Dec 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Mindoro, 21 Dec 44–1 Jan 45; GHQ SWPA OI 74/15, 1 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 13 Oct 44; Sixth Army Mindoro Rpt, pp. 21–23; WVTF Hist Rcd, an. 5, Engr Rpt, *passim*; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, p. 401.

invasion of Luzon, and postassault operations as well, considerably more hazardous and difficult.

Diversionary Activities

The Southwest Pacific's diversionary operations were divided into three phases. First, Dunckel's Western Visayan Task Force would seize northeastern Mindoro and Marinduque Island, thirty miles to the east, in an attempt to make the Japanese believe that the two areas would be developed as staging bases for an invasion of southern Luzon. Second, a series of minor naval demonstrations, simulated landings, dummy parachute drops, and radio and radar deception measures would be executed at various points along the south coast of Luzon. Third, south Luzon guerrillas would co-operate with the Allied Air Forces and the Palau-based Seventh Air Force in destroying railroads, bridges, highways, wire communications, and Japanese supply installations throughout southern Luzon.[22] The Allies also carried out a Pacific-wide deception program to make the Japanese believe that the Formosa-Amoy area, rather than Luzon, would be the next major Allied target after Leyte.[23]

The Western Visayan Task Force's share in the program got under way on 1 January when the 21st Infantry, from its base in southwestern Mindoro, began clearing out northeastern Mindoro, a job that the regiment did not complete until almost the end of the month. By that time the Japanese on the island were no longer a threat. Some 135 Japanese were killed in northeastern Mindoro—at least 50 of them by guerrillas under General Dunckel's control—and the rest of the garrison of some 300 Japanese originally stationed in the area fled to the mountainous interior. The 21st Infantry lost but 1 man killed and 7 wounded. A company of the 21st Infantry secured Marinduque Island during the week ending 11 January, guerrillas having previously cleaned out all but one small pocket of Japanese on the island.[24]

Little information is available concerning guerrilla sabotage operations in southern Luzon, and it is impossible to allocate credit for destruction as between the guerrillas and the air commands. Suffice it to say that since there was considerable difficulty getting demolition supplies into guerrilla hands, the sabotage was probably not as extensive as hoped. Very few of the minor naval and aerial demonstrations were executed before the Lingayen invasion because the necessary planes and small naval vessels could not be diverted to the task in the face of the Japanese aerial counterattacks at Mindoro and Luzon.[25] In brief,

[22] GHQ SWPA OI 80, 20 Nov 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 20 Nov 44.

[23] Rad, MacArthur to JCS and Nimitz, CX–52283, 16 Nov 44, CM–IN 15326; Rad, MacArthur to JCS and Nimitz, CX–52782, 23 Nov 44, CM–IN 22748; Rad, Nimitz to MacArthur and JCS, 19 Nov 44, CM–IN 21934; Rad, JCS to MacArthur and Nimitz, 30 Nov 44, CM–OUT 70546.

[24] WVTF Hist Rcd, Opns Rpt, pp. 2–4; *ibid.*, Intel Rpt, pp. 7–9; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 12, Opns on Mindoro, pp. 7–9; WVTF G–3 Opns Rpts Mindoro.

[25] Miscellaneous memos and msgs in WVTF Guerrilla Jnl File and WVTF PDQ Guerrilla Net File; Rad, TG 77.11 (Diversionary Attack Gp) to ANF SWPA *et al.*, 4 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 3–4 Jan 45; Rad, MacArthur to Kinkaid, TG 77.11, *et al.*, 7 Jan 45, WVTF G–2 Msg File; Rad, Kinkaid to MacArthur, 0644 5 Jan 45; Rad, Kenney to Whitehead and TG 77.11, AX–30585, 8 Jan 45; Rad, Kinkaid to TG 77.11, 8 Jan 45. Last three in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45.

none of the Southwest Pacific's local diversions took place as originally planned. On the other hand, the northeastern Mindoro and Marinduque Island operations succeeded in liberating more Filipinos, helped to clear the Visayan Passages, and secured the north coast of Mindoro against Japanese reinforcement movements. The effects of the Pacific-wide program are unknown.

By the time the deception value of the Southwest Pacific's diversions could have been realized, the Japanese on Luzon well knew where the main landings on that island had taken place. The Japanese were no longer concerned with southern Luzon—they had other fish to fry.

The Approach to Luzon

Allied aircraft, which had not concentrated their efforts against southern Luzon, had been flying missions over widespread areas of Luzon for months. Carrier-based aircraft of the Third Fleet had struck targets on Luzon in September while providing strategic support for the invasions of the Palau Islands and Morotai; they had hit Japanese installations on Luzon again during October and November in support of the invasion of Leyte; and they had returned to Luzon in mid-December in support of the Mindoro landing.[26] By this time, Leyte-based planes of the Allied Air Forces and Seventh Air Force bombers from the Palaus had also initiated strikes against Luzon in a program of air attacks that doubled in intensity during late December. On the 30th, Halsey's carriers left the western Carolines on their way to Formosan and Philippine waters. Meanwhile, Kinkaid's surface forces had completed their preparations; the amphibious attack convoys had finished loading and had set sail for Lingayen Gulf.

Assembling the Attack Forces

The major problem amphibious and ground forces commanders faced in mounting the assault forces—once shipping limitations had been established—was that of co-ordinating staging activities at widely separated points. For example, XIV Corps headquarters, corps troops, and the 37th Infantry Division staged and loaded at Bougainville, in the Solomon Islands nearly 3,000 miles southeast of Lingayen Gulf.[27] The XIV Corps' 40th Division mounted at New Britain, 375 miles west of Bougainville. I Corps headquarters was at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, almost 2,000 miles from Lingayen Gulf; its 43d Division was 125 miles to the east at Aitape in British New Guinea; and its 6th Division staged at Sansapor, on the Vogelkop Peninsula of western Dutch New Guinea some 625 miles northwest of Hollandia. The 25th Infantry Division of Sixth Army Reserve had the longest distance to travel, being located on New Caledonia, about 1,300 miles south-southeast of Bougainville. The 158th RCT loaded at Noemfoor Island, 440 miles northwest of Hollandia. Sixth Army headquarters, the 6th Ranger Battalion, and various other Sixth Army units were on Leyte, about 500 miles southeast of Lingayen Gulf.

[26] G–3 GHQ SWPA, Monthly Summaries of Opns, Sep 44 and Nov 44, copies in OCMH files. The first strikes against Luzon were executed on 21 and 22 September. See Cannon, *Leyte*, ch. IV.

[27] All distances in this paragraph are straight-line statute miles.

Service units were loaded at all these places and at various Services of Supply bases from Australia to Morotai. The staff work involved in co-ordinating the movement of such widely dispersed units, and in scheduling the arrival and departure of shipping from each staging point, would stagger the imagination of anyone not well versed in the peculiar problems of waging war over the vast reaches of the Pacific. The wonder is not that some problems arose during the loading and staging, but rather that the problems were so few and relatively minor in nature.

The XIV Corps was responsible for obtaining the supplies for its own units and for Sixth Army forces stationed in the Solomons and at New Caledonia. XIV Corps units staging at New Britain, New Guinea, Morotai, and Leyte bases obtained their supplies from the Southwest Pacific's Services of Supply through channels established by the Eighth Army, to which these XIV Corps organizations were attached for logistical support during the staging period. An initial survey indicated that all XIV Corps units lacked 25–30 percent of the supplies that Lt. Gen. Oscar W. Griswold, the corps commander, deemed essential for combat efficiency. But before loading began, those units staging in the South Pacific area had obtained 98 percent of their required supplies while those mounting at New Britain and points west got 95 percent of their requirements. The major lasting shortage was that of wheeled vehicles, a shortage general shipping limitations imposed. The I Corps' supply situation was quite similar.[28]

The principal trouble both corps had in loading stemmed from delays in receiving full information concerning characteristics and cargo capacities of ships assigned to them, the limitations of tonnage for each type of vessel, and changes in ship assignments.[29] To some extent these problems seem to have resulted from insufficient liaison between the Army and Navy headquarters concerned. For example, when ships of the III Amphibious Force arrived at Bougainville to load corps troops and the 37th Division, the XIV Corps discovered that the tonnage allotments prescribed for each type of ship by Sixth Army loading instructions were greater than the limitations Allied Naval Forces had imposed upon Admiral Wilkinson's vessels.[30] Again, Army loading planners often found that the information they had concerning a given ship's characteristics was based upon the characteristics of the ship as originally constructed, not as it had been modified by the Navy during a year or more of combat service.

[28] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, Opns, pp. 1, 8–12; *ibid.*, pt. II, Administration, pp. 5–10, 27; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 1, 13, 162–63.

[29] In addition to the sources listed in the previous note, description of these problems from the Army point of view is found in: 37th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–13, 191–92, 285–86, 297–301; 40th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, p. 6; 6th Inf Div, G–4 Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–8; 43d Inf Div Rpt Luzon, p. 57; 43d Inf Div, G–4 Rpt Luzon, p. 1.

[30] The matter was finally straightened out after an extensive exchange of radios among XIV Corps, Sixth Army, Allied Naval Forces, and the III Amphibious Force during the period 16–28 November, copies of which are to be found in XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 13–18 and 19–24 Nov 44, and in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 15–25 Nov 44. At least partially, the difficulties stemmed from the fact that XIV Corps had at first been instructed to employ long tons in planning its loading, but found that its figures had to be revamped on the basis of short tons. Comments of Hon. Hugh M. Milton II, Asst Secretary of the Army (CofS XIV Corps during Luzon assault), 6 Dec 56, in OCMH files.

Such problems frustrated and irritated Army loading officers but seeemd to have been ignored by the naval echelons concerned.[31] In the end these unfortunate —and perhaps avoidable—problems did not prevent the assault forces from loading on time with sufficient supplies and equipment to undertake the tasks assigned. It is enough to say that the two corps and the two amphibious forces overcame the problems, just as they overcame others presented by adverse surf and beach conditions at some staging areas, the late arrival of some ships and ground service units at staging points, and the necessity for transshipping men and materials among various bases for more orderly loading. The job was done.

XIV Corps elements staging at New Britain completed loading on 10 December; those mounting at Bougainville finished two days later.[32] On the 17th all groups of the III Amphibious Force rendezvoused at Huon Gulf, eastern New Guinea, to rehearse the Lingayen assault. General Griswold felt that the 37th Division's rehearsal was satisfactory but had much fault to find with the 40th Division, remarking upon a "general failure to observe the spirit of the rehearsal." [33] As a result, further training was conducted at Manus Island in the Admiralties, where the convoy reassembled on 22 December.[34] On the 27th LST's and LSM's, with escorts, made up a separate convoy and departed for Leyte Gulf. The rest of the force left on the 31st, all sections sailing toward a rendezvous with other components of the Luzon Attack Force, including the VII Amphibious Force with the I Corps aboard.

The I Corps units staging at Aitape finished loading on 25 December and conducted a limited rehearsal on the 27th, when they were joined by the headquarters of the I Corps and the VII Amphibious Force aboard the command ship *Blue Ridge*.[35] This combined convoy left Aitape on the 28th. The rest of the I Corps units finished loading at Sansapor on 29 December and, having had a limited rehearsal on the 23d, sortied during the afternoon of the 30th.

While the various amphibious attack groups were starting toward the objective area, the combat echelons of the Luzon Attack Force were also moving forward, all to rendezvous at Leyte Gulf during

[31] To reach this conclusion the author consulted the reports of the Luzon Attack Force, III Amphibious Force, VII Amphibious Force, and their various echelons, including many reports of individual ships. Of some forty naval reports consulted, only one, that of the AP *President Polk*, reflects any awareness of the problems that so harried Army planners. See: Extract From Report of *President Polk*, in COMINCH, Amphibious Operations, Invasion of the Philippines, October 1944–January 1945, 30 Apr 45, ch. VII, p. 5.

[32] Information on staging and rehearsal is based principally upon: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 13–15, 24–25; 37th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 15–17; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 13, 19; 6th Inf Div, G–4 Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–7; 43d Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–5; 43d Inf Div, G–4 Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–3; III Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–9; *ibid.*, Encl G, Logistics, p. 2; VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–12.

[33] Memo, Griswold for Brush (CG 40th Div), 21 Dec 44, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 12 Dec 44–9 Jan 45.

[34] Ltr, CofS XIV Corps to Maj Gen Robert S. Beightler and Gen Brush, 20 Dec 44, sub: Tng of Unloading Details and Shore Party Personnel, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 12 Dec 44–9 Jan 45; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 25.

[35] The I Corps report, page 13, states: "realistic rehearsals were feasible and carried out to the last detail." This statement is flatly contradicted by all other Army and Navy reports that mention the I Corps–VII Amphibious Force rehearsals.

the period 1–5 January.[36] There, on the 4th, General MacArthur and members of his staff boarded the light cruiser *Boise,* sailing with two escorting destroyers as Task Unit 77.1.2. Admiral Kinkaid and General Krueger went aboard the command ship *Wasatch,* which, with another two destroyers, formed Task Unit 77.1.1.

The first portion of the Luzon Attack Force to leave Leyte Gulf consisted of the Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group (Task Group 77.6) together with a few oilers, ammunition ships, tugs, LCI(G)'s (Landing Craft, Infantry, Gunboats), and screening vessels, all departing about noon on 2 January. Later that day the bombardment and fire support vessels, Task Group 77.2, accompanied by twelve CVE's and escorts from Task Group 77.4, moved out of the gulf. Command of these van echelons was vested in Vice Adm. Jesse B. Oldendorf, who was also the commander of Task Group 77.2.

During the night of 4–5 January another large element of the Luzon Attack Force moved out of Leyte Gulf into Surigao Strait. In the lead was Task Group 77.3, a close covering group consisting of three light cruisers and six destroyers, accompanied by Task Unit 77.1.2, General MacArthur aboard. Next came the entire VII Amphibious Force–I Corps convoy with two CVE's providing cover, followed by the III Amphibious Force–XIV Corps LST–LSM groupment. The whole formed a single convoy over forty miles long. The main body of the III Amphibious Force–XIV Corps convoy left Leyte Gulf on the morning of 6 January, and, making more knots than the preceding elements, soon began to close the distance.

Air Attack and Counterattack

Meanwhile, the Pacific-wide aerial support plan was in operation. Mindoro-based aircraft greatly stepped up the intensity of their attacks during the last week of December. Seeking to stop Japanese overwater reinforcements, these planes sank three large cargo ships or transports and an escorting frigate at Vigan, 100 miles north of the Lingayen Gulf beaches, on 30 December, and three days later at San Fernando, La Union, fifty-odd miles south of Vigan, got four cargo ships and another escort. Strikes against Japanese transport on Luzon were also profitable, and, the Allied Air Forces claimed, Leyte-based and Palau-based heavy bombers (B–24's) destroyed 140 Japanese planes on the ground at various Central Plains fields during the period 20–25 December alone.[37]

[36] The remainder of this subsection is based principally upon: Luzon Attack Force Rpt, pp. 10–13, 21–26; III Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–10; VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–13; *ibid.*, Encl D, Chron Rpt, pp. 2–8; TG 77.2 (Bombardment and Fire Support Gp—Vice Adm Jesse B. Oldendorf) Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 5, 8.

[37] During air operations in support of the invasion of Luzon, two members of the Army Air Forces won Medals of Honor. For a combination of heroic actions while flying fighter cover for bombers striking Clark Field on 25 and 26 December and for a fighter sweep over Negros Island on 7 January. Maj. Thomas B. McGuire of the Thirteenth Air Force was awarded the Medal of Honor. Tragically, the award had to be made posthumously since the major's plane crashed on 7 January as he tried to save a fellow flyer from Japanese attack. While leading a photographic and strafing mission against airfields in the Aparri and Laoag areas on 11 January, Maj. William A. Shomo of the 82d Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron met a flight of thirteen Japanese aircraft, shooting down six Japanese fighters and a twin-engine bomber. For this action, Major Shomo was awarded the Medal of Honor.

The Third Fleet's fast carriers sortied from Ulithi on 30 December and arrived at their first launching point—about 140 miles southeast of Formosa and 225 miles north of Luzon — during the predawn hours of 3 January. There the carrier force began to run into bad weather conditions that were to hamper its operations for weeks.

Admiral Halsey's missions for 3 and 4 January were to destroy Japanese air power on Formosa, hit shipping in the same area, and conduct secondary strikes against the Ryukyus and Pescadores. Poor weather conditions curtailed the morning strikes and forced cancellation of all flights in the afternoon of the 3d. Weather the next day also limited flight operations, but Halsey reported that his planes had destroyed 100 Japanese aircraft and sunk 12 ships and damaged 18 others during the two-day period. There were to be no strikes on 5 January, S minus 4, since the Third Fleet was to move to a new position from which to hit Luzon on S minus 3. On that day, the fast carriers were to cover all Luzon north of Clark Field except for the Lingayen Gulf Area, the Allied Air Forces were to blanket Clark Field and the area to the south, and Admiral Kinkaid's CVE planes were scheduled to fly against Japanese airfields in the Lingayen region. These plans were destined to be changed.[38]

As of the 1st of December the Japanese Army and Navy had probably had a combined air strength of some 500 planes in the Philippines, the bulk of them based on Luzon.[39] This strength had been largely destroyed by Allied air strikes in support of the Mindoro operation and during Japanese air attacks against Mindoro-bound convoys and the Mindoro beachhead area. By the 20th of December, the Japanese Naval Air Service in the Philippines had no more than 30 planes, and the Japanese Army Air Force was down to approximately 100 first-line combat aircraft. About that date, some 50 naval planes flew to Luzon from Formosa to renew attacks against Mindoro, and shortly thereafter, it appears, a few Army aircraft also came down from Formosa or the home islands to reinforce Luzon. Many of these planes were lost during continued attacks against Mindoro until, by 31 December, the Japanese had probably no more than 150 operational aircraft left on Luzon, and about a third that many on other fields in the Philippine archipelago, for a total of about 200.[40]

The Japanese had no intention of making a large-scale air effort at Luzon and planned to send no strong air reinforcements to the Philippines. Instead, they were devoting their main efforts to strengthening the air defenses of the homeland, the Ryukyus, and Formosa. Nevertheless, 200 combat planes was a respectable force. It could also be an

[38] Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 406–11; JANAC, *Japanese Shipping Losses*, p. 78; G–3 GHQ SWPA, Monthly Summaries of Opns, Dec 44 and Jan 45, copies in OCMH files; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 3, 23–32, 61–62; Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, p. 242.

[39] Information from the Japanese side in this and the next subsection is derived mainly from: Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 72, History of *Army Section Imperial GHQ*, pp. 156–61; No. 5, *4th Air Army* Opns, 1944–45, p. 64–73, 77; Statements of Col Misoo Matsumae (Staff *4th Air Army*), in G–2 GHQ FEC, Statements of Japanese Officials on World War II (hereinafter cited as States) (4 vols.), II, 434, 443.

[40] The total of about 200 is far less than the total aircraft the Seventh Fleet's CVE's alone later claimed to have destroyed in the Luzon area. The wide discrepancy between Allied estimates of damage and the Japanese figures is inexplicable.

extremely effective and potent force if the Japanese elected to use the aircraft in kamikaze attacks.

On the evening of 2 January the van group of the Luzon Attack Force—the mine sweeping and hydrographic group, with attachments—was entering the Mindanao Sea, where three Japanese planes ineffectually bombed it.[41] Early the next morning five or six kamikazes jumped the force and succeeded in inflicting minor damage on an oiler and a mine sweeper. By this time the main body of Admiral Oldendorf's force—battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and CVE's of Task Groups 77.2 and 77.4—was also well into Visayan waters. Late in the evening a lone kamikaze slipped through air cover and antiaircraft fire and crashed aboard a heavy cruiser of this second echelon, inflicting considerable damage.

Before noon the next day, 4 January, CVE-based planes shot down two would-be kamikazes, and Allied Air Forces planes, helping to cover the convoys, got another. Beginning at 1700 the Japanese ineffectually attacked the mine sweeping group, then off Mindoro, but not far to the rear a kamikaze caused such damage aboard a CVE that the ship had to be sunk after the loss of about 95 men killed and 65 wounded. The form Japanese air operations would take was becoming clear.

MacArthur at this time reasoned that the attacks had been staged from Luzon airfields, where Allied Air Forces land-based planes had met considerable opposition since the 2d. Late on the 4th the Southwest Pacific commander, having decided that land-based air operations against Luzon had not been as successful as anticipated, requested Halsey to commit the Third Fleet's planes against all Luzon at least as far south at Clark Field on 6 January.[42] Admiral Halsey agreed and, making every possible effort to cooperate with the Southwest Pacific forces, directed his pilots to hit air facilities at Manila as well as those at the Clark Field air center.

On 5 January, while the Third Fleet was making preparations for the new strikes, Oldendorf's forward groups were having a bad time. In a series of kamikaze attacks late in the afternoon—the time the Japanese most frequently chose, the Allied Naval Forces had learned—the Japanese had inflicted considerable damage on a CVE, a heavy cruiser, and a destroyer escort, while also hitting another CVE, a second heavy cruiser, two destroyers, a destroyer transport, a mine sweeper, a fleet tug, and an LCI(G). The first CVE was so badly damaged that it could not conduct flight operations on the 6th, S minus 3, and only limited operations thereafter. Personnel losses for the day were about 65 men killed and 195 wounded, practically all of them of the Allied Naval Forces. Of some forty-

[41] The general sources for the remainder of this subsection and all of the next are: Luzon Attack Force Rpt, pp. 10–18, 22–47, 52–75, 80–83; III Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–11, 17; *ibid.*, Encl D, Air, pp. 2–5, 15, and Encl H, Battle Damage, pp. 1–4; VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–14, and Encl D, Chron Rpt, pp. 5–19; TG 77.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 7–32, 35–42, 48–56; TG 79.1 (part of Wilkinson's command) Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 9–11, and Encl A, Chron Log, pp. 9–25; TG 79.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 6–14, 42–43; TG 77.9 (Reinforcement Gp) Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–6, and Encl A, Chron Log, pp. 10–23; TU 77.4.2 (CVE's) Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 1–3, 6–13, 16–18; TU 77.4.4 (CVE's) Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 9–18, 21–28, 30–35, 38–41; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 4–11, 47–56; Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, pp. 243–46; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 409–13.

[42] Rad, MacArthur to Halsey, CX–55815, 4 Jan 45, in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45.

five Japanese planes attacking during the day, almost all were destroyed.

Nor were the kamikazes the only Japanese forces the advance groups encountered. In midafternoon two Japanese destroyers were discovered moving toward the mine sweepers, now off Manila Bay. An American destroyer and two Australian frigates tried to intercept the Japanese vessels but were unable to close within effective range. Oldendorf then ordered the CVE's to launch strikes against the Japanese ships. The CVE-based planes severely damaged both destroyers, which put back into Manila Bay sometime during the night.

Far to the rear, the amphibious assault convoys had no trouble from Japanese planes on the 5th, but developed a number of contacts with Japanese submarines. During the midafternoon a midget submarine fired two torpedoes toward the portion of the convoy that included the *Boise,* MacArthur's command post afloat. Both torpedoes missed and the submarine was later sunk by combined sea and air action. Another submarine, which could not be found, fired a torpedo or two at a group of LST's with no effect.

On the morning of the 6th, Third Fleet carriers launched attacks from a position about 120 miles off northeastern Luzon. Weather conditions, together with Japanese dispersal and camouflage measures, reduced the effectiveness of the strikes, and Halsey's planes claimed the destruction of only thirty-two Japanese aircraft.

The Kamikaze Threat

It was small wonder that the Third Fleet had found so few planes, for most of the operational aircraft the Japanese still had on Luzon were engaged in attacks against Admiral Oldendorf's groups, now operating in or near Lingayen Gulf. At dawn on the 6th, CVE's and escorts took up air support positions just northwest of the gulf, Task Group 77.6 moved into the gulf to begin sweeping operations, and the fire support vessels of Task Group 77.2 steamed into position to bombard shore installations. Mine sweeping started at 0700, almost coincidentally with a series of Japanese air attacks that lasted for the next twelve hours.

Between 0700 and 0800 Japanese planes undertook some orthodox air attacks, bombing and strafing two destroyers, a destroyer transport, and three mine sweepers, but causing little damage. Kamikaze attacks began about 1130, and by noon the Japanese had severely damaged a battleship and two destroyers and had inflicted lesser damage on two other destroyers. In the afternoon kamikazes sank 1 mine sweeper; severely damaged another battleship, 2 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser, and 1 destroyer transport; and caused light damage aboard a heavy cruiser, 3 destroyers, a mine sweeper, and a seaplane tender. The heavy cruiser *Louisville,* hit for the second time in two days, had to retire from the gulf and join the CVE group outside, and a destroyer transport, also hit for the second time, likewise had to give up active operations. The Japanese attacks killed nearly 170 men and wounded 500 more; misdirected friendly antiaircraft fire caused a few additional casualties.

From their results, the Japanese air operations since 2 January can best be characterized by the term "limited success." So far, they had sunk two ships and caused damage of varying degrees to

some thirty others, and killed approximately 330 men and wounded about 760. But the Japanese had not forced the forward elements of the Luzon Attack Force to retire—on the contrary, mine sweeping and bombardment had progressed pretty much as planned. Nevertheless, Oldendorf and other Army and Navy commanders in the Southwest Pacific Area were worried.

Admiral Oldendorf was worried with good reason. Previously, kamikaze operations against his ships and those of other naval commands, though dangerous, had generally been executed by relatively untrained pilots who had taken few precautions to avoid detection and antiaircraft fire and who often appeared to be flying partially damaged, lightly armored planes carrying little ordnance. In January the kamikazes had been operating in a far different manner.

There was now a definite program of kamikaze operations, for the vast majority of the perhaps one hundred Japanese aircraft that had attacked the forces under Admiral Oldendorf's command since 2 January had at least attempted kamikaze crashes. In addition, the pilots seemed to be more skilled. They took every advantage of radar-blanketing terrain, especially in the Lingayen Gulf area, and flew toward target ships at extremely low altitudes, thus helping to avoid both radar and visual detection. Flight tactics included radical maneuvering designed not only to avoid antiaircraft fire and Allied planes but also to confuse observers as to which ship was the actual target. Finally, many of the kamikaze planes were heavily armored and armed.

The Allies had expected great results from the relatively new proximity fuze for shipboard 5-inch antiaircraft weapons, but the Japanese planes usually appeared so suddenly and took such violent evasive action that 5-inch batteries could seldom track properly. The employment of the expensive special ammunition was, therefore, generally useless, and was sometimes even dangerous to friendly ships. Having missed approaching kamikazes by such distances that fuzes were not activated, shells sometimes sailed on to explode on or near Allied vessels, thereby causing some damage and many casualties. The heavy cruiser H.M.A.S. *Shropshire*, which used its 8-inch batteries in antiaircraft barrages with projectiles set to explode at either 2,500 or 5,000 yards, evidently found her answer to the suicide planes. How effective the method was cannot be accurately ascertained, but it appeared to observers that a number of the kamikazes turned away from the *Shropshire* toward other ships. At any rate, kamikazes never hit the *Shropshire*.

Other Australian ships and the U.S. Navy vessels, finding their 4.7-inch or 5-inch ammunition ineffective, fell back on their automatic weapons batteries—40-mm.'s and 20-mm.'s. However, Admiral Oldendorf reported that the projectiles of these guns did not have sufficient explosive power or impact to knock out heavily armored kamikazes, even though those planes were hit many times as they drove through a veritable hail of antiaircraft fire.

CVE-based planes had also proved unable to stop the kamikaze attacks. The CVE's had maintained local air superiority in the Lingayen area and over other convoys on their way to the gulf, but kamikazes continually slipped through the air cover, and the CVE-based planes

had knocked down less than half of all Japanese aircraft destroyed from 2 through 6 January. Interception, as a result of the Japanese flight tactics and the radar problems, became largely a matter of luck in the Lingayen Gulf area.

By evening of 6 January Admiral Oldendorf had concluded that the terms "local air superiority" and "adequate air cover" as understood before the Luzon operation had little meaning in the face of determined kamikaze attacks. What was required, he said, was a program of offensive air operations designed to keep all Japanese airfields within range neutralized until all Japanese planes were found and destroyed. His CVE's, he pointed out, could not undertake such a task. For one thing, they had too many other missions and for another they were too few in number even to undertake all their close support missions. Finally, Admiral Oldendorf went on, the planes with which the CVE's were equipped were simply not good enough to cope with the type of aircraft the Japanese were employing for the kamikaze attacks.

Some thought of taking his ships out of Lingayen Gulf undoubtedly passed through Admiral Oldendorf's mind on the morning of 6 January, but he well realized the implications of such a retirement. He decided, instead, that if the kamikazes could not be physically defeated, they might be beaten psychologically. Therefore, he saw to it that the mine sweepers continued their operations despite damage. Then, in mid-afternoon on the 6th, he sent in the bombardment battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, not only to undertake assigned missions but also to make the Japanese think that their suicide operations were ineffective. Despite the damage they incurred that day, the bombardment and mine sweeping groups did not begin retiring from the gulf's confined waters to take up night dispositions until almost 1930, about an hour after the last kamikaze raids.

As darkness came on 6 January, Admiral Oldendorf was worried about what the morrow might bring, and again with good cause. When his forces had sortied from Leyte Gulf on 2 January, intelligence estimates had led him to expect that the Japanese would have 300 to 400 operational planes on Luzon, with the capability of bringing in reinforcements in sufficient numbers to mount daily air attacks with 150 planes for a period of ten days or more.[43] So far as the Admiral could ascertain by the 6th—from the reports of the Third Fleet, the Allied Air Forces, and the air and surface elements under his command—the Japanese could have lost less than 125 aircraft so far, giving them at least 225 operational planes on Luzon alone with which to continue their kamikaze program.

Oldendorf's estimate seemed close to reality the next morning, when Admiral Halsey reported that photographs taken by Third Fleet planes on the afternoon of 6 January indicated that 237 apparently operational Japanese aircraft were on Luzon, most of them based at Clark Field.[44] How the Third Fleet's intelligence officers arrived at this estimate is unknown, for by dusk on 6 January the Japanese actually had less than fifty operational aircraft left on the island. But Oldendorf could not know this, nor could he know that the Japanese had no

[43] See above, ch. II.

[44] Rad, Halsey to Nimitz and MacArthur, 0020 7 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 6 Jan 45.

intention of exercising their capability of flying in strong reinforcements from Formosa and the home islands. He knew that the Japanese had not yet mounted attacks with their 150-plane daily potential, and he also knew that the number of attacking planes had mounted steadily every day since 2 January.

Oldendorf believed that the kamikaze attacks would continue, an opinion shared by General Willoughby, who now thought it possible that the kamikaze operations constituted one phase of a co-ordinated counterattack plan that would also involve operations of naval surface elements.[45] The worries that such estimates must have raised in MacArthur's and Kinkaid's minds were certainly not put to rest when, late on the 6th, Oldendorf reported that there was a vital and urgent need for additional air support at Lingayen Gulf.

Recommending that the Allied Air Forces redouble its efforts against Luzon and that the Third Fleet move to the Lingayen area, Admiral Oldendorf pointed out that much more damage to the forces under his command would invite the Japanese Navy to sortie in some strength, precipitating an action with which his own forces were becoming progressively less prepared to cope. He went on to say that if kamikazes went to work on the amphibious convoys — now well within Visayan waters —the results might be disastrous. He concluded with the ominous suggestion that the situation warranted immediate reconsideration of all current plans.[46]

On the basis of information previously available, Admiral Kinkaid had already taken steps to increase the weight of Allied air effort against Luzon. First, he had recommended to General MacArthur that no more air elements be diverted to deception operations along the south coast of Luzon, but that planes assigned to these activities be reallocated to missions against Japanese fields on Luzon. General Kenney immediately issued orders reducing the scale of the diversionary efforts. Second, Kinkaid had requested Halsey to strike Luzon again on S minus 2. To this request the Third Fleet commander had agreed reluctantly, since he had planned to hit Formosa on the 7th. Halsey felt that further operations in the Luzon area would simply tie down his fast carrier groups to a passive role, and he thought it a better idea to bomb Formosa, wnence he erroneously believed most of the Japanese air strikes were originating. Nevertheless, he reversed the Third Fleet's course, that force having already started toward Formosa.[47]

When he received Admiral Oldendorf's late evening message, Kinkaid further requested the Third Fleet to attack all Japanese fields in the Lingayen Gulf area, heretofore reserved for CVE-based planes. Kinkaid hoped that the Third Fleet, in co-operation with the CVE's and the Allied Air Forces, would be able

[45] G–2 GHQ SWPA DSEI 1016, 7 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 7 Jan 45.

[46] Rad, Oldendorf to Kinkaid, 0614 6 Jan 45, VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, Encl D, Chron Rpt, p. 12; Rad, Kinkaid to Halsey, 1834 6 Jan 45, and Rad, Oldendorf to Kinkaid, 2110 6 Jan 45, last two in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45.

[47] Rad, Kinkaid to MacArthur, 0644 5 Jan 45; Rad, Kinkaid to Halsey, 1834 6 Jan 45; Rad, Halsey to Kinkaid, 2054 6 Jan 45. All in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45. Admiral Halsey, in Halsey and Bryan, *Halsey's Story*, page 243, states he received the request to repeat the Luzon strikes from MacArthur, but no such message from MacArthur can be found. For cancellation of deception operations, see above, page 53 and note 25.

to place a day-long neutralizing blanket over all Japanese fields on Luzon. Admiral Halsey agreed. The Allied Naval Forces commander also wanted the fast carrier groups to move to new positions west of Luzon in order to provide additional support for all echelons of the Luzon Attack Force and to interpose itself between Luzon and any Japanese surface elements that might approach under cover of the bad weather then blanketing the South China Sea. Kenney seconded Kinkaid's recommendations, but decision was deferred.[48]

MacArthur proposed further changes. Also believing now that the kamikazes were coming from Formosa, he requested, through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that on 8 January B-29's strike Formosa airfields instead of their scheduled targets, the port facilities in northern Formosa. Later, thinking that the Japanese might be staging kamikazes to Formosa through the Ryukyus, General MacArthur asked that in addition the B-29's attack Okinawa airfields. The Joint Chiefs agreed to these requests, but bad weather conditions prevented the B-29's from carrying out the new assignments as planned. Successful B-29 strikes against the Formosa fields were undertaken too late to do any good, even if the Japanese had been flying kamikazes from the Formosa area.[49]

Halsey's planes, still hampered by poor weather conditions, struck Luzon fields as scheduled on 7 January, claiming to have destroyed about 80 Japanese aircraft during the day. The effort did not halt Japanese air attacks. Of the 40 to 50 operational aircraft the Japanese had left—it appears that the bulk of the planes the Third Fleet's aircraft destroyed on 7 January were not operational to begin with—20 or 25 attacked the various echelons of the Luzon Attack Force.

At Lingayen Gulf the Japanese attacks of 7 January were on a greatly reduced scale, and most of them were of the orthodox type. However, these planes did succeed in sinking two of Oldendorf's mine sweepers. Far to the south, Japanese planes attacked the amphibious convoys intermittently throughout the day, but succeeded only in damaging one VII Amphibious Force LST. During the following night VII Amphibious Force destroyers sank a Japanese destroyer off Manila Bay, one that had put back into the bay on the 5th.

The next day, 8 January, the Third Fleet began moving toward Formosa, refueling on the way. MacArthur and Halsey had both recommended against Admiral Kinkaid's proposal that the Third Fleet take up a covering position off Luzon, and Admiral Nimitz had accordingly instructed Halsey to proceed against Formosa as originally planned. MacArthur, who still believed that the kamikazes were coming from Formosa, also suggested that the Third Fleet attack Formosa on S-day, 9 January, especially if the fleet were not in position to launch major strikes against the island on the 8th.

Nimitz, MacArthur, and Halsey were

[48] Rad, Kinkaid to Halsey, 0324 7 Jan 45, Sixth Army G-3 Jnl File Luzon, 5-11 Jan 45; Chamberlin Comments, 20 Jan 57.

[49] In addition to sources noted previously, information on B-29 operations in support of the Luzon assault is from: Rads, MacArthur to Arnold, CX-56001, 7 Jan, and CX-56140, 9 Jan 45, CM-IN's 5768 and 8096; Rads, Arnold to MacArthur, [Maj Gen Curtis E.] LeMay, Wedemeyer, *et al.*, 7 Jan, 9 Jan, 9 Jan, and 10 Jan 45, CM-OUT's 88424, 89316, 89317, and 89580; CINCPAC-CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 23-26, 66.

looking upon the Third Fleet's fast carrier groups as a strategic weapon of opportunity that should not be tied down to close support of a landing except in an extreme emergency. They realized that Oldendorf and Kinkaid were justifiably influenced by the damage the kamikazes had inflicted upon the Luzon Attack Force, but however reluctant to act against the recommendations of the subordinate commanders, the three senior officers felt that the best employment for the Third Fleet was at Formosa, from which the Japanese air was apparently operating.[50]

Poor weather conditions again curtailed the Third Fleet's operations on 9 January and the strike against Formosa that day—none was launched on the 8th—did not prove as successful as hoped. Third Fleet planes destroyed 47 Japanese aircraft, 5 of them in the air, sank 9 Japanese ships, and damaged 19 other surface vessels.

Meanwhile, the situation at Lingayen Gulf had taken a turn for the better. On the 8th, kamikazes struck the heavy cruiser H.M.A.S. *Australia* for the third and fourth times, inflicting such damage that Oldendorf had to relieve the ship of its bombardment assignments. That, however, was the only important damage Oldendorf's groups suffered on the 8th. For the amphibious convoys, on the other hand, things proved a bit hotter than previously. Kamikazes seriously damaged two escorting CVE's and inflicted minor damage on an LSI, an LST, and an attack transport (APA). In all, the Japanese employed no more than fifteen planes during the day, but had damaged six ships, killed about 50 men, and wounded around 65 more.

Throughout S-day, as assault operations got under way at Lingayen Gulf, about fifteen more Japanese planes conducted scattered attacks. Kamikazes inflicted severe damage on a battleship, hit the light cruiser *Columbia* for the third time and H.M.A.S. *Australia* for the fifth time, and damaged one destroyer escort. Friendly antiaircraft fire, for the second time, inflicted many casualties aboard the battleship *Colorado*.

The Japanese were not quite through. On 10 January eight kamikazes attempted attacks, succeeding in damaging an APA and a destroyer escort. On the 12th, striking with five planes, the Japanese severely damaged a destroyer transport and inflicted lesser damage on another destroyer escort and a destroyer transport. West of Luzon kamikazes, on the same day, hit convoys on their way to and from Lingayen Gulf heavily damaging 3 Libertys and lightly damaging another and 2 LST's. The 13th of January brought with it the last significant air attacks on elements of the Luzon Attack Force. At Lingayen Gulf that day Japanese planes severely damaged another CVE, an APA, and an LST, while lightly damaging a destroyer transport. On the same day another APA suffered a bit from friendly antiaircraft fire.

That was the end. For the Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific Area, it was more than enough. In the month following 13 December, when the Japanese first launched air attacks against the Mindoro-bound convoys, Japanese planes had succeeded in sinking 24 vessels and damaging 67 others. (*Table 1*) Shipboard casualties from the air attacks

[50] Rad, MacArthur to Nimitz and Halsey, 8 Jan 45, cited in VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, Encl D, Chron Rpt, p. 16; Chamberlin Comments, 20 Jan 57.

TABLE 1—RESULTS OF JAPANESE KAMIKAZE OPERATIONS
13 DECEMBER 1944–13 JANUARY 1945

Type of Vessel	Sunk	Heavily Damaged	Lightly Damaged
Battleships		3	1
Heavy cruisers		2	1
Light cruisers		3	
Escort carriers	1	4	2
Destroyers	1	4	11
Destroyer escorts		3	2
Destroyer transports		2	1
Mine sweepers	3	1	3
PT boats	1	1	1
Attack troop transports		1	3
Fleet oilers			2
Fleet tugs			1
Small tankers	2		
PT tenders	1		
Seaplane tenders		1	
Liberty ships	[a]6	4	2
Landing ships, infantry			1
Landing ships, medium			1
Landing ships, tank	6	1	4
Landing craft, infantry	1		1
Landing craft, mechanized	2		
Total	24	30	37

[a]Includes three Liberty ships beached and abandoned at Mindoro.

Source: The sources for this table are primarily the naval documents cited previously in this chapter and Morison, *The Liberation*, pages cited in note 8, p. 46, above. The totals in the table will not necessarily agree with the text, because the table makes allowances for "repeats." The table also includes one PT destroyed and a Liberty ship severely damaged as a result of the naval action off Mindoro. Finally, the table includes vessels damaged indirectly as a result of kamikaze operations, such as the destroyer *Moale* being damaged by ammunition exploding on another vessel.

numbered approximately 1,230 men killed and 1,800 wounded. Of these, the vast majority were men of the United States and Australian naval forces. Losses among merchant seamen were about 275 killed and 100 wounded or injured, while U.S. Army shipboard casualties numbered around 150 killed and 200 wounded.[51]

In the same period, 13 December–13 January, the Japanese had lost perhaps 600 aircraft on or over Luzon and the Visayas to Allied air attacks or in kamikaze operations. Of the total, probably at least a third had been destroyed in attempted or successful kamikaze attacks. With these losses, Japanese air power on Luzon ceased to exist. Although the Allies could not yet know it, they had nothing more to fear from Japanese air strength in the Philippines.

When the kamikaze attacks tapered off, Allied forces had yet to develop an

[51] Casualty figures are based upon the sources previously cited; upon Morison, *The Liberation*, *passim*; and upon telephone conversation, 28 May 1952, author with Mrs. Kathorne A. Daly, Division of Insurance, U.S. Maritime Administration.

effective defense. The only answer seemed to be Admiral Oldendorf's proposals for complete neutralization of all Japanese fields within range. The impossibility of accomplishing this with the means available in the Pacific during early 1945 was first demonstrated at Luzon in January and again at Okinawa in April, when damage to naval forces far surpassed that at Luzon.[52] In both campaigns kamikaze attacks ceased at Japanese initiative—at Luzon because the Japanese refused to send in strong air reinforcements; at Okinawa because they were unwilling to continue the heavy attrition of aircraft attendant upon such operations, preferring to save planes and pilots for the defense of the homeland. What would have happened at Luzon, where Allied air strength was weaker than at Okinawa, had the Japanese elected to exercise their capability of mounting attacks and reinforcements from Formosa is among the imponderables of World War II.

Mine Sweeping and Preliminary Bombardment

At Admiral Oldendorf's direction, mine sweeping, hydrographic surveys, shore bombardment, and support aircraft attacks had continued throughout the period of the worst kamikaze operations at Lingayen Gulf.[53] When mine sweeping began about 0700 on 6 January, the day that the kamikaze attacks were at their height, Oldendorf expected reports of heavy mine fields and strong beach obstacles. Much to everyone's surprise, exploratory sweeps during the morning turned up only two floating mines and none of the moored type.[54] When sweeping was completed on the 8th, only four mines had been found.

On the 7th underwater demolition teams had slipped into the gulf to begin their hazardous task of destroying beach obstacles, and hydrographic ships began marking shoals and taking soundings. Again contrary to expectations, no beach obstacles were found. The "frog men" encountered only a little rifle and machine gun fire, and the few beach defenses they observed appeared to be unoccupied. Their tasks and those of hydrographic ships were completed on the 8th.

While this work was under way, the CVE-based aircraft were bombing and strafing targets along the gulf's beaches and at inland points, flying 250 to 300 sorties during the period from 6 through 8 January. Meanwhile, those oft-forgotten but highly important naval aircraft—battleship-based and cruiser-based seaplanes — were helping to direct the preliminary beach bombardment, which also began on the morning of 6 January.[55]

First targets were Japanese installations in the San Fernando area, on the

[52] See Appleman *et al.*, *Okinawa*, pp. 96–102, 489. During the Okinawa operation kamikazes alone sank 26 ships and damaged 164 others. There the Japanese used about 1,900 aircraft in kamikaze attacks, while during the Mindoro-Luzon invasion period they employed about 200 in such operations. The percentage return was thus much greater for the Mindoro-Luzon operation.

[53] This subsection is based principally upon: Luzon Attack Force Rpt, pp. 13–14, 26–33, 48–52; TG 77.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 1, 6, 18–20; TU 77.4.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, p. 4; CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Opns in POA During Jan 45, pp. 52–54.

[54] Col. Russell W. Volckmann, commanding a guerrilla force known as the U.S. Army Forces in the Philippines (Northern Luzon), USAFIP (NL), claimed that his men had removed many mines from Lingayen Gulf during late 1944. Volckmann Comments, 10 Jan 57.

[55] See, for example, extract of report of USS *Colorado*, in Luzon Attack Force Rpt, p. 60.

east side of the gulf, and on Santiago Island and the nearby mainland at the northwest corner of the gulf. Spotting planes could locate no suitable military targets in the Santiago Island area, and the bombardment vessels fired only a few rounds of ammunition in that direction. Bombardment of the San Fernando area, answered by several ineffectual rounds from Japanese shore batteries, had lasted about two and a half hours when Admiral Oldendorf stopped it in order to send his battleships and cruisers further into Lingayen Gulf to support his beleaguered mine sweepers and to make the Japanese think the kamikaze operations were having no effect. The vessels were in position to fire at the southern beaches about 1715, one section hitting the town of Lingayen and its airstrip and the other concentrating on the San Fabian area, at the gulf's southeast corner. The firing was continually interrupted by kamikazes, and when it ceased at 1915 not more than half an hour of actual bombardment had taken place. The Japanese did not return fire.

Oldendorf's ships again covered the southern beaches on the 7th, once more with no answer from the Japanese. The day's firing ended about 1730, when the bombardment vessels, as was their practice, began retiring from the gulf's confined waters to take up night positions outside. Returning on the morning of the 8th to resume bombardment about 0800, one section again hit the Lingayen area. About ten minutes later a destroyer standing close inshore and a spotting plane from a battleship reported that Filipinos were forming a parade, complete with United States and Philippine flags, in the town of Lingayen. The fire was shifted to more westerly targets while leaflets were quickly prepared instructing the Filipinos to clear the area. A spotting plane dropped the leaflets and the paraders dispersed. Bombardment started again as soon as the area seemed vacated.

The reasons for resuming the bombardment of Lingayen and its environs in the face of this friendly demonstration ashore are unknown, especially since neither underwater demolition teams nor spotting planes had discovered any signs of Japanese activity in the area. The town, at least, seemed safely in the hands of the Filipinos. The most obvious explanation is that erroneous intelligence, having indicated that strong defenses would be encountered in the area, made it incumbent upon Admiral Oldendorf to continue the bombardment whether he wanted to or not. Too much was at stake to take a chance. Actually he could have put a force of seamen ashore on Lingayen Gulf's southern beaches on 8 January without fear — indeed, the entire beachhead area could probably have been occupied by men from the bombardment vessels without much risk anytime after Oldendorf's vessels reached Lingayen Gulf on 6 January. One can but ponder on the amusing (and undoubtedly confusing) results had the I and XIV Corps arrived at Lingayen Gulf to find the beaches already occupied by men of the Allied Naval Forces.

The Filipinos in the Lingayen area could hardly have been pleased as they saw their homes and public buildings damaged or destroyed by what to them must have seemed an unnecessary bombardment. It seems a tribute both to the Filipinos and to the prewar administra-

tion of the United States in the islands—as well as a severe and obvious indictment of Japanese occupation policies—that the people of the Philippines took such adversities in their stride, not permitting personal resentments to overcome judgment and loyalty.

Throughout the rest of 8 January, bombardment of the landing beach areas continued without incident. Practically no military installations or targets were found in the Lingayen town and airstrip area, and relatively few were discovered in the San Fabian region. The San Fabian bombardment vessels ran out of targets by 1530 and moved back up the gulf to strike the San Fernando area for another forty-five minutes, completing the task that the Japanese kamikazes had interrupted on the 6th. The Lingayen area ships had long since ceased their firing for the day. Thus ended preliminary bombardment operations.

That the bombardment, mine sweeping, and air operations in the Lingayen Gulf area had been successful as a preparation for an amphibious assault there can be no doubt. Ashore, considering the absence of Japanese defenses, air and naval bombardment targets had been more than adequately covered, while in the gulf the mine sweepers found only four mines. Judging the effectiveness of the bombardment is another matter. Since the ground forces suffered very few casualties during the landing, the shelling and strafing would appear to have been completely effective, but as Admiral Oldendorf pointed out, the "Japanese tactics of withdrawal from [the] beach areas probably made much of the bombardment unnecessary." [56] In the face of the kamikaze attacks, the situation might have been far different had the Luzon Attack Force encountered expected mine fields and shore defenses.

During the night of 8–9 January Oldendorf's forces cruised just within Lingayen Gulf and across its entrance. The amphibious attack convoys reached the entrance about 0400 on the 9th, S-day, and, the bombardment vessels leading, immediately began moving southward to assigned anchorages. As the amphibious shipping deployed to begin landing operations, the fire support vessels (control now vested in Admirals Barbey and Wilkinson) took up positions for last-minute preassault shelling. Under cover of this fire, transports began lowering boats and loading them with troops; LST's disgorged LVT's and LVT (A)'s of the assault waves. All was in readiness for what many of the participating officers and men of the Luzon Attack Force and the Sixth Army firmly expected to be a bloody shambles.

[56] TG 77.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, p. 36.

PART TWO

INVASION

CHAPTER IV

Establishing the Beachhead

Considered as one event in the Allied campaign against Japan, the assault on Luzon contained within itself great strategic significance. But to the Sixth Army, the attack across the Lingayen Gulf beaches was a tactical introduction to the Southwest Pacific Area's strategic goal — the recapture of the Central Plains–Manila Bay region. The landing would serve General Krueger's forces as the means to secure a base area into which to pour supplies and reinforcements, on which to establish air support units, and from which to launch subsequent offensives against the main body of the Japanese *14th Area Army*. Accordingly, Sixth Army had limited initial objectives. It would secure the terrain within the confines of the Army Beachhead Line and simultaneously deploy to safeguard its flanks against Japanese counterattack. Detailed planning did not extend beyond this preliminary stage. Sixth Army had only the barest outline of a plan for operations inland from the beachhead line — an outline based upon a concept developed at GHQ SWPA. This concept called for Sixth Army to push generally southward from the Lingayen assault beaches and secure crossings over the Agno River, the first major natural defensive barrier on the way to Manila. Once poised along the south bank of the Agno, Sixth Army would prepare to strike on southward toward Manila and Manila Bay. The manner in which the drive beyond the Agno would be conducted was left for future determination depending upon the developing tactical situation on the rest of Luzon.

The Assault: S-day–S Plus 2

First light on S-day, 9 January 1945, revealed an impressive armada of Allied vessels in Lingayen Gulf. The day dawned with a light but broken overcast. Visibility was excellent. Regular, gentle swells lent an aspect of serenity to the gulf's waters, and the surf breaking along the gulf's shores was neither high nor rough. As the sun rose higher, a touch of heat in the tropical dawn became more marked—a man could easily feel that on shore the day might wax as hot as the hinges of hell before evening brought relief. Weather conditions, if anyone aboard the ships of the assault convoys thought to make the comparison, were far different from those the Japanese had encountered at Lingayen Gulf in December 1941. The Japanese had gone ashore during dark, predawn hours through heavy, rough surf. Black skies and intermittent rain squalls had reduced visibility almost to the vanishing point, and the gulf's choppy waters

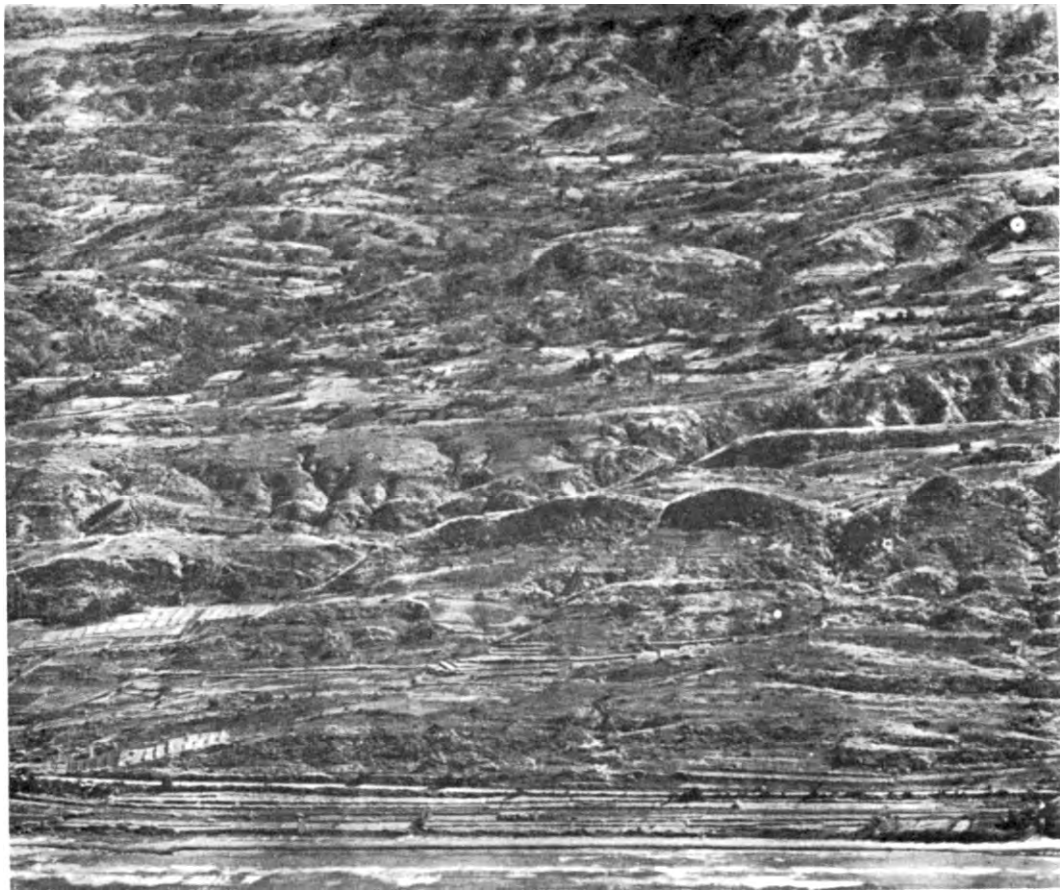


SOUTHERN LANDING BEACH AT LINGAYEN. *Note provincial capitol building, lower right.*

had thoroughly doused the invaders with chill spray.[1]

On 9 January 1945 the American assault troops awaiting debarkation from their transports could observe to their front (south) a generally flat vista broken only by the taller buildings of the towns of Lingayen and San Fabian. It was impossible even to guess what this featureless terrain might hold in the way of Japanese; the imagination could run riot as smoke, dust, and fires from preassault air and naval bombardment rose to obscure the shore line. To the left, ominously brooding, lay the grassy, open foothills of the gulf's eastern shore. Beyond these hills rose terracelike tiers of towering mountains that appeared at a distance to be heavily forested. It was only too easy for troops of the I Corps, coming in on the Sixth Army's left, to imagine what those dark mountains would contain. On the right the men of the XIV Corps had a view of the

[1] Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 128–29.



LOOKING INLAND, EASTERN SHORE OF LINGAYEN GULF

lower, more wooded hills of the Bolinao Peninsula, forming the western side of Lingayen Gulf. No need to worry much about the peninsula yet—no assault was scheduled for that side of the gulf and available intelligence indicated that few, if any, Japanese were located there. Yet, all in all, a man with a good pair of field glasses could decide for himself that this assault could be a sticky affair. Hills and mountains dominated both the eastern and the western flanks of the landing beaches, and the mountains stretched off southward (on the west) and southeastward as far as the eye could reach. Would the Japanese hold the flat land to the front? Would they defend the hills and mountains? Or would they launch counterattacks from yet invisible mountain valleys?

Ignoring the speculations of the assault infantry, the guns of naval fire support vessels began their S-day bombardment on schedule at 0700. At first the battleships, cruisers, destroyers, LCI (G)'s, LCI (R)'s (Landing Craft, Infantry,

Rocket), and LCI (M)'s (Landing Craft, Infantry, Mortar), directed their fires upon selected landing beaches. Admiral Kinkaid was especially well pleased with the performance of the LCI (M)'s, the main batteries of which were Army-manned 4.2-inch chemical mortars. The high-explosive mortar fire, Kinkaid thought in retrospect, seemed more effective for beach neutralization than the strafing undertaken by his CVE-based aircraft. But as the bombardment lifted from the landing beaches to the flanks of the assault area, troops of the leading waves were not concerned with such comparisons — their only concern was whether the beach bombardment, however executed, would indeed be effective.

The Right Flank

The ships of Admiral Wilkinson's III Amphibious Force began debarking XIV Corps assault troops about 0730.[2] Shortly thereafter, LVT's and LVT (A)'s disgorged from LST's to form the leading waves. At 0900 the first amphibians started shoreward from a line of departure approximately 4,500 yards offshore.

The landing beaches of the XIV Corps, on the Sixth Army's right, were located across the middle of Lingayen Gulf's southern shores and centered on Lingayen airstrip and the nearby grounds of the capitol of Pangasinan Province. (*Map 1*)* In peacetime one would have considered the shore line a beautiful swimming beach,[3] a magnificient strand of firm sand stretching eastward almost nine miles from the mouth of the Calmay River to the mouth of the Dagupan. The east bank of the Dagupan, which enters the gulf midway between Lingayen and San Fabian, delineated the boundary between the XIV and the I Corps, and bridges over the Dagupan were expected to provide the first easy means of contact between the two corps. Since there was a gap of over six miles between the I Corps' westernmost beaches and the XIV Corps' easternmost, it was imperative that the Dagupan crossings be seized without delay. Planners anticipated that inasmuch as I Corps troops would be a mile or so closer to the river at the moment of landing they would be the first to reach the bridges, but it was XIV Corps' responsibility to relieve I Corps at the crossings as soon as possible.

The 37th Infantry Division, landing on the XIV Corps' left, was to drive toward the Dagupan, while the 40th Infantry Division going ashore on the corps (and army) right flank, would make a quick thrust west and northwest to Port Sual and Alaminos. Port Sual, located at the southwestern corner of Lingayen Gulf, and at the western extremity of the Army Beachhead Line, possessed some importance as the site of minor port facilities. Alaminos, about twelve miles northwest of Port Sual, lay inland on the Bolinao Peninsula. Early capture of road junctions at Alaminos would help forestall Japanese attempts to organize counterattacks against the Sixth Army's right flank.

[2] Information on plans and organization in this subsection is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 1–7; XIV Corps FO 1, 30 Nov 44; III Amphib Force (TF 79) Attack Plan No. A–305–44, 27 Nov 44, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 2–5 Dec 44; 37th Inf Div FO 19, 12 Dec 44.

*Maps numbered in Roman are placed in inverse order inside the back cover.

[3] Such, indeed, was the author's reaction when he examined these beaches in April 1957.

The XIV Corps' assault force was composed of eight of the corps' eighteen available battalion landing teams. The reserve infantry battalion of each of the four assault regimental combat teams was to follow the first two battalions ashore rapidly, but each division would retain one RCT afloat in reserve until S plus 1 unless the RCT's presence ashore was required earlier.[4] Each of the four assault RCT's 105-mm. howitzer battalions would revert to division artillery control on S plus 1 or S plus 2, when all division and corps artillery would be ashore and an adequate artillery communications net would be functioning.

The XIV Corps' assault waves had no trouble forming, and they headed toward shore in good order.[5] Probably because the leading amphibians and LCI guide boats moved more slowly than anticipated—an ebb tide was still running—no landings were made exactly on schedule at 0930, but all XIV Corps assault waves were on the beach by 0940. Then came LCVP's (Landing Craft, Vehicle and Personnel), LCM's, LCT's, and LST's, all on schedules varying in detail from one beach to another.[6] Shore and beach parties soon started landward, and before 1100 general unloading was under way across all III Amphibious Force–XIV Corps beaches. There had been no opposition. Indeed, as soon as the naval bombardment had lifted from the assault beaches, Filipinos began appearing along the shore line, ready to aid the invading forces.

The 1st Battalion of 185th Infantry, 40th Division, landed on the corps' and army's extreme right. By noon, unopposed, the battalion had marched six miles westward to the mouth of the Agno River. Before dusk LVT (A)'s carried elements of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop across the river to set up a roadblock along the main road just three miles east of Port Sual. Meanwhile, the 2d Battalion, 185th Infantry, had pushed directly inland through the town of Lingayen and had crossed the Calmay River and an east-west stretch of the Agno, two of the largest water courses that sliced the terrain behind the Sixth Army's assault beaches. Nightfall found the regiment's left over four miles inland along Route 13. The 185th had encountered no Japanese during the day and had suffered no casualties.[7]

On the 40th Division's left the 160th Infantry had also gone ashore without trouble and by dusk, having ferried across the Calmay, was assembling almost four miles inland. The regiment had found few signs of Japanese activity and had suffered no casualties. The 2d Battalion, 108th Infantry, the 40th Division's assault reserve, came ashore about 1700 and assembled at Lingayen.[8]

[4] See app. A–3.

[5] The rest of this subsection is based mainly on: Luzon Attack Force Rpt, pp. 16, 32–35, 51–52; III Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, p. 12, and Encl C, Naval Gunfire, pp. 1–4; TG 77.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 28–30; TG 79.1 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, Encl A, Chron Log, pp. 15–17; TG 79.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 7–10; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 17–18; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 35–53; 37th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–21; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 37th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 9–11 and 11–15 Jan 45; 40th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–12; 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 9–12 Jan 45.

[6] See app. B.

[7] Additional information in this chapter on 185th Infantry operations is from: 185th Inf S–3 Per Rpts and Overlays, 9–12 Jan 45; 185th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 9–12 Jan 45; 185th Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

[8] No records of the 108th and 160th Infantry Regiments for the period 9 through 11 January can be located.

Immediately east of the 40th Division, the 37th Division's 148th Infantry poured ashore against no resistance.[9] The regiment found a bridge over the Calmay River in its sector destroyed, but LVT's ferried troops across during the afternoon. The 129th Infantry landed on the XIV Corps' left. While part of the regiment went straight inland and across the Calmay, other units swung east along the beach toward the mouth of the Dagupan River. A few Japanese hidden behind a low sand dune and in houses behind the dune put up a show of resistance, but were quickly silenced by fire from LVT (A)'s or LCI (G) 's.[10]

During the afternoon men of the 129th moved into Dagupan. Finding no signs of I Corps units in the area, the regiment crossed the Pantal River at the east edge of the city by LVT—the highway bridge was out—and once on the east bank quickly made contact with troops of the I Corps' 6th Infantry Division. Later in the day the 129th probed south three miles from Dagupan to Calasiao, where it found nearby bridges over the Pantal and Mayruso Rivers either destroyed or unsafe for heavy vehicles. At dusk the regiment extended its right westward along secondary roads to gain contact with the 148th Infantry. Movement in both regiments' sectors during the day had been strictly confined to roads and to the relatively narrow beach area. Numerous fish ponds and, beyond the Calmay River, many dry rice paddies had prevented cross-country operations.

By dusk on S-day the XIV Corps held a beachhead extending from Calasiao northwestward almost twenty miles to the outpost near Port Sual, a beachhead that penetrated inland for an average depth of some four miles. Practically unopposed—the corps' units had found only two very small groups of Japanese—the advance during the day "far exceeded the wildest dreams of those who had planned the operation."[11] In fact, everything had gone so easily that division and corps intelligence and operations officers had some forebodings about what the morrow might bring.

S plus 1, 10 January, proved little different from S-day in the XIV Corps' zone, and the advance inland continued to resemble chessboard tactics. Probing westward toward Port Sual, elements of the 185th Infantry, on the corps' right, encountered a little resistance, but not enough to constitute a real threat. The 160th Infantry pushed south on Route 13, taking over along this route of advance southward from the 185th, and by nightfall was nearly eight miles inland. A platoon of Japanese infantry, reinforced by four armored cars, had delayed the 160th. The regiment lost approximately 5 men killed and 10 wounded—the heaviest casualties suffered by any regiment of the XIV Corps during the first three days of the Luzon Campaign. The 160th Infantry killed 25 to 30 Japanese in scattered contacts.

On 11 January the 185th Infantry patrolled and consolidated its positions on the west flank, suffered no casualties, killed 5 Japanese, and captured another.

[9] Additional information on the 148th Infantry is from: 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, 1 Nov 44–4 Mar 45, p. 2; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 145th Inf S–3 Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

[10] Additional information on 129th Infantry operations is from: 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–3; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 129th Inf Regtl Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

[11] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 53.

Early in the morning a Chevrolet sedan of 1940 or 1941 vintage, occupied by two Japanese, came calmly down the coast road from the direction of Port Sual. Obviously unaware that Company C, 185th Infantry, maintained a roadblock on the highway, the Japanese practically ran into the American outpost before they realized their situation. Before they could recover from their surprise and consternation, both Japanese were dead, and Company C had acquired some luxurious transportation.

With the 185th Infantry displacing generally westward and the 160th moving south, a gap began to develop along the 40th Division's front. Accordingly, General Griswold, the corps commander, released the 108th Infantry (less 2d Battalion) from corps reserve and late on the 10th Maj. Gen. Rapp Brush, commanding the 40th Division, started the 108th south after the 160th Infantry. The 160th reached Aguilar, a road junction town ten miles inland, about noon on the 11th, finding the town already in the hands of Filipino guerrillas.

Progress in the 37th Division's area on 10 and 11 January was even faster. Pushing generally southeast from its bridgehead across the Calmay, the 148th Infantry, against no resistance, reached the Army Beachhead Line in its zone during the afternoon of the 10th. The next day the regiment outposted the Army Beachhead Line from Dumpay west four miles to Bacnar, on the 37th–40th Division boundary in this area. Patrols then probed five miles south from Bacnar to the Agno River at Urbiztondo, which guerrillas held. But when a patrol of the 37th Reconnaissance Troop sped south out of Dumpay toward the Agno River at Bayambang, it found indications that the Japanese were going to defend the Bayambang crossing.

On the division left the 129th Infantry, on 10 January, marched south eight miles from Calasiao to be greeted by guerrillas at Malasiqui. A skirmish with a Japanese force south of Malasiqui late in the day halted the advance and the bulk of the regiment held at Malasiqui during the 11th, maintaining contact with I Corps units to the north and with the 148th Infantry to the west. The 37th Division's remaining regiment, the 145th Infantry, remained in reserve to the rear.

By evening on S plus 2 the XIV Corps had either physically occupied or outposted practically all the area within the Army Beachhead Line in its zone. Only on the corps' extreme right, on high ground southeast of Port Sual, had no units reached the beachhead line, but the corps had found no evidence that organized groups of Japanese held any portion of that rough, largely trackless, hill country. The XIV Corps had penetrated approximately ten miles southward on its right to Aguilar and over eighteen miles on the left along the corps boundary. In the absence of significant Japanese opposition, the corps' units had advanced in a somewhat mechanical manner. There had existed no chance for the spectacular or the heroic—for the most part the corps had secured undefended terrain methodically, slowed primarily by requirements of caution and the danger of outrunning its supplies. The corps had a firm hold on the ground it had traversed, but one weakness in the corps' situation became steadily more apparent. The corps' left flank was exposed for a distance of some three miles, since the I Corps had been unable to keep pace in the advance southward.

The Left Flank

Unlike those in the XIV Corps' area, the I Corps' beaches were widely separated.[12] The 6th Division, going ashore on the I Corps' right, landed on Blue Beaches 1 and 2, which centered on a sandy coast about midway between the mouth of the Dagupan and that of the Bued River, five miles to the northeast. The west bank of the Bued marked the boundary between the 6th and 43d Divisions. Just east of the river's mouth at San Fabian the 103d RCT, 43d Division, landed on White Beach 3. Almost two miles to the northeast lay White Beach 2, the 169th RCT's landing site. At White Beach 1, adjoining White 2 and opposite the barrio (small town) of Mabilao, the 2d Battalion of the 172d Infantry was the assault unit—the division's, corps', and army's leftmost element.

I Corps held out as reserve the 6th Division's 63d RCT. The 1st and 3d Battalions, 172d Infantry, prepared to land on call at any White Beach, comprised the 43d Division's reserve, while a battalion of the 20th Infantry was the principal reserve for the 6th Division.

As in the XIV Corps' zone, and for similar reasons, none of the I Corps' assault landing took place exactly on schedule. On the corps' right, the 20th Infantry landed unopposed over Blue Beach 2 shortly after 0930. Almost simultaneously, the 1st Infantry went ashore at Blue 1.[13] Moving northeast along the beach to the Bued's mouth and then south about a mile and a half along the west bank of the river, troops of the 1st Infantry secured damaged rail and highway bridges across the stream in midafternoon, and established contact with the 43d Division. Then the 1st Infantry's right pushed rapidly south to Mangaldan, three miles inland. At dusk patrols reached out to the Patalan River, a mile east of Mangaldan, and hurried westward to make contact with the 20th Infantry. The 20th had meanwhile established contact with the 37th Division at both Dagupan and Calasiao. Only one small group of Japanese, which the 1st Infantry encountered, disputed 6th Division's advance during the day. By nightfall the 6th Division's penetration—averaging about three and a half miles—was not as deep as that achieved by the 37th Division on S-day, but the 6th Division had more than kept pace with the 43d Division, on the I Corps' left.

The 43d Division had the most hazardous and difficult S-day tasks. On the division's left low hills lay scarcely three-quarters of a mile inland from White Beaches 1 and 2. Stretching northward, and coming still closer to Lingayen Gulf's eastern shore, a first line of low, grass-covered hills formed a somewhat broken ridge line, the seaward slopes of which grew steeper as the hills proceeded north along the coast. Beyond this first range, which averaged less than 250 feet in height, lay another, more irregular north-south ridge that rose to 350 feet. Still

[12] General sources for this information are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 17–18; VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 15–19, and Encl D, Chron Rpt, pp. 16–18; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–11, 22–28; 6th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–6; 6th Inf Div G–3 Jnl and G–3 Jnl Files, 9–12 Jan 45; 43d Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–8; 43d Inf Div G–3 Per Rpts, 10–12 Jan 45 (9 Jan missing); 43d Inf Div G–3 Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

[13] Additional information on the 1st Infantry is from: 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–8; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 1st Inf S–3 Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45; 1st Inf Msg, Order, and Ltr File, 9–12 Jan 45 (actually a sort of S–3 Jnl File).

further east—a little over three miles inland—was yet a third steep-sided, grass-covered ridge line, this one averaging around 600 feet high.

The three tiers of ridges overlooked the 43d Division's beaches from the north, northeast, and east. They provided the Japanese with natural defensive terrain, excellent observation, good positions from which to deliver direct fire on the beaches, and cover behind which there was protection from the essentially flat trajectory of naval support fires. Moreover, the ridges were close to assembly areas further inland that could provide large Japanese forces with cover and concealment. In a single night the Japanese could move considerable strength from these assembly points into the tiers of hills to launch a counterattack against the Sixth Army's left.

Accordingly, the I Corps directed the 43d Division to seize the most dominating of the nearby hills as quickly as possible. While the 103d Infantry, on the division right, struck generally south and southeast toward the Army Beachhead Line in its sector, the 169th Infantry was to drive due east from its beach to clear Hill 470. Lying three miles inland, Hill 470 was the highest point at the southern end of the third ridge line east from White Beaches 1 and 2. The 2d Battalion, 172d Infantry, was to strike inland to secure Hill 247, at the southern end of the first ridge, and Hill 385, on the second ridge. These objectives lay respectively one and one and a half miles inland and slightly northeast of the beaches. Other elements of the 172d Infantry were to push north along the gravel-surfaced beach road to set up roadblocks and to probe up the coastal ridge line in the area north of Mabilao.

The 169th Infantry, landing in column of battalions, rapidly fanned out to the east and southeast. Japanese artillery and mortars emplaced in the rising ground northeast of the beach harassed the regiment most of the day, and a few small groups of Japanese infantry opposed the regiment's march. At dusk, the 169th was at Binday, near the Bued River about four miles southeast of White Beach 2. Left flank units extended the lines northward along gentle, open slopes leading to Hill 470. The regiment had not yet taken this objective, and patrols reported that strong Japanese forces held the hill.[14]

As the 2d Battalion, 172d Infantry, landed across White Beach 1, Japanese mortar and artillery fire fell sporadically among landing craft and along the shore. Nevertheless, the battalion quickly secured the little that was left of barrio Mabilao, and patrols thrust rapidly up the beach road about half a mile to barrio Alacan. The rest of the battalion struck for Hill 247 and by 1230 seized that grassy-sloped terrain feature against scattered resistance. In the face of increasingly heavy small arms and mortar fire, combat patrols, under constant observation by the Japanese on the open ground of the 172d's sector, moved on toward Hill 385, the crest and eastern slopes of which were still in Japanese hands at dark. Meanwhile, beach conditions being suitable and there being no requirement to commit it elsewhere, the division reserve—the bulk of the 172d RCT—started ashore at White Beach 1 about 1000. Some of the new arrivals

[14] Sources for 169th Infantry operations in this chapter include: 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–30 Jun 45, pp. 4–5; 169th Inf Unit Jnl and Jnl Files, 9–12 Jan 45.



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set up roadblocks along the coastal highway north of Alacan; one battalion remained in reserve near Mabilao.[15]

On 9 January the 103d Infantry's operations soon tended to become tactically distinct from those of the 169th and 172d Infantry Regiments on the 43d Division's left, a condition that obtained for several days. The 103d's initial objective was Hill 200, the high point of a two-mile-square group of low, gently sloping, grassy hills that lay almost ten miles southeast of the regiment's assault beach, White Beach 3. From points of vantage on the Hill 200 complex, Japanese observers could watch deployment of American forces over a large area south and southeast from the Sixth Army's assault beaches. Moreover, the hills dominated the easiest and shortest approaches from the I Corps' landing area to Route 3, the main highway running down the west side of the Central Plains to Manila.

Making an easy landing, the 103d Infantry was through shattered San Fabian by 1030, having encountered no opposition. Small groups of Japanese delayed further advances toward the Hill 200 area, but by dusk leading elements of the 103d had penetrated almost four miles inland. The regiment held for the night just north of San Jacinto, two miles east of the 1st Infantry's concentration at Mangaldan.[16]

[15] Additional information on the 172d Infantry is from: 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, pp 1–4; 172d Inf S–3 Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 172d Inf Msg File and Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

[16] Additional information on the 103d Infantry is from: 103d Inf Rpt Luzon, 1 Jan–31 May 45, pp. 4–10; 103d RCT S–3 Per Rpts, 9–12 Jan 45; 103d Inf Opns Jnl, 9–12 Jan 45.

Although the I Corps' assault units were ashore by dusk on S-day, there were important differences between the situation in its zone and that in the XIV Corps area. The I Corps' penetration had not been as deep. The rising terrain in the sector of the 169th and 172d Infantry Regiments, harassing fire from Japanese mortars and artillery, and delaying actions by small groups of Japanese across much of the corps front had combined to slow progress. Moreover, I Corps had no solid front. The 103d Infantry, on the 43d Division's right, had no physical contact with the 6th Division, and within the 43d Division area gaps existed between the flanks of the 103d, 169th, and 172d Infantry Regiments. In the open, heavily populated area over which the I Corps was operating so far, such gaps attained little significance—it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Japanese to launch surprise counterattacks over the terrain the I Corps had secured on S-day. But if the gaps continued to exist, or if they widened as the corps' left flank units moved further into the hills on an axis of advance divergent from the center and right flank forces, then trouble might very well arise.

On 10 January the 6th Division—less the 63d RCT, still in corps reserve—displaced generally south and south-southeast about four miles over flat, dry, open, and hot farm land, and at nightfall held a front of roughly seven miles, west to east. The division had had difficulties getting supplies forward during the day, a problem that, combined with a few minor skirmishes, had slowed progress. The 1st and 20th Infantry Regiments lost 2 men killed and 10 wounded on 10 January, and killed 15–20 Japanese. Again the advance of the division had not kept pace with the 37th Division on the XIV Corps' left, and by dark on the 10th there was a 9-mile discrepancy of penetration along the corps boundary.

To the left of the 6th Division, the 103d Infantry of the 43d Division moved forward on 10 January on an ever-expanding front, the axes of advance of its flanks forming an angle of nearly 90 degrees. The 2d Battalion engaged in a game of tag with a Japanese tractor-drawn 75-mm. artillery piece, which delayed the American unit from successive positions down the graveled road toward Manaoag at the southwestern corner of the Hill 200 group. The 103d's supporting artillery destroyed the Japanese tractor during the afternoon, but the Japanese manhandled their gun into Manaoag as the American battalion halted west of the town for the night. The regiment's other two battalions held west and northwest of the Hill 200 area. Again, as dark came the 103d Infantry was out of contact with the 6th Division, to the right, and the 169th Infantry, to the left.

On the 11th the 103d Infantry started up the open, grassy, western slopes of the Hill 200 complex and soon discovered that it faced stiff fighting before it could secure the area. To the right, the 6th Division's 1st Infantry, which made patrol contact with the 103d near Manaoag during the day, consolidated positions held the previous night. The 20th Infantry, against no opposition, again advanced over open farm land and secured about five miles of ground in a south-southeasterly direction across a front of nearly six miles. At dark the 20th Infantry was still about three miles behind the main body of the 129th Infantry, 37th Division, along the corps boundary.

The situation had developed far differently on 10 and 11 January in the zones of the 169th and 172d Infantry Regiments, on the I Corps' left. Troops of both regiments began looking deep into the face of death on 10 January, gaining a foretaste of the type of resistance that would hold up the 43d Division for the next month. The division had had ample combat experience in the steaming jungles of the South Pacific and New Guinea, but the enervating heat, the steep-sided bare hills, and the fanatical opposition in the rising ground east and northeast of Lingayen Gulf was something else again. The worst of pre-assault imaginings about the Japanese in that sun-baked yet depressing hill country would come true all too soon.

Encountering resistance described as "heavy,"[17] the 1st Battalion, 169th Infantry, behind close artillery and mortar support, fought throughout 10 January along the steep, grassy slopes of Hill 470 and finally seized the crest about 1730. The rest of the regiment, meanwhile, struck across the Bued River toward Hills 355 and 318, respectively two miles southeast and two and a half miles south of Hill 470. Treeless like the other hills in this portion of the 43d Division's area, Hills 318 and 355 provided the Japanese with excellent observation of the I Corps beaches, controlled the approaches to Route 3 in the country north of the 103d Infantry's sector, and also dominated the southern approach to grassy Mt. Alava, a 520-foot-high hill mass lying less than two miles east of Hill 470.

The 169th's drive toward Hills 318 and 355 on 10 January halted near the Bued in the face of intensive artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire. On the 11th the regiment virtually surrounded Hill 318 but, despite the closest possible support from CVE-based aircraft, naval gunfire, and division artillery, was unable to dislodge the Japanese, who had tunneled themselves into the sides of the dirt and rock hill. The cave and tunnel defenses at Hill 318 typified those being found by all elements of the 43d Division on 10 and 11 January, and the Japanese employed their holes not only for infantry protection but also for mortar and artillery emplacements. At Hill 318, specifically, the Japanese garrison consisted of an infantry company reinforced by mortars and a few pieces of artillery.

To the north on 10 and 11 January, the 172d Infantry encountered similar defensive installations. The regiment cleared Hill 385 on the 10th and then struck toward Hills 351 and 580, along the southern part of the third ridge line inland from the beaches. Mopping-up operations at Hill 385, Japanese mortar and artillery fire, and danger from friendly artillery supporting the 169th Infantry at the southern end of the ridge, combined to slow the drive on Hill 351. On the 11th Japanese mortar and artillery fire all across the 172d Infantry's eastward-facing front waxed so intense that Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Wing decided to change the regiment's direction of attack from east to north. He ordered the unit to strike toward Hills 351 and 580 from Hill 470, in the 169th's zone, and from other points of vantage along the southern end of the third ridge line. Redeployment consumed much of the 11th, and the 172d's right flank therefore gained little ground during the day.

[17] 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 5.

On the division, corps, and army extreme left on 10 January the 1st Battalion, 172d Infantry, advanced two miles up the graveled coast road and patrolled along the crest of the coastal ridge. Little opposition from Japanese infantry greeted this advance, but Japanese mortar and artillery fire harassed the battalion from the north and east. On the morning of the 11th the unit held its forward positions until relieved by the 158th RCT of Sixth Army Reserve.

The Beachhead Through S Plus 2

Committing the Sixth Army Reserve

As early as evening of 10 January, Sixth Army operations and intelligence officers had decided that the Sixth Army Reserve should be committed to the I Corps zone, as contemplated in the preassault plans. The situation at Lingayen Gulf was sufficiently disturbing to give pause to intelligence officers from infantry battalions on up through General MacArthur's headquarters. All units had anticipated strong opposition, but as yet only the 169th and 172d Infantry Regiments, on the far left, had encountered significant resistance, and it had begun to appear that these two units had uncovered a formal defense line. The Japanese had obviously withdrawn whatever strength they may once have deployed in the immediate assault area, but it was the consensus of intelligence officers that this withdrawal was a ruse. The Japanese were probably inviting the Sixth Army to overextend its lines until its flanks became vulnerable to counterattack.

Attention focused on the left as the probable point of Japanese attack. Allied air reconnaissance had substantiated guerrilla reports of Japanese troop movements and strong defenses to the north, northeast, and east of the I Corps beaches, and the opposition the 43d Division had encountered provided additional confirmation. Indeed, as resistance increased along the 43d Division front on 10 and 11 January, many intelligence officers began to feel that a Japanese counterattack might be imminent and that the Japanese were delaying the 43d Division primarily to gain time to assemble forces for a large-scale counteroffensive.[18]

Other factors prompted commitment of the reserve in the I Corps zone, possibly the most important being Krueger's desire for I Corps to advance toward the Army Beachhead Line at a pace more commensurate with that of XIV Corps. There were many reasons why I Corps had been unable to keep up. The corps had to cover far more ground to gain its objectives than did XIV—fully three-quarters of the terrain enclosed within the Army Beachhead Line initially lay within the I Corps' zone. In addition, I Corps had to advance halfway around the compass—from north up Lingayen Gulf's east shore around to the south along the corps boundary. In the smaller XIV Corps zone the advances had to cover only a quarter of the compass, from west to south, and, with no resistance on the west, XIV Corps could place emphasis on its advance south across a front approximately fifteen miles wide. The I Corps, by evening on 11 January, held an overextended front stretching

[18] G–2 Sixth Army, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation as of 1800 10 Jan 45, and G–2 Sixth Army, G–2 Per Rpt 371, 9 Jan 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45; G–2 GHQ SWPA, DSEI's 1019 and 1020, 10 and 11 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl Files, 10 and 11 Jan 45. See also above, ch. II.

along an arc of some twenty-five miles from the gulf's coast north of Alacan to Balingueo on the corps boundary.

The divergent advances of the I Corps divisions tended to create gaps along the front, gaps that would widen unless the corps received reinforcements. The existence of such gaps slowed progress, for all units had to patrol far to their flanks to maintain physical contact with friendly forces and to make sure that no concentrations of Japanese were bypassed. In this situation, the task of division reconnaissance troops and regimental intelligence and reconnaissance platoons was of special importance and significance.

The I Corps' relatively slow progress southward began to hold up XIV Corps, for the latter's left flank, exposed for almost nine miles during the night of 10–11 January, was still exposed for about three miles at dusk on the 11th. Although the entire XIV Corps could apparently move south from its positions on the Army Beachhead Line and cross the Agno River without meeting serious opposition, the advance would increase the gap along the corps boundary. It would avail nothing for the 6th Division to proceed southward abreast of the XIV Corps' left—such a move would create an exposed flank within I Corps. Either I Corps would have to be strengthened or XIV Corps would have to halt. For obvious reasons the latter solution could not be considered favorably by either General MacArthur or General Krueger.

On 11 January Maj. Gen. Innis P. Swift, the I Corps commander, had concluded that he would soon have to commit most of his corps reserve, the 63d RCT, in the 43d Division's zone. The corps thereupon prepared to continue operations with but one battalion of the 63d Infantry as a reserve. The 43d Division had already committed its entire strength and the 6th Division's remaining reserve was a battalion of the 20th Infantry.[19] The margin of safety was too small, especially in view of a possible Japanese counterattack.

Accordingly, on the morning of 11 January, General Krueger sent the 158th RCT of the Sixth Army Reserve ashore on the I Corps' left. Unloading just north of White Beach 1, the RCT dispatched two infantry battalions up the coast road. One battalion relieved 172d Infantry elements along the road and the other pushed north to within a mile of Rabon, three miles beyond Alacan, and dug in to block any Japanese attack down the coastal highway.[20]

The commitment of the 158th and 63d RCT's on I Corps left seemed adequate to thwart immediate Japanese threats from the north or northeast. The 6th Division and the XIV Corps had not encountered sufficient opposition to warrant their immediate reinforcement. Therefore General Krueger decided to hold his other major reserve unit, the 25th Infantry Division, in reserve in the I Corps sector. The division began unloading on the 11th and started moving inland to an assembly area between the Agoi and Patalan Rivers behind the 43d Division's right flank.[21]

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[19] Rad, Swift to Krueger, RM–79, 12 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–13 Jan 45; I Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 36; 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 11 Jan 45; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–30 Jun 45, p. 1; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 5.

[20] Sixth Army FO 34, 20 Nov 44; 158th Inf Rpt Damortis-Rosario, 11 Jan–13 Feb 45, p. 1; 158th RCT S–3 Jnl and Jnl Files, 11–12 Jan 45.

[21] Sixth Army FO 34; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 20; Rad, Krueger to Swift, 1915/I 10 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 5–11 Jan 45; 25th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, 17 Jan–30 Jun 45, pp. 7–9, 12–14.

The remaining elements of Sixth Army Reserve—the 6th Ranger Infantry Battalion and the 13th Armored Group—also came ashore. The 6th Ranger Battalion, landing over Blue Beaches on 10 January, moved on the 11th to the Dagupan area, where it began preparing a perimeter defense at a site selected for Sixth Army headquarters. The 13th Armored Group unloaded on the 11th and, less its 775th Tank Battalion, assembled at San Fabian. The 775th moved up the coast road to Alacan.[22]

The Situation: Evening S Plus 2

As viewed from the vantage points of MacArthur's and Krueger's headquarters, three strikingly significant facts had emerged by the time the Sixth Army's reserve had begun to land. First, resistance to the initial penetrations had been surprisingly weak. Second, as expected, significant opposition was developing along the I Corps front from the north around to the southeast, and a threat of counterattack had arisen from the north and east. Third, further rapid advances would evidently overextend the Sixth Army's lines, exposing flanks beyond the limits of calculated risk.

So far, casualties had been far lower than anticipated. Operations ashore to dusk on the 11th had cost the Sixth Army 55 men killed and about 185 wounded, the 43d Division having lost the most men and the 37th Division the least. Most of the casualties had resulted from Japanese mortar and artillery fire rather than from close-in infantry action. Japanese casualties in ground operations had also been quite low; indications are that Sixth Army infantry had killed only 150–200 Japanese to evening on 11 January.[23]

At the end of the first three days of the campaign, then, the Sixth Army had seized a beachhead and, from a tactical point of view, had firmly established itself ashore. Plans for the next few days called for the XIV Corps to continue southward and secure crossings over the Agno River; the I Corps to continue to advance into what promised to be the center of Japanese resistance within the limits of the Army Beachhead Line. The major problem facing Sixth Army at dusk on 11 January was that of determining the nature, location, and extent of the opposition developing on the left. Where were the Japanese and what were they planning to do?

[22] 6th Ranger Inf Bn Rpt, 2 Jan–1 Jul 45, p. 2; 13th Armd Gp Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–5, 10–12.

[23] Casualty reporting during the first three days of the Luzon Campaign was extremely spotty. The figures given above are derived from a mass of contradictory and incomplete U.S. Army sources.

CHAPTER V

The Enemy

The Sixth Army's landing at Lingayen Gulf on 9 January had come as no strategic surprise to General Tomoyuki Yamashita, commander of the Japanese *14th Area Army* in the Philippines.[1] The landing had achieved tactical surprise, for Yamashita had not expected the invasion for at least another two weeks, and *14th Area Army* planners had not seriously considered the possibility that the Sixth Army would land its main strength across Lingayen Gulf's southern shores. But Yamashita knew an invasion was coming, expected it through Lingayen Gulf, and, ever since the invasion of Mindoro, had been redoubling his efforts to prepare for the inevitable.

Japanese Strategy in the Philippines

Originally, Japanese plans for the defense of the Philippines had envisaged that the decisive battle would be fought on Luzon.[2] Air and naval forces might seek their Armageddon in the central or southern Philippines, but the *14th Area Army* would undertake only delaying actions there.

The Allied invasion of the central Philippines at Leyte in October precipitated a switch, and the Japanese decided to fight it out on the ground at Leyte. Leyte turned into a graveyard of Japanese hopes. Their Navy suffered a shattering defeat; they lost hundreds of land-based and carrier-based aircraft, losses they could ill afford; they threw away ground

[1] The general sources for most of this chapter are: Japanese Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (vol. II of the 3-volume SWPA Hist Series, prepared by G–2 GHQ FEC) (hereinafter cited as SWPA Hist Series, II), pp. 281–86, 295–302, 310–11, 337–43, 404–37; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 5, *4th Air Army* Opns, 1944–45, pp. 64–77; No. 6, *14th Area Army* Plans, 1944, pp. 12–25, 28–37, 44–45; No. 8, *14th Area Army* Operations on Luzon, pp. 2–3, 6–40; No. 11, *35th Army* Operations, 1944–45, pp. 23–34, 114, 119, 127; No. 21, History of *Southern Army*, pp. 61–70, 73–80, 83–84; No. 72, History of *Army Section Imperial GHQ*, pp. 123–27, 131–48, 153–61; Memoirs of Lt Gen Akira Muto (CofS *14th Area Army*), in G–2 GHQ FEC, Translations of Japanese Documents (4 vols., hereinafter cited as Trans, copies in OCMH files), II, Item 20 (hereinafter cited as Muto Memoirs), pp. 7–17, 22–24, 31.

[2] In addition to the sources cited in note 1, this section is based on: United States Strategic Bombing Survey (Pacific), Naval Analysis Division, *Interrogations of Japanese Officials* (2 vols., Washington, 1946), II, 500–30, Interrog of Vice Adm Shigeru Fukudome (Comdr *2d Air Fleet*); Interrog of Gen Yoshijiro Umezu (CofS Japanese Army), USSBS (Pacific), Interrog No. 488, copy in OCMH files; Maj Gen Yoshiharu Tomochika (CofS *35th Army*), The True Facts of the Leyte Operation, *passim*, originally published in Japan in 1946, translated MS copy in OCMH files; Statements of Maj Gen Toshio Nishimura (an ACofS *14th Area Army*), States, II, 677, 687; Statement of Lt Gen Jo Iimura (CofS *Southern Army*), States, I, 540–41; Rpt of Joint Research by Gen Iimura, Lt Gen Shuichi Miyazaki (Chief *Opns Dept Army Sec Imperial GHQ*), Col Takushiro Hattori, Col Kazutsugu Sugita (both on Miyazaki's staff), States, II, 498–502; Before the Military Commission Convened by the United States Army Forces Western Pacific, United States of America *versus* Tomoyuki Yamashita, Public Trial (hereinafter cited as USA *vs.* Yamashita), pp. 3623–3665 (Yamashita testimony), p. 3007 (Muto testimony).

reinforcements drained from China and Luzon; their loss of cargo ships and transports was irreplaceable.[3]

Yamashita had steadfastly opposed making Leyte a decisive battle area and, able tactician that he was, had concluded as early as the first week of November that Leyte was lost. At that time he had proposed to his immediate superior, Field Marshal Count Hisaichi Terauchi of *Southern Army,* that the Leyte fight be halted and efforts be concentrated upon preparing the defenses of Luzon. Terauchi turned deaf ears to this proposal as he did to a similar Yamashita plan in early December after an Allied force had landed on the west coast of Leyte, closing the *14th Area Army*'s principal port of entry on that island.

Next, Yamashita viewed the Allied invasion of Mindoro as an event that provided him with a welcome opportunity to cease his all but impossible efforts to reinforce Leyte. Calling off—apparently on his own initiative—a last reinforcement attempt, Yamashita again recommended to Count Terauchi that attention be turned to Luzon. The latter, having already forestalled Yamashita's earlier attempts to halt the fighting on Leyte, now directed the *14th Area Army* to prepare a counterattack against Mindoro.

This Yamashita had no intention of doing. It was therefore with some uneasiness that he greeted Lt. Gen. Jo Iimura, the Chief of Staff of *Southern Army,* when the latter arrived at Manila from Saigon—site of Terauchi's headquarters—on 17 December. But Iimura, after talking to Yamashita, advised Terauchi that the *14th Area Army* commander's recommendations ought to be followed. On the 19th, Terauchi finally ordered Yamashita to prepare the defenses of Luzon. The idea of sending strong reinforcements to Mindoro was quietly dropped, and the Japanese *35th Army* on Leyte was informed that it could expect no more help. On 25 December Yamashita directed Lt. Gen. Sosaku Suzuki, *35th Army* commander, to evacuate his forces from Leyte as best he could and make preparations to defend the rest of the southern and central Philippines.[4]

Yamashita's planning problems were still not solved. On 21 December Lt. Gen. Shuichi Miyazaki, Chief of Operations, *Army Section, Imperial General Headquarters,* reached Manila prepared to direct Yamashita to continue defensive efforts in the central Philippines and simultaneously ready the defenses of Luzon. After two days of conferences with Iimura, Yamashita, and the latter's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Akira Muto, Miyazaki also decided that Yamashita's plans had to be followed. Miyazaki concluded that no one in Tokyo had enough knowledge of the situation in the Philippines to overrule Yamashita, and he promised Yamashita to do his best to prevent any further interference by *Imperial General Headquarters* with the conduct of operations on Luzon. Yamashita, belatedly, had his way.[5]

[3] See Cannon, *Leyte.*

[4] For subsequent operations of the *35th Army,* see below, chs. XXX–XXXII.

[5] Iimura returned to Saigon on 24 December and Miyazaki to Tokyo on the 25th. Apparently, Iimura's original mission had been to see to it that Yamashita followed Terauchi's instructions to the letter. If so, the mission must have been considered a failure by Terauchi. Perhaps only coincidentally, Iimura immediately found himself with a new assignment—on 26 December he was given command of the almost defunct *2d Area Army* in the Indies.

The Japanese on Luzon

During the first half of November Yamashita, while trying to convince *Southern Army* of the folly of continuing the fight on Leyte, had prepared a draft plan for the defense of Luzon. A realist, Yamashita knew that if it had not already done so, *Imperial General Headquarters* would soon write Luzon off as a strategic loss. He believed, therefore, that operations on Luzon would have to be primarily defensive in character, and he knew that he could expect no reinforcements once an Allied invasion force reached the island. Nevertheless, his November plans included provisions for a strong counterattack against an Allied landing force—a counterattack that would be executed only if expected supplies and equipment reached Luzon, if he could keep on the island three infantry divisions scheduled for shipment to Leyte, if he could obtain a modicum of air support, and if he could maintain the mobility of an armored division already on Luzon.

The three infantry divisions reached Luzon, but two lost fully a third of their troops and equipment to Allied air or submarine action on the way; one RCT of the third division had to be left on Formosa for lack of shipping. Worse still, scheduled shipments of supplies and equipment never arrived, and stocks available on Luzon were inadequate for the forces already there. No air reinforcements, Yamashita learned by mid-December, would be forthcoming. The Allies would be able to dominate the skies over Luzon and render the armored division immobile.

By mid-December Yamashita had concluded that the only course open to him was a static defense. He intended to delay the conquest of Luzon as long as possible in order to pin down as many U.S. divisions as he could in the hope of slowing Allied advances toward Japan. He prepared to undertake his task with understrength, underfed, and underequipped ground combat forces, the leadership and organization of which left much to be desired.[6]

Japanese Logistics

Logistically, Yamashita faced the proverbial insoluble problems and insurmountable obstacles.[7] First, supplies on

[6] Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 6, *14th Area Army* Plans, pp. 33–34, 50; No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 2–3, 24; Statement of General Tomoyuki Yamashita, States, IV, 500; Muto Memoirs, pp. 12–13; Nishimura Statement, States, II, 677–78; *Shobu Gp (14 Area Army) Opns Dept*, Outline of Operational Policy for Luzon, 19 Dec 44, and apps. I and II thereto, 20 Dec 44, Trans, III, pt. I, pp. 16–28. Colonel Volckmann, guerrilla leader in northern Luzon, believed on the basis of documents his men had captured from the Japanese that Yamashita had reached his decision for a static defense before the end of November. The November plans had called for operations primarily defensive in character, hedged by "if" provisions for a counterattack. The December plans left out even the "if" provisions for a counterattack.

[7] Additional sources used for this subsection include: Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Operations of the *Shimbu Group*, pp. 4–5; No. 10, Operations of the *Kembu Group*, pp. 2, 5–6; Nishimura Statements, in States, 690–94; USA *vs.* Yamashita, pp. 2999, 3014, 3027–28 (Muto); *ibid.*, pp. 3540, 3566 (Yamashita); *ibid.*, pp. 3013–14, 3219 (Lt Col Kikuo Ishikawa, Supply and TO *14th Area Army*); *ibid.*, p. 3190 (Maj Gen Goichi Kira, Intendance Off, *14th Area Army*); 10th Info and Hist Serv Hq Eighth Army, Staff Study of Japanese Operations on Luzon, Narrative of Col Ryoichiro Aoshima (Chief *LofC Sec, 14th Area Army*), pp. 5–8, 12–13; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, Narrative of Col Shujiro Kobayashi (Opns Off *14th Area Army* and *Shimbu Gp*), pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, Narrative of Col Yasuji Okada (CofS *Kembu Gp*), p. 16; *ibid.*, Narrative of Col Shigeo Kawai (Staff *2d Tank Div*), pp. 4–5; *ibid.*, Aoshima Interrog, p. 7.

Luzon were insufficient to provide properly for the *14th Area Army*, and at the end of December General Muto, Yamashita's chief of staff, reported that "supply shortages had reached unexpected proportions."[8] Second, the Japanese transportation system was completely inadequate for the task at hand—moving supplies from depots to defensive positions. Third, the system of supply control and distribution was chaotic until late December.

Chief shortages were ammunition, demolitions, construction equipment of all sorts, medical supplies, communications equipment and food. In brief, the *14 Area Army* was ill equipped for a long campaign. The food situation alone would soon bring that fact home sharply. Even before the end of 1944 food stocks in the Philippines had been inadequate to satisfy both Japanese and Filipino requirements. Rice had to be imported from Thailand and French Indochina, and much of the rice harvested on Luzon had been sent to Leyte. With increased Allied air and submarine activity in the South China Sea, imports were drastically reduced until, in December, not a single shipload of food reached Luzon. As early as mid-November the food shortage on Luzon had reached such proportions that the *14th Area Army* had cut its ration from a daily three pounds to about nine-tenths of a pound. Before mid-January men in some units would be lucky to get as much as a half a pound a day.

Many of Yamashita's supply problems stemmed directly from his transportation problems, for he found it impossible to move the supplies and equipment that were available, a condition resulting from many causes. For one thing, a Japanese infantry division had only 500 organic vehicles—as compared with the 2,125 in a U.S. Army division[9]—and none of the Japanese units on Luzon had its authorized number of vehicles. This shortage was compounded by a lack of fuel and lubricants. Moreover, the railroads on Luzon, never adequate for the scale of military operations envisaged by the Allies and Japanese, had been allowed to fall into "a shocking state of disrepair" during the Japanese occupation.[10]

Allied land-based and carrier-based air attacks, combined with guerrilla sabotage operations, multiplied transportation problems a hundredfold. Bridges were destroyed, highways cratered, railroad beds and marshaling yards damaged, railroad rolling stock and engines knocked out, and trucks destroyed. By 9 January the highways and railroads on Luzon, once the finest transportation network in the Pacific and Far East outside Japan, were in such condition that the *14th Area Army* could move only a trickle of essential supplies to defensive positions.

Manila had long been the main supply depot for Japanese forces in the Philippines, the New Guinea area, and the Indies, and in June 1944 had also become the principal distribution and transshipment point for *Southern Army* supplies moving to Indochina and Malaya. As the main port of entry in the Philippines and the hub of Luzon's rail-

[8] Muto Memoirs, p. 13.

[9] TM-E 30-480, Handbook on Japanese Military Forces, p. 23; FM 101-10, Staff Officers Field Manual: Organization, Technical, and Logistical Data, 1945, par. 121.

[10] Muto Memoirs, p. 13.

road and highway network, Manila had also been the *14th Area Army*'s main supply point. Japanese naval forces operating in the Philippines and at points south had likewise stockpiled supplies and equipment there.

No centralized logistical authority existed at Manila, and many of the supplies did not come under Yamashita's control until after 1 January 1945. As a depot, Manila must have presented a chaotic picture, so much so that General Muto, remembering the mess after the war, was prompted to state that the supplies and equipment there "were piled in an unsystematic . . . helter-skelter way" and that there was "a lack of articles . . . required in the Philippines accompanied by plenty . . . for which there was no use." [11]

Yamashita had no intention of defending Manila. The efficacy of his defense of Luzon would therefore depend in large measure on how much of the 65,000 to 70,000 metric tons of Army supplies stockpiled there he could move out of the city to defensive positions elsewhere before the Americans arrived. Early in December he had found to his dismay that with existing transportation it would take six months to move the entire stockpile. But he had to do what he could, and issued orders to remove approximately 13,000 metric tons of the most vital supplies to northern Luzon by mid-January. Because of the transportation problem and Yamashita's lack of control over many commanders and units at Manila, only a little over 4,000 metric tons of the Manila stockpiles had been redisposed to northern Luzon by 9 January.

[11] USA *vs.* Yamashita, p. 2999 (Muto testimony).

Command and Organization

As if his logistic problems were not enough, Yamashita's gods had also presented him with equally serious problems of command, organization, administration, and morale.[12] Manila, for example, had long been cluttered with various headquarters, over many of which Yamashita had no control. Indeed, until mid-November at least, less than half the troops on Luzon were under Yamashita's command.[13]

The senior headquarters in Manila until 17 November was that of Terauchi's *Southern Army*. Directly under it, and all on the same level of command, were Yamashita's *14th Area Army*; the *4th Air Army* under Lt. Gen. Kyoji Tominaga; and a logistical headquarters, the *3d Maritime Transport Command*, under Maj. Gen. Masazumi Inada. Also in Manila were three important naval headquarters. The first two were the *Southwest Area Fleet* and its subordinate echelon, the *3d Southern Expeditionary Fleet*, both commanded by Vice Adm. Denshichi Okochi, who controlled all Japanese naval forces in the Philippines and who was responsible only to naval headquarters in Tokyo. The third naval headquarters was the *31st Naval Special Base Force* under Rear Adm. Sanji Iwabuchi, who reported to Okochi.

In addition about 30,000 Army replacements, who had been stranded on Luzon for lack of shipping, were sta-

[12] Additional sources used in the preparation of this subsection are: USA *vs.* Yamashita, pp. 3524–26, 3655 (Yamashita); *ibid.*, pp. 3001–02, 3008–09 (Muto); *ibid.*, pp. 2533–36 (testimony of Vice Adm Denhichi Okoochi, more commonly Denshichi Okochi, Comdr *Southwest Area Fleet*); *ibid.*, Defense Exhibit J, Org Chart prepared by Muto.

[13] See app. C–1.

tioned at Manila. The city had also become a collection point for Army and Navy men discharged from hospitals or rescued from vessels sunk in nearby waters. Control over the heterogeneous collection was divided among *Southern Army, Southwest Area Fleet,* and *Imperial General Headquarters.*

After mid-November steps were taken to bring order into this confusion of commands. *Headquarters, Southern Army,* moved to Saigon on 17 November, taking with it Inada's *3d Maritime Transport Command* headquarters.[14] Early in December Army replacements and convalescents passed to Yamashita's control, and the *4th Air Army* was placed under him on 1 January. On the 6th Yamashita gained operational control of shore-based naval troops, but it was not until mid-January that the service troops of the *3d Maritime Transport Command* passed to his command.[15]

His late assumption of control created many problems for Yamashita, whose opinion was:

> The source of command and co-ordination within a command lies in trusting your subordinate commanders. Under the circumstances, I was forced [to defend Luzon] with subordinates whom I did not know and with whose character and ability I was unfamiliar.[16]

For example, Yamashita had trouble with General Tominaga and the *4th Air Army* from the first. Before the air unit passed to Yamashita's control, Tominaga had provided no help in preparing defenses outside Manila. Instead, Tominaga worked on readying defenses of the city and environs, for he felt that the defense of Luzon would be meaningless if Manila were abandoned without a fight. It was not until he passed to Yamashita's control that Tominaga moved his headquarters and thousands of his troops out of the city.

The bulk of the units Yamashita commanded on Luzon could by no means be fitted into the category of first-class combat organizations. Divisions recently formed from former garrison units were badly organized, ill equipped, poorly officered, and miserably trained. In even worse state were the multitude of provisional infantry and artillery units that the Japanese organized on Luzon from the Manila replacements, ship survivors, convalescents, and, in some cases, Japanese civilians stranded in the Philippines. Even the regular units were in poor shape, many having suffered morale-shattering losses of men and equipment on their way to Luzon. The *23d Division,* for instance, had lost its chief of staff, most of the other officers of division headquarters, and fully a third of its men. The *10th Division* had suffered similarly, while only two-thirds of the *19th Division* reached Luzon from Formosa before the Allied invasion put an end to further shipments.

Yet Yamashita had a respectable force, and one that was far stronger than General Willoughby, MacArthur's intelligence chief, had estimated. Instead of the 152,500 troops of Willoughby's estimate,

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[14] By this time Inada was an "evacuation expert." He had arrived in western New Guinea in late 1943 to assume command of a supply organization there; went to Hollandia to take command of the *6th Air Division* in April 1944; made his way westward overland to the Wakde-Sarmi area after the Allied invasion of Hollandia, arriving shortly after the Allied landings near Sarmi on 17 May; again escaping, went to the Philippines; moved to Saigon in November; and wound up to survive the war as a ground commander in Japan proper.

[15] See app. C–2.

[16] USA *vs.* Yamashita, p. 3655 (Yamashita).

Yamashita actually had nearly 275,000 men.[17] Willoughby, of course, could not know exactly what Yamashita planned to do with these troops; he did not anticipate an essentially static defense.

The General Defense Plan

Yamashita knew that within the framework of his plan for a protracted delaying action on Luzon he had no hope of defending all the island.[18] He had neither the troops nor the equipment to do so, and the terrain in many places would not provide him with desired natural defensive positions or access to significant food-producing areas. Thus, he felt he could not defend the vital Central Plains–Manila Bay region against the superiority he knew MacArthur could and would bring to bear. Yamashita, therefore, did not intend to copy MacArthur's example of 1941–42 and withdraw into Bataan, which the *14th Area Army* commander considered a cul-de-sac. On that relatively small peninsula, scarcely twenty by thirty miles in area, Yamashita's 275,000 troops could not hope to find food, and, concentrated in such a limited area, would quickly be cut to pieces by the superior air, naval, and artillery fire power available to MacArthur. By the same token, Yamashita had decided to leave undefended the southern shores of Lingayen Gulf, for he had concluded that the terrain there would make futile any attempt to hold that ground.

Having decided to abandon the Central Plains–Manila Bay region, Yamashita concentrated his forces in three mountainous strongholds that, he felt, the Allies could overrun only at the cost of many lives and much time. Only minor delaying actions, by isolated garrisons, would be undertaken at other points on Luzon.

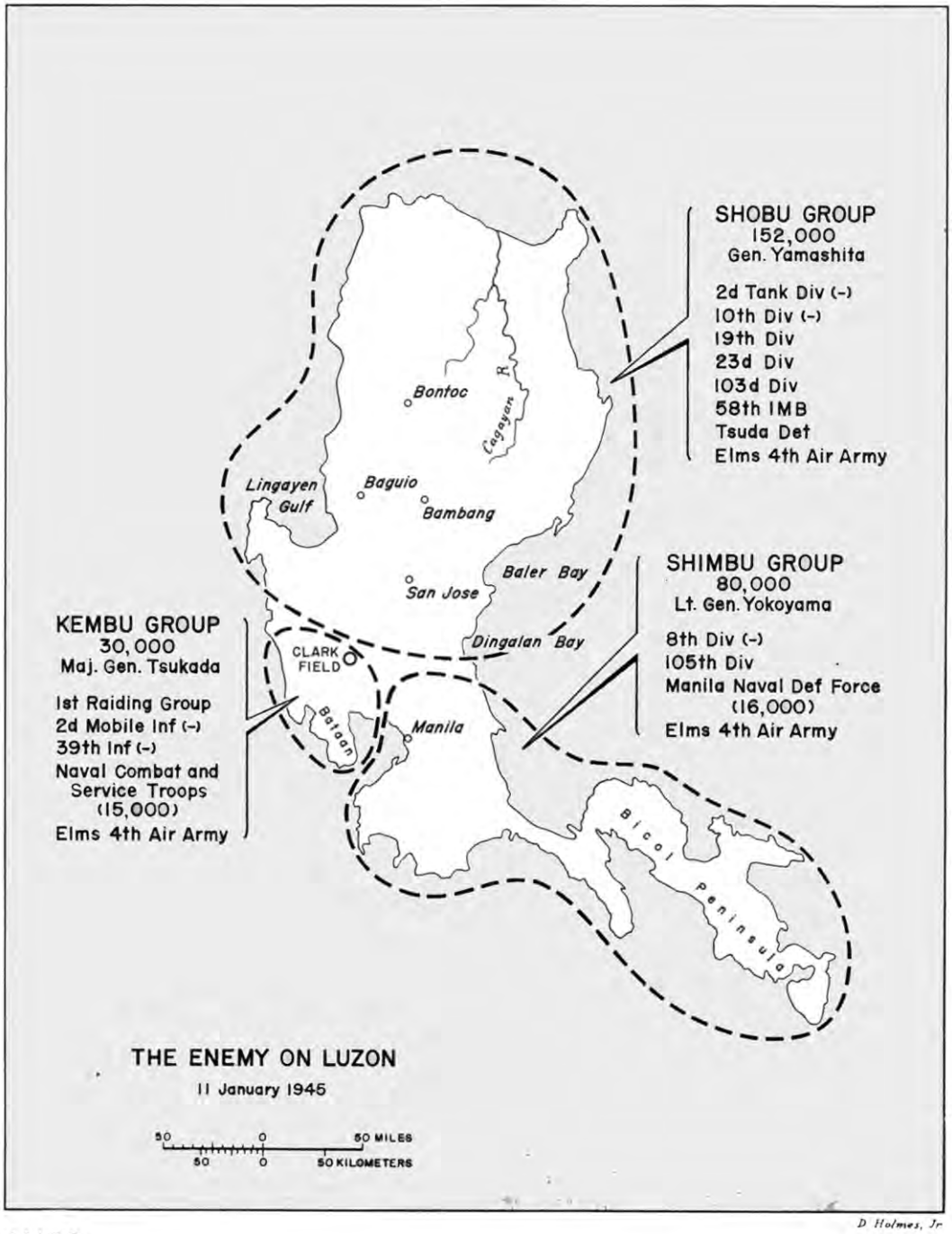
The strongest and most important of the defense sectors covered all Luzon northeast and east of Lingayen Gulf. (*Map 3*) Included within this sector was the mountainous region east and northeast of the gulf as well as the fertile Cagayan Valley, ranking only second to the Central Plains as a food-producing area of the Philippines. To defend this northern stronghold Yamashita formed the *Shobu Group*, a force he retained under his direct command. Headquarters of the *Shobu Group*—identical with *Headquarters, 14th Area Army* — was located at Baguio, the cool and beautiful Philippine summer resort city, which lay about 5,000 feet up in the mountains and about twenty-five miles northeast of San Fabian on Lingayen Gulf.[19]

The *Shobu Group* numbered around 152,000 troops. Its major units were four infantry divisions (the *10th, 19th, 23d,*

[17] General Willoughby did not change his estimate of Japanese strength significantly until the campaign was nearly over.

[18] In addition to relevant documents cited in note 1, this subsection is based on: *14th Area Army* Opns Orders, Trans, III, pt. III, Item 3, pp. 8–18; Nishimura Statement, States, II, 691–92; Yamashita Statement, States, II, 497; Statement of Col Kenichiro Asano (CofS *8th Division* and ACofS *Shimbu Gp*), States, I, 90–92; USA *vs.* Yamashita, pp. 2536–38 (Okochi testimony); *ibid.*, pp. 3527–28 (Yamashita); Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 1–5; No. 10, Opns of the *Kembu Gp*, pp. 1–6; *14th Area Army Home Organization Board* (a sort of veterans group), *14th Area Army* Tr Org List (prepared in Japan, Dec 46), trans in OCMH files.

[19] *SHOBU* was the code name for the *14th Area Army* as well as the name of the northern defense group. In Japanese plans, orders, and reports, the distinction between the group and the army is sometimes elusive, but in this narrative the term *Shobu Group* is reserved for the northern defense sector.



D Holmes, Jr

MAP 3

and *103d*), the *2d Tank Division* (less most of the *2d Mobile Infantry* and other elements), and the *58th Independent Mixed Brigade* (about half the size of a Japanese infantry division).[20] The rest of the group included various *4th Air Army* units, miscellaneous small combat and service organizations, and many provisional units of all types. The *Shobu Group's* principal missions were to prevent an Allied landing on the west coast of Luzon north of Lingayen Gulf, threaten the left flank of Sixth Army forces moving south through the Central Plains, deny the Americans access to the Cagayan Valley from the south, and, finally, conduct a protracted defense of the rugged, mountainous terrain it held.

The second defensive groupment Yamashita located in mountain country on the west side of the Central Plains overlooking the Clark Field area. This force, designated *Kembu Group*, was to deny to the Allies the use of the Clark Field air center as long as possible, threaten the right flank of Allied units moving down the Central Plains, and, when forced back from Clark Field, execute delaying operations in the Zambales Mountains, to the west of the air base.

Until late December the *Kembu* area was under the command of Lt. Gen. Yoshiharu Iwanaka, *2d Tank Division* commander, who supervised the efforts of naval troops and part of his division to make defensive preparations. When on 1 January *4th Air Army* passed to Yamashita's control, he ordered General Tominaga to set troops to work in the *Kembu* region, but left the group temporarily under Iwanaka's command, having some idea of moving the entire *2d Tank Division* to the Clark Field area. The Allies reached Luzon before the *2d Tank Division* could concentrate in the *Kembu* area, and Yamashita then placed the group under the command of Maj. Gen. Rikichi Tsukada, who also commanded the *1st Raiding Group*, an airborne infantry unit previously controlled by *4th Air Army*. Tominaga's *4th Air Army* headquarters moved during the first week of January from Manila to Echague, in the north-central part of the Cagayan Valley.

Of the 30,000 men of *Kembu Group*, about half were naval airfield engineers, ground crews, antiaircraft units, and some ground combat organizations, all under Rear Adm. Ushie Sugimoto, the commander of the planeless *26th Air Flotilla*. In addition to these troops and Tsukada's *1st Raiding Group*, *Kembu Group* contained the *2d Mobile Infantry* (less one battalion), a tank company, and other detachments from the *2d Tank Division*; some field and antiaircraft artillery organizations; and a heterogeneous collection of service units from *4th Air Army*.

The third major Japanese force was the *Shimbu Group*, under Lt. Gen. Shizuo Yokoyama, who also commanded the *8th Division*.[21] While responsible

[20] The *61st IMB*, stationed on the Batan and Babuyan Islands off northern Luzon, was nominally part of the *Shobu Group* but is not included in the foregoing totals. The unit remained unmolested on its islands until the end of the war, playing no part in the Luzon Campaign. Of the total of some 150,000 in the *Shobu Group*, about 140,000 were in uniform as of 9 January. The remainder consisted of civilian government and military employees, many of whom were drafted into the service before the campaign was over.

[21] The staffs of *Shimbu Group* and *8th Division* headquarters were somewhat different, although many officers served on both.

for defending all southern Luzon, General Yokoyama was to concentrate his main strength in the mountains east and northeast of Manila. Yamashita ordered him not to defend the capital, but to keep troops there only long enough to cover the evacuation of supplies and delay the Allies by destroying important bridges. In the mountains east of the city, Yokoyama would control the dams and reservoirs that supplied Manila's water. His 80,000 men included the *8th Division* (less the *5th Infantry*, on Leyte), the *105th Division*, various Army service and minor combat units, and some 20,000 naval troops under Admiral Iwabuchi of the *31st Naval Special Base Force.*

In southwestern Luzon, Yokoyama stationed a reinforced infantry regiment from the *8th Division.* A naval guard unit and miscellaneous *4th Air Army* service organizations armed as auxiliary infantry held the Bicol Peninsula of southeastern Luzon, which was also in Yokoyama's sector. Many Japanese Army suicide boat units, whose members were ultimately to fight as infantry under *Shimbu Group* control, were stationed at various points along Luzon's southwestern and southern coasts.[22]

Dispositions in Northern Luzon

The Shobu Group

The first Japanese to establish contact with the Sixth Army were members of the *Shobu Group.*[23] In late December 1944 that group had been disposing itself in what Yamashita intended to make his principal forward defenses in northern Luzon. The final defensive area, into which the *Shobu Group* would ultimately withdraw, formed a near-isosceles triangle in high, rugged mountains of that section of northern Luzon lying west of the Cagayan Valley. The southwestern anchor of the triangle was Baguio, whence the base line ran almost due east thirty-five miles to Bambang, located on Route 5 north of the exits of the mountain passes leading from the Cagayan Valley to the northeastern corner of the Central Plains. The apex of the triangle was Bontoc, at the junction of Routes 4 and 11 some fifty miles northeast of Baguio.

A basic tenet of Yamashita's plan for the defense of northern Luzon was to hold the approaches to the Cagayan Valley until that region could be stripped of foodstuffs and military supplies for the triangular redoubt. Yamashita expected that once the Sixth Army had secured the Central Plains–Manila Bay area it would strike his defensive triangle from the south, possibly making its main effort an attack into the Cagayan Valley via the Bambang approach. Yamashita had to hold the southern approaches to the triangle to keep open his supply lines from Manila and to maintain his line of communications to the *Shimbu Group,*

[22] Further information on dispositions in southern Luzon is to be found in Chapters XII and XXIII, while material on the deployment of the main body of the *Shimbu Group* is set forth in Chapters XXI and XXII.

[23] The general sources for this section are: SWPA Hist Series, II, Japanese Opns in the SWPA, 418–25, 430–37; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon (hereafter cited as *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon), 6–15, 26–28, 36–40; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, Aoshima Narrative, pp. 3–4, 7–10, and atchd Maps Nos. 1 and 2; Statement of Maj Gen Haruo Konuma (Vice CofS *14th Area Army*), States, II, 300–302, 305–09, 327–30; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List.

much of which he might transfer to the *Shobu Group* sector if time permitted.

The focal point for the defense of the southern approaches to the Cagayan Valley was San Jose, forty-five miles southeast of San Fabian and nearly the same distance south of Bambang. Situated at the end of one branch of the Manila Railroad, San Jose was also the site of the junction of Routes 5, 8, and 96. Route 5 led north to Bambang through Balete Pass and south from San Jose toward Manila along the eastern side of the Central Plains. Route 8 led northwest from San Jose toward Lingayen Gulf. Route 96 went southeast toward the east coast of Luzon.

San Jose was the main transshipment point for supplies going north from Manila or being moved out of Central Plains depots to the *Shobu Group*. Some supplies from December sailings to west coast ports such as San Fernando, La Union, were also reassembled at San Jose. During late December an average of 600 metric tons of all types of supplies and equipment, including most of the matériel from Manila, came into San Jose each day, much of it by rail. There, supplies were transferred to trucks or hand-carrying parties for further movement north along Route 5. So long as Yamashita could hold San Jose and control Route 5, he could continue to ship supplies north into the *Shobu* defensive triangle. Without San Jose, the group would be cut off from its principal sources of military supplies and equipment, and would have to rely on food and other supplies it could move out of the Cagayan Valley. Baguio became *Shobu Group*'s most important secondary supply point. Yamashita planned to assemble there the many tons of supplies stockpiled at various west coast points during November and December.

From the first Yamashita realized that a glaring weakness in all his plans for the defense of northern Luzon was the absence of a good overland link between Baguio and Bambang. He urgently needed a road between the two towns not only to move troops rapidly between the two fronts but also to transport supplies to Baguio from the Cagayan Valley and from the stockpiles being established along Route 5 north of San Jose. Accordingly, Yamashita began construction late in December or early in January. The supply road swung east off Route 11 at a point about ten miles northeast of Baguio, and followed a narrow prewar mining and logging road—until then suitable only for light traffic—for the first ten or fifteen miles eastward. Then it swung east-southeast through the Caraballo Range, following a graded horse trail that American forces had constructed before the war, to Route 5 at Aritao, ten miles south of Bambang. By early February, the *Shobu Group*, using hand-carrying parties along much of the route, was able to move about a ton of supplies west along the improved road each day. It was mid-April before the whole road was open to trucks.

While Yamashita deployed a considerable portion of his strength in positions to defend the approaches to San Jose and the Bambang anchor of the defensive triangle, he did not neglect the other approaches to the triangular redoubt and the Cagayan Valley. He assigned responsibility for holding the Cagayan Valley and the north and northwestern coasts of Luzon to the *103d Division*, to which he attached an understrength regiment of the *10th Division*.

The *23d Division,* with the *58th Independent Mixed Brigade (IMB)* attached, held the west coast from Alacan north sixty-five miles, and was also responsible for defending the approaches to Baguio from the south and west.[24] The *58th IMB* had some troops as far north as San Fernando, but its main strength was concentrated along the coastal hills from Alacan north twenty miles to Aringay. Yamashita intended to deploy the *23d Division* along an arc of high ground defenses running generally southeast from Alacan across Hill 200 and on another ten miles to the Cabaruan Hills, which controlled the Route 3 crossing over the Agno River. If they could not hold their assigned sectors, the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB* would fall back on Baguio, delaying along successive defensive lines.

The *23d Division* had stationed an infantry battalion along the southwestern shore of Lingayen Gulf and had directed the battalion to delay an American drive down the west side of the Central Plains. A reconnaissance unit from the same division, with orders to withdraw without offering any resistance, was deployed along the gulf's southern shores, but had sped southward after the infantry battalion when ships of the Allied Naval Forces had begun preassault bombardment. It had been principally stragglers from these two *23d Division* organizations that the XIV Corps and the 6th Division of I Corps had encountered on 9, 10, and 11 January.

In early January, the *10th Division,* less the bulk of two infantry regiments, was responsible for the defense of San Jose. One regiment, less a battalion, was in the Bambang area attached to the *103d Division,* and another, also minus a battalion, was far to the southwest on Bataan Peninsula. The division was, however, reinforced by the *Tsuda Detachment,* an understrength regimental combat team of the *26th Division.*[25] Stationed at Dingalen and Baler Bays on Luzon's east coast, *Tsuda Detachment* was to make a fighting withdrawal to the Central Plains in the event of an American landing on the east coast. Ultimately, both the *10th Division* and the *Tsuda Detachment* would defend Route 5 through Balete Pass and secure the Bambang anchor of Yamashita's final defense triangle.

When the Sixth Army landed at Lingayen Gulf the *19th Division* was at Naguilian, on Route 9 between Baguio and the west coast town of Bauang, seven miles south of San Fernando.[26] Yamashita planned to move the *19th Division* to a reserve position at San Leon, on Route 8 twenty miles northwest of San Jose. The *2d Tank Division* (less most of its *2d Mobile Infantry*) was in the southern part of the Central Plains, strung out along Route 5 south of San Jose.[27] It was to defend against Ameri-

[24] Additional information on the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB* is from: Statements of Maj Gen Bunzo Sato (CG *58th IMB*), States, II, 253–54, 259–62; Statement of Col Masaichi Takahashi (Staff *23d Div*), States, IV, 42–43.

[25] The *Tsuda Detachment* contained the *11th Independent Infantry Regiment* (less *2d Battalion*) of the *26th Division,* a battery of medium artillery, and miscellaneous service troops, all under Col. Tsukada Tsuda. The rest of the *26th Division* was on Leyte.

[26] Additional information on the *19th Division* comes from: Statement of Lt Gen Yoshiharu Ozaki (CG *19th Div*), in States, III, 177; Nishimura Statement, States, II, 677–80.

[27] Additional information on the *2d Tank Division* is from Statement of Col Shigeo Kawai (Staff *2d Tank Div*), States, II, 145–49.

can parachute landings in the Central Plains, hold itself mobile for a possible counterattack, prepare to withdraw up Route 5 into the Cagayan Valley, and be ready to move west across the Central Plains to the *Kembu* area.

The Effect of the Invasion

When on 6 January Allied Naval Forces' vessels started bombarding San Fernando and environs, Yamashita began to fear an imminent assault at the port city. Such an invasion, coming north of the *58th IMB*'s concentration, would endanger the security of Route 9 to Baguio, especially if the *19th Division* were to deploy southward as planned. Quickly, Yamashita changed his plans for the *19th Division* and directed the division commander, Lt. Gen. Yoshiharu Ozaki, to hold the coastal sector from Bauang north forty miles—an area previously assigned to the *58th IMB*—and to maintain considerable strength at Naguilian to defend Route 9. The change in plans was not drastic. As a result of Allied air attacks and guerrilla operations, and because of the prevailing opinion within *14th Area Army* that no American landings would occur before mid-January, the *19th Division* had hardly started redeploying toward San Leon when its new orders arrived. The division had only to stay where it was to execute Yamashita's directive.

But the change upset Yamashita's plans for strengthening *Shobu Group*'s southern flank and the approaches to San Jose and Bambang. He accordingly decided to organize four defense lines in front of San Jose and Bambang, employing the *2d Tank Division* in a new role. The first line, the *23d Division's* Alacan–Cabaruan Hills arc, presumably already in existence, would now be considered an outpost line of resistance behind which three new lines would be established. Yamashita decided that to gain time for the construction of the three new lines, he would have to strengthen the outer arc. Therefore he ordered the *2d Tank Division's Shigemi Detachment,* roughly comparable to a combat command of an American armored division, to move from its concentration point on Route 5 south of San Jose and take station at the road junction town of Urdaneta, on Route 3 north of the Cabaruan Hills.[28] Part of the detachment was to move on to reinforce *23d Division* outposts at Binalonan, five miles north along Route 3 from Urdaneta.

Since many of the bridges along the main roads to Urdaneta had been destroyed, and since guerrilla and Allied air operations impeded movement over these roads, the *Shigemi Detachment* had to displace by night marches over secondary roads, approaching Urdaneta and Binalonan from the northeast. Dawn on 9 January found the detachment at San Manuel, five miles east of Binalonan.

Having decided that the road and bridge destruction would make it impossible for the *2d Tank Division* to move across the Central Plains to the *Kembu* area, Yamashita now planned to move the rest of the division northeast behind

[28] The *Shigemi Detachment* was named after Maj. Gen. Isao Shigemi, also the commander of the *3d Tank Brigade, 2d Tank Division.* It consisted of the *7th Tank Regiment,* a battalion (less elements) of the *2d Mobile Infantry,* and miscellaneous reinforcing elements. The *7th Tank Regiment* had taken part in the Philippine Islands Campaign of 1941–42, but had apparently been completely reconstituted since then.

the *Shigemi Detachment.*[29] The division (less the *Shigemi Detachment* and the *2d Mobile Infantry*) would concentrate on the Agno near Tayug, six miles southeast of San Manuel. Here, the armored unit was to make ready to counterattack or, conversely, to defend a mean track known as the Villa Verde Trail, which wound north and east over rough mountains from the vicinity of Tayug to join Route 5 north of Balete Pass.

During the first days following Sixth Army's landings, many *Shobu Group* staff officers, dismayed by the American progress inland as well as by the increasingly adverse effect of Allied air and guerrilla operations on *Shobu Group* supply movements, implored Yamashita to mount an all-out counterattack, employing the *2d Tank Division* as a spearhead. Such an attack, Yamashita's subordinates suggested, would gain valuable time to move supplies into the triangular redoubt. Even if only temporarily successful, the attack might provide *Shobu Group* with an opportunity to capture American supplies and move them into the mountains. But Yamashita concluded that Sixth Army was deploying great strength so slowly and cautiously that no situation favorable for a Japanese counterattack could arise in the near future. Furthermore, other staff officers advised him that he *2d Tank Division*'s fuel situation, combined with the condition of roads and bridges in the Central Plains, would make it impossible for the division to mount a cohesive counterattack. Yamashita felt that the only result would be the quick decimation of his armored strength and, envisaging an essentially defensive role for the entire *Shobu Group,* refused to risk any important elements of the group in a counterattack.

As one consequence of this decision, Yamashita committed the *2d Tank Division,* still minus the *Shigemi Detachment* and most of the *2d Mobile Infantry,* to the first of the three new defense lines in front of San Jose and Bambang. On 11 January he directed the division to concentrate at Lupao, on Route 8 nine miles northwest of San Jose, and to extend its left southeast to Muñoz, on Route 5 south of San Jose. Here, the division could better plug a gap between the *10th* and *23d Divisions'* existing lines than would be possible if the unit were to move to Tayug, as Yamashita had directed only two days earlier. Moreover, the new deployment would bring strong defensive forces closer to San Jose and thus help forestall envelopment of that town from the west or south.

The responsibility for holding the second of the three new lines Yamashita assigned to the *10th Division* which, with the arrival of the *2d Tank Division* from the south, could redeploy some of its strength away from San Jose. On the northwest the second line was virtually an extension of the first, and stretched from Lupao to Tayug and the entrance to the Villa Verde Trail. The southeastern section of the second line stretched from San Jose southeast twenty-five miles to Bongabon, junction of the roads to Baler and Dingalen Bays on the east coast. The *Tsuda Detachment,* now directed to withdraw inland from the bays, would defend this section of the

[29] Actually, the destruction was great enough to forestall the division's move westward by about 25 December, while Yamashita did not cancel plans to move the unit to the *Kembu* area until 9 January. The delay in issuing the cancellation order probably provides a bleak commentary on the state of Japanese communications on Luzon.

second line to help prevent the outflanking of San Jose from the south and southeast.

Yamashita realized that his forces would be unable to hold out indefinitely in the relatively flat, open land in front of San Jose and that, accordingly, he would require a line in better defensive terrain along the approaches to the Bambang anchor of his triangle. Thus, the third new line of defenses he established in early January lay across Route 5 in the mountains some twenty miles north of San Jose and about seven miles south of Balete Pass. Responsibility for holding this third line was initially vested in the *10th Division,* but Yamashita knew that, with the missions he had already assigned it, the unit would not have enough strength to defend the line. Therefore, on 8 January, he directed the *105th Division* of *Shimbu Group* to start north from its positions east of Manila to deploy along the new Route 5 defensive line. The division's first echelon was composed of division headquarters, five infantry battalions, and an understrength artillery battalion. Indications are that Yamashita expected to have plenty of time to move the rest of the *105th Division* northward, and that he may also have planned to bring north much of the *8th Division,* leaving *Shimbu Group* only provisional Army units and the naval forces.[30]

As of 11 January the *105th Division*'s advance elements had barely started their trek northward. The *2d Tank Division*'s *Shigemi Detachment* was at San Manuel and had passed to the control of the *23d Division.* Another combat command of the *2d Tank Division,* the *Ida Detachment,* was still strung out along Route 5 twenty-five to thirty miles south of San Jose. The rest of the division, which was composed of division headquarters, division troops, the *10th Tank Regiment,* and a battalion each from the *2d Mobile Infantry* and the *2d Mobile Artillery Regiments,* was moving into position along Route 8 northwest of San Jose.[31]

On 11 January the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB* held excellent defensive positions in the area east and north of Alacan on Lingayen Gulf, but the *23d Division*'s outer arc of defenses from Alacan to the Cabaruan Hills was weakly garrisoned. On its own initiative the division had decided that the Alacan-Cabaruan line would prove indefensible if American forces landed substantial strength over Lingayen Gulf's southern shores and swung thence generally southeastward. Therefore, the division had prepared its principal defenses in higher

[30] At least initially, the redeployment of the *105th Division* was apparently partially intended as a means of permitting the *2d Tank Division* to move to the *Kembu* area. But plans to move the tank division west were canceled the day after Yamashita issued the movement orders to the *105th Division,* without a concomitant cancellation of *105th Division* orders. Therefore, it appears that Yamashita intended to move the *105th Division* north to the *Shobu* area no matter where the *2d Tank Division* was ultimately deployed. Hints that Yamashita planned to bring the *8th Division* north are more elusive, although the move would have been logical in the context of his plan to make his principal stand in northern Luzon. A thesis that Yamashita may have intended to denude the *Shimbu Group* of its regular Army combat units is supported by the fact that just one tank regiment of the *2d Tank Division* held defensive positions in the *Shimbu* area until the end of the first week of January.

[31] The *Ida Detachment* was named after Col. Kumpei Ida, the commander of the *6th Tank Regiment,* around which the detachment was built. The detachment had previously held defenses at Ipo Dam, in the Manila watershed area, under *Shimbu Group* control. The *10th Tank Regiment* was commanded by Col. Kazuo Harada.

terrain east of the Alacan-Cabaruan line, disposing most of its strength in rising ground east of Route 3 from Sison, about seven miles inland from Alacan, south and southeast ten miles to Binalonan and San Manuel.

General Muto, Yamashita's chief of staff, had discovered this unauthorized redeployment during an inspection tour on 5 January. Muto agreed that the *23d Division* could not hold back a concerted American drive southeast from Lingayen Gulf, but he was alarmed at the prospect that the Sixth Army, encountering no substantial defenses in the region west of Route 3, would be able to initiate a drive toward San Jose far sooner than anticipated, thereby upsetting all Yamashita's plans. Muto therefore directed the *23d Division* to reinforce its Alacan–Cabaruan Hills line forthwith. Obviously in no hurry to comply with these orders, the *23d Division*, by 11 January, had sent forward from its Sison–Binalonan–San Manuel positions only one infantry company and half a battery of artillery. As the division would soon learn, further opportunities to strengthen the Alacan–Cabaruan Hills arc had passed.

CHAPTER VI

Expanding the Hold

I Corps Meets the Enemy

By evening of 11 January, I Corps' center and right flank units were well into the *23d Division*'s weakly held arc of forward defenses.[1] Simultaneously, the corps' left was preparing to drive north toward the Damortis-Rosario road, in the *58th IMB*'s sector.

The Attack on the Left

The Damortis-Rosario road, a two-lane, concrete-paved section of Route 3, led east from the junction of Route 3 and the coast road at Damortis, about eight miles north of San Fabian, to the junction of Routes 3 and 11, eight miles inland and a mile east of Rosario. (*Map II*) Seizure of the Damortis-Rosario stretch of Route 3 would present I Corps with an easy means of access to Route 11, in turn providing a two-lane asphalt-paved axis of advance toward Baguio along the deep valley of the Bued River. Equally important, if the I Corps could quickly gain control over the Damortis-Rosario road and the Routes 3–11 junction, the corps could largely overcome the threat of counterattack against the Sixth Army's beachhead from the north and northeast. With the security of its left rear thus assured, the XIV Corps could speed its drive toward the Sixth Army's principal objective area, the Central Plains–Manila Bay region.

The Damortis - Rosario road ran sometimes across wooded ravines and sometimes over ridge tops for three-quarters of the way to Rosario, and then continued across open farm land and through Rosario to a junction with Route 11. The road was dominated by broken ridges and steep-sided hills to both the north and the south for the first five miles inland. South of the road the hills and ridges were grass-covered; to the north many of the draws and ravines contained thick scrub growth. Bare, steep heights north, northeast, and east of Rosario controlled the Routes 3–11 junction. The *58th IMB*, defending the Damortis-Rosario road, had all the advantages of observation, while the relatively soft rock and dirt mixture of the hills and ridges gave the brigade ample opportunity to indulge in what was soon to appear to the I Corps as the Japanese Army's favorite occupation — digging caves and tunnels.

Numbering about 6,900 men, the *58th IMB* was composed of five independent infantry battalions of some 900 men each, a battalion of fifteen 75-mm. mountain

[1] The general American sources for this section and its subsections are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 19–23; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 28–34; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–12; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 12–18 Jan 45; 43d Div G–3 Jnl Luzon, 12–18 Jan 45.

guns, and brigade service troops.[2] Attachments included three heavy artillery units totaling nearly 2,150 men with twelve artillery pieces ranging in caliber from 150-mm. to 300-mm. By coincidence, one of the first I Corps units to gain firm contact with the *58th IMB* was a correspondingly separate nondivisional organization, the 158th RCT. This unit, with about 4,500 men, was organized into three infantry battalions, a 12-weapon battalion of 105-mm. howitzers, and regimental troops. The RCT would have additional fire support from CVE-based planes and from the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers of the Luzon Attack Force.

On 12 January the 158th RCT, which had replaced elements of the 172d Infantry, 43d Division, along the coast road on the 11th, sent patrols into Damortis and found the town virtually deserted.[3] Late the same day General Krueger, in order to unify command on the army left, released the RCT from army control and attached it to I Corps. For similar reasons General Swift, the corps commander, further attached the combat team to the 43d Division.[4] Swift also attached his corps reserve, the 6th Division's 63d RCT, to the 43d Division and directed the division commander, General Wing, to commit the 63d to close a growing gap between the 158th RCT and the 172d Infantry, which had been advancing eastward as the 158th pushed north.[5]

On the morning of 12 January the 172d Infantry, aided by left flank elements of the 169th Infantry, undertook an abortive attack against Hill 580, near the southern end of the third, bare-crested ridge line inland from the Mabilao landing beaches.[6] From Hill 580 the ridge line stretched northward about four and a half miles to the Damortis-Rosario road near barrio Cataguintingan, at the edge of the open farm land west of Rosario. On the east the ridge overlooked open, gently sloping terrain that fell away to the valley of the Bued River, leading northeastward from the vicinity of Hill 580 and past the Routes 3–11 junction. A tiny tributary of the Bued, the Apangat River, lay just under the eastern side of the ridge line.

Once Hill 580 was cleared, the 172d Infantry could proceed north along the ridge and the Apangat River abreast of the 63d Infantry, which, as 43d Division plans evolved on 12 and 13 January, was to attack north along the next ridge to the west while the 158th Infantry struck east along the Damortis-Rosario road. If this three-regiment attack succeeded quickly, the units could drive rapidly on to overrun artillery positions north of the road from which the Japanese were still shelling I Corps beaches and then

[2] Japanese information in this subsection is from: Sato Statement, States, III, 253–55; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, O/B an., pp. 1–2; 43d Div FO 2, 13 Jan 45.

[3] Additional information on 158th RCT operations is from: 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–13; 158th Inf Rpt Damortis-Rosario, pp. 1–2; 158th RCT S–3 Jnl and Jnl File, 11–17 Jan 45; 158th Inf Unit Jnl and Jnl File, 11–18 Jan 45.

[4] Rad, Sixth Army to I Corps and 158th RCT, 2048 12 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–13 Jan 45; Rad, I Corps to 158th RCT, 0034 13 Jan 45, 158th RCT S–3 Jnl File, 11–17 Jan 45.

[5] Rad, I Corps to Sixth Army, RM–79, 12 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–12 Jan 45; Entry 56, 11–12 Jan, and Entries 44 and 76, 12–13 Jan, 43d Div G–3 Jnls, 11–12 and 12–13 Jan 45.

[6] See above, Chapter IV, for a generalized description of the three ridge lines. Additional information on 172d Infantry operations is from: 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, pp. 3–6; 172d Inf S–3 Rpts, 11–18 Jan 45; 172d Inf Jnl and Msg File, 11–18 Jan 45.



JUNCTION OF COASTAL AND DAMORTIS-ROSARIO ROADS AT DAMORTIS

push on to secure the Routes 3–11 junction, thereby helping to safeguard Sixth Army's extreme left and permitting General Krueger to devote more attention to the XIV Corps' drive toward Manila. Making final prep rations for the three-regiment advance, the 43d Division estimated that some 5,000 troops of the *58th IMB* held defenses in the Damortis-Rosario sector, an estimate that was at least 1,000 men too low.[7]

On the morning of 13 January, behind close mortar support, the 172d Infantry again struck up the grassy, steep slopes of Hill 580, meeting a withering fire from Japanese mortars, machine guns, and rifles. Before securing most of the hill at 1730, the two assault companies lost about 15 men killed and 25 wounded. The next day the regiment continued north along the third ridge, supported now by the 43d Division's 103d Field Artillery Battalion (105-mm. howitzers) from positions near White Beach 1. Against scattered resistance, the 172d captured Hill 565, a mile and a quarter north of Hill 580. This gain had been so easy that General Wing, the 43d Division's commander, directed the regiment

[7] Of the 9,000 men originally in or attached to the *58th IMB*, over 6,000 were probably available to hold the approaches to Rosario. About 1,000 more were at Aringay, on the coast north of Damortis. The remaining 2,000 were sick, had been killed or wounded by the air, naval, and artillery bombardments, or were scattered in small detachments north and east of Rosario.

to push on during the 15th to take Hill 665, another mile and a quarter north and the highest point along the third ridge line.

Meanwhile, the attacks of the 63d and 158th Infantry Regiments had not gone so well. On the 13th the 63d attacked north from Hill 247 (captured by the 172d on S-day) and seized Hill 363, about a mile and a half up the middle ridge.[8] Artillery support was to have been provided by the 43d Division's 155-mm. howitzer battalion, the 192d Field Artillery, since the 63d RCT's own 105-mm. battalion had been sent south with the rest of the 6th Division.

Unfortunately, the 192d Field Artillery did not learn it was to support the 63d Infantry until after dark on 12 January, and could not start moving to good close support positions until daylight on the 13th, after the 63d had started its attack. Unlike a 105-mm. battalion, the 192d did not normally operate in direct support roles and lacked the forward observers and communications the lighter battalions possessed. The 192d might therefore have been expected to take some time to prepare for its direct support mission, but the battalion reported it could have provided some support—with at least one battery—by noon on the 13th had not Col. Ralph C. Holliday, commanding the 63d Infantry, insisted that wire be laid for artillery liaison officers and forward observers, a job that was not completed for the 192d Field Artillery for almost thirty-six hours. Colonel Holliday may have been influenced in his decision by the fact that the artillery's SCR–610 radio did not work efficiently in the broken terrain of the middle ridge line where the 63d Infantry was attacking. It was not, indeed, until the 43d Division had supplied the 192d Field Artillery with infantry SCR–300 sets that the battalion was able to establish satisfactory radio communications. Then, on 14 January, the first radio brought up to the battalion's forward observers was promptly destroyed by Japanese artillery, which also cut wire that had already been laid. Support was again delayed.

During the 14th, the 192d brought one battery still further forward to excellent direct support positions, but the communications problems made it impossible for this battery to deliver any support fires that day. It was, finally, midafternoon on 15 January when the entire battalion was in position—about a mile inland and approximately three miles south of Hill 363—and ready to give the 63d Infantry the support it needed.[9]

Without artillery support, and continually forced to seek cover from observed Japanese artillery and mortar fire against which it could call down no counterbattery fire, the 63d Infantry's progress was slow. Heat helped to slow advances. Though scarcely a mile inland, the regiment was cut off from Lingayen Gulf's cooling breezes and reaped the dividends of the broiling sun on the browning, steep hills. Water was another problem—none was readily available in the regiment's area, and the absence of

[8] Additional information on the 63d Infantry is from: 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–2; 63d Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 13–18 Jan 45; 63d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 13–18 Jan 45.

[9] Ltr, Lt Col Donn R. Pepke (CO 2d Bn 63d Inf) to author, 7 Jan 53, OCMH files; 192d FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–3; 192d FA Bn Jnl, 12–16 Jan 45. The 192d's records indicate that some support missions were fired late on the afternoon of the 14th, but Colonel Pepke, commanding the 63d Infantry's leading battalion, stated that he received no artillery support until noon on the 15th at the earliest.

roads made it necessary to hand-carry all drinking water forward. But General Wing was dissatisfied with the regiment's accomplishments. Late on the 14th he relieved Colonel Holliday and placed Lt. Col. Harold G. Maison, the regimental executive officer, in command. Under Maison's direction, the 63d prepared to drive on northward to gain contact with the 158th Infantry along the Damortis-Rosario road.[10]

The 158th Infantry had spent 13 January patrolling in the Damortis area and preparing to attack eastward on the 14th in a drive that was expected to take the regiment at least halfway to Rosario in one day. The attack on the 14th proceeded smoothly for approximately five minutes. Then, as the 158th's leading elements started through a shallow defile about half a mile east of the Damortis—coastal road junction, Japanese mortar and artillery fire began chewing up the highway, and Japanese machine gun fire pinned down the American troops as they sought cover along the slopes north and south of the road. The troops of the *58th IMB*, who had taken a heavy pounding from Allied aircraft, naval fire support vessels, and I Corps artillery for some days, had abandoned their coastal defenses and had moved into defilade positions along the eastern slopes and folds of the coastal ridge line. Their cave and tunnel defenses had been invisible from the west, and they had been able to set up what amounted to an ambush that 158th Infantry patrols had not discovered on 13 January. During the afternoon of the 14th the 158th Infantry's forward troops painfully withdrew from their exposed positions on the open slopes just east of Damortis. The day's abortive effort cost the regiment 20 men killed and 65 wounded.

The next day the 158th Infantry, supported by the 147th Field Artillery Battalion (105-mm. howitzers), naval gunfire, and CVE-based planes, gained about 1,000 yards of ground in an easterly direction both north and south of Route 3, advancing on a front about 800 yards wide astride the highway. South of the road, troops reached the crest of the first ridge line, which did not extend north of the road. There, the seaward slopes rose eastward to a ridge that, lying approximately a mile and a quarter inland, formed a northward extension of the middle ridge south of Route 3. Units of the 158th operating north of the road on 15 January were able to press only halfway up the bare slopes of the northern ridge.

Meanwhile, south of Route 3, the 63d Infantry had advanced over a mile and a half north from Hill 363 in an attempt to reach barrio Amlang, at the eastern exit of the defile through which the 158th Infantry was driving. The 63d was now operating along the eastern slopes of the first ridge line and across the second ridge, which became progressively more broken and ill-defined as the regiment proceeded northward. Japanese artillery and mortar fire, which showed no signs of decreasing in intensity as the day wore on, lambasted the 63d's forward elements all day.

Both the 63d and the 158th Infantry Regiments had encountered stronger resistance than anticipated, and General Wing now realized that neither was

[10] Intervs, author with Col George G. O'Connor (CO 53d FA Bn 6th Div), 15 Dec 52 and 2 Feb 53; Ltr, Pepke to author, 7 Jan 53; 63d Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 13–15 Jan 45; 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 13–15 Jan 45.

going to break through toward Rosario as soon as hoped. Accordingly, he directed the 172d Infantry to speed its advance toward Route 3. He simultaneously directed the regiment to seize Rosario and clean out Japanese artillery emplacements north of Route 3 from which much of the fire had been falling on the 63d and 158th.[11]

Speed on the right appeared essential for another reason. Late on 14 January both air and ground observers had spotted a Japanese motorized column moving south along Route 3 below the Routes 3–11 junction. If, as feared, this move presaged a build-up for a Japanese counterattack against the Sixth Army's left, the 172d Infantry had to gain control over the highway junction before any more Japanese troops could come south. The regiment began operations on the morning of 15 January to secure the junction. That day, at the cost of 5 men killed and 20 wounded, the 172d Infantry established one battalion at the edge of Route 3 about a mile and a half west of Rosario.

The 43d Division was now trying to accomplish three related tasks: secure the Routes 3–11 junction; overrun all Japanese artillery emplacements in the Damortis-Rosario region; and secure all the ground on its left to the Army Beachhead Line, which lay roughly three miles north of the Damortis-Rosario road. Since it appeared to General Wing that his three left flank regiments did not have enough strength to accomplish all these missions, he directed the 169th Infantry, which had been operating to the southeast for three days, to push some troops north along Route 3 toward the Routes 3–11 junction. The 172d Infantry was to seize Rosario, high ground immediately north of the town, and the highway junction. The 63d would clear the Damortis-Rosario road from the 172d's westernmost positions west to barrio Amlang. The 158th Infantry's primary task was to eliminate the Japanese from the ridge north of the defile where the regiment had been stopped. The 158th had already probed up the western slopes of this ridge, and patrols had discovered that the Japanese had many mortar and machine gun positions, and a few artillery emplacements as well, along the ridge line, which extended for some two miles north of the road.

Advances made on 16 January in accordance with these plans were disappointing. None of the three regiments on the left made significant progress, but all took more casualties. The 158th Infantry, for example, suffered 13 men killed, 34 wounded, and 49 evacuated because of heat exhaustion. Almost all the casualties were incurred by one battalion and constituted a rate that no battalion could stand for long. The supply problems of the 63d and 172d Infantry Regiments were becoming more and more vexing. Until engineers could construct roads northward along the ridges, food and ammunition had to be either airdropped or moved up by Filipino hand-carrying parties. At this stage of operations on Luzon, it was not yet possible to organize such a resupply program on the scale required for rapid advances. The three regiments on the left—the 169th had been unable to start any troops north along Route 3 on 16 January — had apparently been stalemated, each unable to make significant

[11] 43d Div FO 3, 15 Jan 45.



TROOPS ON HILL OVERLOOKING DAMORTIS-ROSARIO ROAD

progress until the others began breaking through. General Wing would have to discover some way to break the stalemate quickly, for in large measure the entire development of the Sixth Army's campaign was coming to depend upon the progress of the 63d, 158th, and 172d Infantry Regiments.

The 43d Division's Right Flank

While operations on the 43d Division's left had been developing into a stalemate, the 103d and 169th Infantry Regiments, on the division right, had been preoccupied with a drive eastward toward the Army Beachhead Line, a drive that took the regiments into the *23d Division's* outer defensive arc. On 13 January, after having cleared, with the 172d Infantry, the southern end of the third ridge line inland from the landing beaches, the 169th Infantry began directing its major efforts toward securing Hill 318, on the east bank of the Bued River four and a half miles due east of San Fabian, and Hill 355, two miles northeast of Hill 318.[12]

The 169th Infantry was up against the *23d Division's 64th Infantry*, which was responsible for holding the western approaches to Route 3 from a point near

[12] Additional information on 169th Infantry operations is from 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–5; 169th Inf Unit Jnl and Jnl Files, 12–18 Jan 45.

During preliminary attacks against Hill 318 on 12 January, S. Sgt. Robert E. Laws of Company G, 169th Infantry, earned the Medal of Honor when, leading the company's assault squad, he personally knocked out a Japanese pillbox and, although wounded, continued to fight, killing three Japanese before being evacuated.

the Routes 3–11 junction south-southeast almost eighteen miles to Urdaneta.[13] The Japanese regiment numbered about 2,500 troops, at least half of whom were ill-trained replacements picked up on Luzon. The *1st Battalion*, less a reinforced rifle company at Hill 318, was on Hill 355. The *3d Battalion* held Mt. Alava, a mile and a half north of Hill 355, and the ground sloping down to Route 3 at the town of Sison, two and a half miles northeast of Mt. Alava's crest. Supporting artillery, about two medium battalions, was emplaced in the Mt. Alava–Sison area and at Hill 355. The *64th Infantry* was well dug in along the bare slopes of Hills 318 and 355 and Mt. Alava, having constructed many tunnels and caves and enlarged natural fissures and holes. The regiment, having all the advantages of observation, could watch every movement of 169th Infantry troops across the open approaches to the hill defenses.

The 169th Infantry, in a frontal assault that cost 70 men killed or wounded, cleared Hill 318 by evening on 14 January and the next day started a two-pronged attack against Hill 355.[14] The effort of the 15th, at the expense of 15 men killed and 30 wounded, only demonstrated that continued frontal assault from the south and west held out little chance for the quick success and breakthrough to Route 3 that General Wing, under pressure from General Swift at I Corps headquarters, was demanding. Wing accordingly directed the 169th Infantry to cease its frontal attacks, bypass Hill 355 to the south, and displace overland to Route 3 at barrio Palacpalac, four miles south of Sison.[15]

To escape detection in the open ground south of Hill 355 and Mt. Alava, the 169th Infantry, which left a one-battalion containing force at Hill 355, started its overland march at 2030 on the 15th. Forced to ford two small rivers and thread its way through dry rice paddies with their separating embankments, the regiment did not close at Palacpalac until 1700 on the 16th. The troops had been encumbered by supplies during the march because supply lines were abandoned until the 103d Infantry, on the right, could secure good gravel roads running from Route 3 at Pozorrubio, a mile south of Palacpalac, southwest to Manaoag and west to San Jacinto.

For some days the 103d Infantry had been striving to reach and clear Route 3 from Pozorrubio south to Urdaneta, but had found its way blocked by the reinforced *2d Battalion, 64th Infantry*, on the Hill 200 complex. The Japanese battalion had about 600 men on the six square miles of complicated but gently rolling and open hills, in which they had dug many caves, tunnels, and machine gun emplacements. The Japanese had ten to fifteen artillery pieces in support, some of them held mobile along the road to Pozorrubio. Other troops and

[13] Japanese information in this subsection is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 463, n. 9, and Plate III; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, pp. 1–2; 103d Inf O/B Rpt Luzon, p. 1.

[14] Additional information on operations at Hill 355 comes from: 716th Tank Bn Rpt Luzon, p. 3; 169th Inf Verbal FO, 14 Jan 45, résumé in 169th Inf Jnl File, 14 Jan 45; 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 13–15 Jan 45.

[15] 43d Div FO 3, 15 Jan 45; Entries 27, 100, and 101, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 13–14 Jan 45; Entries 21 and 32, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 14–15 Jan 45; Entry 84, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 15–16 Jan 45; 43d Div G–3 Rpts, 15 and 16 Jan 45; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–11.

additional artillery were in Pozorrubio and at Binalonan, midway between Pozorrubio and Urdaneta.

The 103d Infantry's fight to clear Hill 200 was marked from start to finish by heat and dust, and by extremely close support of 105-mm. howitzers, the 105-mm. self-propelled howitzers of the regimental Cannon Company, 4.2-inch mortars, and a company of the 716th Tank Battalion.[16] The battle was joined in earnest on the morning of 12 January, and by dark on the 16th only minor mopping up remained. Some 250 of the Japanese defenders escaped toward Pozorrubio, which elements of the 103d Infantry entered late on the 16th. The next day the 103d cleared the town, the remaining troops of the *2d Battalion, 64th Infantry*, having withdrawn northward during the night. Meanwhile, further south, two reinforced companies of the 3d Battalion, 103d Infantry, had reached barrio Potpot, a mile or so west of Binalonan on the Binalonan-Manaoag road. The companies scarcely had time to set up defenses at dusk on the 16th before they were attacked from the east by a force of Japanese tanks.

Counterattack

Although General Yamashita never had any intention of launching a major counteroffensive against the Sixth Army, he did decide, probably to assuage the oft-expressed desires of many members of his staff, to undertake some minor, local counterattacks on the Sixth Army's left.[17] His intention was to retain some initiative for *14th Area Army* and to gain a bit more time to continue moving supplies north into the *Shobu Group*'s redoubt. The *23d Division* was to execute the local counterattacks, moving on the night of 16–17 January.

The division directed the attached *58th IMB* to strike south along the coast road to disrupt the 158th RCT's supply line. The division's own *71st Infantry*, from positions in hills east and northeast of Sison, was to send two companies southwest down the Bued River valley, threatening the rear and the supply routes of the 172d and 169th Infantry Regiments. The *72d Infantry*, also employing two companies, was to move into Pozorrubio and operate against the rear of the 169th and 103d Infantry Regiments. The armored *Shigemi Detachment*, attached to the *23d Division* since 10 or 11 January, was to send a small tank-infantry task force west from San Manuel, through Binalonan, and on to Manaoag to disrupt the 103d Infantry's attack.

"From the first, however, the plan went awry."[18] On the north, the only noteworthy action seems to have been a raid against a 158th RCT artillery emplacement. For the rest, the units on the 43d Division's left reacted to the *58th IMB*'s share in the counterattack with laconic reports of "normal infiltration." Conflicting information makes it impossible to separate the parts played by the *71st* and *72d Infantry Regiments*,

[16] Additional information on the 103d Infantry is from: 103d Inf Rpt Luzon, 1 Jan–31 May 45, pp. 7–13; 103d RCT S–3 Per Rpt, 12–18 Jan 45; 103d Inf Opns Jnl, 12–18 Jan 45.

[17] Japanese information in this subsection is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 437–38; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 44–45; Takahashi Statement, States, IV, 43; Sato Statement, States, III, 254; Kawai Statement, in States, I, 321–24; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, p. 3.

[18] SWPA Hist Series, II, 438.



MANAOAG. HILL 200 COMPLEX IS IN BACKGROUND.

but in their sectors there was more action. One small party of Japanese reached rear installations of the 172d Infantry, set afire a gasoline dump, damaged a couple of trucks, killed 2 American soldiers, and wounded 8 others. This group of Japanese dispersed after losing about 10 men killed, but continued to create infiltration scares along the Bued River valley for the next two or three days.

At barrio Palacpalac some 200 Japanese hit the perimeter of the 1st Battalion, 169th Infantry, shortly after dark on 16 January. Confused fighting—the Japanese group had not expected to find the Americans on Route 3—continued until after daylight on the 17th, when the Japanese withdrew leaving nearly a hundred dead on the field. The 169th's battalion lost 4 men killed and 26 wounded. The action may not, indeed, have been part of the counterattack, but may well have been precipitated by remnants of the *2d Battalion, 64th Infantry,* withdrawing from Hill 200.

The strongest raid was that executed by the *Shigemi Detachment* against the outpost of the 3d Battalion, 103d Infantry, at barrio Potpot. Shortly before midnight on 16 January, Japanese tanks suddenly loomed up through the dark-

ness on the east side of the outpost. American antitank gunners were so taken by surprise that two tanks were able to drive through the perimeter spraying machine gun fire in all directions before disappearing down the road toward Manaoag. A third Japanese tank was knocked out east of the perimeter, but others, accompanied by infantry, continued to attack. The Japanese infantry withdrew after a sharp, two-hour fire fight, and the tanks also disappeared. But at dawn on the 17th the two tanks that had broken through earlier came roaring back down the road from Manaoag. This time they were destroyed.

When a count could be taken, the 103d Infantry's groupment at Potpot found it had lost 2 men killed and 10 wounded; a 37-mm. antitank gun, a jeep, and an M8 scout car destroyed; and a tank, another jeep, and a second M8 damaged. The Japanese lost 11 tanks and at least 50 men killed.

At dawn on the 17th, as the Japanese counterattacks at Palacpalac and Potpot ended, elements of the 25th Division began moving up to relieve the 169th and 103d Infantry Regiments. Taking stock at the end of the day, the 43d Division (and its attached 158th and 63d RCT's) could look back on its performance since the landing with mixed feelings. Nowhere had the division projected any strength to the Army Beachhead Line,[19] and at least temporarily the units on the division left had become involved in a stalemate that threatened to have a serious, if not disruptive, effect upon Sixth Army's progress. On the other hand, the 43d Division's troops had met and partially overcome the strongest resistance the Japanese on Luzon had yet offered any elements of the Sixth Army. The division had overrun some important positions along the *23d Division*'s outer line of defenses, and it had uncovered additional Japanese concentrations. Holding a front of approximately twenty-five miles as of daybreak on 17 January, the five regiments under 43d Division control had attained positions that at least partially nullified chances that *14th Area Army* could launch a large-scale surprise counteroffensive that might seriously threaten Sixth Army's beachhead. The division's main problem was to overcome the last major vestiges of such a threat by securing control over the Routes 3–11 junction and gaining a firm hold on Route 3 south of the junction. Their accomplishments to 17 January had cost the forces under General Wing's command approximately 770 casualties —roughly 200 men killed or missing and about 570 wounded.

The 6th Division's Zone

While the 43d Division had been moving against the strongest Japanese defenses so far encountered on Luzon, I Corps' right flank unit, the 6th Division, had been holding along a generally static line.[20] By evening on 11 January, it had appeared that the 6th Division could push on in its sector to the Army Beachhead Line and as far as the Agno River with little trouble, but General Swift, the I Corps commander, held the

[19] Actually, a couple of patrols of the 158th Infantry had reached the Army Beachhead Line along the coast north of Damortis.

[20] The principal sources for this subsection are: I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 28–32; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–10; 6th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–6; 6th Cav Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–9; 6th Div G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 12–17 Jan 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–9.

division back because its further advance would create a potentially dangerous gap along the I Corps' front. (*Map 4*) Swift directed the division to consolidate along a line stretching from Malasiqui, about twelve miles inland on the I–XIV Corps boundary, northeast across open farm land almost ten miles to the 6th–43d Division boundary near Manaoag. The division displaced to its new line against negligible opposition on 12 and 13 January, and immediately began sending reconnaissance elements eastward and southward. Patrols of the 6th Reconnaissance Troop, based in the vicinity of Manaoag, reported that Urdaneta was held by a strong force of Japanese and that Villasis, another five miles south along Route 3 and on the Agno, also contained a Japanese garrison. Patrols moving out of Malasiqui found a good-sized Japanese group dug in on the Cabaruan Hills, centering some six miles east of Malasiqui.

The 6th Division could not move against these Japanese concentrations until released from its holding mission, and, lest a great gap develop between the 6th and 43d Divisions, release could not come until the situation across the Sixth Army's front was sufficiently clarified to permit General Krueger to decide how and where to commit his last reserve, the 25th Division—a decision he did not reach until late on the 16th. When the 25th Division started taking over from 43d Division right flank units on the morning of the 17th, the 6th Division was able to resume its advance, heading now toward Urdaneta and the Cabaruan Hills. Until the 17th the 6th Division had encountered no strong resistance, and its casualties, excluding those of the 63d RCT, numbered no more than 20 men killed and 90 wounded.[21]

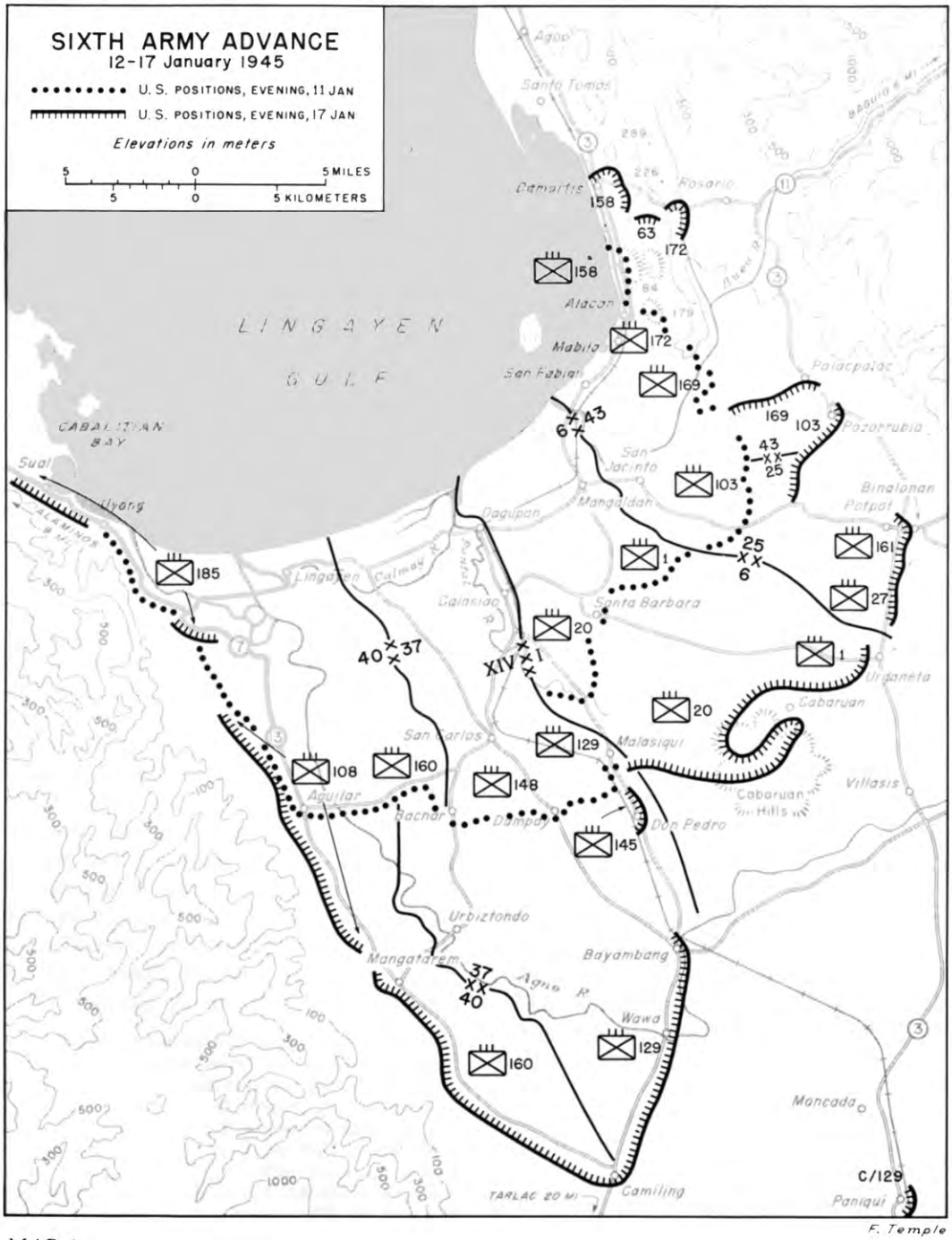
XIV Corps Probes South

The XIV Corps had not been idle while the I Corps had been developing the situation on Sixth Army's left.[22] As of evening on 11 January, XIV Corps' 37th Division was outposting the Army Beachhead Line from the corps boundary south of Malasiqui west nearly eight miles to Bacnar on the 37th–40th Division boundary. The 40th Division's most southerly unit was at Aguilar, on Route 13 and the Army Beachhead Line about six miles west of Bacnar. To the northwest, along Lingayen Gulf's southwestern shore, the 40th Division had control of Route 7 almost as far as Port Sual, the western terminus of the Army Beachhead Line.

During the period 12–14 January the 185th Infantry, 40th Division, with the 40th Reconnaissance Troop attached, secured Port Sual and moved on to take the road junction town of Alaminos on the Bolinao Peninsula. The regiment also advanced north four miles from Port Sual along the western side of Lingayen Gulf to Cabalitan Bay, where it found that men of the Allied Naval Forces, unopposed, had already landed to establish a seaplane base. Patrols then drove west and reached Dasol Bay, on Luzon's west coast, on 15 January. No-

[21] For further information on the commitment of the 25th Division, see below, Chapter VIII. Operations of the 6th and 25th Divisions on 17 January are described in Chapter IX.

[22] The general sources for this section are: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 54–62; 40th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–13; 40th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 12–17 Jan 45; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–25; 37th Div G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 12–18 Jan 45; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 20.



F. Temple

MAP 4

where did any significant contacts with Japanese forces develop.

Further south, the 160th Infantry of the 40th Division had a few skirmishes with elements of the *Kubota Detachment,* which was composed of the *23d Reconnaissance Regiment, 23d Division,* and a large part of the *1st Battalion* of the *72d Infantry, 23d Division.* A few stragglers of the *Kubota Detachment* were cut off on the Bolinao Peninsula, but the detachment dissipated most of its strength in a series of minor clashes south along Route 13 with the 160th Infantry.[23]

To the 40th Division's left, on 12 January, patrols of the 37th Division found Filipino guerrillas holding Bayambang, on the Agno River eight miles south of Malasiqui, and secured Urbiztondo, on the Agno five miles south of Bacnar. The next day patrols moved into Wawa, between Bayambang and Urbiztondo. On 15 January a battalion of the 129th Infantry, 37th Division, crossed the Agno at Wawa and marched on south along a dusty gravel road to Camiling, where Route 13 comes in from the northwest. A battalion of the 160th Infantry, 40th Division, came down from Aguilar to Camiling the same day.

General Krueger now instructed General Griswold, the XIV Corps commander, to send more troops south of the Agno. On the evening of 15 January Griswold accordingly directed his engineers to construct crossings over the Agno so that heavy equipment could move on toward Manila and larger forces could be supplied south of the river. Generally, the corps was to bring its main strength up to the line Bayambang-Wawa-Camiling, and was to set up an outpost line further south.[24] Units redeployed without incident during the next two days. By the 17th the corps had outposts at Moncada, on Route 3 over ten miles south of the Agno at Villasis in the I Corps sector; at Nampicuan and Anao, on the corps boundary four miles east of Moncada; and at Paniqui, on Route 3 six miles south of Moncada. As of 17 January XIV Corps had lost about 30 men killed and 90 wounded, compared to I Corps losses of 220 killed and 660 wounded.

Whatever the strength of the opposition the XIV Corps had encountered in the open, flat farm land through which it was moving, the corps had accomplished its initial missions. It had secured Sixth Army's right; it had reached and passed the Army Beachhead Line in its sector; it had secured crossings over the Agno River. From the nature of the resistance encountered so far and from information supplied by guerrillas and reconnaissance patrols about the area south of the Agno, it appeared that XIV Corps could drive on toward Manila just as soon as I Corps could assure the safety of the XIV's left rear and the supporting echelons could move sufficient supplies and heavy equipment across the Agno, over which the Japanese had left scarcely a single bridge standing.

[23] Japanese information in this section is from: *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 45, 73–74; SWPA Hist Series, II, Plate III (after p. 437); *Kubota Detachment* Opnl Order 1, 5 Jan 45, trans in 40th Div G–3 Jnl File, 14 Jan 45. The detachment was named after Lt. Col. Shohei Kubota, also the commander of the *23d Reconnaissance Regiment.*

[24] XIV Corps Opns Memos 6, 15 Jan 45, and 6/1, 17 Jan 45, both in XIV Corps Opns Memos File; 37th Div Opns Memo 3, 16 Jan 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 15–18 Jan 45; 40th Div Opns Memo 1, 16 Jan 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 16–17 Jan 45; Sixth Army FO 42, 16 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 147.

CHAPTER VII

The Logistics of the Invasion

The danger of overextension in the face of the continued threat of Japanese counterattack against Sixth Army's left was the principal factor so far preventing XIV Corps from driving further and more rapidly southward. At the same time, however, logistical problems threatened not only seriously to delay XIV Corps progress but also to slow I Corps operations to secure the army left. Largely as the result of circumstances beyond the control of Sixth Army and of the Allied Naval Forces, the problem of supplying the advancing troops of the two corps had become extremely vexing during the first week ashore on Luzon. Indeed, as early as evening of S plus 1, 10 January, all supply operations at Lingayen Gulf had almost halted. Moreover, Sixth Army engineers had quickly found that unanticipated difficulties would delay bridge and airfield construction in the Lingayen Gulf area and that other construction projects along the gulf's shores would have to be abandoned as impracticable. Such logistical problems tended to create the proverbial vicious circle—on the one hand they would delay the XIV Corps' progress southward; on the other hand they demanded that XIV Corps push southward as rapidly as possible to secure the Clark Field air center and the Manila port facilities.

Unloading the Assault Convoys

Beach Operations on S-day

Early landings on 9 January gave no hint of problems to arise.[1] The long, shallow gradient along the XIV Corps' beaches was ideal for LVT's, LVT(A)'s, and Dukws, all of which made their way to dry land without difficulty. However, most LCVP's grounded in shallow water some 20 to 30 yards offshore. Next, engineer special brigade LCM's (Landing Craft, Mechanized) grounded about 50 yards off the beaches, Navy LCT's stopped 75 to 80 yards out, and LST's grounded by the stern 50 to 100 yards seaward of the LCT's.

Most of the LST's had stuck on a shoal or sand bar that, fronting much of the

[1] The principal sources used for this section and its subsections are: III Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–14; *ibid.*, Encl A, Intel, pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, Encl C, Logistics, p. 3; TG 79.1 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 12–13, 16–17; TG 79.2 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 10–15, 31–33, 38–40; TG 79.3 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 1, 6–7, 11; TG 79.4 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 6–12, 19–28; TG 79.6 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 6–9; VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–5, 17, 27–30; TG 78.5 Lingayen Gulf Rpt, pp. 6–7; 4th ESB Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–8, 11–22; I Corps Amphib Off, Lingayen Gulf Rpt, atchd to 3d ESB Rpt, Jan 45, pp. 3, 8, 10–12; 37th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–21, 192–95; 544th EB&SR Hist, 1 Feb 43–1 Feb 46, I, 21–24; 594th EB&SR Rpt Lingayen Gulf, 24 Nov 44–13 Feb 45, pp. 4–9; 533d EB&SR Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 6–9; 543d EB&SR Rpt M–I Opn, pp. 7–22; 543d EB&SR Rpt on M–I Opn Through S Plus 3, pp. 1–7.

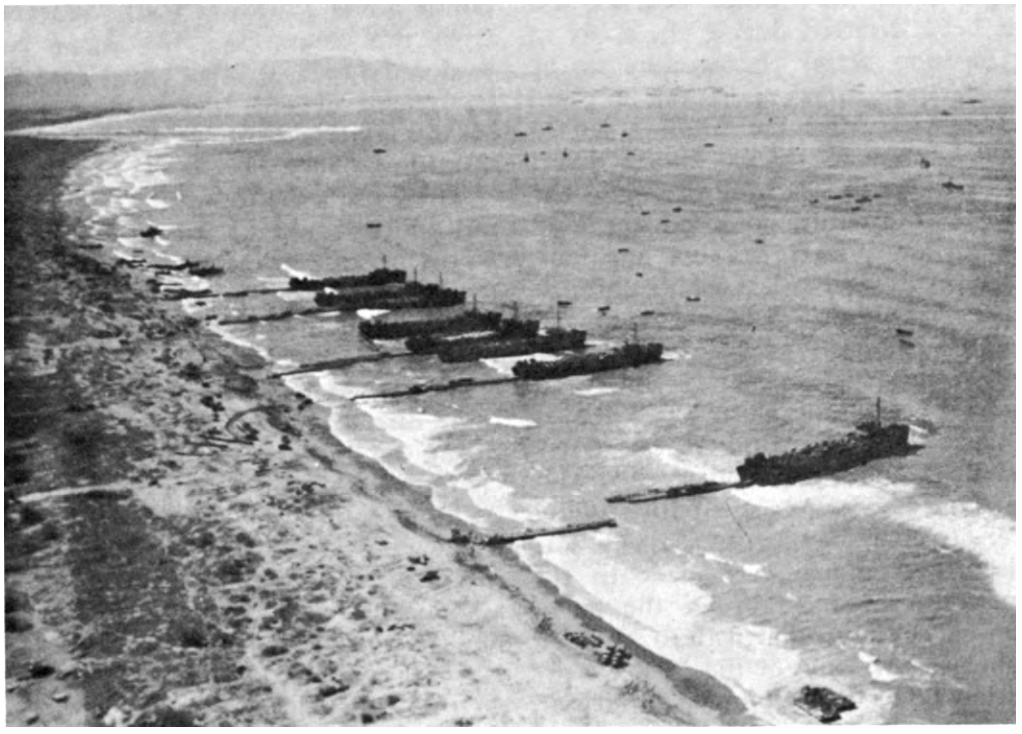
length of the XIV Corps' beaches, had not been detected during the study of preinvasion aerial photography or by hydrographic survey operations on 7 and 8 January.[2] After the landings started on 9 January it was too late to divert LST's to better beaching sites, and the price of the failure to locate the sand bar earlier quickly became apparent. Attempts to send trucks ashore through water that deepened on the landward side of the shoal proved futile, since most of the vehicles were not—and could not have been—sufficiently waterproofed to make their way through salt water that at least in a few spots reached well over their hoods. At many points, therefore, direct unloading from LST's was halted, and efforts were made to rig ponton causeways to bridge the water gap — a solution that led to another problem.[3] At some of the XIV Corps' beaches LST's had grounded so far out that crews had to use three causeway sections to reach dry land and even then bulldozers had to push sand ramps out from shore at some points to reach the inland end of the third sections. Building such ramps was no mean feat since most of the engineer shore party bulldozers required for the task were still aboard the very LST's awaiting discharge. Army planners, who had no more information about shoals than Navy planners, had assumed that LST's would be able to get close inshore at all points across Lingayen Gulf. Working from this assumption, the Army had loaded the bulk of shore party men and equipment aboard LST's. The effect of this emphasis was that the entire unloading schedule began to break down.

There are some indications that LST unloading was also slowed at two or three points because naval personnel, forced to alter tentative plans to construct two-section ponton causeways, took a long time to rig the required three-section causeways. Many LST's, unloading bulk cargo directly on to the causeways, rendered the bridges useless for the discharge of wheeled or tracked vehicles. At some points along the beaches LST commanders, reluctant to follow beaching directions from Navy beachmasters ashore, used their own discretion as to how to avoid the shoal. At this time Navy doctrine was not entirely clear on the degree of control beachmasters could exercise. Moreover, doctrine on LST beaching varied between the III and the VII Amphibious Force, a circumstance that undoubtedly created problems for commanders of LST's operating in the Southwest Pacific Area for the first time.[4] In the case of the III Amphibious Force (XIV Corps) beaches, most of the beachmasters, sadly outranked by LST skippers, did not have a rank commensurate with their responsibilities. Moreover, many LST commanders reported that discharge slowed down even more because Army unloading details assigned to their ships were too small to begin with and because the members of the details had a marked tendency to disappear one by one. Discharge of bulk cargo from some LST's therefore virtu-

[2] Admiral Barbey, commanding the VII Amphibious Force, believed that sufficient information, properly interpreted, had been available to disclose the shoal well before the landings. Barbey Comments, 14 Apr 57.

[3] By naval designation, the proper spelling for ponton in *ponton cubes* is *pontoon*. For the sake of consistency, the Army spelling *ponton* is employed in this volume.

[4] Barbey Comments, 14 Apr 57.



LST's With Causeways at XIV Corps Beach

ally halted until ship commanders could round up members of their own crews to do the job.

Also serving to retard the discharge rate of LST's and smaller craft was the terrain along many beaches. A line of sand dunes, lying about 10 yards inland and varying from 5 to 15 feet in height, extended along the beaches.[5] The dunes proved no obstacle to foot troops but, steep on the seaward side, were impassable for wheeled vehicles. Until bulldozers—apparently no one thought of putting crews of men to work with shovels—could cut exit roads through the barriers, vehicles had to disperse laterally along the beaches. Luckily, the sand on the water side of the dunes was fairly firm; nonetheless the unloading area rapidly became congested, and bulk cargo piled up along the water's edge. On the west, at the 40th Division's beaches, there was less trouble with dunes, but some congestion resulted because it was necessary to keep the Lingayen airstrip clear of supplies and equipment.

If shore party troops and equipment had not been so concentrated on LST's and had been able to get ashore as scheduled, much of the early beach congestion could have been avoided, and the landing schedules could have been maintained.

[5] As reported in 1945. The author examined the beaches in April 1957 and found no dunes as much as ten feet high, while in many places the dunes were scarcely three feet high.

But shore parties were so involved in getting themselves ashore that they were delayed in turning to their normal tasks. In addition, throughout the day many troops that should have been handling bulk supplies on the beach had to help unload cargo from the smaller landing craft. Normally, with small craft beaching at the water's edge, no more than ten men would be detailed to help unload cargo from an LCM or an LCVP, but at the XIV Corps' beaches it was necessary to form human chains of fifty to a hundred men to reach out into the surf for the cargo. Shore parties could not meet this abnormal demand for manpower, and a number of on-the-spot improvisations had to be employed. Seamen came ashore from transports and cargo ships, combat troops of reserve units lent a hand, stragglers were rounded up on the beaches, and as soon as possible local Filipinos were organized into labor parties.

Beach conditions alone did not create all the manpower problems on S-day. Some of the difficulties reflect a lack of detailed co-ordination during planning.[6] For example, one Navy beachmaster expected an Army working party of 91 men to show up to help unload a transport's small craft. Instead 75 arrived, led by an Army lieutenant who was sure that 75 was the correct number. The difference of just 15 men could and did make a disproportionate difference in the speed of small-boat discharge.

All across the Sixth Army's beaches, shore party officers had trouble establishing and maintaining control over units attached to the nucleus engineer boat and shore regiments. At one XIV Corps beach, for instance, the shore party commander and a Navy beachmaster decided to move one RCT's cargo discharge point about half a mile. The move, involving the transfer of markers, communications equipment, bulldozers, tractors, and trucks, alone halted unloading for about forty-five minutes. Then, when all was in readiness to resume discharge operations at the new site, the shore party commander found that many of his troops had disappeared during the transfer. It took another half an hour or so to round up the men and resume unloading at the former pace.

A shortage of trucks, although anticipated, became more serious than expected. Most of the trucks scheduled to go ashore on the morning of S-day carried supplies consigned to infantry units. The vehicles were first to move to temporary unit dumps behind the dune line and then, unloaded, report back to the beaches for shore party assignments. The plan was one thing, its execution another.

Since there was no Japanese opposition at the beaches, infantry units had penetrated inland much faster and further than expected. Trucks had to make longer round trips than anticipated, delaying their return to the beaches. Some infantry units, landing well before their supply trucks, failed to leave adequate guides or directions at the beaches. As a result, trucks could not find the units to which they were to deliver cargoes. Late in the afternoon, when shore party

[6] Additional information on XIV Corps beach operations is from: TU 79.4.1 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 2–3; *ibid.*, Encl K, Transportation Div 10 Beachmaster Rpt, pp. 1–3; TU 79.4.3 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, p. 8; *ibid.*, Encl B, Transportation Div 30 Beachmaster Rpt, pp. 3–4; TU 79.6.1 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, Encl A, Transportation Div 8 Beachmaster Rpt, pp. 2–3; TU 79.3.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, p. 2; TU 79.3.3 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 17, 21–22.

men started looking for vehicles to help alleviate the beach congestion, they found many trucks parked along roads just inland, still loaded and still searching for their units. Finally, come infantry units had not been properly briefed or had shirked their responsibility to return the trucks to the beaches and had instead retained the vehicles inland.

Whatever the causes, a critical shortage of trucks existed at XIV Corps beaches during S-day. In addition, few bulldozers, tractors, or cranes were available. These latter shortages had resulted in large measure from shipping shortages and the expectation of heavy resistance at the beaches. Planners had had no choice but to load available shipping with combat units and equipment, skimping on shore party matériel. Thus, the engineer boat and shore regiments and attached service units arriving on S-day—and the S plus 2 convoy also—reached Luzon far underequipped. Even with the best possible beach and surf conditions the shore parties would have been operating on a shoestring. They had no margin of safety—no slack or reserves—to deal with unforeseen contingencies.

As the result of matériel and manpower shortages on the beaches, offshore discharge—from transports to small craft—steadily fell behind schedule. Having to wait at the beaches an inordinately long time to unload, landing craft were slow to return to cargo vessels. Combat units also delayed discharge operations when they requisitioned engineer boat and shore regiment LCM's to serve as ferries across the many streams just inland from the beaches.

Discharge problems along the I Corps' beaches were similar to those in the XIV Corps' sector except that at White Beaches 1 and 2, where the 43d Division went ashore, all landing craft and landing ships could beach with dry ramps at any stage of the tide.[7] At the other I Corps beaches, shore parties were even slower getting ashore than in the XIV Corps area, and control problems loomed at least as large. A single example suffices to illustrate the control problem—the 6th Division's shore party, which operated under the command of Headquarters, 543d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, 3d Engineer Special Brigade. (*Table 2*)

The situation was little different at other beaches across Lingayen Gulf. Because planners had wanted to get forward echelons of technical service units set up on Luzon as early as possible, many underequipped and undermanned organizations, attached to the shore parties, arrived on S-day and S plus 2 to complicate the control problem. In retrospect, many officers felt that it would have been better to send forward fewer technical service units in favor of making certain that those that came were fully up to strength in men and equipment. Many of the service units saw limited use during the first week or so of operations on Luzon and, when loaded at the staging areas, took up space that the shore parties sorely needed. The shore party commanders, faced with the task of co-ordinating the operations of so many miscellaneous units, accomplished a remarkably good control job. The wonder is not so much

[7] Additional information on the I Corps–VII Amphibious Force beach operations is from: TU 78.1.2 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pt. I, pp. 3–4, 24–26; TU 78.1.21 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 15–16; TU 78.1.23 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 3–7; TU 78.5.3 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 1–4; TU 78.5.4 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, pp. 10–11; *ibid.*, Encl F, Rpt of Transport Div 32 Beachmaster.

TABLE 2—COMPOSITION OF 6TH DIVISION SHORE PARTY

543d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment (less Company C, two platoons of Company A, Boat Battalion headquarters)
3d Battalion, 20th Infantry (available for general labor details unless required for combat by the 6th Division)
6th Quartermaster Company, 6th Division
466th Quartermaster Amphibious Truck Company (Dukws)
558th Quartermaster Railhead Company (less elements)
2448th Quartermaster Truck Company (2½-ton 6x6 trucks)
4188th Quartermaster Service Company
244th Transportation Corps Port Company (less one platoon)
294th Transportation Corps Port Company
48th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company
622d Ordnance Ammunition Company
706th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company, 6th Division
108th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad
1st Platoon, 36th Military Police Company
Company C, 263d Medical Battalion, 3d Engineer Special Brigade
Provisional Truck Company, 6th Division (2½-ton 6x6)
Detachment, 198th Quartermaster Gas Supply Company
Detachment, 163d Ordnance Maintenance Company, 3d Engineer Special Brigade
Detachment, 3608th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (tanks)
Detachment, 293d Joint Assault Signal Company
Detachment, 1462d Engineer Boat Maintenance Company, 3d Engineer Special Brigade

Source: 4th ESP Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–2; 543d EB&SR M–I Opn Rpt, an. 6, Org Chart; 543d EB&SR Rpt on M–I Opn Through S Plus 3, p. 1; 6th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, p. 4.

that control at the beaches was sometimes loose, but rather that control was established and maintained as well as it was.

Harassing fire from Japanese mortars and artillery emplaced on the high ground to the east and northeast of the I Corps beaches was a delaying factor with which XIV Corps did not have to contend. The fire waxed so intense late in the afternoon of 9 January that LST's had to halt operations at all White Beaches. Night unloading at these beaches was impossible.

One or two other problems were peculiar to the I Corps beaches. Inadequate ship-to-shore communications plagued most beachmasters and shore party commanders throughout the day, and some aspects of unloading were poorly coordinated. For example, the VII Amphibious Force's beachmaster announced at one point that bulk cargo could not be handled at White Beach 3. Actually, under the direction of one transport division beachmaster and the local shore party commander, bulk cargo had been coming ashore at White Beach 3 slowly but efficiently for two hours before the announcement and continued to do so thereafter. At another beach the shore party commander and the beachmaster decided to move a small-craft discharge point, but three cargo ships continued to send supplies to the abandoned area despite the best efforts of the beachmaster to redirect traffic.

Some trouble arose over control of landing craft across I Corps beaches. Engineer special brigade LCM's were scheduled to help unload first the ves-

sels that had carried them to Lingayen Gulf, then other ships of the same naval transport division, next other ships as directed by Navy control officers, and, when all naval vessels were discharged, were to report to shore party commanders for directions to start unloading merchant ships. Many of the LCM coxswains had been improperly briefed on the sequence of unloading, and some had inexplicable difficulty locating the ships they were to unload. Too often Navy beachmasters could not help solve the location problem, for they had too little information concerning individual ship anchorages to give the LCM's proper directions.

Many LCM coxswains, contrary to plan, reported to shore party commanders after their first run to shore. The shore party usually directed the LCM's back into Navy command channels, but some shore party officers assigned the LCM's to special Army missions such as the river crossing operations that took lighterage craft away from unloading jobs in the XIV Corps' area. Offshore, some engineer LCM's making turnaround trips to naval cargo ships were directed by ships' captains to different vessels. On occasion Navy control officers did not learn of the changes, and in one case a I Corps shore party lost track of five LCM's for two days, the craft having moved to another beach at the order of a Navy transport captain.

Despite the difficulties, both normal and abnormal, the AP's and APA's of the III and VII Amphibious Forces slated for S-day discharge were unloaded and ready to leave Lingayen Gulf by 1800 as planned. On the other hand, only two or three LST's, the majority of which were also scheduled for S-day discharge, were unloaded; some LSM's had not completed discharge; and, finally, only a bare start had been made toward the unloading of AK's (Cargo Ships, Auxiliary) and AKA's (Cargo Ships, Attack). At the end of the day, it was obvious that the morrow would have to bring with it ideal conditions of weather, tide, organization, co-ordination, and communications if all vessels of the S-day convoy were to be unloaded by evening of S plus 2 in accordance with plans.

Discharge Operations, 10 and 11 January

Weather conditions were to prove anything but ideal. Far to the north of Lingayen Gulf strong tropical disturbances, including the typhoon that had hampered the operations of Admiral Halsey's fast carrier task forces, were whipping up the waters of the South China Sea. During the night of 9–10 January the pressures built up by these storms began to create corresponding pressures within Lingayen Gulf. By midmorning on 10 January the surf was so high and rough all along the XIV Corps beaches that unloading, having gotten off to an excellent start early in the day, slowed drastically and rapidly. Before noon Dukws halted lighterage operations, offshore seas being so rough that the amphibians could not climb back on LCT and LSM ramps to reload. About 1330, LCVP lighterage also ceased. By that time many LCVP's had broached to or swamped, and one had tossed end over end onto the beach.

About an hour later causeway discharge also stopped. By 1500 two ponton causeways had swung broadside to the beach, two were awash, and most of

the others had to be secured to prevent damage. Self-propelled ponton barges could no longer run; three LST's had stuck fast on the beaches and a fourth, broaching to stern first, had damaged a fifth. By 1530 engineer LCM's were the only craft still able to come through the surf at XIV Corps beaches, but offshore the waves were so high that it was next to impossible to keep the LCM's sufficiently close aboard discharging ships to permit unloading. Finally, shortly after 1600, all discharge operations ceased along the XIV Corps beaches.

In I Corps area the two Blue Beaches and White Beach 3 also closed down during the afternoon. At White Beaches 1 and 2, on the eastern shore of the gulf, the surf was not so rough and discharge operations continued until dusk, when Japanese artillery and mortar fire again forced a halt. By nightfall the discharge of cargo vessels had fallen hopelessly behind schedule all across the gulf.

Ashore, on the other hand, shore parties were able to make considerable progress in relieving beach congestion, although still hampered by a shortage of tracked and wheeled vehicles. As beaches closed down one by one, the shore parties turned to clearing operations. Mainly by dint of manhandling —employing every man, American and Filipino, who could be found in the beach area—most bulk cargo was sorted and piled in dumps. But a dearth of vehicles, combined with bridge construction problems, still made it impossible to move much cargo inland.

On S plus 2, 11 January, the surf remained high and rough, but abated sufficiently in the afternoon for LCM's to resume lightering at the Blue Beaches. LSM's completed discharge during the



CONGESTION AT BLUE BEACH

day, but this accomplishment brought mixed blessings. Previously, some of the unloaded LSM's, larger and more stable than LCM's, had made good lighters, but now all had to assemble for the trip back to Leyte. Lighterage also decreased as more and more engineer LCM's broke down—at Blue Beach 2, for example, only eighteen of twenty-eight assigned were still operational at dark on 11 January. LCM maintenance became a major problem, primarily because a theaterwide spare parts shortage had made it impossible for the engineer boat and shore regiments to bring with them sufficient parts to assure continued operations, especially during the beating that LCM's took from the rough surf on 10 and 11 January. The few Navy LCM's present had the same problem.

Actually, the engineer LCM's provided the best lighterage during the assault. Army and Navy LCVP's were too small and light for the surf that

arose on S plus 1, while LCT's and LSM's drew too much water to get close inshore except at White Beaches 1 and 2. The LCT's also proved quite hard to handle in the rough surf. The engineer LCM's were the LCM(6) model, six feet longer and a bit heavier than Navy LCM(3)'s used at Lingayen Gulf. Although possessing essentially the same draft and capacity as the smaller Navy craft, the engineer LCM's were more seaworthy in the high, rough surf.

Along the beaches on S plus 2 truck shortages remained acute, and in I Corps' area only 25 percent of scheduled trucking was available by dusk. Additional Filipino labor partially alleviated the shortage, but congestion remained severe at White Beaches 1 and 2, especially as more and more ships were diverted there to take advantage of easier surf conditions.

At White Beach 3 congestion increased on 11 January as the convoy carrying the 25th Infantry Division of the Sixth Army Reserve hove to and began discharging.[8] The division had hoped that I Corps could furnish shore party help, but in co-operation with Task Force 77.9, the Reinforcement Group, had prepared for its own unloading. Having no assigned engineer special brigade shore party, the division had organized regimental shore parties around a nucleus of one infantry battalion from each regiment, augmented by a composite group from division headquarters and division troops. The division had "scrounged" two light cranes at its staging area, and Task Group 77.9 had borrowed eight 5-ton cranes, complete with naval CB (construction battalion) operators, from the naval base in the Admiralty Islands. There, the task group had also secured 100 lengths of conveyor belt, employed for handling bulk cargo, to add to 50 lengths the 25th Division had brought with it and 75 more lengths that the ships of the convoy contributed.

As anticipated, I Corps could provide little help, although the shore party at White Beach 3 did supply a few LCM's and the local beachmaster diverted a couple of LCT's to help Task Group 77.9. However, Task Group 77.9's own boats unloaded most of the 25th Division's matériel, and the men and equipment the task group and the division brought along handled all cargo on the beaches. Unloading was slow and not a single transport, all scheduled for S plus 2 discharge, was ready to leave that night. The 158th RCT, which had an engineer special brigade shore party attached to it, unloaded with less trouble on Red Beach, immediately north of White Beach 1.

All across Lingayen Gulf, LST discharge conditions improved on 11 January, and by 1800 most LST's that had arrived on S-day were ready to return to Leyte, two days behind schedule. A few AKA's were also ready to leave by dusk. Ashore, much of the congestion at the XIV Corps' beaches and at the I Corps' Blue Beaches decreased rapidly, though the arrival of the Sixth Army Reserve renewed congestion at all I Corps landing points. Clearing the beaches had demanded almost superhuman effort on the part of all personnel involved, and by evening on 11 January many officers

[8] Additional information on unloading the Sixth Army Reserve is from: VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, p. 17; 534th EB&SR Rpt, 11 Jan–13 Feb 45, pp. 2–4; 25th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–14; TG 77.9 Rpt Lingayen Gulf, Encl F, Comments on Loading, pp. 1–3.

and men of the shore parties and the beachmaster groups had had but two or three hours sleep since they had awakened on the morning of the 9th.

On S plus 2 an innovation solved many of the lighterage problems that the high, rough surf had caused. LCM's, LCVP's, and amphibian tractors and trucks began to discharge in protected waters just inside the mouths of the many streams that cut into Lingayen Gulf's southern shore. Given the weather conditions and the tactical situation, it would seem that use might have been made of the river banks before the afternoon of S plus 2, but as events turned out it was S plus 4, 13 January, before the protected anchorages were extensively employed.

Cleaning Up

As night fell on S plus 2, order had begun to emerge from what must have appeared to many beachmasters and shore party commanders to be the unconscionable confusion of the preceding two days. If the weather did not take another turn for the worse, those responsible for discharge and beach operations could foresee the ultimate unloading of all S-day and S plus 2 shipping. This was a prediction that many Army and Navy officers at Lingayen Gulf might well have been unwilling to make twenty-four hours earlier.

Unfortunately, during the next two days there was little abatement in the surf, and unloading proceeded generally under the same handicaps that had prevailed on 10 and 11 January. LST discharge continued to run far behind schedule, especially as ponton causeways were buffeted onto the beaches time and time again. Late on 14 January one III Amphibious Force LST, as an experiment, beached quite far in at high tide and unloaded through the shallows at low water. The method proved successful and was often used thereafter, reducing the role of the causeways to secondary importance. However, with more and more LST's of resupply convoys arriving from rear bases, a considerable backlog of unloaded LST's developed by 15 January, a backlog that persisted until the end of the month.

For the AP's, APA's, AK's, AKA's, and merchant vessels, lighterage continued to be a major problem as operational accidents and mechanical failures deadlined more and more landing craft. The only compensating factor was that as more use was made of the protected river mouth discharge points all unloading accelerated. Nonetheless, most of the AK's and AKA's of the S-day convoy were two days late leaving Lingayen Gulf, as were those of the S plus 2 group. AP's and APA's of the latter convoy were also two days late departing.

On S plus 3, 12 January, the Navy established more centralized control over lighterage than had been possible in the initial assault phases, when command channels had been necessarily much subdivided. Beachmasters and shore party commanders were now able to keep better track of lightering craft and so could employ them more efficiently. Ashore, truck shortages continued to be critical. For example, the I Corps' shore parties had expected the 6th and 43d Divisions to return approximately 220 trucks to the beaches by the morning of 10 January, but as of the morning of the 14th only 159 trucks were available.

In brief, discharge operations were not

an unqualified success during the first week. While the shelving beaches and adverse weather and surf conditions were in large measure directly or indirectly responsible for many difficulties, it would be incorrect to assume that there were no mistakes in planning and execution. However, despite the difficulties on the beaches, Admiral Barbey, the VII Amphibious Force commander, was sufficiently impressed with the shore party operations to report:

> It is believed that the Engineer Special Brigade as organized in the Southwest Pacific Area is the most efficient Shore Party organization now functioning in amphibious warfare and that the permanent organization of these [brigades has] contributed in large measure to the success of amphibious operations in this theater.[9]

It is perhaps sufficient tribute to all echelons to state that in the face of unanticipated and unavoidable problems the Army and Navy units concerned with discharge operations at Lingayen Gulf ultimately accomplished their missions. Certainly General Krueger, the commander with so much at stake, felt that all hands "did as well as could have been expected under existing conditions."[10]

Inland Supply and Construction

Moving the Supplies From the Beaches

For most of the first week of the Luzon Campaign, difficulties involved in moving supplies from the beaches to their proper destination inland were almost as great as those encountered during discharge operations.[11] Bridge construction was the main problem in the stream-cut area along the southern shores of Lingayen Gulf. The assault forces found that most of the bridges from the gulf south across the Agno River had been at least partially destroyed by Allied air action, naval bombardment, or Japanese and guerrilla demolitions. Moreover, many of the bridges found intact were too weak to bear the weight of the Sixth Army's heavy equipment. Some bridges had been destroyed by MacArthur's withdrawing forces in 1941–42, and the Japanese had replaced them with structures capable of bearing only ten to twelve tons. The Sixth Army now needed bridges of at least 35-ton capacity.

Without bridges, the advancing infantry depended largely on LVT ferries for supplies during the first few days after the assault—even the ubiquitous jeeps moved over rivers aboard LVT's. Initially, artillery and tanks were moved south by a variety of expedients. The 6th Division, for example, got two 105-mm. artillery battalions across the Binloc River, behind the Blue Beaches, using a temporary fill, while the 37th Division moved two of its field artillery battalions across the Calmay River on engineer LCM ferries. The 40th Division used Filipino rafts, ponton float ferries, and engineer LCM's for both

[9] VII Amphib Force Rpt Luzon, p. 30.

[10] Comments of General Walter Krueger, 18 Dec 56.

[11] The general sources for this section and its subsections are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 139–42, 152; *ibid.*, III, 56–58, 113–14, 169, 243; *ibid.*, IV, 8, 28–29, 34, 43, 80; Army Service Command (ASCOM) Rpt Luzon, 26 Dec 44–13 Feb 45, pp. 11–18, 22–23, 39; 5202d Engr Constr Brig Rpt Luzon, pp. 23–29, 54–56; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 168, 195; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 19, 25, 193–96, 209–10, 303; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 6; 6th Div G–4 Rpt Luzon, p. 15; 6th Engr Bn Rpt Luzon, p. 15; 43d Div G–4 Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–7, 18; 117th Engr Bn Rpt, 8 Jan–4 Feb 45, pp. 1–2.

troops and equipment. In the 43d Division area there were not as many streams, and the division found the bridges of the Manila Railroad intact—all that had to be done to make the bridges passable for wheeled vehicles was to lay planking across the rails. Where no bridges were found, fords sufficed for the 43d Division.

Conversely, roads were no problem except on the I Corps' left, especially in the zones of the 63d and 172d Infantry Regiments. There, bulldozers had to construct roads where none existed. Elsewhere, only occasional smoothing or filling of shell holes was necessary. Pending the development of roads in part of its area, the 43d Division employed as many as 500 Filipinos a day in hand-carrying operations and, as soon as airfields were constructed, used airdrops extensively.

Unloading delays made it impossible to begin bridge construction and repair as soon as hoped. Bailey bridge spans had been divided among several ships for safety's sake and came ashore piecemeal, making it difficult for engineers to find and assemble the necessary spans. Nevertheless, the 37th Division's 117th Engineers had a Bailey across the Pantal at Dagupan by the morning of 13 January, thus permitting the division's heavy equipment to move on south.[12] The 6th Division's 6th Engineers built a Bailey across the Binloc River by the afternoon of 11 January, while elements of the 5202d Engineer Construction Brigade, operating directly under Sixth Army control, had placed heavy ponton bridges across the Binloc and the Calmay by the 15th, providing similar crossings in the 40th Division's area.

Further inland, various Engineer units repaired existing structures to carry 35-ton loads or constructed new crossings. The 5202d built two ponton bridges across the Agno, one at Wawa and the other at Bayambang, by 20 January, and all available engineers constructed new timber bridges across smaller streams. Generally, bridge construction could not keep pace with the advancing infantry. LVT's and Dukws, not designed for the job, accordingly had to be pressed into service for operations far inland—a field expedient that hardly met with the approval of many experienced officers and drivers.

As events turned out, bridge repair rather than new construction took up most of the engineers' time. Thus, although the bridging problem in the area south to the Agno was formidable, it

> . . . did not develop to the proportions originally expected. This was attributable primarily to the failure of the enemy to oppose the landing and his failure completely to demolish existing bridges . . . bridge *replacement* was only 25% of the anticipated figure.[13]

Beyond the Agno, bridge destruction was much more thorough, a fact that, coupled with the slow rate of discharge, threatened to cause a serious shortage of heavy bridging equipment in addition to an expected shortage of light bridging. General Krueger therefore requested that the Allied Air Forces cease its program of bridge destruction, and after 20 January the air arm limited its antibridge strikes to spans the Sixth

[12] To bypass other destroyed bridges in its zone, the 37th Division sent its artillery and tanks south over roads in the I Corps area, routing them via Calasiao, Santa Barbara, Balingueo, and then back into the XIV Corps zone at San Carlos and Malasiqui.

[13] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, IV, 29. (Italics supplied.)

Army specifically wanted knocked out.[14]

Inland, the general shortage of trucks was ever more keenly felt as the army advanced southward. Few troops could move by motor and the infantry's rate of march therefore governed the speed of the advance. Even at this relatively slow pace, transportation facilities were strained to the utmost to keep supplies going forward, and supply levels sometimes become dangerously low at inland dumps.

So critical was the truck shortage that Sixth Army quickly began to devote considerable energy to repairing railroad facilities. The 37th Division was the first unit to get a section of railroad into operation. Casting around for some means of employing the Manila Railroad, the division found the roadbed north and south of the Agno River in fairly good condition and located a few sound flatcars, but could discover no usable engines. Thereupon, the division's 737th Ordnance Company rigged a jeep with flanged railroad wheels to make an improvised engine capable of hauling four loaded 16-ton flatcars. On 19 January the 37th Division's first "train" ran down the twelve miles of track from San Carlos — the division's truck head — to Bayambang. Two days later the unit acquired two small donkey engines from a sugar refinery and added another ten miles of track to its railroad.

Meanwhile, the Engineer, Sixth Army, and the Army Service Command began rounding up experienced Filipino railroad men and started to repair roadbeds, rolling stock, and locomotives. On 22 January the first train moved by one of the railroad's standard engines pulled out of Dagupan for Bayambang. Simultaneously the road was opened from Dagupan northeast to San Fabian. The initial capacity of the lines between San Fabian and Bayambang was 200 deadweight tons per trip, a small tonnage but so important that General Krueger arranged for the Allied Air Forces to limit its attacks on rolling stock solely to trains actually moving within Japanese-controlled territory.[15] As units moved on southward, additional sections of the railroad were opened as fast as rolling stock could be found and bridges repaired. The job became more and more pressing, for it was not until March that the combat and service units on Luzon obtained all their organic transportation from rear bases. Even then the length of the supply lines continued to strain highway facilities to the utmost until port operations began at Manila. "The early rehabilitation of the railroad," Sixth Army reported, "prevented collapse of the supply system [during] the advance on Manila."[16] Certainly, the rapid repair of the railroads, the employment of such field expedients as jeep engines, the use of LVT's and Dukws for extended overland hauls and as river-crossing ferries, and the many hours engineers devoted to bridge repair combined to overcome truck shortages and to permit units to operate along combat supply lines three to four times normal length. Although supplies were sometimes slow getting forward to the

[14] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, IV, 43; Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WL–235, 19 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 18–20 Jan 45; Rad, MacArthur to Kenney, Krueger, and Kinkaid, CAX–50069, 20 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 20–22 Jan 45.

[15] See, *inter alia*, Rad, Sixth Army, GHQ SWPA, WL–670, 25 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 25–26 Jan 45.

[16] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 58.



FIRST STANDARD LOCOMOTIVE IN OPERATION *hauls ammunition to front, 22 January.*

combat units, no serious shortages developed.[17] Again, ingenuity and hard work kept the operations going and solved difficult, unexpected problems.

Construction

Work to satisfy the pressing requirement for airfields at Lingayen Gulf began almost as soon as the first assault waves hit the beaches.[18] On S-day an engineer survey party determined that the Lingayen airstrip could be rehabilitated by the time the CVE's of the Allied Naval Forces had to leave, but unloading delays retarded work until S plus 2. Even then, most of the repairs were made by some 400 Filipino laborers who, working almost entirely by hand, began filling bomb craters with beach sand and started clearing debris. With the aid of only three or four pieces of heavy equipment, the Filipinos had the strip in shape by the afternoon of S plus 3 for a CVE-based fighter to make a successful emergency landing. It was 13 January before "formal" engineer work began at the site, and not until the 15th were all three engineer battalions assigned to the project ashore and working.

[17] Col Ingomar M. Oseth, Hq AGF, Observer's Rpt on Opn of the Sixth Army, SWPA, 26 Nov 44–27 Feb 45, 10 Apr 45, p. 3.

[18] In addition to the sources cited in note 8, this subsection is also based on: 308th Bombardment Wing (H) Rpt Luzon, 1 Jan–28 May 45, pp. 4–9; Maj. Charles W. Boggs, Jr., USMC, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines* (Washington: Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1951) (the USMC's official history), pp. 66–67, and n. 160, p. 105; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 416–18.

Other delays occurred when some lack of co-ordination or misunderstanding of unloading plans made it difficult to get discharged steel matting for surfacing the strip. First, the XIV Corps, responsible for getting the matting to the strip, could obtain no information through either Army or Navy channels concerning the whereabouts of the mat-laden cargo ships. Then, shortly after mat discharge had started late on the afternoon of S plus 3, the two ships carrying most of the matting moved off to an outer anchorage for the night, contrary to plans. The next day high surf hampered discharge, and by evening only 200 tons of matting was ashore. The cost of even this small amount was two Dukws and one LVT sunk and three men seriously injured. Risks were even greater during the night unloading, but had to be accepted since it was necessary to discharge a daily average of 700 tons of matting to meet the construction target date.[19]

By dint of almost incredibly hard work on the part of shore parties, engineers at the airfield, and Filipino civilian labor, the Lingayen strip, steel-matted to a 5,000-foot length, was ready for sustained use about midnight on 15 January. C–47's began operations from the field the next day, when some P–61's of the 547th Night Fighter Squadron also arrived. On 17 January P–40's and P–51's of the 82d Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron flew in, as did the 18th Fighter Group's P–38's. Headquarters, 308th Bombardment Wing (Heavy), responsible for the initial conduct of land-based air operations in the area, was already set up. On the 17th, a day behind schedule, the wing relieved the CVE's of air cover and support duties.

In original plans the Lingayen strip and another field in the area were to be developed into all-weather air bases, but since Japanese opposition was less than anticipated and since good weather was in prospect for the next three months, the Allied Air Forces, Sixth Army, and General Headquarters determined that two dry-weather strips would be sufficient. Construction of necessary all-weather fields could wait until the Clark Field air center was secured. In the meantime, it was still imperative to provide a second field in the Lingayen area to move sufficient planes forward for proper air support operations.

On S-day engineers of the Army Service Command had selected a site at Blue Beach for the second field, and Filipino laborers began work there on 13 January, followed three days later by one engineer battalion.[20] From the beginning of construction some engineers and airmen expressed reservations about the desirability of the Blue Beach site, for the area was narrow and had a high water table. On the 16th engineers also discovered that the subsoil was extremely difficult to compact.

Already, another likely site had been examined in dry rice paddies about midway between Dagupan and Mangaldan, five miles to the east. Some work started

[19] The story of the mat unloading difficulty is to be found in an exchange of radios among Sixth Army, XIV Corps, I Corps, and the Luzon Attack Force in the Sixth Army G–3 Journal Files Luzon, 11–13 and 13–15 January 45.

[20] Further information on the selection of the second site is derived from Rads, I Corps to Sixth Army, RM–69 and 2150, 11 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–13 Jan 45.

at this site on 17 January, and during the next two days all the troops and equipment from the Blue Beach strip moved to the new location.[21] The Mangaldan strip, compacted earth without steel matting, was ready for fighters on 22 January, and within a week was expanded to the length necessary for medium bombers. Fifth Air Force fighters and A–20's, together with Marine Air Groups 24 and 32, equipped with the obsolescent Douglas Dauntless dive bomber, moved up to Mangaldan by the end of the month, all passing to the control of the 308th Bombardment Wing.[22]

While work on the airfields was under way, other construction had begun. The Naval Service Command prepared an advance PT-boat base, readied a seaplane base at Cabalitan Bay on Lingayen Gulf's west shore, and set up shore installations for shipping control and minor repairs. More extensive construction for naval purposes awaited the seizure of base sites at Manila and Subic Bays in southern Luzon.

The Army Service Command soon discovered that the shores of Lingayen Gulf had no suitable sites at which to construct docks that would have the capacity to discharge large cargo vessels, and therefore abandoned plans to construct such facilities. Adverse surf and beach conditions also led to the cancellation of projects for constructing many smaller docks, lightering jetties, and an extensive fuel jetty system. At first fuel barges anchored inside the mouth of the Dagupan River. Ultimately ASCOM built a small permanent fuel jetty at Alacan on the east shore of the gulf, whence pipelines stretched to the two airstrips. Engineers also constructed a small jetty for unloading railroad equipment at San Fabian. LST beaching sites were improved, but most larger vessels discharged over wharves built along the river at Dagupan. The rest of the planned port construction would have to await the recapture of Manila.

Logistical Command and Control

The schedule for centralizing logistical responsibilities in the hands of the Army Service Command, vice the I and XIV Corps, could not be met, the discharge delays and co-ordination problems making it desirable for the two corps to retain responsibility until 19 January, four days longer than planned. On the date the transfer became effective, Army Service Command assumed most of the logistical support responsibility within a region designated as the Army Base Area, enclosed within an arc lying generally three and a half miles inland from the gulf's shores. Later moved forward with the advance, this line also marked the rear boundaries of the two corps' areas of continued logistical responsibility.

Within the Army Base Area, Army Service Command was responsible for traffic control, discharge and beach operations, road and bridge maintenance, airfield construction, and all other construction except that assigned to the 5202d Engineer Construction Brigade, which continued to operate directly under Sixth Army control. Establishing

[21] According to Boggs, *op. cit.*, p. 67 and n. 160, p. 105, Col. Clayton C. Jerome, USMC, commanding Marine aviation on Luzon, had a large if not decisive share in locating the Mangaldan strip.

[22] In addition to his other duties, Colonel Jerome became the 308th's base commander at the Mangaldan strip.

its headquarters at Mangaldan, Army Service Command took over the control of all other service units in the base area. Most of its operational functions, except for airfield construction, it delegated to Base M, which set up headquarters at San Fabian, with subbases at Dagupan and Port Sual. Shore party operations now centralized at Headquarters, 4th Engineer Special Brigade. On 29 January, meeting its target date, Army Service Command assumed responsibility for dispersal, issue, storage, and delivery of all Sixth Army supplies, responsibilities thus far resting with the two corps and other units.

Until 13 February logistical operations remained under the control of Sixth Army, functioning through Army Service Command. On that date, as planned, the Services of Supply, Southwest Pacific Area, took over. Somewhat reorganized, Army Service Command's headquarters was redesignated Headquarters, Luzon Base Section, in which capacity it continued in control of logistical operations on Luzon. Base M was transferred to the control of the Luzon Base Section, which also controlled other bases later established on Luzon. Still later, Luzon Base Section was redesignated Philippine Base Section, in which role it co-ordinated most Services of Supply activities throughout the archipelago.

The Sixth Army's G–4, Col. William N. Leaf, had viewed the decentralized logistical control that existed before Army Service Command took over on 19 January with some misgivings. He realized that completely centralized control neither could nor should be established during the initial phases of an amphibious operation, but he was pleased when the service command organized centralized cargo discharge and reported:

> Centralized operation of cargo discharge should be effected at the earliest practicable time. This permits Army, the best judge of . . . requirements, to put the weight of effort where it belongs. . . . tonnages will be increased under early centralized control, and tactical units, thus released, will be enabled to devote themselves to the tactical situation.[23]

By coincidence, and apparently only by coincidence, the discharge rate at Lingayen Gulf jumped as soon as Army Service Command took over unloading control. Slowed by adverse surf conditions and the other difficulties that hampered unloading, discharge at the Lingayen beaches totaled some 20,000 dead-weight tons of bulk cargo by evening on 18 January as opposed to a scheduled total of 26,000 tons. The actual rate caught up with and surpassed the planned rate within the next week and continued to exceed estimates thereafter.

Colonel Leaf likewise welcomed Army Service Command's assumption of additional logistical burdens on 29 January:

> . . . the issue of supplies should [also] be centralized at the earliest practicable date. The early grouping of supply responsibilities will do much to prevent waste of rations and unnecessary dispersion of ammunition.[24]

In this connection, of course, it is necessary to note that Leaf was thinking in terms of the Allied air superiority that existed at Lingayen Gulf on and after 9 January. This superiority permitted an early centralization of supply dumps

[23] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 58.
[24] *Ibid.*, III, 169.

that, under other circumstances, might have proved extremely dangerous.

In regard to the logistical command established at Lingayen Gulf, Colonel Leaf stated that Army Service Command

> . . . was an unnecessary link in the chain of command and that Base M could have supplied the same logistic support. Since there was only one base [during the drive to Manila], the use of [Army Service Command] interposed another headquarters between the units to be served and Sixth Army.[25]

While Leaf's views on the existence of two supply headquarters at Lingayen Gulf seem logical, it is possible that the Sixth Army G–4 did not know all the circumstances that led to their creation. For example, it was the consensus at GHQ SWPA and Headquarters, Services of Supply, that the Services of Supply could not spare any officers of the caliber required for the logistical command in the large-scale operation at Lingayen Gulf. Accordingly, Maj. Gen. Hugh J. Casey, formerly Chief Engineer, GHQ SWPA, was selected for that command. Since it was not desired to restrict Casey's activities and talents to the relatively limited role of a base commander, he had been appointed to the higher level of Army Service Command.[26] In any case, the Services of Supply would have had to create some co-ordinating headquarters such as the Army Service Command when bases in addition to Base M were established on Luzon. Nevertheless, activation of Headquarters, Army Service Command, probably could have waited.

Sixth Army itself promoted some decentralization, keeping the 5202d Engineer Construction Brigade under the control of the Engineer, Sixth Army, rather than passing it to the control of Army Service Command. The Engineer's reason was that the brigade's operations—primarily road and bridge construction and maintenance—had to be so closely tied in with those of the combat units that it was necessary for the Sixth Army to control the brigade directly.[27]

Colonel Leaf's criticisms of decentralization and of the logistical command system at Lingayen Gulf were almost identical with remarks he had made on the same subjects after the Leyte operation.[28] At Leyte decentralization had lasted even longer than at Lingayen Gulf, and an Army Service Command–Base K organization that had functioned at Leyte was an exact parallel of the Army Service Command–Base M established at Lingayen Gulf. Yet, whatever the defects of the system at both Leyte and Luzon, the system worked. It might well have been accomplished with less "red tape" under another system, but that the organization was considered to have considerable merit, at least by GHQ SWPA and the Services of Supply, is illustrated by the fact that it was also slated to be employed during the invasion of Japan.

[25] *Ibid.*, III, 58.

[26] Chamberlin Comments, 20 Jan 57.

[27] Interv, author with Lt Gen Samuel D. Sturgis, USA, Ret., formerly Engineer, Sixth Army, 8 Feb 57.

[28] Sixth Army Rpt Leyte, pp. 206, 220, 243.

PART THREE

THE CENTRAL PLAINS

CHAPTER VIII

Redeployment and Tactical Plans

The period 16–18 January was one of transition for both Sixth Army and *14th Area Army*. For the Americans it was a period of planning and redeploying to fulfill General Krueger's urgent desire to speed the pace of operations on the army left and to comply with new orders that General MacArthur issued directing Sixth Army to push XIV Corps on toward Manila more rapidly. For the Japanese, the same period found General Yamashita frantically trying to realign his forces for the better defense of the approaches to the Cagayan Valley and the *Shobu* redoubt.

New American Plans

Plans for Left Flank Operations

Growing dissatisfaction with the progress of operations in the I Corps zone, especially in the Damortis-Rosario area, played a large part in prompting General Krueger to formulate some of his new plans.[1] A catalyst may well have been the failure of the 172d Infantry, 43d Division, to secure Rosario and the Routes 3–11 junction on 16 January, as planned.[2] The Japanese had evacuated both locations, probably as the result of air and naval bombardment and long-range artillery fire, but on surrounding high ground they had plenty of artillery, mortars, and machine guns that covered all approaches. Col. George E. Bush, commanding the 172d Infantry, knew, therefore, that he could hold neither Rosario nor the road junction until his troops had cleared the nearby dominating terrain.[3] Wing, the 43d Division's commander, agreed, but while making provision for a new effort in the Rosario area also planned to destroy strong Japanese forces, including more artillery, along the Rosario-Damortis road between the 172d and 158th Infantry Regiments, since the road could not be used until the Japanese pocket was cleaned out. General Wing directed the 158th RCT and the 63d Infantry (to be attached to the 158th) to devote all their energies to the necessary clearing operations. Meanwhile, he limited the 172d Infantry to holding action with its left

[1] This subsection is based generally upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 20–21; I Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 32; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, p. 12; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 9; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 9; Sixth Army FO 42, 16 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 147; I Corps FO 2, 16 Jan 45; 43d Div FO 4, 17 Jan 45; 6th Div FO 6, 16 Jan 45; Rpt, Sixth Army G–3 Liaison Off with 158th and 63d RCT's to G–3 Sixth Army, 16 Jan 45, and Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army to ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 16 Jan 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 15–17 Jan 45.

[2] See above, ch. VI, p. 109.

[3] Further information on the development of the 43d Division's new plan is derived from: Entries timed 1030, 1130, 1140, and 1150 16 Jan 45, and 1250 17 Jan 45, 172d Inf Jnl Luzon; Entries 45, 77, and 88, 16–17 Jan 45, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 16–17 Jan 45.

and to securing the high ground immediately north and northwest of Rosario with its right.

This plan left open to the Japanese both the Routes 3–11 junction and Route 3 south to Palacpalac, where the 169th Infantry was concentrating. With the prevailing fear of counterattack from the northeast—a fear certainly not abated after the events of the night of 16–17 January—it was imperative that the 43d Division secure the road junction immediately. The division could accomplish this task within the foreseeable future only if the 103d and 169th Infantry Regiments were to drive north up Route 3, simultaneously clearing dominating terrain east and west of the road.

Wheeling left along Route 3, the two regiments would leave behind them a huge gap between the 43d Division's right rear—to be anchored at Pozorrubio—and the 6th Division's left, which was approaching Urdaneta. To fill this gap and to assure continued progress eastward toward the Army Beachhead Line, General Krueger, on 16 January, decided to commit another major portion of Sixth Army Reserve. He released to I Corps the 25th Division, less one RCT, to take over a wedge-shaped zone of attack between the 6th and 43d Divisions. The 25th's left would be based on roads running east and northeast to Pozorrubio; its right on roads leading southeast to Urdaneta. The division would first seize Binalonan and then secure Route 3 between Pozorrubio and Urdaneta.

The commitment of the 25th Division permitted General Swift, the I Corps commander, to lift his restrictions on the 6th Division's advance toward Route 3, the Army Beachhead Line, and the Agno River. The division now directed its 20th Infantry to eliminate the Japanese known to be holding the Cabaruan Hills and ordered the 1st Infantry to strike east to seize Urdaneta, maintaining contact on the left with the 25th Division.

To provide added protection to XIV Corps' left rear and to gather information on which to plan future advances, Krueger directed I Corps to reconnoiter south and east across the Agno in its zone. He issued no new orders to XIV Corps, which would continue to consolidate along the Agno, bring forward its supplies, and maintain its outposts south of the river.

New Plans for the Drive to Manila

Krueger intended to hold XIV Corps generally along the line of the Agno until Swift's I Corps could overcome the resistance from Damortis to Urdaneta and, having thus eliminated the most immediate threat to the army's left flank and base area, could begin maneuvering some of its forces south abreast of Griswold's corps. It would be impossible, Krueger reasoned, to completely overcome the danger of counterattack on the left until he could commit the 32d Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division, and the separate 112th Cavalry RCT, all scheduled to reach Luzon toward the end of January. Then, but not until then, would it be safe in his opinion to mount an all-out drive toward Manila.[4]

General MacArthur, having assured the Joint Chiefs of Staff that he could secure the entire Central Plains–Manila Bay region within four to six weeks after

[4] General Walter Krueger, *From Down Under to Nippon: The Story of Sixth Army in World War II* (Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1953), pp. 227–28; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 8–9, 20–23.

the assault at Lingayen Gulf,[5] was unwilling to accept the two- or three-week delay in the drive toward Manila that Krueger's plan foretokened. MacArthur was by no means as worried as Krueger that the Japanese would counterattack the extended left of the Sixth Army as its forces drove toward Manila, and, unlike Krueger, MacArthur did not think that the Japanese would defend Manila.[6]

It is readily apparent the MacArthur and Krueger were basing their plans on different intelligence estimates. General Willoughby, MacArthur's chief of intelligence, had estimated that there were about 152,500 Japanese on Luzon and that these troops were scattered in three defensive areas—one north and northeast of Lingayen Gulf, another in the Clark Field region, and the third covering all southern Luzon, probably excluding Manila. Willoughby had further estimated that over half of the Japanese were located in the northern defensive area.[7] By 17 January, as Sixth Army was redeploying in accordance with Krueger's orders of the 16th, the army had over 175,000 troops ashore, at least 110,000 of them classed as combat personnel.[8] Given Willoughby's estimates, it is small wonder that MacArthur was unworried about the Sixth Army's left and felt that Krueger would have little difficulty occupying Manila.

Krueger was basing his plans on quite different figures. His G–2, Col. Horton V. White, placed 234,500 Japanese on Luzon, an estimate approximating the actual Japanese strength of some 250,000 far more closely than Willoughby's. White did not believe that the Japanese had as much strength on Luzon south of Manila as did Willoughby, and White felt that Manila would be strongly defended. Like Willoughby, the Sixth Army G–2 estimated that about half the Japanese on Luzon were in position to threaten the army's left, but White placed some 50,000 more Japanese on the left than did Willoughby.[9]

In addition to his desire to seize Manila as early as possible, MacArthur had other reasons to push Sixth Army south more rapidly than Krueger's plans would permit. Requirements of Pacific strategy, the theater commander radioed to Krueger on 17 January, made imperative the early seizure and rehabilitation of the Clark Field air center.[10] Kenney's Allied Air Forces manifestly needed air base facilities on Luzon far beyond the capacity of the fields that engineers could hurriedly prepare in the Lingayen Gulf area. Strategic air support requirements for Nimitz' invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa alone made it necessary to develop heavy bomber fields on Luzon at an early date. The Allied Air Forces also needed to expand its base facilities in order to carry out its part in blocking the Japanese shipping lanes to the Indies and to provide adequate support for ground operations on Luzon. Finally, the Lingayen strips, not being all-weather fields, would probably wash out once Luzon's rainy season began in late

[5] See above, chs. I and II.

[6] Krueger, *From Down Under to Nippon*, p. 228; Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

[7] See also above, ch. II.

[8] An. 3, Tr List, an. 6, Assignment of Shipping, and an. 7, Loading and Landing Schedule, to Sixth Army FO 34, 20 Nov 44, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 121–36.

[9] G–2 Sixth Army, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation With Respect to MIKE ONE Opn, 5 Dec 44, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 27–31; Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56; White Comments, 23 Jan 57.

[10] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CAX–50027, 17 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 112–13.

April. The seizure of the Clark Field air center, with its prewar paved runways, its new paved strips the Japanese had constructed, its proximity to presumably reparable rail and highway facilities, and its location relatively close to the port of Manila, would go far toward meeting the air base requirements on Luzon.[11]

MacArthur had all these reasons for believing that XIV Corps both should and could move faster. He suggested to Krueger that the threatening dispositions of the Japanese on the Sixth Army's left actually permitted a rapid advance at least as far as Clark Field on the part of XIV Corps. The theater commander right southward behind XIV Corps' left proposed that Krueger echelon I Corps' rear, thereby protecting XIV Corps while simultaneously containing—not necessarily attacking, it is to be noted —the Japanese forces on the army left. With such a plan in execution, MacArthur continued, it would not be necessary to hold XIV Corps back until I Corps could push strong forces south abreast. Even determined resistance by Japanese in the Clark Field area, MacArthur claimed, need not long delay XIV Corps, since such opposition would be "completely dislocated" by XI Corps, soon to land on the west coast of Luzon just north of Bataan Peninsula. MacArthur concluded with an order to Krueger to "direct . . . operations with a view to the earliest possible" seizure of the Clark Field air center.[12]

At this juncture Colonel White, revising his earlier estimates, began to feel that the proposed advance of XIV Corps might not be as risky as previously thought. By this time, the true pattern of the Japanese plan for the defense of Luzon had begun to crystallize for Colonel White, and on 17 January, about a week before Willoughby reached the same conclusion, White decided that the Japanese were not going to defend the Central Plains. He now estimated that XIV Corps would probably encounter no significant opposition until it reached Bamban, on Route 3 thirty-five miles south of the Agno River and just north of Clark Field. He guessed that the only strong Japanese force left in the Central Plains was the *2d Tank Division,* which he correctly suspected was displacing northward. And even if that Japanese division were still concentrated near Cabanatuan, twenty-five miles east across the Central Plains from Route 3 at Bamban, White did not feel that it could pose too much of a threat to XIV Corps —the destruction of intervening bridges and Allied air superiority would see too that.[13]

Despite these encouraging estimates from his G–2, General Krueger still felt that considerable risks were involved in any plan to speed XIV Corps toward Manila. He knew that behind MacArthur's pressure was the theater commander's desire to appear in the Philippine capital at the earliest possible date, and felt sure that MacArthur had in mind his birthday, 26 January, which was also Krueger's.[14] Krueger was not so confident that XI Corps' landing north of Bataan would in any way upset

[11] *Ibid.*; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 392, 402, 418, 421, 443–45, 448, 470–71; see also above, chs. I and II.

[12] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CAX–50027, 17 Jan 45.

[13] G–2 Sixth Army, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation With Reference to Proposed Seizure of Clark Field, 17 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–18 Jan 45; White Comments, 23 Jan 57.

[14] Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

Japanese defensive plans in the Clark Field region.[15] Moreover, in closer contact with XIV Corps' situation than MacArthur, Krueger felt that the XIV Corps' supply problems alone would slow progress. Finally, I Corps was developing so much opposition all across its front that Krueger believed the corps would be unable, as MacArthur suggested, to echelon enough strength southward on its right to protect XIV Corps' left rear. Rather, Krueger foresaw that it would be necessary for XIV Corps to provide its own protection by echeloning its left to the rear, to this degree weakening its striking power for the advance southward.[16]

Nevertheless, Krueger had to alter his plans in accordance with MacArthur's wishes, and on 18 January he issued new orders that provided for the execution of MacArthur's directive by stages.[17] XIV Corps, Krueger's orders read, would move its main strength up to its former outpost line south of the Agno by 20 January. On the 21st, Griswold would push his right south along Route 3 to Tarlac, twenty miles beyond the Agno, and his left to Victoria, eleven miles northeast of Tarlac. Once on the Tarlac-Victoria line, the corps would make ready to move on toward Clark Field, leaving troops echeloned along its left rear to maintain contact with I Corps and cover a XIV Corps zone that Krueger now enlarged by pushing the I–XIV Corps boundary ten to fifteen miles eastward.

Krueger directed I Corps to secure Route 3 from Pozorrubio north to the Routes 3–11 junction as well as the stretch of Route 3 west to Damortis. Simultaneously, to help protect XIV Corps' left rear, I Corps would advance its right east and southeast to a new line lying generally three miles east of Route 3 and extending southward to the eastern anchor of XIV Corps' former outpost line. The I Corps would also send its reconnaissance forward to establish contact with XIV Corps troops at Victoria, and would then establish an outpost line running northeastward from Victoria approximately eight miles to the highway-railroad junction town of Guimba.

The I Corps' task would obviously be the most difficult, but to accomplish its mission the corps had under its control the 43d Division, the 6th Division, the 25th Division less the 35th RCT in Army Reserve, and the separate 158th RCT. The XIV Corps would advance southward through the Central Plains with the 37th and 40th Divisions.

Japanese Redispositions

Until XIV Corps reached the outposts of the *Kembu Group* in the Clark Field region, it would meet no Japanese other than scattered remnants of the *Kubota Detachment*.[18] Yamashita knew that the western side of the Central Plains was wide open south to Bamban, but there

[15] Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56. See also below, ch. XVII, for XI Corps operations on Bataan. As events turned out, XI Corps was still fighting its way across Bataan well after XIV Corps had taken Clark Field.

[16] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 23; Krueger, *From Dawn Under to Nippon*, p. 229; Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

[17] The remainder of this subsection is based mainly on Sixth Army FO 43, 18 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 147.

[18] This section is based on Japanese sources, on file in the OCMH, that were used in the preparation of and are cited in Southwest Pacific Area Historical Series, II, pages 438–43.

was nothing he either could or wanted to do about it. Like Krueger, he was much more concerned with the situation east and northeast of Lingayen Gulf, although for different reasons.

By 16 January, I Corps had largely overrun the *23d Division–58th IMB* outer line of defenses except in the Mt. Alava–Hill 355 area and on the Cabaruan Hills. Yamashita had not expected to hold these defenses very long in any case. Moreover, the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB* controlled such excellent defensive terrain in the Rosario area that Yamashita does not seem to have worried that Sixth Army could or would soon mount a strong drive toward the Baguio anchor of the *Shobu Group*'s triangular redoubt. However, to guard against a sudden and unexpected breakthrough on his southwestern flank Yamashita, on or about 15 January, did strengthen the road junction area by dispatching south for attachment to the *23d Division* two infantry battalions of the *19th Division*. For the rest, the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* were to hold the positions they then had along and on both sides of Route 3 from Palacpalac to Rosario and Damortis until forced back on Baguio.

The defense of the approaches to San Jose worried Yamashita far more. The direction of the I Corps' advances seem to him to pose a direct and immediate threat to that gateway to the Cagayan Valley. He also feared that American forces were about to drive on San Nicolas at the southern end of the Villa Verde Trail, the best alternate route toward the valley from the south. Still trying to move supplies and troops up Route 5 through San Jose, he could at best take a very anxious view of the 43d Division's breakthrough along the *23d Division*'s outer line in the Manoag–Hill 200 area, for the defenses of the approaches to San Jose from this direction were still woefully weak. Some units of the *2d Tank Division*, concentrating in the Lupao area northwest of San Jose, had not yet passed through the latter town. Worse still, the advance echelons of the *105th Division*, coming north from the *Shimbu* area with five battalions of infantry, were still twenty-five to thirty miles south of San Jose as of 15 January. Something had to be done and done quickly if the approaches to San Nicolas and San Jose were to be held much longer.

On 15 January, returning to a once-discarded plan, Yamashita directed the *2d Tank Division* to concentrate in the Tayug area, southwest of San Nicolas. The division would hold the Villa Verde Trail and the Ambayabang River valley, which, lying between the trail on the east and the Agno on the west, provided an approach to Baguio from the south and southeast. The *2d Tank Division* would also assume control over *10th Division* elements—principally the *10th Reconnaissance Regiment*—already in the Tayug–San Nicolas area. The *Shigemi Detachment*, still at San Manuel across the Agno west of Tayug, was to move up to Binalonan to cover the displacement of the rest of the *2d Tank Division*. Ultimately, the *2d Tank Division* would withdraw up the Villa Verde Trail to Route 5, reconcentrating along Route 5 to defend the southern approaches to the Bambang anchor of the *Shobu* defense triangle. The *10th Division*, meanwhile, would defend the immediate approaches to San Jose, holding that town until the *105th Division* passed through on its way up Route 5. Then

the *10th Division* would itself withdraw up Route 5.

Yamashita could not execute these plans, for the *2d Tank Division* reported that it could not carry out the role assigned it. The terrain in the Tayug–San Nicolas area, the division reported, was ill suited to armored operations. Moreover, the division's terrain reconnaissance parties had concluded that the Villa Verde Trail, the shortest route of withdrawal from the Tayug–San Nicolas region, was impassable for tanks and trucks.

Another event forcing Yamashita to alter his plans provides a sad commentary on the state of Japanese communications. On 17 January the *14th Area Army* commander belatedly learned that the *10th Division* had never concentrated at San Jose and that it had made no real effort to dispose itself along the entire Tayug–Umingan–Lupao–San Jose defense line for which it was responsible. Lt. Gen. Yasuyuki Okamoto, the division commander, had decided that he did not have sufficient strength to hold the relatively open ground assigned to him. Most of his *39th Infantry* was with the *Kembu Group*, the bulk of the *10th Infantry*, greatly understrength, was attached to the *103d Division* for the defense of northern Luzon, and, at least as late as 15 January, he had received no word as to when he might expect the attached *Tsuda Detachment* to arrive in the San Jose area from the east coast. He had therefore withdrawn most of his troops up Route 5 from San Jose and had started disposing them along the line Yamashita had intended the *105th Division* to hold; leaving behind only a reinforced infantry company and two artillery battalions to secure the all-important railhead. Okamoto had directed the *10th Reconnaissance Regiment* to remain in the San Nicolas area, and he stationed three or four rifle companies of his *63d Infantry* along the Tayug–Lupao line and in rising ground to the southwest.

Faced with these unexpected problems, Yamashita again had to make sweeping changes in his plans. He decided that the best thing to do was to accept the *10th Division*'s redeployment as a *fait accompli*. He thereupon directed the *2d Tank Division*, which had already started moving toward Tayug, to hold its main strength southeast of Tayug to protect the immediate approaches to San Jose. Leaving the *Shigemi Detachment* in the San Manuel area, the division would concentrate at Lupao and establish its *Ida Detachment* —a combat command built upon the *6th Tank Regiment* — at Muñoz, on Route 5 about nine miles southwest of San Jose. Thus, both main approaches to the latter town—via Route 8 from the northwest and Route 5 from the southwest—could be held, and forces could be shifted between the two concentrations along a secondary road connecting Lupao and Muñoz.

Yamashita directed the *10th Division* to complete defensive preparations in the area where it was already disposing itself; the *105th Division*, instructed to speed its northward movement, would drop two of its five first-echelon infantry battalions at San Jose. There the two battalions, as well as the *10th Division* detachments at San Jose and in the area to the west, would pass to *2d Tank Division* control. The rest of the *105th Division*'s first echelon would continue north up Route 5.

To the northwest, there was one further change. As the *Shigemi Detachment* prepared to move west from San Manuel to Binalonan in accordance with the earlier plans, it found Sixth Army troops already in the outskirts of the latter Route 3 town. Therefore the combat command decided to fight it out at San Manuel, where it could hold at least one approach to the Villa Verde Trail.

None of the rapid changes in plans for the defense of the San Jose area affected Yamashita's program for the employment of the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB*. These units were already in excellent position to hold the approaches to Baguio, a fact that became increasingly clear to I Corps as it continued to attack toward the Routes 3–11 junction in accordance with Sixth Army's new plans.

CHAPTER IX

Securing the Sixth Army's Base Area

The Fight for the Routes 3–11 Junction

The 43d Division, as it resumed its attack on 17 January to secure the junction of Routes 3 and 11, was well aware that strong Japanese forces remained within its zone of responsibility. (*See Map II.*) The division and its attached 158th and 63d RCT's had good reason to believe that hard fighting was in store before they reached the junction and cleared the terrain to the Army Beachhead Line on Sixth Army's northern flank.

The Situation

On 17 January, the *58th IMB*, with its ample supporting artillery, was still responsible for holding the Damortis-Rosario road and the Routes 3–11 junction.[1] The *23d Division*, commanded by Lt. Gen. Fukutaro Nishiyama, held the terrain along both sides of Route 3 south from the road junction to Pozorrubio. The division's *1st Battalion, 64th Infantry*, was on Hill 355, while the *3d Battalion* still held Mt. Alava.[2] The *23d Division*'s *71st* and *72d Infantry Regiments* defended the rising ground east of Route 3 between the junction and Pozorrubio. Here the terrain rose sharply to a ridge that begins at Hill 600, two miles north of Pozorrubio, and stretches northward six miles to Hill 1500, overlooking the junction. Hill 1500 seems to have been the responsibility of one of the *58th IMB*'s independent infantry battalions; the rest of the ridge was defended by the *2d* and *3d Battalions, 72d Infantry*,[3] and the *3d Battalion, 71st Infantry*. The *72d Infantry* also had some strength so emplaced as to guard the entrance to the Arodogat River valley, east of the Hills 600–1500 ridge, in order to block that outflanking valley route.

The *2d Battalion, 71st Infantry*, holding defenses in the 6th Division's zone, was cut off from the rest of the *23d Division*, which had as a reserve the *1st Battalion, 71st Infantry*, located near the Routes 3–11 junction. Two battalions of the *19th Division* were on their way south from Baguio to reinforce the *23d Division*, and the total strength available to General Nishiyama was probably

[1] Japanese information throughout this section is from: 43d Div G–2 Per Rpts, 20 Jan–10 Feb 45; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, pp. 2–3; 103d Inf OB/ Rpt Luzon, p. 1, and atchd maps; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, O/B an., pp. 1–2; 33d Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Intel, Sec. 2, Enemy O/B, pp. 2–6; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List. See also above, chs. VI and VIII.

[2] The *2d Battalion, 64th Infantry*, had been wiped out at Hill 200 by the 103d Infantry, 43d Division.

[3] The *1st Battalion, 72d Infantry*, part of the *Kubota Detachment*, was cut off on the west side of the Central Plains. See above, ch. VI.

close to 13,000 men. General Wing, the 43d Division's commander, had well over twice that number at his disposal. He would need all this strength, for the advantages of terrain were still on the side of the Japanese.

The terrain in the *23d Division*'s zone was varied, within the framework of an area comprising generally rising ground. The ground in the vicinity of the Damortis-Rosario road has already been described; west of Route 3 in the region between the junction and Pozorrubio the slopes were bare, but fairly gentle; east of the highway the approaches to the crest of the Hills 600–1500 ridge line were bare and quite steep. Deep, sharp draws separated individual knobs throughout the area, some thick with scrub growth including bamboo thickets, others grass banked and offering little concealment. Throughout the area the Japanese had well-established, sometimes elaborate defenses. They had enlarged natural caves, dug new ones, and constructed tunnels to connect caves. Some artillery pieces were mounted on rails for easy withdrawal into caves; others were hidden in specially constructed nipa huts. Well-conceived camouflage and tactically sound emplacement of all weapons were hallmarks of the defense.

General Wing's plan for securing the Routes 3–11 junction called for two converging attacks, both essentially frontal in nature. He did not feel he had the time, the strength, or the necessary knowledge of Japanese dispositions and the terrain to mount envelopments. He directed the 63d, 158th, and 172d Infantry Regiments to attack from the west along the Damortis-Rosario road and the 103d and 169th Infantry Regiments to drive north astride Route 3 from Pozorrubio.[4] The execution of this plan would involve the seizure of four separate objectives: the Damortis-Rosario road and the dominating terrain immediately north and south of that section of Route 3; the Hill 355–Mt. Alava complex south of Rosario and south-southwest of the Routes 3–11 junction; the Hills 600–1500 ridge line east of Route 3 from Pozorrubio north to the junction; and, finally, the junction and nearby dominating heights.

Mt. Alava and Hill 355

The 169th Infantry, 43d Division, had moved to barrio Palacpalac, on Route 3 just north of Pozorrubio, for the purpose of seeking new routes of approach to Hill 355 and Mt. Alava.[5] The regiment left one battalion on the south side of Hill 355 to contain the Japanese on that terrain feature. The rest of the unit spent much of 17 and 18 January preparing to launch an attack against Mt. Alava from the east and southeast, and on the 18th the 2d Battalion moved north on Route 3 toward Sison, almost four miles beyond Palacpalac. About two miles south of Sison the unit branched off on a new section of Route 3 that bypassed Sison to the east and rejoined the old road half a mile northeast of the town. The Japanese, who had perfect observation all along the road, made no serious attempt to oppose the advance until late afternoon, when, as the American battalion secured the junction northeast of Sison, they began firing machine guns,

[4] 43d Div FO 4, 17 Jan 45.

[5] The general sources for this subsection are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 21–33; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–23, 81–83, 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 17–31 Jan 45; 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–6; 169th Inf Unit Jnls and Jnl Files, 17–25 Jan 45.

mortars, and artillery against the 169th's unit. At dusk eight accompanying tanks of the 716th Tank Battalion were sent back to the Route 3 branching between Sison and Palacpalac because they seemed to be drawing the Japanese fire.

Beginning about 0500 on 19 January, a Japanese force composed of *64th Infantry* units withdrawing from Mt. Alava (and possibly some *72d Infantry* troops cut off at Sison) struck the 2d Battalion, 169th Infantry, from the southwest. By noon constant Japanese pressure, increasingly heavy Japanese artillery fire from which the American troops could find no protection, and a concomitant threat that the Japanese might cut Route 3 south of Sison, forced the battalion to withdraw along the flat, open land to the Route 3 fork where the tanks had bivouacked. As reassembled on 20 January, the 2d Battalion had only 650 effectives left from a landing strength of over 1,000 men. Its combat casualties on 18 and 19 January had totaled approximately 35 men killed and 165 wounded; the broiling sun had taken an additional toll. However, the fighting on the 18th and 19th had not been wasted. The *64th Infantry*, in order to keep open its line of communications, had practically denuded its Mt. Alava defenses and had lost nearly 400 men killed.

Mt. Alava was now wide open to attack by the 169th Infantry, and that regiment launched an assault on the 20th. By evening, the attacking forces had secured the bare crest of the mountain and the next day finished mopping up. The regiment turned its attention to bypassed Hill 355 and, employing two battalions, made slow and costly gains on the bare-sloped hill during 22 and 23 January. By late afternoon of the 24th the 169th had cleared most of the hill, and in the process had killed nearly 500 men of the *1st Battalion, 64th Infantry*, and attached units. The 3d Battalion, 103d Infantry, then undertook the reduction of the last resistance at Hill 355 and Mt. Alava, and soon developed a quite sour view of its assignment:

> According to many infantrymen, a campaign for a ridge system is "strategically closed" when the enemy thereon, having lost his last "battleship" and possessing only isolated groups of three or four thousand men and a dozen or so artillery pieces, may no longer be expected to invade successfully the western half of the United States. Once the enemy is beaten to his knees to this extent, there remains only to "mop up." [6]

At any rate, from 25 through 28 January the 103d's battalion killed nearly 150 more Japanese and captured or destroyed four 47-mm. antitank guns and seven 75-mm. and 105-mm. field artillery weapons at Hill 355. Three days later, having flushed a few hidden Japanese from Hill 355 and Mt. Alava, the battalion marched back to Pozorrubio to rejoin its parent unit. The first of the 43d Division's four separate battles was over.

The High Ground East of Route 3

The 103d Infantry had secured Pozorrubio on 17 January against scattered resistance, thus opening a supply route to the 169th Infantry.[7] On the 19th, its

[6] 103d Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 36.

[7] Additional information for this subsection is from: 103d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 13, 18–24; 103d RCT S–3 Per Rpts, 16 Jan–15 Feb 45; 103d Inf Opns Jnl, 16 Jan–15 Feb 45; 169th Inf Unit Jnls and Jnl Files, 24 Jan–15 Feb 45.

elements further south having been relieved by the 25th Division, the 103d began to attack Hill 600, the southern end of the ridge line lying east of Route 3 in the area between Pozorrubio and the Routes 3–11 junction. After frontal assaults that cost almost 100 men killed or wounded, the regiment secured a precarious foothold on the hot, grassy, open southern slopes of Hill 600 about dusk on 20 January, but was unable to gain more ground the next day on the bare terrain, which afforded no protection from Japanese fire. That continued frontal attack from the south, at least, would prove costly was made clear in a shocking manner on the morning of 22 January. An incautious grouping of officers and enlisted men in the open at a forward command post on Hill 600's southern slopes brought down fifteen well-placed rounds of Japanese 75-mm. artillery fire. Within minutes 4 company commanders were killed and 2 others officers were wounded; 7 enlisted men were killed and 33 more were wounded, many of them key NCO's. The 3d Battalion, 103d Infantry, had to withdraw from the hill to reorganize, and the 43d Division revamped its plan of attack against the Hills 600–1500 ridge line.

General Wing now directed the 103d Infantry to establish a line of departure along Route 3 and strike eastward against the northwestern slopes of Hill 600, simultaneously driving up the southwestern slopes of bare Hill 700, cresting nearly 2,000 yards north of the top of Hill 600. The regiment was also to secure Hill 800, lying about 1,200 yards across an open saddle northwest of Hill 700. The 169th Infantry, moving up to the 103d's left (north), would seize Question Mark Hill, a little over 2,000 yards north of Hill 800, and the 3d Battalion. 63d Infantry, previously I Corps Reserve. was to clear Benchmark Hill, about 1,800 yards northwest of Question Mark. Once all these bare, steep-sloped hills were in American hands, the attacking forces would drive on to take Hill 1500, the southern crest of which lay 2,000 yards northwest of Benchmark Hill across the scrubwood draw of the Cauringan River.[8]

The new attack—essentially a frontal assault up the bare, western slopes of the Hills 600–1500 ridge line— started on the hot morning of 25 January. On the far left the 3d Battalion, 63d Infantry, secured the west side of Benchmark Hill at the cost of 8 men killed and 28 wounded. Then the battalion turned north across the Cauringan River to help the rest of the 63d Infantry, which had just moved over from the Damortis-Rosario road sector, to clear Hill 1500. Meanwhile, the 169th Infantry had captured the open crest of Question Mark Hill, but left the eastern slopes in Japanese hands. On 27 January the 169th relieved elements of the 63d Infantry still holding the western side of Benchmark Hill and then settled down to a

[8] 43d Div FO 5, 24 Jan 45; 169th Inf FO 2, 24 Jan 45. The 33d Division, later fighting over the same ground, knew Question Mark Hill as Hill 1500, a name also employed initially by the 169th Infantry. The 33d Division applied the name Question Mark Hill to another height 1,500 yards north of the 43d Division's Question Mark and about 800 yards east of Benchmark Hill. The 43d Division knew the 33d Division's Question Mark as Hill 1800. The problem of nomenclature is further confused by the fact that elements of the 33d Division also applied the name Question Mark to a height some 1,500 yards north-northeast of Hill 1800. See also below, ch. XXV.

period of patrolling to hunt down Japanese stragglers and pinpoint defensive installations for air and artillery strikes.

To the south the 103d Infantry (less the 3d Battalion), on 25 January, had reached the open crest of Hill 600 but, finding its exposed position untenable until heights further north were cleared of Japanese, had had to withdraw. On the regiment's left 82 men were killed or wounded in an abortive attempt to seize Hill 700 and Hill 600's grassy northwestern slopes. Late in the afternoon patrols discovered that the Japanese had left undefended the saddle connecting Hills 700 and 800. That night one battalion of the 103d employed the saddle as a route of approach to Hill 800, which the unit secured against a small, surprised group of Japanese.

About 1500 on 27 January Company E, 103d Infantry, managed to reach the bare crest of Hill 700. Half an hour later all hell broke loose, to the accompaniment of a violent tropical cloudburst. Company F, 103d Infantry, which had secured a foothold on the northwestern slopes of Hill 600, was hit by a strong Japanese counterattack; Japanese artillery lambasted the 2d Battalion's command post, disrupting communications, firing an ammunition dump, and inflicting 19 casualties; Japanese infantry struck Company E, which lost 15 men killed or wounded and had to abandon Hill 700. Throughout the following night small groups of Japanese struck intermittently at 103d Infantry positions from Hill 600 to Hill 800. The next day the 103d, like the 169th Infantry, settled down to a period of patrolling and consolidating. The regiment made one or two further efforts to take Hill 700, but neither it nor the Japanese of the *23d Division* were able to hold the hill's narrow, exposed crest. In effect, the 43d Division and the *23d Division* compromised on denying the hilltop to each other.

The 103d and 169th Infantry Regiments had not accomplished their original mission of clearing the ridge from Hill 600 north to Question Mark Hill. On the other hand, they had secured much of the terrain immediately adjacent to Route 3 in their sectors and had largely succeeded in denying to the Japanese the southern two-thirds of the Hills 600–1500 ridge line, thereby protecting Route 3 from Pozorrubio north against direct and observed machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire. The task of eliminating mortar and artillery fire from more distant emplacements would devolve upon artillery and Army and Marine Corps aircraft. The two 43d Division regiments would patrol to locate targets for these supporting arms, simultaneously guarding their own portions of the 43d Division's zone against Japanese surprise counterattack from the east.

The operations east of Route 3 had cost the 103d and 169th Infantry Regiments dearly. Heat, fanatic Japanese resistance, and the necessity for attacking up open, steep slopes had taken a heavy toll until, by the end of January, each of the regiments' infantry battalions was down to little more than one-half of effective strength. Casualties had not been exceptionally heavy on any one day—except, perhaps, for the 200 killed and wounded suffered by the 2d Battalion, 169th Infantry, on 18 and 19 January—but the cumulative total was such that the two regiments were badly in need of rest and rehabilitation.

The Damortis-Rosario Road

Since one wing of the 43d Division's converging attack toward the Routes 3–11 junction failed to accomplish its mission, it fell to the 63d, 158th, and 172d Infantry Regiments to seize the junction, but before the three units could do so, it was necessary for them to secure the Damortis-Rosario road.[9] By 17 January the 158th Infantry had driven approximately a mile and a quarter east along the road but then had been stopped at a defile through which the road passed at a point about 750 yards west of barrio Amlang. North of the defile a reinforced company of the *58th IMB* defended an open, grassy ridge that stretched northward from the vicinity of Amlang two miles to the Cupang River. South of the road, on the middle of the three ridges that rose in steps inland from Lingayen Gulf's eastern shore, a battalion of the *58th IMB* had halted both the right flank of the 158th Infantry and the forward elements of the 63d Infantry, which had been driving north athwart the middle ridge toward Amlang. The *58th IMB* also had strong forces on high ground along both sides of Route 3 from Amlang southeast two miles to barrio Cataguintingan, near which the 172d Infantry had reached the highway. The Japanese unit likewise held partially wooded high ground that lying north of the highway, dominated the town of Rosario and the flat, open farm land between Rosario and Cataguintingan. All three American regiments were more or less stalemated, and further progress by any one demanded a breakthrough by at least one other.

During the period 17–19 January the 158th Infantry's leftmost units, gathering momentum behind close air and artillery support, cleared the ridge line north of Amlang against scattered but determined resistance. South of the road, on the middle ridge, both the 158th and the 63d Infantry Regiments made negligible gains. Finally, late on the 18th, the 158th and 63d made patrol contact about a mile south of Amlang and, coordinating plans, launched a concerted attack on the morning of 19 January against *58th IMB* defenses along the northern section of the middle ridge. The last Japanese defenses collapsed on the 21st, and the 158th Infantry was then able to advance along Route 3, securing the road as far as a roadblock the 63d Infantry had set up about 1,000 yards east of Amlang. The operations from 17 through 23 January (when the 158th reached the 63d's roadblock) cost the two regiments roughly 50 men killed and 300 wounded. The *58th IMB* lost nearly 650 men killed during the same period.

Route 3 continued southeastward from the 63d's roadblock, and a poor road, hardly more than a trail, looped south from the roadblock to rejoin the main highway just west of Cataguintingan. On 23 January, pressed by General Wing to drive along Route 3 to the 172d Infantry's positions, the 158th Infantry dispatched troops and tanks eastward along both the highway and the loop road, but gained scarcely 500 yards. For the next two days the 158th's progress demanded laborious, foot-by-foot advances over and up open hills and

[9] The principal sources for this subsection are: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–29; 158th Inf Rpt Damortis-Rosario, pp. 2–4; 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–15; 158th RCT S–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 17–31 Jan 45; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, pp. 6–9; 172d Inf Jnl, 17–28 Jan 45. See also above, ch. VI.



MEDIUM TANKS SUPPORT 158TH RCT NEAR DAMORTIS

ridges in the face of machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire, and it was not until 26 January that the regiment broke through to Cataguintingan. Now all that remained to clear the rest of the Damortis-Rosario road was to secure the flat, open two-mile stretch between Cataguintingan and Rosario, a task the 172d Infantry had been about since 17 January.

In an exposed position on the open farm land near Cataguintingan, its supplies running low, the 172d had spent 17 January patrolling and consolidating its positions. The following night a Japanese 155-mm. howitzer battalion that had been supporting the *58th IMB* attempted to withdraw to Rosario through the 172d Infantry's roadblock. The Japanese unit lost five howitzers destroyed and over 100 men killed. However, a single round from a howitzer the Japanese had managed to get into action hit the command post and aid station of the 2d Battalion, 172d Infantry, killing the battalion commander, 2 other officers, and 14 enlisted men, and wounding 15 more officers and men.

On 18 January a company of the 172d crossed Route 3 and seized positions on the southwestern slopes of Hill 600, two miles northeast of Cataguintingan and a mile northwest of Rosario. Using the fairly gentle southern slopes of the hill, which was partially covered by scrub growth, elements of the 172d Infantry

then occupied a bare hill, also about 600 feet high, approximately 1,000 yards north of Rosario. From this hill the infantry, in co-operation with supporting artillery and aircraft, could control much of the Rosario area as well as the southern reaches of the Pugo Valley. This valley ran north into the mountains to connect with mountain trails leading to Baguio, and could be employed by the Japanese as a secondary avenue of retreat or reinforcement.

The 172d Infantry marched on from the hill north of Rosario to Hill 606, a scrub-grown height half a mile northeast of the town and overlooking the stretch of Route 3 between Rosario and the Routes 3–11 junction. From a base of operations at Hill 606, patrols went into Rosario, finding the town mined, liberally booby-trapped, and defended by machine gunners and riflemen hidden in shattered buildings. The 172d finally cleared Rosario on 28 January. Now the regiment could abandon its exposed, tortuous supply route that wound up the ridge to Cataguintingan and employ the two-lane, concrete-paved Route 3 inland from Damortis. The 43d Division had completed the third of its four tasks.

The Routes 3–11 Junction

The final mission—securing the junction of Routes 3 and 11 a mile and a quarter east of Rosario—featured two regiments in a converging attack.[10] The 172d Infantry struck from the north and northwest; the 63d Infantry drove in from the south and southeast. The key terrain feature in the 172d Infantry's zone was Hill 900, the scrub-grown peak of the hill mass of which Hill 606 formed a southwestern nose. Hill 900 lay about a mile and a half north of the junction, while the bare northern crest of Hill 1500, the 63d Infantry's key objective, was almost the same distance east of the junction and dropped steeply away on its western slopes to the Bued River. An old stretch of Route 3, lying about half a mile east of the main road, hugged the bottom of the Hill 1500 hill mass, the southern crest of which lay approximately half a mile south of the northern peak.

Hills 900 and 1500 were so located and their defenses were so arranged that they had to be attacked simultaneously; neither could be held until the other was also largely cleared of Japanese. Accordingly, the 63d and 172d Infantry Regiments launched a dual attack on the morning of 25 January. To avoid costly frontal assault, the 172d sent its maneuver force northeast between Hills 600 and 606 and across the Pugo Valley to fall upon the Japanese rear on the northwestern shoulder of Hill 900. Achieving tactical surprise, the regiment cleared the northern and western slopes of the hill in time to dig in for the night before the Japanese struck back with two or three unsuccessful counterattacks. During the next three days, driving mainly against the rear of strong Japanese positions, the 172d Infantry banged, clawed, bayonetted, and shot its way south through the scrub growth of Hill 900 against fanatically determined resistance. The last defenses fell on 29 January.

Meanwhile, the 63d Infantry, attacking generally to the northeast, had sent

[10] This subsection is based on: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–23, 78–80; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 9 Jan–13 Feb 45, pp. 7–10; 172d Inf Jnl, 24 Jan–13 Feb 45; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–6; 63d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 24–30 Jan 45.

its 1st Battalion across the Bued River on 25 January to start a frontal assault up the open western slopes of Hill 1500. During the next two days the 2d Battalion came up on the 1st's right, and the 3d Battalion (relieved at Benchmark Hill by the 169th Infantry) struck north across the Cauringan River and up Hill 1500's bare southern slopes. The 63d took the southern crest of the hill mass on 28 January, but left the northern crest and the eastern slopes in Japanese hands. On the 30th the 172d Infantry took over the attack at Hill 1500, subsequently extending the hold to the northern peak.

By the 30th, then, American troops had cleared the Japanese from most important terrain dominating the Routes 3–11 junction. Patrols of the 172d Infantry had reached the junction as early as 28 January but, since the area was devoid of cover, made no attempt to occupy it permanently. For the time being, it was enough that the high ground overlooking the junction was secure—the Japanese could no longer send forces down Route 11 from Baguio to execute a surprise attack against the Sixth Army's left rear.

The final operations to gain control over the junction—from 25 through 30 January—had cost the 172d Infantry about 30 men killed and 150 wounded, while the 63d Infantry had lost about 40 men killed and 270 wounded. Perhaps as many as 1,000 Japanese, the majority of them members of the *58th IMB,* gave up their lives in the junction area during the same period. The rough, tedious, three-week battle for the junction was over—the Sixth Army's beachhead was secure against attack from the north and northeast.

Binalonan and San Manuel: The I Corps Center

While the fight for the Routes 3–11 junction had been raging, I Corps center and right flank divisions had pushed steadily east and southeast to secure Sixth Army's eastern flank and to provide protection to XIV Corps' left rear. (*Map III*) The first job facing I Corps' center division, the 25th, was to secure Route 3 from Pozorrubio south through Binalonan to Urdaneta, a total road distance of some ten miles. This done, the division would drive on eastward to a second objective line extending from San Felipe, two and a half miles east of Binalonan, to Bactad, three and a half miles east of Urdaneta, anchoring its left on the bare foothills of the Caraballo Range.[11]

The terrain over which the 25th Division was to advance was flat and open, characterized by dry and drying rice paddies, fields for other crops, and some carabao pasture land, none of which provided any cover or concealment except along stream beds. The stream beds and a few irrigation ditches constituted the only obstacles to free maneuver, but at this season of the year many of the smaller streams were dry, and easy fords were available across those that still carried water. A good network of all-weather roads existed in the division's sector. Route 3 was a two-lane, macadam highway, while the east-west roads were two lanes wide and gravel surfaced. The only real transportation problem was whether the gravel roads

[11] Sixth Army FO's 42 and 43, 16 and 18 Jan 45; I Corps FO's 2 and 3, 16 and 18 Jan 45.

could stand up under the constant pounding of heavy military traffic.

The division's first major objective was the road junction town of Binalonan, about midway between Pozorrubio and Urdaneta. The town was held by remnants of the *Shigemi Detachment* armored force that had made the abortive counterattack against elements of the 103d Infantry, 43d Division, during the night of 16–17 January.[12] Under orders to move up to Binalonan from San Manuel, six miles to the east, the *Shigemi Detachment* had evidently started its displacement on 16 or 17 January, but the movement ceased on the 17th when General Shigemi learned that American troops were within a mile of Binalonan. Thus, as of 17 January, the Japanese garrison at Binalonan was composed of a company of the *2d Mobile Infantry, 2d Tank Division*; eight or ten tanks of the *7th Tank Regiment*; a few artillerymen manning two or three 75-mm. weapons; and some stragglers of the *2d Battalion, 64th Infantry*, from the Hill 200 area west of Binalonan. The total force probably numbered less than 350 troops.[13]

The defenses within Binalonan were of a hasty nature — trenches and dirt bunkers for the infantry, sandbagged emplacements under buildings, and earthern revetments behind which medium tanks were hidden hull down as pillboxes. With insufficient forces to man a perimeter all around, the garrison concentrated at the southern and eastern sides of Binalonan in order to hold the approaches to three bridges over the Tagumising River, which flowed southward past the eastern border of the town.[14]

On the morning of 17 January the 161st Infantry, on the 25th Division's left, relieved troops of the 103d Infantry holding a perimeter a mile west of Binalonan and immediately began patrolling toward the town.[15] The 27th Infantry, on the division's right, moved forward the same day from the vicinity of Manaoag and secured Route 3 from a point about a mile south of Binalonan to the 6th Division's left at Urdaneta.

The regimental commander, Col. James L. Dalton II, delayed the 161st Infantry's advance toward Binalonan for a couple of hours while he determined that a raid against his rear elements near Manaoag had no significance. Then, in the afternoon, his 3d Battalion pushed into the northern half of Binalonan and cleared that section of the town before dark. Meanwhile, Japanese rifle and machine gun fire had stopped the 1st Battalion a block short of the Tagumising River in the southern half of town. About 1730 a lone Japanese tank ran across the battalion's front, spraying the area with 47-mm. and machine gun fire before it was destroyed. Shortly thereafter, five more tanks began whipping through the streets in the southern and central sections of the town in a completely disorganized counterattack marked by wild firing in every direction by both sides in the affray. The 161st

[12] See above, ch. VI.

[13] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–22; 161st Inf, Battle of Binalonan, p. 2. (The 161st Infantry's report for Luzon is divided into a series of separate narratives, one for each engagement.)

[14] 161st Inf, Battle of Binalonan, p. 2.

[15] The battle for Binalonan is reconstructed from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–22; 161st Inf, Battle of Binalonan, pp. 2–5; 161st Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 17–18 Jan 45.

Infantry finally destroyed the five tanks, and the night settled down to a "static fire fight" between the infantry elements.[16]

With the help of three mediums from the 716th Tank Battalion, the 161st completely cleared Binalonan by 1300 on 18 January. In and around the town the regiment had killed some 250 Japanese and had destroyed or captured 9 tanks, 2 75-mm. artillery weapons, 5 trucks, an artillery tractor, and large quantities of ammunition. The 161st lost 19 men killed, 66 wounded, and 3 trucks destroyed. For the 25th Division the cost had been relatively low considering the degree of control it had gained over roads leading to the east, southeast, and south. Certainly the cost would have been far greater had the main body of the *Shigemi Detachment* been in its proper position at Binalonan instead of six miles away at San Manuel.

After the capture of Binalonan General Swift, the I Corps commander, directed the 25th Division to move up to the San Felipe–Bactad line by evening on 20 January; secure crossings over the Agno River, which flowed generally southward in the division's sector; and then reconnoiter eastward across the Agno up to ten miles beyond the San Felipe–Bactad line.[17] The job was a big one, for the division's front would extend in an arc nearly thirty miles long from Pozorrubio around to the 6th Division's left and would have to be covered without help of the 35th RCT, which was still in army reserve. But Maj. Gen. Charles L. Mullins, Jr., the 25th's commander, was not too worried. He had enough information to know that the 27th Infantry would encounter few Japanese, and he also knew that the only significant Japanese force still left west of the Agno River was the *Shigemi Detachment* at San Manuel. He had reasonably accurate information about the combat command's strength and armament, but he did not know that General Shigemi had elected to stand to the last man at San Manuel.[18]

Dug in at San Manuel, the *Shigemi Detachment* was hardly an asset to Yamashita's *Shobu Group*. It guarded but one approach to the Villa Verde Trail route into the group's final redoubt—a poor road running east from San Manuel to San Nicolas and crossing the Agno River via a long, rocky ford that was nearly impassable to wheeled vehicles. A good gravel road ran south from San Manuel and connected with other roads leading toward the entrance to the Villa Verde Trail and toward San Jose as well. These roads south of San Manuel were well connected with Urdaneta and other towns in the 6th and 25th Divisions' sectors. The *Shigemi Detachment* could not withdraw east, for it had already decided that the long ford and the Villa Verde Trail were impassable for its armor, artillery, and trucks; there were no roads to the north; withdrawal to the west was already impossible; and the escape route to the south was cut on 19 January when the 27th Infantry, 25th Division, moved into Asingan, four miles south of San Manuel.

Not knowing that General Shigemi had made up his mind to fight to the death at San Manuel, General Mullins

[16] 161st Inf, Battle of Binalonan, pp. 3–4.
[17] I Corps FO 3, 18 Jan 45.
[18] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 22. See also above, ch. VIII.

considered the *Shigemi Detachment* a strong threat to his left that he would have to eliminate before the 25th Division could thrust across the Agno. Accordingly, he directed the 161st Infantry to destroy the *Shigemi Detachment*. The ensuing engagement, given General Shigemi's plan to hold fast, had little significance in the broad scope of the Luzon Campaign. However, it foreshadowed subsequent encounters with Japanese armor and provides a neat picture of 25th Division tactical maneuver against armor employed as a purely stationary defensive weapon.

San Manuel lies just off the southeastern nose of a bare, steep-sided ridge that, rising to a height of 850 feet less than a mile north of town, leads northward into the Caraballo Mountains.[19] Along the west side of the ridge lies the Aboredo River and its steep-banked valley, stretching north to connect with rough mountain trails leading toward Baguio. East of the ridge is a lesser stream and a dirt road that heads northward five miles to the Agno River near the point where that stream debouches from its mountain gorges to begin its majestic sweep across the Central Plains.

The stream east of the ridge runs on south through a steep draw on the eastern side of San Manuel. A small drainage ditch runs around the nose of the ridge on the north side of town, the southern and western sides of which are lined with deep, broad drainage and irrigation ditches. Dense bamboo thickets, some of which included large trees, grow along the outskirts of the town. The only fairly open approach is on the southwest, where the main road from Binalonan comes in past a small cemetery.

The Japanese garrison numbered over a thousand men, with the rifle elements concentrated in the understrength *1st Battalion, 2d Mobile Infantry*. There were 40 medium and 5 light tanks of the *7th Tank Regiment*, about 15 75-mm. and 105-mm. artillery pieces from the *2d Mobile Artillery*, a few 47-mm. antitank guns, at least 25 machine guns, and 15 or more light mortars. The defense was centered on tanks in earthen revetments. There were 75 revetted emplacements in San Manuel, each ringed with rifle pits and at least one machine gun position. Initially, tanks occupied 25 to 30 of the revetments, while Shigemi held out 10 to 15 tanks as a mobile reserve. Tanks and infantry could move rapidly from one revetted strongpoint to another. The Japanese oriented the defenses principally against attack from the west, southwest, and south, but they did not neglect the other approaches entirely and disposed their weapons in depth for all-around defense.

Considering the tactical importance of the ridge north of town to both attacker and defender, it is almost incredible that the *Shigemi Detachment* stationed only a platoon of infantry there. The 161st Infantry made no such mistake. The regiment had to seize the ridge to secure its northern flank, to block the Aboredo

[19] The story of the fight at San Manuel is based on: 161st Inf, Engagement for the Aboredo River–San Manuel Hill Mass, pp. 1–4, and atchd opns sketch; Brig Gen James L. Dalton II, Commentary on Reduction of Strong Point, San Manuel, Luzon, pp. 1–7 (this is the 161st Infantry's only report for the main battle); 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 19–29 Jan 45; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–25; 716th Tank Bn Rpt Luzon, p. 67.

For heroic action—succoring wounded while under heavy Japanese fire at Binalonan and San Manuel during the period 18–24 January—T/4 Laverne Parrish of the Medical Detachment, 161st Infantry, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Valley as a route of Japanese reinforcement or withdrawal, and to gain an excellent jump-off point for the attack. For the rest, Colonel Dalton's plan for the reduction of San Manuel called for a converging attack. The 2d Battalion was to make the main effort, striking from the north; the 1st Battalion, in support, would move in from the west and southwest from the south side of the road to Binalonan. The 3d Battalion was at this time in corps reserve, but the 161st Infantry was strengthened by a reinforced company of the 716th Tank Battalion and Company D, 98th Chemical Battalion, with its 4.2-inch mortars.

By evening on 23 January, at the cost of 3 men killed and 5 wounded, the 161st had secured the southern slopes of the bare ridge north of San Manuel and had set up trail blocks in the Aboredo Valley. The entire 2d Battalion then deployed along a line of departure northwest of the town in preparation for a dawn attack on the 24th. The 1st Battalion, coming forward along the road from Binalonan, halted at the last cover west of San Manuel.

On 24 January the 1st Battalion's secondary attack started first, behind a fifteen-minute artillery and mortar preparation. The effort failed. Supporting tanks could not cross a tree-lined drainage ditch on the southwest side of town, and Japanese 47-mm. fire destroyed one tank and temporarily disabled four others. A sixth tank was immobilized when it attempted to hurdle the ditch. Pinned down, partially in the open, hot fields, the 1st Battalion lost 6 men killed and 55 wounded during the day; the supporting tank company lost another 2 men killed and 8 wounded. Late in the afternoon both the infantry and the tanks withdrew westward to covered positions.

The first attacks by the 2d Battalion met with no greater success. Company F, striking down the ridge, advanced fifty yards into San Manuel, but a Japanese counterattack, spearheaded by three tanks, drove the company out of town at midmorning. The 2d Battalion launched another attack shortly after 1730, with Cannon Company M7's and Antitank Company 37-mm. guns in close support. At dark the battalion had a tenuous hold on the northern part of San Manuel, and its supporting weapons had knocked out five Japanese tanks and reduced the volume of machine gun and rifle fire that had been slowing the attack.

During 25 and 26 January the 2d Battalion, supported by tanks transferred from the 1st Battalion's sector and by elements of both the 1st and the 3d Battalion, inched its way southward through the town, gaining two or three blocks across a front six blocks wide. Company B, attached, moved around to the 2d Battalion's left (east) flank and blocked the bridge over the draw on the east side of San Manuel, thereby cutting the last route by which the Japanese could evacuate their tanks. Early on the morning of the 27th all of the 1st Battalion swung around to the 2d's left, and at mid-morning the two battalions launched a coordinated attack southward behind close support from two battalions of 105-mm. howitzers. By dusk, after a bloody day's fighting at close quarters, the two battalions were abreast along the north side of the main road through town.

About 0100 on the 28th the Japanese launched a counterattack against the regimental center with 13 tanks in waves of 3 or 4 each, Japanese infantry

following. The 161st knocked out 10 tanks; the other 3 and infantry survivors then withdrew into the southeastern corner of the town. Before dawn most of the Japanese left in San Manuel scrambled across the draw on the east side of town and fled, but not before launching a final counterattack to cover their escape. At 0930 the 161st Infantry's two battalions resumed the drive southward through the town, and by 1330 San Manuel was clear.

In a heroic but tactically unimportant stand the *Shigemi Detachment* had virtually fulfilled its self-imposed desire for annihilation in place. The detachment had lost 750 men killed; all its tanks, artillery, trucks, machine guns, and mortars had been either captured or destroyed. Probably no more than 250 troops escaped, and many of them were unarmed and wounded. The 161st Infantry and attached units had lost approximately 60 men killed and 200 wounded; the 716th Tank Battalion lost 3 tanks.

The necessity for the bloody assault on San Manuel is, perhaps, open to question. Colonel Dalton stated:

> The town could at any time have been by-passed to the south and blocked off. . . . no noticeable effort was made [by the Japanese] to hold the eastern exit of town, so that after three days' fighting [American] traffic could have passed unimpeded through the north side of town and on to San Nicolas. Two more days were required to clear the southern half of town.[20]

Yet common sense lent ample support to General Mullins' decision to eliminate the *Shigemi Detachment* before sending his division on to execute all the missions assigned it by I Corps. Mullins did not know that the *Shigemi Detachment* intended to hold in place—to him the combat command clearly possessed a counterattack capability and therefore constituted a threat to his left. As matters stood at 1330 on 28 January, the 25th Division could advance eastward to cross the Agno River in its sector without having to worry about the security of its left flank.

Advancing the I Corps Right

The chief responsibility for protecting XIV Corps' left rear during the early stages of the corps drive south through the Central Plains of Luzon devolved upon the 6th Infantry Division, I Corps' rightmost unit. The division's missions were to clear the remaining terrain to the Army Beachhead Line in its sector; drive south and east to an objective line stretching from Bactad, on the 25th Division's right, south almost fifteen miles to Cuyapo; seize and secure crossings over the Agno River in its zone; and reconnoiter south and southwest toward Guimba and Victoria to establish contact with the 37th Division's left. The 6th Division would start to execute the missions understrength, for its 63d RCT remained under 43d Division control for the duration of the fight for the Routes 3–11 junction.[21]

By 17 January, when the 6th Division started forward from the Malasiqui–Manaoag line it had held since the 14th, division patrols had discovered a pocket

[20] Dalton, Commentary on Reduction of San Manuel, p. 4.

[21] The 105-mm. howitzer battalion that normally supported the 63d Infantry was with the 6th Division, but the rest of the RCT attachments remained with the regiment.

of Japanese in the Cabaruan Hills, lying athwart a secondary gravel-surfaced road connecting Malasiqui with Villasis, on the Agno River six miles south of Urdaneta. The division also had reason to believe that the Japanese held Urdaneta and controlled the gravel road that led from Urdaneta three and a half miles east to Bactad. Indications were that strong Japanese forces might likewise be encountered at Villasis, holding the Route 3 bridge across the Agno, and at Carmen and Rosales, just across the river from Villasis.

The Cabaruan Hills

Crossed by the Army Beachhead Line, the Cabaruan Hills formed a low barrier approximately four miles square that dominated the approaches to Route 3 and the Agno River east and south of the 6th Division. With few heights over 200 feet, the hills were covered with bamboo thickets, scattered palms, a few patches of scrub growth, and open fields. Shallow valleys, either grassy or cultivated, separated individual knolls and afforded little opportunity for covered or concealed approach to Japanese defenses.[22]

Originally, the Cabaruan Hills had been the southern anchor of the *23d Division*'s outer defense line. The garrison, known as the *Omori Detachment,* was built around the *2d Battalion, 71st Infantry,* and numbered about 1,500 troops. Reinforcing units included a battery of 75-mm. artillery, two or three medium tanks, various service units, and the *Gun Company, 71st Infantry.* Defenses, under preparation for some time, were concentrated in the northwestern section of the hills in an area immediately west of the town of Cabaruan which lay at the north-central edge of the hills.[23]

As had been the case with the *Shigemi Detachment,* it might have been possible to bypass the *Omori Detachment* and contain it with minimum forces. Maj. Gen. Edwin D. Patrick, the 6th Division commander, seems to have had such a plan in mind.[24] He apparently hoped that a hard attack by the 20th Infantry, on his division's right, could overcome most of the Japanese resistance in two or three days. Then he could leave a single battalion behind to mop up while the rest of the division pushed on to the Bactad-Cuyapo objective line.[25]

In preparation for its attack, the 20th Infantry had slowly moved troops into the hills until, at dawn on the 17th, the 1st Battalion was in the center of the hills, where a north-south trail crossed the road to Villasis; the 2d Battalion, which was to make the main effort, was at barrio Lunec, at the hills' northwestern corner; the 3d Battalion was in reserve off the west-central edge of the terrain complex. By evening on the 18th, the 2d Battalion had reached a low ridge line about 2,500 yards west of the town of Cabaruan and had determined that the center of resistance lay in a U-shaped group of knolls and ridges 1,000 to 1,500 yards to its front. While the 20th Infantry clearly had not yet

[22] 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 8.

[23] SWPA Hist Series, II, 436, n. 9; 6th Div, Sp Rpt, The Battle of the Cabaruan Hills, p. 11. The *Omori Detachment* was named after the infantry battalion commander.

[24] The rest of this subsection is mainly based on: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–16; 6th Div, Battle of Cabaruan Hills, pp. 1–13; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–16; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–18.

[25] See, for this idea, 6th Div FO's 5, 6, 7, and 8, respectively dated 15, 16, 18, and 19 Jan 45.

reached the main defenses, the attack had so far gone easier than anticipated, and General Patrick expected that the regiment could complete its task by dark on the 19th.[26] It had better, for I Corps had directed the 6th Division to get to the Bactad-Cuyapo line by dusk on the 20th.[27]

Despite a setback during the afternoon, operations on 19 January seemed to meet with success. By evening of that day over 500 Japanese had been killed throughout the hills, and the 20th Infantry estimated that not more than 300 were left in the northwest pocket. Since it appeared that little further effort would be required to overcome the last opposition, General Patrick directed the 20th Infantry to pull two of its battalions out of the hills. The remainder of the regiment, reinforced by a company of 4.2-inch mortars and one of medium tanks from the 44th Tank Battalion, would finish mopping up.

Probing slowly through the roughest ground in the Cabaruan Hills on 20 and 21 January, the 20th Infantry's reinforced battalion jumped off in the morning of the 22d in what was expected to be the last attack, its way paved by an especially heavy artillery and air bombardment. But from the start, operations on 22 January did not go as planned. The air strike, conducted by Fifth Air Force A–20's was four hours late, subjecting the infantry to "a nerve racking wait," [28] and did not include requested napalm. Air and artillery concentrations were, however, well placed, and it seemed improbable to the waiting infantry that many Japanese could have lived through them. A combined tank-infantry assault began about 1230 and proceeded slowly but steadily for almost two hours. Then the attackers were stopped cold by a tremendous burst of rifle, machine gun, and light artillery fire from the very hillsides that had received the weight of the bombardments. Company E, in the lead, fell back; Company G's officers were all either killed or wounded, and the company was temporarily scattered; Company F was pinned in place; two supporting tanks were knocked out; casualties mounted quickly to 10 men killed and 35 wounded.

As early as 20 January the 20th Infantry had estimated that one reinforced battalion was too weak for the task at hand and had asked that another battalion be committed. Col. Washington M. Ives, Jr., the regimental commander, requested that he be given at least an additional rifle company and followed his request with a report that 600 Japanese remained in the Cabaruan Hills.[29] Greatly perturbed by the implied delay to a general advance south and east that the 20th Infantry's request and estimate brought up, General Patrick directed the 1st Infantry to send one battalion to reinforce Colonel Ives, a redeployment made possible because the 1st Infantry had encountered only scattered resistance in its sector.[30]

On 24 January the reorganized 2d Battalion of the 20th Infantry held in place as the newly arrived battalion of the 1st Infantry took up the attack. The

[26] 6th Div FO 7, 18 Jan 45.
[27] I Corps FO 3, 18 Jan 45.
[28] 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 12.

[29] Entry 20, 20th Inf Unit Jnl, 20–21 Jan 45; Entry 34, 20th Inf Unit Jnl, 21–22 Jan 45; Entry 10, 20th Inf Unit Jnl, 22–23 Jan 45; Entry 41, 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 22 Jan 45; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpt 15, 22–23 Jan 45.
[30] Entries 48 and 49, 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 22 Jan 45.



WATCHING AND WAITING IN CABARUAN HILLS

1st Infantry's battalion made limited gains, but had closed with the main defenses by dark. Prospects for quick success seemed so much brighter that the 20th Infantry's elements were withdrawn from the hills.

General Krueger had by now taken a direct interest in the fight and on the 24th directed General Swift, I Corps commander, "to promptly eliminate" the remaining opposition in the Cabaruan Hills lest the 6th Division and, concomitantly, XIV Corps, be further delayed.[31] General Swift relayed the message to General Patrick, who reported to the corps commander that the 1st Infantry could probably clear up the last resistance in another day. There were only a hundred Japanese left alive in the last pocket, Patrick estimated, and there seemed no necessity to commit additional troops.[32]

The 1st Infantry's battalion attacked again on the 25th but by nightfall had gained only 300 yards of new ground against determined resistance. Neverthe-

[31] Rad, Krueger to Swift, WL–558, 24 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 22–24 Jan 45.

[32] Telecon, CG I Corps and ACofS Sixth Army, 25 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 24–25 Jan 45; Telecon, G–3 6th Div and G–3 I Corps, 1940 24 Jan 45, 6th Div G–3 Jnl File, 24 Jan 45; Entry 46, 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 25 Jan 45.

less, about 1830 General Patrick reported to General Swift that organized resistance in the Cabaruan Hills was over, an estimate with which the 1st Infantry did not agree. Instead, the regiment believed that 150 to 200 Japanese still held strong positions and requested that before resuming the attack its assault battalion be reinforced with ten to twelve flame thrower teams.[33] Action on 26 January proved the 1st Infantry right. During the morning the battalion gained only 150 yards at the cost of 12 men killed, 12 wounded, and a tank destroyed. General Patrick thereupon directed the regiment to move another battalion into the hills for a co-ordinated attack on the 27th.[34]

The two-battalion attack was successful and by 1600 on 28 January the 1st Infantry had overcome all resistance in the Cabaruan Hills. In the last two days, the 1st Infantry's battalion lost approximately 20 men killed and 50 wounded while killing an additional 225 Japanese. A final summation disclosed that over 1,400 Japanese had been killed in the hills between 17 and 28 January. The 6th Division's units engaged there had lost about 80 men killed and nearly 200 wounded. The *Omori Detachment* had indeed fought to the death, but while it had done so the bulk of the 6th Division had swept around and beyond it.

Urdaneta to Cuyapo

On 17 January, while the 20th Infantry started closing in on the *Omori Detachment,* the 1st Infantry began to advance toward Urdaneta from the west and northwest.[35] At Urdaneta a small outpost of the *Shigemi Detachment* put up a fight strikingly similar to that in which the 161st Infantry, 25th Division, had engaged at Binalonan. The 1st Infantry lost about 5 men killed and 15 wounded at Urdaneta; the *Shigemi Detachment* lost over 100 men killed and another 9 tanks destroyed.

Relieved at Urdaneta by elements of the 25th Division on 19 January, the 1st Infantry sped southward along Route 3 toward Villasis and the Agno River, six miles distant. That day the regiment occupied Villasis against no resistance and moved across the river to secure Carmen. It also took Rosales, on Route 8 about three miles east of Carmen, again against no opposition. On the 20th, a battalion of the 1st Infantry continued eastward along gravel-surfaced Route 8 another three miles to Balungao, which guerrillas already occupied. Balungao was located on the Bactad-Cuyapo objective line about midway between the latter two towns. Less elements sent back to the Cabaruan Hills, the 1st Infantry held the Rosales-Villasis-Balungao area until 28 January.

Meanwhile, the battalions of the 20th Infantry, as they were released from the Cabaruan Hills, moved south and southeast through Villasis to Cuyapo, taking the latter town on 20 January. The 6th Division had thus secured its portion of the I Corps' objective line and was ready to go on to the corps reconnaissance line, which extended from Victoria, on the I–XIV boundary fourteen miles south of Cuyapo, northeast about eight miles to Guimba, in turn some ten miles

[33] Entries 93 and 111, 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 25 Jan 45.
[34] Entry 41, 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 26 Jan 45.

[35] This subsection is based on: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–18; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–12; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 18; 6th Cav Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–20.

southeast of Cuyapo. The 6th Reconnaissance Troop had reached Guimba on 20 January and had made contact with XIV Corps patrols at Victoria the same day, but until the resistance in the Cabaruan Hills was cleaned up, the 6th Division was unable to move stronger forces south and southeast from Cuyapo.

The Achievements Analyzed

For the Japanese forces holding positions along the Sixth Army's left flank, the defense as conducted since 9 January had not been without its bright spots. The *23d Division* and *58th IMB* had held the Routes 3–11 junction against heavy odds for almost two weeks, and in so doing had inflicted many casualties upon I Corps. Despite the loss of the entrance to Route 11, Baguio—the southwestern anchor of the *Shobu Group*'s final redoubt—seemed secure for some time to come, and Sixth Army had not yet gained contact with the strongest defense forces holding in front of San Jose—gateway to the approaches to the group's southeastern anchor.

On the other hand, Japanese losses in man and matériel had been staggering. The *23d Division* was little more than half its original strength; nearly two-thirds of the *58th IMB* and attached artillery were casualties. The regiments of the *23d Division* would fight again, but their ranks would be filled by ill-trained replacements or would be brought partially up to strength by the attachment of third-class provisional units. Of even greater significance was the loss of most of the *23d Division* and *58th IMB* artillery, together with numerous trucks and large stores of ammunition and other supplies. In fact the units' losses had forced Yamashita to the conclusion that a protracted attempt to hold the Routes 3–11 junction would have been futile. On or about 23 January he had, accordingly, instructed the *23d Division* to make preparations to withdraw further up Route 11. The withdrawal was not well under way by 28 January, but the beginnings of the retreat had probably rendered easier the tasks of the reinforced 43d Division on the I Corps left.[36]

To the south the picture was not so bright for the Japanese. By their fight to the death in place, the *Omori* and *Shigemi Detachments* had deprived the *Shobu Group* of a reinforced infantry battalion and an armored combat command. The slight delay the two units imposed upon I Corps was hardly commensurate with the loss of first-line troops and valuable combat equipment that could have been used to better advantage elsewhere. The fantastic stands of both detachments are illustrative of a sort of tour de force to which the Japanese Army seemed peculiarly addicted during World War II, but neither stand had much significance.

It is true that during the time the 6th and 25th Divisions were fighting against the *Omori* and *Shigemi Detachments,* the *Shobu Group* was able to redeploy forces further east for the more effective defense of San Jose,[37] but the opportunity for the redeployment was only an incidental and accidental result of the *Omori* and *Shigemi Detachment* stands. Theoretically, the 6th and 25th Divi-

[36] 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, pp. 2–3; 43d Div G–2 Per Rpt, 10 Feb 45; 103d Inf O/B Rpt Luzon, p. 1; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, p. 81; SWPA Hist Series, II, 439.

[37] See below, ch. XI.

sions could have bypassed and contained the two Japanese units, but the Japanese had held positions from which they could threaten the eastern crossings of the Agno, and Sixth Army could not know that the fighting at San Manuel and in the Cabaruan Hills had been undertaken to overcome dangers more imaginary than real. Actually, elements of both U.S. divisions had bypassed the Japanese units, but neither division could move far beyond the Agno lest its rear become exposed to counterattack from the north. First, the 43d Division had to gain control of the Routes 3–11 junction, and it actually had been the defense offered by the *23d Division* and the *58th IMB* that had permitted *Shobu Group* to realign forces in front of San Jose.

Convinced earlier that Yamashita could endanger the Sixth Army's base area, the safety of which was essential until the Manila Bay region fell, Krueger had ample reason to believe that the 43d Division's success had secured the army's left and rear against the Japanese threat. The army's base area was safe. The gains achieved by the 6th and 25th Divisions had added to this security, but the most decisive action had been that of the 43d Division and its two attached RCT's.

CHAPTER X

The Capture of Clark Field

To 28 January I Corps had been able to accomplish little more than long-range reconnaissance toward the fulfillment of its second mission, that of protecting XIV Corps' left rear. Thus, beyond the protection it could provide for itself, XIV Corps had been moving southward through the Central Plains since 18 January with an exposed left flank. That day the main strength of the 37th and 40th Infantry Divisions was deployed along the Agno River from the corps boundary at Bayambang west ten miles to Urbiztondo. Two battalions were across the river from Camiling, nine miles south of Bayambang, east almost fifteen miles to Anao. (*See Map III.*) The XIV Corps was in high spirits. Its casualties had been light, it was rapidly assembling supplies along the Agno to support its advances southward, and it did not anticipate any serious opposition at least until it reached Clark Field, forty miles south of the Agno and the first major objective on the road to Manila.

General Griswold, the XIV Corps commander, was to push his troops south in successive bounds, the length of each bound to depend on I Corps progress and on how rapidly XIV Corps could keep its supplies moving. First, General Krueger directed Griswold, XIV Corps would move in strength up to its outpost line by 20 January. On the 21st the corps would start advancing to a line extending from Tarlac, on Route 3 nearly twenty miles southeast of Camiling, northeast almost ten miles to Victoria. There the corps would halt pending further orders from Sixth Army.[1]

Into Contact With the Kembu Group

Twenty-four hours before the deadline set by General Krueger, XIV Corps, encountering no opposition, moved up to the Camiling-Anao line, and advanced well beyond the line on the right, or west.[2] The 160th Infantry, 40th Division, which had reached Camiling on 18 January, marched seven miles south along Route 13 on the 19th. On the corps left the 129th Infantry, 37th Division, moved into Carmen, occupied Anao in strength, and established contact with other 37th Division outposts at Paniqui, on Route 3 five miles southwest of Anao.[3] The regiment also cleared Route 3 from Carmen south eleven miles to the junc-

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[1] Sixth Army FO 43, 18 Jan 45; see also above, ch. VIII.

[2] The general sources for this section are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 23–25; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 59–66; XIV Corps G–3 Jnl Files, 19–23 Jan 45; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–29; 37th Div G–3 Jnl and Jnl Files, 19–23 Jan 45; 40th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 14–15; 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 19–24 Jan 45.

[3] Additional material for the 129th Infantry is from: 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 4; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 19–23 Jan 45; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

tion of the highway with the main line of the Manila Railroad at Moncada. Here, in a midmorning clash, the 129th Infantry took the first sizable number of prisoners to be captured on Luzon—almost 200—and also killed about 55 Japanese.

Advances on 20 January were equally rapid. With the 129th Infantry holding on the corps left, the 37th Division's 148th Infantry advanced south four miles along Route 3 from Paniqui to Gerona, and then marched east about four miles along a gravel road to Pura, four miles north of Victoria. The 37th Reconnaissance Troop, finding the town already in the hands of guerrillas, rode into Victoria at dusk on the 20th. Meanwhile, left flank units of the 40th Division had marched into Gerona from the west and had struck on south along Route 3 to a point just four miles short of Tarlac.[4] The 40th Division's right had advanced to within four miles of Tarlac along Route 13. Nowhere in the flat, open farming country through which they were passing had troops of the XIV Corps encountered any significant opposition.

The advance continued on 21 January as the corps moved forward to establish itself along a line south of Victoria and Tarlac. Elements of the 160th Infantry, 40th Division, cleared Tarlac against scattered rifle fire shortly after 0900. Site of the junction of the main line of the Manila Railroad with the branch running northeast through Victoria to San Jose, and of the junction of Routes 3 and 13, Tarlac had been an important Japanese supply base and had therefore received considerable attention from Allied Air Forces bombers and carrier-based planes of the Third Fleet. Before it withdrew southward on 19 and 20 January, the small Japanese garrison had destroyed the military supplies and equipment that the Allied aircraft had missed. Tarlac was practically in ruins and virtually deserted as of 21 January, but, as was the case elsewhere throughout the Central Plains, Filipinos began flocking back to the city upon the arrival of American troops.

After cleaning out Tarlac the 160th Infantry sent one battalion south along Route 3 about four miles to San Miguel. To the east, the 145th and 148th Infantry Regiments, 37th Division, marched unopposed south and southwest from Victoria and, establishing contact with the 160th near San Miguel, set up a defensive outpost line extending eastward to a road junction just west of La Paz and thence back north to Victoria.

Since XIV Corps had advanced well beyond the Tarlac-Victoria line without encountering significant opposition, Krueger, late on the 21st, directed Griswold to strike on southward to seize the Clark Field air center. Krueger knew that risks were involved. For one thing, XIV Corps supply units were having a hard time moving as fast as the combat troops. For another, I Corps was still unable to advance its right beyond Cuyapo, and XIV Corps' left would therefore remain exposed. However, since I Corps reconnaissance patrols had reached Victoria and Guimba without developing significant contacts, the risks did not appear as great as they had three days earlier when XIV Corps had started south. Also, of course, Krueger had to

[4] Additional information on 40th Division operations is from: 160th Inf Unit Jnls and Jnl Files, 19–23 Jan 45; 108th RCT Jnls and Jnl Files, 19–23 Jan 45.

consider MacArthur's orders to get to Clark Field rapidly.[5]

The Sixth Army's order gave General Griswold pause. The speed of his corps' advance had stretched his supply lines abnormally and had exposed his left from Cuyapo to La Paz, a distance of nearly twenty-five miles. He had no definite information about suspected Japanese concentrations in the vicinity of Cabanatuan, on Route 5 just fifteen miles east of La Paz. His worries about the security of his flank were hardly put to rest by reports of new contacts with Japanese forces at Moncada, now twenty miles behind the front, and at La Paz. Elements of the 129th and 145th Infantry Regiments easily took care of the Japanese in the Moncada area, but during the night of 21–22 January a pitched battle developed at La Paz when a platoon of Japanese infantry, supported by one tank, attacked a 148th Infantry perimeter at a road junction a mile west of town. The Japanese withdrew after destroying a bridge that carried a secondary road across a river a mile east of La Paz.

Griswold reported to General Krueger that it would be impossible to extend XIV Corps' left any further south until he had more information about Japanese forces east of La Paz. Accordingly, Griswold intended to keep the 37th Division echeloned to his left rear while the 40th continued south along Route 3 to Bamban, fifteen miles below Tarlac. The 40th would then hold while the 37th Division sent patrols into the I Corps zone as far as Cabanatuan, an "invasion" to which Swift, the I Corps commander, proved agreeable. The plan admitted of some delay in reaching Clark Field, but was approved by General Krueger, who was becoming increasingly afraid that XIV Corps might be overextending itself.[6]

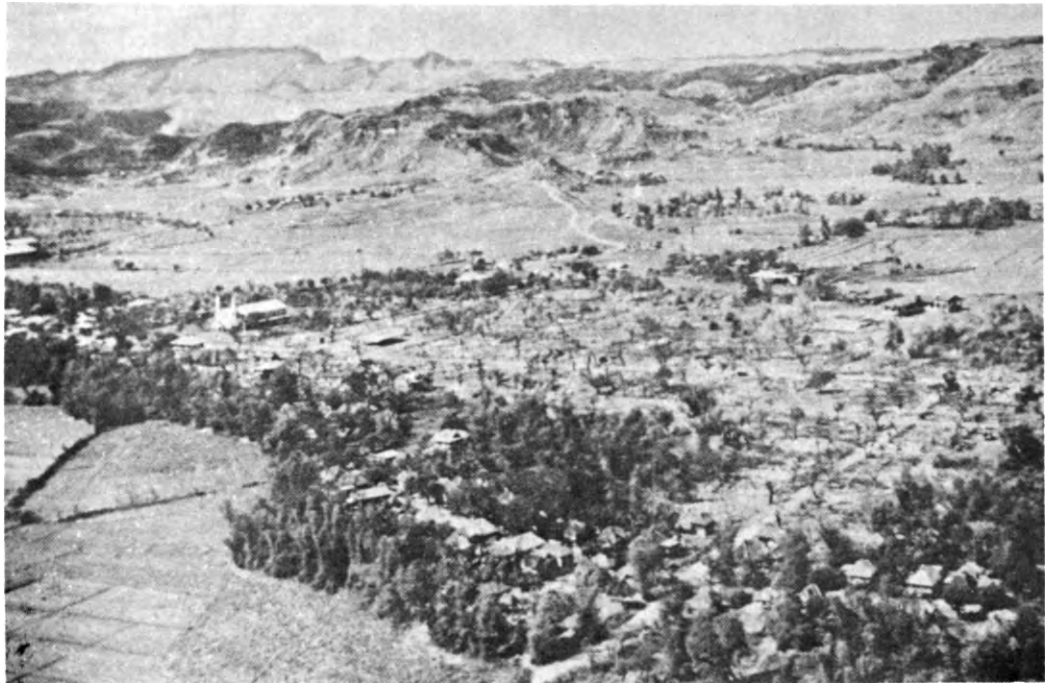
By evening on 22 January forward elements of the 160th Infantry and the 40th Reconnaissance Troop had reached Capas, on Route 3 five miles short of Bamban. The reconnaissance troop then probed westward ten miles to Camp O'Donnell, terminus of the infamous Death March from Bataan in April 1942. The prisoners had long since been evacuated, but marked graves gave ample mute testimony to O'Donnell's past. The Japanese were also gone, but they had just left—without a chance to eat the food that had been cooking on their camp stoves.[7]

Operations early on 23 January gave promise of smooth sailing. On the 40th Division's left the 108th Infantry cleaned a few Japanese stragglers out of towns up to seven miles east and southeast of Capas. On the right the 160th Infantry, against no opposition, secured Bamban Airfield, two miles south of Capas and on the east side of Route 3. The town of Bamban, however, was infested with small groups of Japanese, and one battalion of the 160th Infantry took most of the afternoon to root them out. Then the battalion swung west off the highway

[5] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 24; Sixth Army FO 44, 21 Jan 45.

[6] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 24; Telecon, CG XIV Corps and DCofS Sixth Army, 21 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 20–22 Jan 45; Memo ACofS G–3 XIV Corps for CofS XIV Corps, sub: Proposed Plan for Capture of Clark Field, 20 Jan 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 20–21 Jan 45; XIV Corps FO 3, 22 Jan 45.

[7] For a detailed account of the Death March, see Stanley L. Falk, *Bataan: The March of Death* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1962).



BAMBAN AND HIGH GROUND TO WEST

toward sharply rising ridges, greeted by increasingly heavy small arms fire. Another battalion secured a ford over the Bamban River south of town, and was fired on by Japanese mortars from the high ground to the west. The 40th Division, it began to appear, had reached some strong, organized defenses, defenses that all intelligence officers from MacArthur's headquarters on down had anticipated would be found in the Clark Field area.

General Griswold decided to spend 24 January consolidating, regrouping for further advances southward, and probing into the defenses the 160th Infantry had uncovered. He directed the 40th Division to feel out Japanese strength and dispositions west and southwest of Bamban, and ordered the 37th Division, less its 129th RCT, to assemble northeast of Bamban to await further orders. The 129th would continue to protect the XIV Corps' elongated left flank. In effect, Griswold was preparing to swing half his strength—the 40th Division—90 degrees west into the high ground dominating Clark Field while holding the 37th Division, less the 129th RCT, ready to resume the march toward Manila on short notice. He felt he needed only the 129th RCT along his exposed left because his reconnaissance into the I Corps sector had found no concentrations of Japanese in the Cabanatuan region.[8]

[8] XIV Corps FO 3, 22 Jan 45; XIV Corps Opns Memo 9, 23 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 22–24 Jan 45; Griswold Comments, 11 Jan 57.

The First Attacks

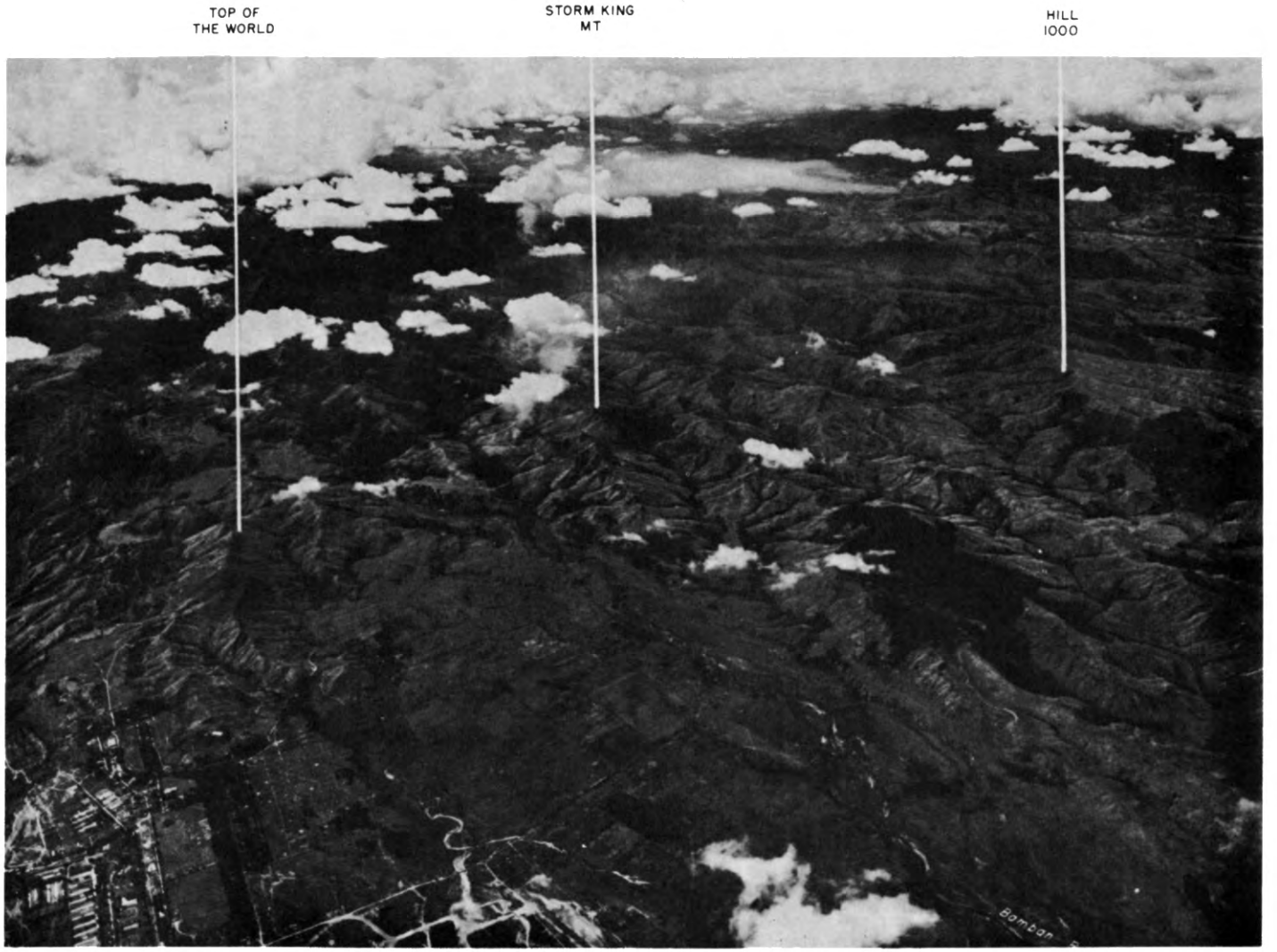
Terrain and Defenses at Clark Field

A vast complex of prewar and Japanese-constructed paved and unpaved runways, taxiways, dispersal areas, aircraft revetments, and associated installations comprised the Clark Field air center—the whole extending from Bamban Airfield south along both sides of Route 3 for almost fifteen miles. *(Map IV)* There were fifteen separate landing strips, with but three exceptions all located west of the highway. Clark Field proper, with six separate strips, lay on the west side of Route 3 in an open area about four miles wide, east to west, and extending from Mabalacat, four miles south of Bamban, south another six miles. In the western section of this airfield region lay Fort Stotsenburg, prewar home of various Philippine Scout units, including the 26th Cavalry.[9]

East of Route 3 the flat, hot terrain is given over to rice paddies—dry in January—and farm lands that are cut by many irrigation ditches and small, tree-lined streams. Here the only prominent terrain feature is wooded Mt. Arayat, rising in majestic isolation above the floor of the Central Plains to a height of some 3,350 feet. West of Clark Field the bare foothills of the Zambales Mountains rise sharply, forming a series of parallel ridges, oriented northeast to southwest, and separated by the Bamban River and many lesser wet-weather streams. Its source deep in the mountains behind Fort Stotsenburg, the Bamban, called the Sacobia along its western reaches, flows generally northeastward past the northern side of the Clark Field strips. About a mile and a half west of Mabalacat, the stream turns northward for three miles, its western bank formed by the steep noses of parallel ridges rising southwestward into the Zambales Mountains. A mile south of Bamban, an unnamed stream comes in from the west to join the Bamban River. Here, under the clifflike southern side of another sharp ridge, the Bamban makes a right angle turn to the east, ultimately feeding into the Rio Chico de la Pampanga off the northeastern slopes of Mt. Arayat. Just east of the river bend south of Bamban, the Manila Railroad crosses the river and, some 200 yards further east, Route 3 also goes over the Bamban. The bridges here had been destroyed by MacArthur's retreating forces in 1942, rebuilt in wood by the Japanese, and knocked out again by the Allied Air Forces or guerrilla sabotage in January 1945. The ford the 160th Infantry had found and secured on 23 January proved a good dry-weather replacement, but both bridges would have to be reconstructed before the rainy season began in May.

The ridges at the river bend south of Bamban and along the north-south stretch of the Bamban River rise steeply to a height of some 600 feet within 250 yards of the river's banks. West of Fort Stotsenburg bare, dominating hills shoot quickly and sharply up to a height of over 1,000 feet scarcely half a mile beyond the camp's western gate. From all this rising ground Japanese artillery, mortars, and machine guns could lay easily observed fire along Route 3 and the Manila Railroad, and could just as easily prevent the Allied Air Forces from using the Clark Field air center. The

[9] Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, p. 22.



KEMBU DEFENSE AREA. *Fort Stotsenburg is at lower left.*

40th Division, probing into this terrain, knew all too well that, as usual, the infantry's objective would be the high ground.

While there was general agreement that the Japanese maintained defenses in the Clark Field area, no intelligence agency of the Southwest Pacific Area had much information concerning the strength and extent of the defenses, nor of the capabilities and intentions of the Japanese in the region. When XIV Corps' advance elements reached Bamban on 23 January, various estimates placed from 4,000 to 8,000 Japanese on or near Clark Field. Intelligence officers believed that most of these Japanese were service personnel—Army Air Force ground units—with perhaps a leavening of combat troops from the *2d Tank Division*. As of 23 January XIV Corps' G–2 Section felt that the Japanese might offer only minor delaying action at Clark Field, and was willing to state nothing more definite than that some Japanese defenses existed in the hills immediately west and southwest of Bamban.[10]

These estimates were far wide of the mark. General Tsukada's *Kembu Group* numbered some 30,000 troops, whose orders were to

> . . . check an anticipated penetration of the Clark Field sector, facilitate the operations of the air forces as far as possible, and as a last resort hinder utilization of the airfields by operating from the strongpoint west of Clark Field.[11]

Tsukada divided his heterogeneous collection of Army and Navy combat and service units into nine separate detachments; for a headquarters he used that of the *1st Airborne Raiding Group*, his previous command. His Army personnel, about 15,000 men in all, he assigned to four combat and four service detachments. The ninth detachment, comprising naval combat and service troops, numbered another 15,000 men. The total trained combat strength available to the *Kembu Group* was about 8,500 troops, of whom no more than half were first-class, well-seasoned men.

The largest Army combat detachment was the *Eguchi*, with 3,900 men under Lt. Col. Seizuke Eguchi. Eguchi's troops included five airfield construction battalions armed as light infantry, a provisional infantry battalion formed from replacements and casuals from Manila, and a heavy (120-mm.) antiaircraft gun battalion set up for ground support operations.[12] Next in size, with about 2,800 men, was the *Takayama Detachment* under Lt. Col. Koshin Takayama, who was also the commanding officer of the *2d Mobile Infantry, 2d Tank Division.*

[10] G–2 GHQ SWPA, G–2 Per Summary of Enemy Trends, No. 26, 21 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 21 Jan 45; Sixth Army G–2 Weekly Rpt 71, 17 Jan 45, copy in G–2 DA Files; XIV Corps G–2 Per Rpts 11–14, 21–24 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl Files Luzon, 20–22 through 24–25 Jan 45; Teletype Msg, G–2 XIV Corps to G–2 Sixth Army, 0025 23 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 22–24 Jan 45.

[11] *14th Area Army* Opnl Order No. A–384, 11 Jan 45, Trans, III, Item 3, p. 19. The remainder of this subsection is based principally on: SWPA Hist Series, II, 447–49; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 10, Luzon Opns of the *Kembu Gp*, pp. 4–11, and atchd map; No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Operations, pt. IV, pp. 20–21; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, Interrog of Col Yasuji Okada (CofS *Kembu Gp*), pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, Okada Narrative, p. 16; 38th Inf Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 128–30.

[12] The antiaircraft battalion was probably a naval unit. Eguchi was also the commander of the *10th Air Sector Unit*, an engineer and defense organization, the headquarters of which he used as detachment headquarters.

Takayama's force included the *2d Mobile Infantry* less two battalions, two airfield construction battalions reorganized as auxiliary infantry, an understrength antitank gun battalion, and a 75-mm. battery from *2d Tank Division* artillery. The third combat force, the *Takaya Detachment,* numbered 750 men under Maj. Saburo Takaya. It was composed of the understrength *2d Glider Infantry* (formerly part of Tsukada's *1st Airborne Raiding Group*) and miscellaneous attachments. The last Army combat group with the *Yanagimoto Detachment,* about 650 men under a Captain Yanagimoto, whose command included the *3d Battalion,* less elements, of the *2d Mobile Infantry,* and an independent light tank company. The four service detachments were apparently at first in direct support of the four combat detachments, but most of the men of the service units later fought as infantry.

The naval troops were under the command of Rear Adm. Ushie Sugimoto, whose headquarters was that of the now planeless *26th Air Flotilla.* The admiral subdivided his detachment into five combat sectors and two service commands. His principal combat force was the small *37th Naval Guard Unit,* which formed the nucleus of one of the combat sectors. The rest of the naval troops included the ground echelons of various naval air groups, a few stranded pilots, some antiaircraft units, and service personnel of all categories.

Considering its total strength, the *Kembu Group* was lightly armed. It possessed less than a battalion of 47-mm. antitank guns; two or three batteries, in all, of 70-mm. and 75-mm. field artillery weapons; about a battalion of medium artillery—100-mm. to 150-mm.—either emplaced in caves or on self-propelled mounts; and the equivalent of two battalions of naval 120-mm. antiaircraft guns, all emplaced as ground support weapons. The auxiliary and provisional infantry units had few heavy machine guns and fewer mortars. But the *Kembu Group* had many other types of fairly heavy automatic weapons. It had modified a variety and multitude of automatic antiaircraft guns for ground support roles, and it had stripped machine guns and machine cannon from damaged aircraft in the Clark Field area, moving the weapons into the hills and mountains to provide added fire power.

Tsukada disposed his forces along three eastward-facing defense lines, which stretched north to south almost ten miles. The first line, the *Kembu Group*'s outpost line of resistance (OPLR), had its northern anchor on a bare, steep ridge nose about two miles northwest of Bamban, and followed successive noses south to the Bamban River. South of the stream, the OPLR continued to the Abucayan River, on the south side of Fort Stotsenburg, taking advantage of knolls and ridgelets in the western portion of the Clark Field area. Elements of the *Takayama Detachment* held the northern section of the OPLR; part of the *Eguchi Detachment* defended the southern half.

General Tsukada did not plan protracted operations along the OPLR, for he could not hold the southern part of the line, which ran over relatively flat ground, against the air and armored superiority he knew Sixth Army could bring to bear. Instead, he intended to control the Clark Field area, Route 3, and the Manila Railroad by fire from his main line of resistance (MLR), which

lay generally two and a half miles west into the mountains from the OPLR. He located the northern anchor of the MLR on the bare top of a 1,000-foot-high ridge about five miles west of Bamban; and here the *Kembu Group* refused its left flank with a westward extension of the MLR. The *Takayama Detachment* held the left third of the MLR; the *Takaya Detachment* the center, south to the Bamban River; and the *Eguchi Detachment* the ground south of that stream to a point two miles southwest of Fort Stotsenburg, where the right flank was also refused.

In rugged, still higher terrain a couple of miles west of the MLR, Admiral Sugimoto's naval forces were moving into an area the *Kembu Group* viewed as its "last-stand" position. Far to the east, forward of the OPLR, was the mobile *Yanagimoto Detachment*. With no fixed position, this covering force was ready to defend against paratroop landings, help hold the south flank of the OPLR, and undertake reconnaissance as required. As of 23 January *Yanagimoto Detachment* headquarters was at Angeles, on Route 3 and the Manila Railroad about ten miles south of Bamban.

The *Kembu Group*'s strength lay in the terrain it held, in the depth of its defenses, and in the great number of automatic weapons (aircraft and antiaircraft) it possessed. Its major weaknesses were its immobility; the inadequate training and armament of the bulk of its troops; shortages of food, ammunition, and field artillery; and the rudimentary state of many defensive installations, a state deriving from the late start in establishing the positions at and west of Clark Field. The health of the command was poor from the start, and medical supplies were short. Morale was not of the highest order, and many of the troops were easily disaffected Formosan, Okinawan, and Korean labor personnel. In brief, the *Kembu Group* was the poorest armed, prepared, and supplied of Yamashita's three defense commands. On the other hand, as the 40th Division was soon to learn, even poor service troops, whatever their state of training and armament, can put up stiff resistance in good defensive terrain. Before a week had passed the 40th Division and the XIV Corps would be willing to concede that General Tsukada and his troops had missed no opportunities to exploit to the utmost every defensive advantage the terrain they held offered them.

Penetrating the OPLR

Directed by General Griswold to probe into the *Kembu Group*'s defenses west and southwest of Bamban, the 40th Division ordered its 160th Infantry to press on against the Japanese with whom it had established contact on 23 January. The regiment would strike westward from a line of departure along the Manila Railroad both north and south of the Bamban River. Its left would drive up Lafe Hill, a 600-foot-high ridge nose lying half a mile south of the confluence of the Bamban and the unnamed stream coming in from the west. The right flank objective was another ridge nose, Hill 500, immediately north of the stream junction.[13]

The two objectives marked the northernmost major strongpoints along the *Takayama Detachment*'s portion of the OPLR. Two airfield engineer battal-

[13] 40th Div FO 7, 22 Jan 45, 160th Inf Jnl File, 23 Jan 45; XIV Corps Opns Memo 9, 23 Jan 45.

ions, supported by provisional mortar and machine gun units, held the two ridge noses and the ridges rising from the noses to the southwest. The Japanese had emplaced dismounted aircraft machine cannon and a few light artillery pieces to cover the hills and their approaches. Caves of various sizes pockmarked the steep slopes of both objectives, some of the caves at the bottom of the ridges having been converted from storage dumps to defensive installations. There were no easy approaches to either ridge nose. The visible sides of bare Hill 500 were virtual cliffs where, for the Japanese, a big rock was nearly as good a defensive weapon as a rifle or machine gun. The slopes of knife-crested Lafe Hill were almost as steep and, bare like those of Hill 500, possessed some rock outcroppings. This was handhold terrain where the problem involved in closing with the Japanese defenses would be equaled only by the problems of supply and evacuation.

Two battalions of the 160th Infantry launched the attack about noon on 24 January.[14] Despite the terrain difficulties and heavy fire from Japanese automatic weapons, mortars, and 75-mm. artillery, the southern wing of the attack, behind close artillery support, worked its way up Lafe Hill and secured the crest by 1800. The units on the right, however, were scarcely able to gain a foothold on the scrub-grown northern slope of Hill 500.

Although the 160th Infantry had encountered well-organized resistance and had failed to take one of its objectives, XIV Corps' G–2 Section was still reluctant to believe that the Japanese had significant defenses west of Bamban. Rather, the section estimated, the 160th had uncovered a small delaying force bent upon self-destruction in place.[15] General Griswold, therefore, expected that the 40th Division could overcome the resistance in the Bamban vicinity on 25 January and, he hoped it could clear all the Clark Field–Fort Stotsenburg region within another day or two.[16] The 40th Division did not share the corps' optimism. On 25 January the division was able only to broaden its front to both the north and the south, and to accomplish even this had to commit elements of the 108th Infantry on its right. Major new objectives were Hill E, a bare ridge nose with fairly gentle slopes a mile and a quarter north of Hill 500, and steep-sided, bare Hill 636, a mile and a quarter southwest of Lafe Hill and over a mile up (southwest) the next ridge south of Lafe Hill.

Fighting over open ground against a company of Japanese that had excellent heavy weapons support, the 160th Infantry, on 25 January, failed to reach Hill 636, but, overrunning one OPLR position along the eastern nose of the Hill 636 ridge line, did progress almost a mile up the ridge. Further north, other elements of the 160th cleared Hill 500 during the day, and an attached battalion of the 108th Infantry secured Hill E and then went on to clear a few Japanese from Hill G, another bare knoll a little over a mile north-northwest of Hill E.

[14] This subsection is based generally upon: 40th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 15–18; 40th Div G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 24–28 Jan 45; 160th Inf Unit Jnls and Jnl Files, 24–28 Jan 45; 108th RCT Jnls and Jnl Files, 24–28 Jan 45; XIV Corps G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 24–29 Jan 45.

[15] XIV Corps G–2 Per Rpt 14, 24 Jan 45.

[16] XIV Corps Opns Memo 10, 24 Jan 45.

The 40th Division did not yet know it, but the attack had carried through some of the *Takayama Detachment*'s strongest OPLR defenses and, on the right, had taken the assault troops to positions from which they could outflank the left of the OPLR. The defenses, which Tsukada had expected would hold at least a week, had fallen rapidly under the combined weight of American infantry, artillery, and air attack. The achievements had cost the 40th Division 15 men killed and 45 wounded; the *Takayama Detachment* had lost over 300 men killed of an original OPLR force of nearly 1,100 troops.

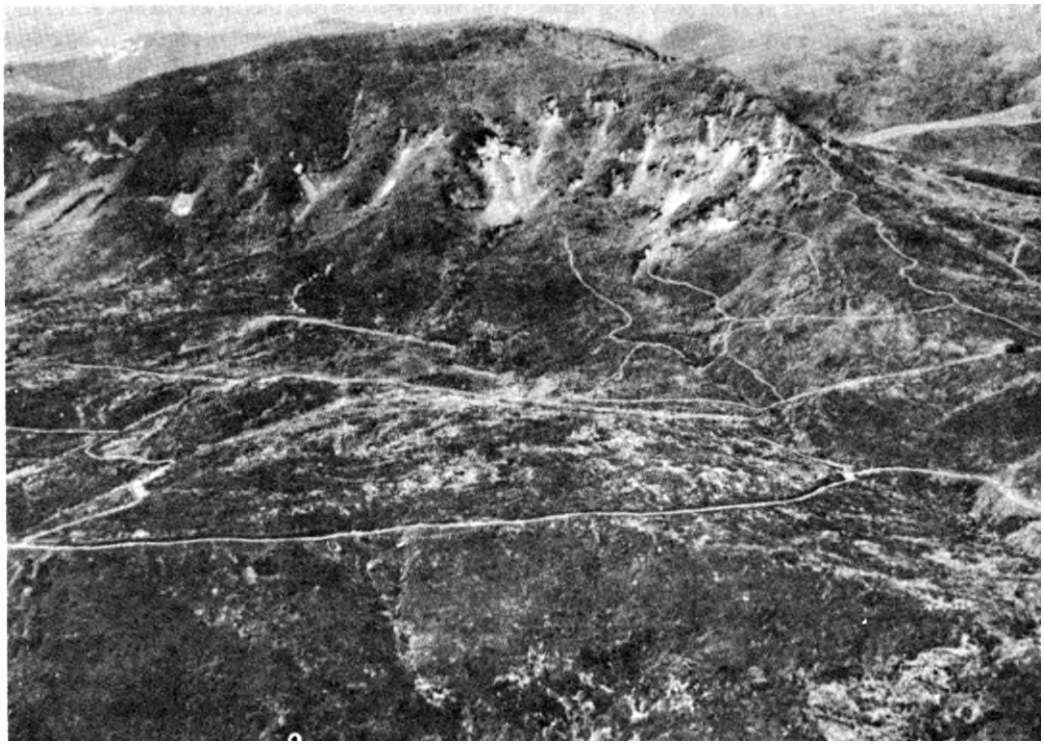
The 40th Division next planned to swing the 160th and 108th Infantry Regiments south. The 160th's initial objectives included Hill 636 and another bare knob 800 yards further west along the same ridge line. Once it had secured these two terrain features, the 160th would wheel southwest across the Bamban River to clear Clark Field proper and the eastern half of the Fort Stotsenburg camp area. The 108th Infantry, initially undertaking a wide development westward beyond Hills E and G, was to strike south to seize Hill 350, a mile and a half west of Lafe Hill, and then continue south-southwest on the 160th's right to clear the western half of Fort Stotsenburg. The 108th was also to secure high ground immediately west of and overlooking the fort area.[17]

By the time the attack on the 26th was well under way, a distinct pattern had emerged from the operations west and southwest of Bamban, a pattern that would remain in effect as long as the *Kembu Group* was able to put up a semblance of organized resistance. Any movement by American troops along the generally open ridges west of Route 3 inevitably brought down Japanese machine gun and mortar fire, often augmented by fire from the dismounted aircraft automatic weapons, antiaircraft guns, and light artillery. Seeking cover and usually pinned in place, the American infantry would call for close-in mortar and artillery support, wait for the concentrations to be fired, and then drive forward a few yards, when the process had to be repeated. Each time, the Americans managed to overrun a few Japanese machine gun or rifle strongpoints.

There was little choice of routes of advance. Draws, providing some concealment in scrub growth or bamboo thickets, were usually covered by well-emplaced Japanese weapons both within the draws and on the ridges to each side. Possession of the high ground, as ever, was essential. Yet the troops had to employ draws whenever possible to outflank Japanese ridge line strongpoints, and often draws and ravines proved to be the only routes by which tanks, tank destroyers, and cannon company self-propelled mounts could get to the front to fire against Japanese cave positions along the sides of the ridges.

The capture of one Japanese-held cave served only to disclose another, and one machine gun position was overrun only to provide access to the next. Dislodging the *Kembu Group* from such defenses in depth was to prove a slow, laborious, and costly process, demanding the closest teamwork between the infantry and its supporting arms. Casualties, as a rule, would not be heavy on any one day—progress would be too slow and the troops would spend too much of

[17] 40th Div FO 9, 25 Jan 45, 108th RCT Jnl File, 25 Jan 45.



CAVE-POCKED HILL, *typical of Japanese defenses in Clark Field area.*

their time pinned down awaiting fire from supporting weapons. But a daily attrition rate of about 5 men killed and 15 wounded for each battalion engaged would soon begin to have its effect.

When it proved impossible for tanks and other supporting artillery to reach the front lines, or when it was impossible for any reason to lay fire into a Japanese position, the infantry had to fall back on assault team techniques. An eight-man assault squad would be equipped with submachine guns, flame throwers, demolitions, and smoke and thermite grenades. A six-man covering squad, armed with rifles and light automatic weapons, would provide close support. The two-squad team would operate forward of and under the cover of fires from other infantry units and heavier support weapons, all set up on dominating ground.[18]

On 26 January the 160th Infantry's left made the greatest progress as the *Takayama Detachment*'s right flank OPLR defenses began to disintegrate. The 160th secured Hill 636 with little trouble and also cleared the grassy crest of Hill 600, a hot three-quarters of a mile southwest of Lafe Hill along the Lafe Hill ridge. North of the unnamed

[18] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 29; G–3 40th Div, Summary of Opnl Lessons Learned, MIKE ONE Opn, p. 3, attached to 40th Div Rpt Luzon.

stream the 160th's right flank drove west against negligible resistance and began wheeling southward to prepare to cross the stream and rejoin the rest of the regiment.

In the 108th Infantry's sector advances were more painful. The regiment had to give up its hold at Hill G in the face of heavy concentration of Japanese artillery and mortar fire, and could make very little progress in the Hill E area. In the afternoon, attempts to start the scheduled enveloping maneuver succeeded only in extending the regimental right into rising ground 1,000 yards northwest of Hill G.

The 40th Division had not made anticipated progress, but the operations on 26 January had provided the division and the XIV Corps with a clearer picture of the opposition. By the end of the day the division's G–2 Section was able to delimit the Japanese OPLR, had recognized it as an OPLR, and had identified the major components of the *Takayama Detachment*. The corps' G–2 Section readily admitted that the 40th Division had uncovered a strong defensive line and that the Japanese seemed determined to maintain control of the Clark Field area.[19] General Griswold had to accept the fact that operations in the Clark Field region were going to take longer than he had hoped and might require the commitment of additional forces.

The 40th Division's operations on 27 January, again meeting with limited success, confirmed Griswold's reasoning. The 160th Infantry gained only 500 to 800 yards in westerly and southwesterly directions during the day and was unable to bring its right flank elements south of the unnamed stream. Further north the 108th Infantry advanced about 1,000 yards southwest from Hills E and G but failed to reach the day's objective, Hill 5, a rough bare height three-quarters of a mile southwest of Hill G. Nevertheless, by the end of the day the 40th Division had virtually demolished the *Takayama Detachment* OPLR, reducing the once well-organized line to a number of isolated strongpoints manned by troops who preferred to die in place rather than withdraw to the detachment's MLR. These isolated groups presented no real threat, and it was only a matter of time before the 40th Division would eliminate them. Finally, the 40th Division's progress through 27 January had secured the Manila Railroad and Route 3 from Bamban south to Mabalacat. The gains of the first four days' action against the *Kembu Group* had cost the 40th Division approximately 35 men killed and 115 wounded; the *Takayama Detachment* had lost at least 1,000 men killed alone.

A Planning Interlude

While the 40th Division had been engaged against the *Takayama Detachment*, the 37th Division had safeguarded XIV Corps' eastern flank, had continued to reconnoiter eastward into the I Corps zone, and, on 25 January, had begun to extend its right (west) flank southward from the vicinity of Bamban in the area immediately east of Route 3. On the 26th, the 145th Infantry secured Mabalacat and Mabalacat East Airfield, four miles south of Bamban, against light

[19] 40th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–18; 40th Div G–2 Rpts, 25–27 Jan 45, 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 25–27 Jan 45; XIV Corps G–2 Per Rpt, 26 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 26–27 Jan 45.

opposition. The next day the 145th Infantry advanced south along Route 3 another three miles to Culayo and Dau, while 148th Infantry secured Magalang, five miles east of Dau.

The Culayo-Dau area assumed some importance as the junction of Route 3 with a road running west through Clark Field to Fort Stotsenburg and with a spur of the Manila Railroad running from the fort to Magalang. In its advance to Dau the 145th Infantry encountered tanks of the *Yanagimoto Detachment,* operating south of the town, and had been fired on by Japanese artillery emplaced in high ground west of Fort Stotsenburg. Scattered groups of Japanese held out in Culayo and Dau until the morning of 27 January.

On the 26th, the 145th Infantry swung west across Route 3 and with little difficulty overran Clark Field Runway No. 1, a mile northwest of Culayo. It had been almost thirty-seven months since American ground forces had set foot on Clark Field.[20]

On 27 January, the 145th Infantry marched another three miles south along Route 3 to the city of Angeles, which the *Yanagimoto Detachment* had already left to Filipino guerrillas. From Angeles, good gravel roads led southwest toward Bataan Peninsula and northeast to Magalang, while Route 3 and the Manila Railroad swung off to the southeast on their way to Manila. The 148th Infantry on 27 January patrolled east and south from Magalang finding no significant traces of the Japanese. At the close of the day, the 37th Division's two regiments were prepared to leave Clark Field to their right rear and continue the advance toward Manila.[21]

How to employ the 37th Division in the immediate future was a knotty problem for both General Griswold and General Krueger.[22] The obvious choices presented obvious disadvantages. If the division were to continue toward Manila, its right rear might be open to a *Kembu Group* counterattack that the 40th Division might not be able to repel; if the division were committed to fight against the *Kembu Group*, the advance on Manila would be delayed; if the division left strong forces echeloned along XIV Corps' left rear to protect the corps' exposed left flank, both the advance to Manila and the destruction of *Kembu Group* would be delayed. General MacArthur's constant pressure upon General Krueger to get the XIV Corps on toward Manila further complicated the problem.

The key to speed in the advance toward Manila was the time element—the time taken by I Corps to extend its right flank south and southeast in order to afford better protection to the XIV Corps left rear, and the time taken by XIV Corps to assure the safety of its right rear by overrunning the principal *Kembu Group* defenses in the Clark Field area. One factor mitigated the problems attendant upon securing XIV Corps' right rear. On 29 January, the XI Corps was to land on Luzon's west coast north of Bataan in an attack that

[20] MacArthur's forces, retreating into Bataan, had evacuated the Clark Field area during the night of 1–2 January 1942. See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, p. 213.

[21] XIV Corps and 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 25–28 Jan 45.

[22] The general sources for the remainder of this section are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 24–27; Sixth Army FO 45, 26 Jan 45, in *ibid.*, I, 147–48; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 69; XIV Corps Opns Memo 11, 27 Jan 45; I Corps FO 7, 27 Jan 45.

bid fair to divert *Kembu Group* attention and take some of the pressure off XIV Corps.[23] On the other hand, the problems involved in providing protection to XIV Corps' left flank were not so easily solved. General Krueger felt that I Corps could not advance south from the San Felipe–Cuyapo line, which the corps had secured by 27 January, until reinforcements reached Luzon. To spread I Corps any thinner would create an entirely new danger—a weakly held I Corps flank exposed to counterattack from a Japanese concentration the Sixth Army believed to be located near San Jose on Route 5. It was bad enough to have XIV Corps' left exposed, but at least that corps had the protection of distance and unbridged streams against a Japanese thrust from San Jose, protection I Corps' right would not have once it started southward.

The 32d Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division, and the separate 112th Cavalry RCT all reached Lingayen Gulf on 27 January. Once the units were unloaded, Krueger could return the 25th Division's 35th RCT, still in Army reserve, to I Corps. He also intended to give the 32d Division, less one regiment in Army reserve, to I Corps for insertion between the 25th and 43d Divisions. Then the 25th and 6th Divisions could narrow their fronts and continue south and southeast with less danger of leaving the I Corps flank exposed beyond the limits of a calculated risk.

Krueger reasoned that the 32d Division and the 35th RCT could move into position in time for I Corps to start advancing beyond its San Felipe–Cuyapo line on 28 January, striking forward to a new objective line twenty miles to the south and southeast. On the right the 6th Division would move up to a line extending from Licab to Muñoz, on Route 5 eight miles southwest of San Jose. The 25th Division would take over near Muñoz to extend the new objective line northward to Route 8 at Lupao, roughly nine miles northwest of San Jose. Reconnaissance would be projected to San Jose, Cabanatuan, and Rizal, the last lying ten miles southeast of San Jose.

Feeling that for the time being the I Corps' advance would provide adequate security along XIV Corps' left rear, Krueger directed XIV Corps to resume its drive toward Manila, first securing crossings over the Pampanga River, twenty-five miles south of Clark Field. Griswold hesitated to commit his "free" unit—the 37th Division less the 129th RCT—to an advance to the Pampanga so hurriedly, for he feared the division might be cut off south of Clark Field if it moved too soon. He wanted another two or three days, at least, of concerted attacks against the *Kembu Group* so that he could push that force far enough back into the mountains to permit the uninterrupted flow of troops and supplies down Route 3 and reconstructed portions of the Manila Railroad. He also felt that he would have to drive the *Kembu Group* further into the Zambales Mountains to allow the Allied Air Forces to carry out pressing construction tasks at Clark Field unmolested.

Accordingly, Griswold directed the 37th Division to move to the attack on the 40th Division's left, clearing those portions of Clark Field still controlled by the Japanese and then securing Fort

[23] See below, ch. XVII.

Stotsenburg and the high ground immediately west and southwest of the fort area. While not complying entirely with Krueger's orders to get to the Pampanga, Griswold did direct the 37th Division to send reconnaissance south along Route 3 to San Fernando, Pampanga Province, fifteen miles beyond Clark Field. From San Fernando Route 7 stretched southwestward into Bataan. Once it had captured San Fernando, Griswold's orders read, the 37th Division would reconnoiter southwest along Route 7 to gain contact with XI Corps and would patrol southeastward along Route 3 to the Pampanga crossings.

The missions Griswold assigned him forced a wholesale reshuffling of units upon Maj. Gen. Robert S. Beightler, the 37th Division's commander. First, with I Corps resuming its advance southward, Beightler needed only one battalion of his 129th Infantry to protect the XIV Corps' left rear, and he decided to employ the rest of the regiment in the attack on Fort Stotsenburg. To bring the regiment up to strength for this task, he attached to it a battalion of the 145th Infantry. The rest of the 145th would strike west from Angeles to clear the high ground south and southwest of Fort Stotsenburg. To the 148th Infantry and the 37th Reconnaissance Troop fell the 37th Division's other missions.

As the 37th Division swung into action against the *Kembu Group*, the 40th Division would continue its drive southwestward in the area north of the Bamban River, its objective ground rising to over 1,500 feet three to four miles beyond the 160th Infantry's deepest penetration. The 160th Infantry was to make the main effort in the 40th Division's sector, its axis of advance to be the steep-sided Hill 636 ridge line running in a southwesterly direction along the north bank of the Bamban River. The 108th Infantry would continue its drive on the 160th's right and would eliminate the last pockets of resistance along the *Takayama Detachment*'s section of the OPLR. The 185th Infantry and the 40th Reconnaissance Troop would continue to protect the XIV Corps line of communications back to Lingayen Gulf, patrol into the northern portion of the Zambales Mountains, and secure the Sixth Army's right rear.[24]

XIV Corps' new attack, scheduled to start at 0700 on 28 January, would be launched against a Japanese force that still held many positions along its OPLR, that was still under centralized control, that had lost few of the weapons with which it had begun to fight, and that still held excellent defensive terrain from which it could observe every movement made by the assaulting Americans. The 108th Infantry had yet to overrun some *Takayama Detachment* OPLR defenses; the 160th Infantry, having destroyed the OPLR in its sector, would drive directly into the *Takaya*—not the *Takayama—Detachment*'s sector in the center of the *Kembu Group* MLR; the 129th and 145th Infantry Regiments would slam into the *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR, undisturbed so far except by air and artillery bombardments. On 27 January the *Yanagimoto Detachment* withdrew its tanks and infantry to the Fort Stotsenburg area, in effect setting up another defensive line between the *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR and MLR.[25] The 129th Infantry would head directly

[24] 37th Div FO 25, 27 Jan 45; 40th Div FO 10, 27 Jan 45.
[25] SWPA Hist Series, II, 449.

into the strengthened *Eguchi Detachment* sector.

Closing With the Kembu Group's MLR

Leading off the new attack, the 129th Infantry struck westward from the vicinity of Culayo about 0715 on 28 January and within two and a half hours gained firm contact all across the *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR.[26] Fire coming from a block of destroyed hangars and mine fields at the western end of Runway No. 2, two miles west of Culayo, stopped the regiment's right, which mediums of the 754th Tank Battalion supported. The 129th's left reached the outskirts of barrio Tacondo, off the southeastern corner of Fort Stotsenburg, but halted when hit by Japanese small arms and machine gun fire and by a misplaced Fifth Air Force strike. The supporting tanks stopped at another mine field. The Japanese had strewn mines liberally in the 129th Infantry's sector, the extent of their mining operations indicated by the fact that during the period 28–31 January the 37th Division removed almost 1,350 mines from Clark Field and Fort Stotsenburg.

Meanwhile, north of the Bamban River, the 160th Infantry encountered surprisingly light opposition as it swept on along its ridge line to seize open-crested Hill 620, a mile beyond Hill 636. But Japanese automatic weapons, mortars, and artillery pinned down the regiment as, during the afternoon, it drove 1,200 yards west of Hill 620 on an ever-broadening front. At 1900 Japanese infantry counterattacked, and the 160th had to withdraw its forward companies some 700 yards in order to refuse its right (north) flank, which was bearing the brunt of the attack. The next day, still operating on open ground, the regiment pulled in its right and narrowed its front to a width closely corresponding to that of the *Takaya Detachment* MLR.

By this time the American units were dividing the ground among themselves much as the Japanese had divided it. The 108th Infantry, on the 40th Division's right, was now fighting only against the *Takayama Detachment*; the 160th Infantry's adversary was the *Takaya Detachment*; the 129th Infantry faced the *Eguchi Detachment*. The similarity in deployment, based upon the terrain compartments of the area, illustrates the fact that the principles of terrain appreciation often differ little from one army to another.[27]

On 29 January the 160th Infantry gained almost two miles in a southwesterly direction across a front nearly a mile wide, breaking through a strongpoint at the very center of the *Takaya Detachment* MLR. The Japanese reacted with several small-scale counterattacks during the night, but achieved nothing. In this success the 160th Infantry lost 10 men killed, about 70 wounded, and nearly 50 evacuated because of heat exhaustion and combat fatigue.

[26] This subsection is based generally on: 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–35; 37th Div G–3 Jnl and Jnl Files, 28 Jan–1 Feb 45; 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–5; 129th Inf, Hist of 129th Inf, 1810–1945, pp. 51–59; 129th Inf Jnl, 28 Jan–2 Feb 45; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 28 Jan–2 Feb 45; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–15; 145th Inf S–3 Jnl, 28–31 Jan 45; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 28–31 Jan 45; 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 28–31 Jan 45; 160th Inf Unit Jnls and Jnl Files, 27–31 Jan 45; 108th RCT Jnls and Jnl Files, 28 Jan–1 Feb 45.

[27] The *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR lay entirely within the 129th Infantry's zone. Its southernmost MLR strongpoint was within the 145th Infantry's zone, but the *Eguchi Detachment* abandoned this position before the 145th reached it.

For the 129th Infantry, action began on 29 January with an unsuccessful *Eguchi Detachment* counterattack. The American regiment's advance started about 0915, after an artillery and 4.2-inch mortar preparation and after awaiting a Fifth Air Force strike that failed to materialize. Against increasingly heavy fire from all types of Japanese weapons, the 129th Infantry overran the right of the *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR by 1630 and started into the ruins of the Fort Stotsenburg camp area. Fifteen minutes later six *Yanagimoto Detachment* tanks counterattacked at barrio Tacondo, hitting the 3d Battalion, 129th Infantry, on its right. Since the battalion's supporting tanks had just withdrawn to replenish fuel and ammunition,[28] only infantry machine guns and a lone Cannon Company self-propelled mount—which was promptly knocked out along with most of its crew—at first opposed the Japanese tanks. Other self-propelled mounts, as well as vehicles from the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion quickly came up, and the Japanese tanks began to withdraw. Four *Yanagimoto Detachment* tanks were ultimately knocked out, as were two vehicles of the 637th.

The two Japanese counterattacks on the 29th had been launched with the hope that the OPLR might be restored and held at least another day or two. With their failure General Tsukada, the *Kembu Group* commander, ordered the *Eguchi Detachment* to withdraw to its MLR positions. For the *Yanagimoto Detachment* the losses, coupled with attrition in other, lesser contacts and with losses from American artillery fire during the preceding few days, marked the end of an armored unit. The detachment's survivors pulled back into the *Eguchi Detachment* MLR.[29]

These *Kembu Group* orders must have been issued about the same time that General Beightler gave the 129th Infantry new instructions deriving from a chain of events over which the regiment had no control. Taking stock of the situation in the Clark Field area on 29 January, General Krueger was not too well pleased. Passing on the pressure earlier placed upon him by General MacArthur, Krueger reminded Griswold that strategic considerations made it imperative to seize the entire Clark Field air center promptly, and directed the XIV Corps commander to press the attack with the "utmost vigor."[30]

Griswold passed on the pressure to the 37th and 40th Divisions, ordering the 37th to secure Fort Stotsenburg and the high ground to the immediate west by dark on 30 January, simultaneously broadening its front to the right.[31] Thus far a gap of two miles had separated the 129th Infantry's right and the left of the 160th Infantry, on the north bank of the Bamban. From a position on high

[28] Hist of 129th Inf, 1810–1945, p. 56. According to an exchange of messages summarized in the 129th Infantry Regimental Journal for the period 1805–1848, 29 January, the regimental and battalion commanders felt that the tanks had withdrawn to avoid Japanese artillery fire; that they refused to return to the front at the time of the Japanese tank attack; and that they did not provide proper support for Cannon Company self-propelled mounts and 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion weapons. The regimental commander reported that he finally got three tanks turned around and back to the front, but not until the Japanese tanks had withdrawn. The records of the other units involved contain no further information on the action.

[29] SWPA Hist Series, II, 451.

[30] Rad, Krueger to Griswold, WL–827, 29 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 28–29 Jan 45.

[31] Tele Msg, XIV Corps to 37th Div, 1701 29 Jan, Entry 1709, 37th Div G–3 Jnl, Jan–Feb 45.

ground near barrio Dolores, situated on the south bank of the river, Japanese automatic weapons and mortars from an *Eguchi Detachment* OPLR strongpoint had been harassing the 160th Infantry. This strongpoint, and two other OPLR positions between Dolores and the 129th Infantry's right, had to be eliminated before the 160th Infantry could continue southwestward and before the security of all the Clark Field runways could be assured.

The last unit to receive the impact of the pressure from higher headquarters was the unit in contact, the 129th Infantry, which General Beightler directed to extend its right as far as the Bamban River and secure the Dolores area.[32] The regiment cleared the hills near Dolores with little difficulty on 30 January, most of the defenders having already withdrawn in accordance with the *Kembu Group*'s orders of the 29th. Since the *Eguchi Detachment* had abandoned practically its last forward positions during the night and since the *Yanagimoto Detachment* had also withdrawn to the MLR, the 129th Infantry encountered only light opposition as it continued westward, securing the rubble of Fort Stotsenburg by dusk on the 30th. Before dark, right flank units, driving into rising ground west of the camp area, gained contact with an *Eguchi Detachment* MLR strongpoint. So easily had the advance been made during the day that it appeared that all the dominating high ground close to Fort Stotsenburg could be cleared without much trouble.

Meanwhile, north of the Bamban, the 160th Infantry battled on against the *Takaya Detachment* MLR. Resistance was stiffer than any the 160th had yet encountered, and the regiment, losing 11 men killed and 86 wounded, gained only 500 yards of new ground during the day. The 108th Infantry continued to make local advances in its area and by evening on the 30th had finally secured Hill 5. The 108th also cleared Thrall Hill, a height 1,000 yards south of Hill 5 that remnants of *Takaya Detachment* OPLR units defended fiercely. With the seizure of Thrall Hill the 40th Division had overrun almost the last of the isolated OPLR pockets.

On 31 January the 108th Infantry instituted long-range patrolling westward, making no contact with organized Japanese forces. The 160th Infantry, to the south, again could make very little progress in the face of fanatic opposition, although the regiment had the closest possible artillery support and was also supported by tanks brought up along flat ground on the north bank of the Bamban.

As had been the case of the 30th, the key action on 31 January took place along the 129th Infantry's front. The regiment's objective for the day was a large, bare-sloped commanding hill mass known as Top of the World, lying about 1,200 yards beyond Fort Stotsenburg and marking the western limits of the XIV Corps' objective area as then defined. The *Eguchi Detachment* had the open approaches to the 1,000-foot-high hill mass covered with 20-mm., 25-mm., and 40-mm. automatic weapons, the fires of which were reinforced by a few mortars and light artillery pieces. Once Top of the World and nearby knobs were taken, the security of Fort Stotsenburg and Clark Field could be assured against fire from anything except long-range artillery.

[32] 37th Div FO 26, 29 Jan 45.

The 1st Battalion, 129th Infantry, launched the attack against Top of the World at 0900 on 31 January. Delayed and sometimes pinned in place by Japanese fire during the morning, the battalion secured the steep, grassy, southern and southeastern slopes of the hill by midafternoon, and before dark some troops were halfway up those slopes. On the morning of the next day, 1 February, there was considerable maneuvering by small units all across the hill's open slopes, and from time to time the defenders and the attackers almost reached the point of engaging in games of catch with hand grenades. Despite determined resistance on the part of the Japanese, the 129th Infantry battalion gained the crest of the hill mass at 1330. Clark Field was secure.

The Attack Through the End of January

With the seizure of Top of the World and the 160th Infantry's concomitant penetration of the *Takaya Detachment* MLR, the critical phase of XIV Corps' battle against the *Kembu Group* came to a successful end. The 37th and 40th Divisons had overrun the group's OPLR, they had pierced the MLR in both the *Takaya* and the *Eguchi Detachment* sectors, and they had destroyed the *Yanagimoto Detachment* as an armored force. They had inflicted over 2,500 casualties on the Japanese, whose fanaticism and tenacity is illustrated in part, at least, by the fact that the American forces had taken less than 10 prisoners in the Clark Field area since the attack began on 24 January. Through 31 January the 37th and 40th Divisions, together with reinforcing units, had lost roughly 150 men killed and 600 wounded. As usual, the infantry bore the brunt of the losses. The casualties of the four regiments participating in the attack west from Route 3 approximated:[33]

Regiment	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
129th	50	230	280
145th	5	10	15
108th	30	125	155
160th	45	215	260
Total	130	580	710

Probably an equal number of men had had to be evacuated from the front lines as the result of injuries, sickness, heat exhaustion, and combat fatigue.

Of greater significance than the casualties were the tactical results of the battle against the *Kembu Group* through 31 January. XIV Corps had secured the Clark Field air center for the Allied Air Forces—construction work had already begun and the Fifth Air Force planes would soon be flying from repaired strips. Next, the corps, pushing the *Kembu Group* westward, had assured for itself the uninterrupted flow of supplies down Route 3 and the Manila Railroad, securing a line of communications along which future advances toward Manila could be supported.

The fight against the *Kembu Group* was not yet over. Manifestly, the rest of General Tsukada's forces could not be left at large—his strength was still potentially too great—but the XIV Corps had made sufficient progress by 31 January that plans could be made to release one division from the *Kembu Group* to continue the drive toward Manila.

[33] The table is based upon incomplete, contradictory, and mutually irreconcilable figures contained in the sources cited previously in this chapter.

CHAPTER XI

Protecting XIV Corps' Rear and Flanks

The Problem and the Plan

At the end of January the speed of XIV Corps' progress toward Manila continued to depend largely upon the pace of I Corps' advance to the east and south. *(See Map III.)* On 31 January XIV Corps was preparing to send the 37th Division on toward Manila along Route 3, while the 1st Cavalry Division, recently attached to the corps, was assembled at Guimba and making ready to mount a complementary drive toward the capital down the east side of the Central Plains via Route 5.[1]

XIV Corps had made provision to secure its right rear and its line of communications against the threat posed by the remaining troops of the *Kembu Group* by directing the 40th Division to resume the westward offensive in the Clark Field area and drive the *Kembu Group* deeper into the Zambales Mountains. Some additional measure of protection had been given XIV Corps' right by XI Corps, which had landed on the west coast of Luzon north of Bataan and was well inland toward the base of Bataan Peninsula by the end of January. Although XI Corps had not, as MacArthur had hoped, "completely dislocated" the resistance the *Kembu Group* offered, the corps had pinned down a first-class Japanese infantry regiment that might otherwise have been deployed to good advantage at Clark Field.[2] Furthermore, MacArthur and Krueger hoped that opposition in front of XIV Corps, as that corps drove on toward Manila, might be at least partially dislocated by the 11th Airborne Division, which, under Eighth Army direction, had landed on 31 January along Luzon's west coast south of Manila.[3] The principal problem, then, was still the security of the XIV Corps' left rear, security that I Corps had to provide.

Directed by General Krueger to move up in strength to the Licab-Lupao line, I Corps had set its 6th Division in motion toward the southern section of that objective line on 28 January.[4] That afternoon the 6th Division had troops in Victoria and Guimba, which previously marked the unit's limits of reconnaissance, and on the next day relieved a 37th Division outpost at Licab, five miles east of Victoria.[5] Encountering no opposition, the 6th Division left sped east-

[1] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 75; Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 148–49. See also below, ch. XII.

[2] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CAX–50027, 17 Jan 45 Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 112–13. See also chs. VIII, above, and XVII, below.

[3] See below, ch. XII.

[4] For selection of this line, see above, ch. X.

[5] Operational material in this section is from: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 14, 23; 6th Cav Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–23; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–21; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 18–20; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–28; 25th Cav Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–4; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–13; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–11.

ward on 29 January along a good gravel road that led through hot, dry, flat farm land and cut Route 5 in the vicinity of Talavera, almost twelve miles east of Licab. On 30 January, after a skirmish with a small Japanese force, the division secured the road junction barrio of Baloc, on Route 5 about five miles north of Talavera. Far more easily than expected, the 6th Division had severed the main line of communications between the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups,* two-lane, paved Route 5.

Muñoz, marking the northern end of the 6th Division's section of the Licab-Lupao line, lay on Route 5 and the San Jose branch of the Manila Railroad some five miles north of Baloc. On 27 January the 6th Reconnaissance Troop reported the town unoccupied, but upon reinvestigation the next day discovered a strong Japanese force in and around the town. On the 30th one rifle company of the 20th Infantry, 6th Division, unsuccessfully attempted to clear the town, and the 6th Division learned that the objective was not to be taken without a stiff fight.

Meanwhile, the 6th Reconnaissance Troop had ranged far to the south of Muñoz and Talavera. On the 28th, elements of the troop reached the vicinity of Cabanatuan, about seven miles south of Talavera and nearly fifteen east of Licab. Unlike XIV Corps patrols a few days earlier, the 6th Division's reconnaissance units reported that a strong force of Japanese held Cabanatuan, but the 6th Reconnaissance Troop found no other signs of Japanese south of Talavera and Licab. Other 6th Division patrols learned that the Japanese had established a counterreconnaissance screen west of Muñoz and San Jose.

The 25th Division, on the 6th's left, had not been successful in moving up to its portion of the Licab-Lupao line. Coming out of army reserve on 28 January, the 25th Division's 35th Infantry marched east along Route 8 from Rosales and by evening the next day, unopposed on its advance through hot, dry, rice-paddy country, had reached barrio Gonzales, on gravel-paved Route 8 nearly ten miles west-northwest of Lupao. In the meantime the 27th Infantry, moving overland via narrow, dusty, dirt roads south of Route 8, had driven a Japanese outpost from barrio Pemienta, on Route 8 three miles east of Gonzales.

Unknown to the 25th Division, a small tank-artillery force of the *2d Tank Division* had been trapped along the highway between Gonzales and Pemienta. From 2000 on the 29th until 0430 the next morning the force tried unsuccessfully to break through a perimeter the 27th Infantry had established at Pemienta. By the time the action had ended the American regiment had killed 125 Japanese and had destroyed 8 tanks, 8 artillery prime movers, 4 tractors, 8 105-mm. howitzers, 5 trucks, and miscellaneous other equipment. The 27th Infantry's own losses were about 15 men killed and 45 wounded.

Meanwhile, 25th Division patrols had learned that the Japanese held Umingan, on Route 8 five miles northwest of Lupao, in some strength. On 30 January the 27th Infantry started moving into position to strike the town from the north and northwest, while the 35th Infantry began preparing a holding attack from the west and southwest. To cover these preparations, the 25th Reconnaissance Troop patrolled toward Lupao and other towns along Route 8 between



WRECKED JAPANESE TANK-ARTILLERY COLUMN, NEAR PEMIENTA

Umigan and San Jose. The troop made scattered contacts with many small groups of Japanese in the region west of the highway and south of Umingan, indicating that the Japanese had a counter-reconnaissance screen in the 25th Division's sector as well as in the 6th Division's area.

Although the 25th Division had not reached Lupao, the advances made by I Corps' two right flank divisions through 30 January were of considerable importance to future Sixth Army planning. First, by severing Route 5, the 6th Division had forced the *Shobu–Shimbu Group* line of communications eastward to poor roads in the foothills of the Sierra Madre beyond the main highway. Even these routes would be denied the Japanese once I Corps could secure Cabanatuan and San Jose. Then, by the end of January, I Corps had gathered sufficient information from patrols, captured documents, Filipino guerrillas, prisoners of war, and aerial reconnaissance for Sixth Army to conclude that strong elements of the *2d Tank Division* were concentrated in the triangle formed by San Jose, Muñoz, and Lupao. General Krueger also had reason to believe that the *10th Division* had considerable strength at or near San Jose. The 6th Division's unopposed advances to 30 January, and its discovery that there were no Japanese west of Route 5 in the region south of Licab and Talavera, indicated to Krueger that the dangers to the XIV Corps' left rear were not as great as he had previously feared. On the other hand, he was unwilling to discount entirely the threat presented by the *2d Tank Division* and *10th Division* concentrations in the San Jose–Muñoz–Lupao area. His interpretation of avail-

able intelligence did not lead him to believe that the Japanese forces in the area had only defensive intentions, and he therefore felt the two Japanese units had an offensive potential he could not ignore. I Corps, Krueger decided, would have to make long strides toward overcoming the threat from the San Jose–Muñoz–Lupao triangle before the XIV Corps' advance to Manila could proceed unchecked.[6]

Accordingly, on 30 January, General Krueger directed I Corps to drive eastward in order to seize San Jose and secure a line extending from that town to Cabanatuan and Rizal, respectively twenty miles south and ten miles southeast of San Jose. (*Map 5*) Once on this line, I Corps would reconnoiter to Luzon's east coast at Baler and Dingalen Bays. Krueger also changed the I–XIV Corps boundary from the earlier north-south line through the Central Plains, turned the line east of Licab, passed it north of Cabanatuan, and swung it thence southeast to Dingalen Bay.[7]

The Capture of San Jose

Japanese and American Tactical Plans

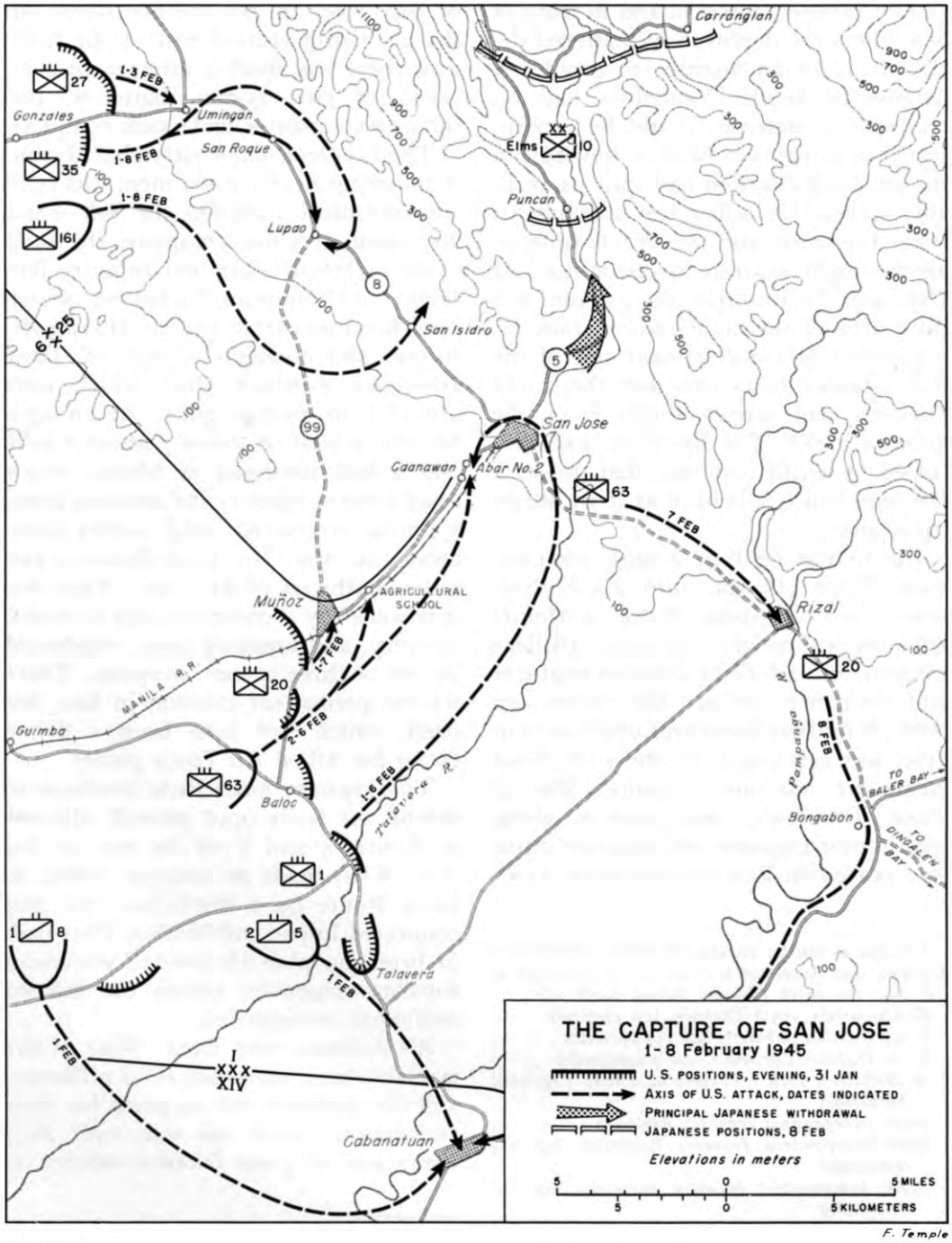
General Yamashita was vitally interested in the defense of San Jose for reasons that, as of 30 January, were of secondary importance to General Krueger. Krueger knew that with the successful accomplishment of its mission I Corps would have cut the last overland links between the *Shimbu and Shobu Groups* and would have gained a good base of attack against the *Shobu Group* concentration in northern Luzon, but Krueger's main interest was the protection of XIV Corps' left rear. Yamashita, on the other hand, intended to hold San Jose and its approaches until he could move all the supplies stockpiled there north into the mountains along Route 5 and until the *105th Division* could pass through the town on its way north from the *Shimbu Group* to join the *Shobu Group*. Yamashita estimated that his troops could move the bulk of the supplies—mainly ammunition—still at San Jose out of town by the end of the first week in February, and he hoped that the last elements of the *105th Division* would have cleared San Jose by the same time.[8]

Thus Yamashita viewed the defense of San Jose as a holding action of limited duration. Yet the course of future operations in northern Luzon would be determined in large measure by the nature of the defensive stand of the *2d Tank Division* and attached elements of the *10th* and *105th Divisions*. Upon that defense depended the quantity of supplies the Japanese could move out of San Jose and environs before losing that railhead, the strength the *2d Tank Division* would have left, and the size and composition of the forces the *105th Division* could move through the town before it fell. Manifestly, if I Corps could capture San Jose quickly, Sixth Army's ultimate task in northern Luzon would be much easier.

[6] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 32.

[7] Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 148–49.

[8] Japanese information in this section and its subsections is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 444–46; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; Kawai Statement, States, II, 145–49; Konuma Statement, States, II, 300–40; Kawai Narrative and atchd maps, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 31; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 29, 31–33.



F. Temple

MAP 5

The Japanese forces at and in front of San Jose were deployed in scattered detachments in an attempt to provide a defense in depth. Yamashita had intended that defenses would be concentrated at Lupao and Muñoz, but instead the *2d Tank Division* had split its available forces—including the attachments from the *10th* and *105th Divisions*—among eight separate strongpoints. At Umingan, for example, the garrison was built around the *3d Battalion, 26th Independent Mixed Regiment,* one of the five infantry battalions that the *105th Division* had started north from the *Shimbu* area.[9] The battalion was reinforced by a rifle company that the *10th Division* had left behind as it withdrew up Route 5.

Lupao was held by a tank company each of the *7th* and *10th Tank Regiments,* two companies of the *2d Mobile Infantry,* a three-gun (75-mm.) artillery platoon, and *2d Tank Division* engineer and ordnance troops. San Isidro, on Route 8 midway between Lupao and San Jose, was garrisoned by the *10th Tank Regiment,* less one company. The *2d Tank Division*'s headquarters, along with minor engineer and infantry units, was located on Route 5 two miles north of San Jose. A bit further north, in sharply rising ground east of the highway, there was another groupment composed of two 75-mm. batteries, two infantry companies, and a tank company.

The *Ida Detachment* defended Muñoz. Numbering nearly 2,000 men, this combat command included the *6th Tank Regiment,* less one company; the bulk of the *356th Independent Infantry Battalion, 103d Division;*[10] a battery of 105-mm. howitzers from the *2d Mobile Artillery;* and elements of the *2d Tank Division*'s *Antitank Unit,* which were armed with 47-mm. guns. At an agricultural school on Route 5 about a mile and a half northeast of Muñoz was a small force of infantry and antitank guns; a similar groupment held barrios Caanawan and Abar No. 2, on Route 5 two miles southwest of San Jose. Rizal was garrisoned by a company each of tanks, infantry, and antitank guns, reinforced by two or three 75-mm. weapons. There was no permanent garrison in San Jose itself, which had long been a prime target for Allied Air Force planes.

The Japanese made little provision to defend the fairly open ground adjacent to Routes 5 and 8 on the way to San Jose. They made no attempt, either, to block Route 99, a third-class road that connected Lupao and Muñoz. They had, in brief, no plan to forestall American flanking maneuvers against the isolated individual strongpoints.

All defenses were fixed. Most of the available tanks were dug in as pillboxes, and the Japanese had no plans for their withdrawal. After the war, *14th Area Army* and *2d Tank Division* officers of-

[9] Insofar as can be ascertained from contradictory Japanese and American sources, the composition of the force the *105th Division* moved north was:
Headquarters, 105th Division, less elements
105th Division Artillery, less 1½ batteries
105th Division Engineers, less 7 companies
3d Battalion, 26th Independent Mixed Regiment (attached)
184th Independent Infantry Battalion
183d Independent Infantry Battalion, less 2½ companies
359th Independent Infantry Battalion, less 2½ companies
3d Company, 182d Independent Infantry Battalion
Inoue Provisional Infantry Battalion

[10] This battalion had formerly been attached to the *10th Division.*

fered many explanations for the unorthodox, static use of the armor, citing fuel shortages, Allied air superiority, terrain difficulties, and the light armament and armor of the Japanese tanks as compared to the American. No doubt all these explanations have some validity, but they also reveal that Yamashita was willing to sacrifice the *2d Tank Division,* which he would have found difficult to employ in a more normal role, in the static defense of the approaches to San Jose. He had obviously determined that the approaches would be held, whatever the cost, until the *105th Division* and the ammunition stockpiled at San Jose had moved north up Route 5.

I Corps plan for the attack on San Jose was simplicity itself, as is the nature of most good plans. General Swift, the corps commander, decided upon a pincers movement. The 6th Division, to make the main effort, would attack northeast up Route 5 through Muñoz; the 25th Division would support with a drive southeast along Route 8 through Umingan and Lupao. General Swift reinforced each division for the attack. To the 25th Division he attached a 155-mm. gun battalion, an 8-inch howitzer battalion, a 4.2-inch mortar company, and a company of medium tanks. The 6th Division's reinforcements included a 155-mm. howitzer battalion, two 105-mm. howitzer battalions, a 4.2-inch mortar company, a company of medium tanks, and two platoons of light tanks. The 6th Division would provide its own protection on its right and right rear; the 25th Division's left rear would be protected by the 32d Division, which had started to move into the line between the 25th and 43d Divisions. The 43d Division and the 158th RCT would hold the ground they had secured in the Damortis-Rosario sector.[11]

The Attack Begins

The drive toward San Jose began on the morning of 1 February as the 20th Infantry, 6th Division, gathered for an assault on Muñoz and the 27th Infantry, 25th Division, struck toward Umingan.[12] The ground around Muñoz, flat and open, provided neither cover nor concealment for the attackers, and was broken only by a few drainage or irrigation ditches within the town and by a gentle draw opening westward from the town's center. A few, small, scattered trees afforded the only shade in the vicinity—heat from the broiling tropical sun would become a problem for the 20th Infantry. Few houses within the town were still intact, for American air and artillery bombardment had already made a shambles of most buildings.

Japanese medium tanks, mounting 47-mm. weapons and machine guns, formed the backbone of the defense. Most of the tanks were dug in with turrets barely showing above ground. Artillery and 47-mm. antitank guns were in sandbagged or earthen-walled emplacements that only a direct hit by American mortars or high-angle artillery fire could knock out. Japanese infantry and machine gunners held strongpoints throughout the Muñoz debris, which also provided camouflage for many artillery and tank positions.

[11] I Corps FO 8, 31 Jan 45; 25th Div FO 7, 31 Jan 45, 35th Inf Jnl File, 31 Jan 45; 6th Div FO 12, 31 Jan 45.

[12] Information on 6th Division operations in this section is generally from: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 23–27; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 17–21; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 31 Jan–3 Feb 45.



Muñoz

On 1 February the 3d Battalion, 20th Infantry, led the attack with an attempt to gain control of a 2,000-yard stretch of Route 99 along the western edge of Muñoz. After fifteen minutes' preparation by a battalion of 105-mm. howitzers and two platoons of 4.2-inch mortars, the infantry struck from the southwest at 0800. About 1130, when the leading troops were still 500 yards short of Route 99, Japanese tank and artillery fire from the southern end of Muñoz stalled the attack. The 1st Battalion then came up on the right, but was able only to clear a few Japanese from a cemetery stretching along Route 5 and the Manila Railroad at the southeastern corner of town.

The 2d of February was essentially a repetition of the 1st, and again the 20th Infantry made only slight gains. General Patrick, the 6th Division's commander, began to lose patience. He was already dissatisfied with the 20th Infantry's earlier performance in the Cabaruan Hills and was increasingly disturbed by what he felt was inordinately slow progress at Muñoz. He thereupon relieved the 20th's commander, Colonel Ives, an action he later came to regret,

and replaced Ives with Lt. Col. Harold G. Maison.[13]

On 3 February the 2d Battalion, 20th Infantry, moved in on the northwest, but could not reach Route 99 in its sector. The 3d Battalion pushed across that road at the southwest corner of Muñoz, but gained only half a block into the main section of the town. The 1st Battalion, on the south side of Muñoz, made negligible progress. By dusk, the 20th Infantry had overrun a few Japanese strongpoints, but in order to hold its gains had had to destroy completely and physically occupy every position it had reached so far. Muñoz, General Patrick had begun to realize, was going to be a costly, hard, and time-consuming nut to crack. The 20th Infantry had not yet closed with the main Japanese defenses, but had spent most of the last three days pinned down by Japanese artillery, tank, and machine gun fire. Only by hugging the ground and taking advantage of the little cover even shattered tree stumps afforded had the regiment kept its casualties down to 15 men killed and 90 wounded.

The 6th Division, bogged down at Muñoz, could take some wry consolation from the fact that the 25th Division had made no better progress at Umingan, where the cover and concealment problems were much the same as at Muñoz.[14] On 1 February the 25th's 27th Infantry attacked from the north and west. Under cover of artillery and air support, troops operating along Route 8 advanced to within 250 yards of Umingan's western edge, but Japanese machine gun and rifle fire then pinned them down. Japanese antitank weapons drove off American tanks that came up Route 8 to support the infantry, while irrigation ditches on both sides of the road prevented the tanks from executing cross-country maneuvers. The infantry sought what cover it could find in these and other irrigation ditches, and, since many of the ditches were charged with noisome excrement that flowed sluggishly through dry rice paddies, spent a thoroughly unpleasant afternoon. Meanwhile, elements of the 27th Infantry attacking from the north had also spent most of the day seeking cover from Japanese fire. Toward dusk these troops had advanced only as far as an almost-dry creek bed 500 yards north of Umingan. As night fell one company employed another creek bed to push into the northwestern corner of the town, but after that the attack stalled completely.

During the course of the day General Mullins, the 25th Division's commander,

[13] Entries 33 and 34, 20th Inf Unit Jnl, 1–2 Feb 45; 6th Div G–1 Jnl, 2 Feb 45; Interv, Stanley L. Falk, Pacific Sec, OCMH, with Col O'Connor, formerly CO 53d FA Bn, 6th Div, 1 Sep 53, copy of interv notes in OCMH files. According to Colonel O'Connor, Maj. Gen. Charles E. Hurdis, who became commander of the 6th Division when Patrick was killed later in the campaign, felt that Patrick came to believe after the battle for Muñoz that in the light of the Japanese strength ultimately discovered there Colonel Ives's relief was regrettable and unjustifiable. Ives later commanded a regiment of the 38th Division on Luzon, reflecting the fact that General Krueger still had confidence in him. Maison had temporarily commanded the 63d Infantry during the fight for the Routes 3–11 junction, but had reverted to the post of regimental executive officer upon the arrival of Col. Everett M. Yon to take over the 63d. Yon, in turn, had previously commanded a regiment of the 93d Division, which was being scattered around the Southwest Pacific Area in various small garrisons.

[14] Information on 25th Division operations in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 27–30; 25th Div G–3 Jnl File, 1–3 Feb 45; 25th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 1– Feb 45; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–15; 27th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 1–3 Feb 45; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–16; 35th Inf Jnl Files, 1–3 Feb 45.

had decided to employ part of the 35th Infantry to bypass Umingan to the south. Moving cross-country along one-lane dirt roads, a battalion of the 35th, encountering no opposition, occupied San Roque barrio, on Route 8 nearly four miles southeast of Umingan and a little over a mile north of Lupao. Another battalion of the 35th Infantry had held during the day in open ground south of Umingan, but early on the 2d drove up a third-class road against the southeastern corner of the town. Mullins had already directed the 35th Infantry to use its remaining battalion in an attack west into Umingan along Route 8.[15]

The 35th's two battalions did not meet expected resistance on 2 February, for during the night most of the Japanese infantry had withdrawn northeast from Umingan into the grassy foothills of the Caraballo Mountains. By 1300 on the 2d, the 35th Infantry had cleared most of Umingan, leaving two final pockets for the 27th Infantry to reduce the next day. When a summation was made at dusk on the 3d, the 35th Infantry's casualties in the reduction of Umingan were 3 men killed and 13 wounded, while the 27th Infantry had lost nearly 40 men killed and 130 wounded. The Japanese, who lost about 150 killed, left behind eight 47-mm. antitank guns along with large quantities of 47-mm. and 75-mm. ammunition.

The capture of Umingan had taken a day longer than General Mullins had anticipated, casualties had been high compared to those of the Japanese, and the main body of the Japanese had escaped to fight again. Hoping to make up the time lost, Mullins pushed the 35th Infantry on toward Lupao during the afternoon of 2 February, hardly giving the regiment time to regroup after its operations at Umingan.[16] The regiment estimated that a company of Japanese infantry, reinforced by fifteen to twenty medium tanks, held Lupao. If so, the regiment felt, it would need only one reinforced battalion to capture the town, and it expected to clear the objective by 1800 on the 2d.[17]

The 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, leading the advance on Lupao, met no resistance during the afternoon of 2 February until its lead company was within 750 yards of town. Then, Japanese artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire stopped the attack cold. Attempts to outflank the defenses across the open ground of dry rice paddies that surrounded the town proved unavailing, and at dusk the battalion withdrew 500 yards westward to allow supporting artillery and mortars to lay concentrations into the town. Resuming frontal attacks the next morning, the 35th Infantry, still trying to advance across open ground, again made no significant progress. Like the 20th Infantry in front of Muñoz, the 35th Infantry had been stopped at Lupao.

Outflanking Maneuvers

By late afternoon of 3 February, General Patrick and General Mullins faced nearly identical situations. Stalled in front of intermediate objectives, the two division commanders had to devise some means of bypassing and containing the Japanese strongpoints at Lupao and

[15] 25th Div FO 8, 1 Feb 45.

[16] Change No. 1, 2 Feb 45, to 25th Div FO 8, 1 Feb 45.

[17] 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 15; 35th Inf FO 2, 2 Feb 45, 35th Inf Jnl File, 2 Feb 45.

Muñoz while pressing the attack toward San Jose. General Patrick, although he had not expected the delay at Muñoz, had forehandedly directed the 1st Infantry to reconnoiter six miles east of Muñoz to the Talavera River with a view toward locating an overland approach to the San Jose–Rizal road at the point where that road crossed the Talavera three miles southeast of San Jose. Here, he had reasoned, the 1st Infantry might assemble for an attack toward San Jose, if necessary, to support the 20th Infantry's drive up Route 5. Orders to the 1st Infantry to move to the Talavera crossing went out during the late afternoon of 1 February. Simultaneously, Patrick directed his 63d Infantry to bypass Muñoz to the east and come back onto Route 5 north of the town, ready to drive on San Jose in concert with the 1st Infantry.[18]

General Mullins made somewhat similar arrangements to bypass Lupao. Temporarily leaving the 27th Infantry at Umingan and assigning the task of clearing Lupao to the 35th Infantry, Mullins directed the 161st Infantry to move cross-country to positions on Route 99 south of Lupao and then push on to Route 8 between San Isidro, four miles southeast of Lupao, and San Jose. The regiment would patrol toward San Jose in preparation, if the need arose, for helping the 6th Division secure that town. The 35th Infantry, in addition to capturing Lupao, would cut Route 8 between Lupao and San Isidro with a force of sufficient strength to prevent Japanese movements between the two towns, both now known to be held in some strength.[19]

The 3d Battalion, 35th Infantry, moving over rising ground northeast of Lupao, established itself on Route 8 about 1,500 yards southeast of the town during the afternoon of 3 February. The next day the battalion forced its way into the southern edge of Lupao against heavy opposition, but 35th Infantry troops north and west of the town made no progress. Meanwhile, the 161st Infantry had started moving and by mid-afternoon on 4 February had set up roadblocks on Route 8 southeast of San Isidro. The regiment was ready to attack toward either San Isidro or San Jose, but progress made by the 35th Infantry, to the northwest, and the 6th Division, to the southeast, made further advances unnecessary for the time being.[20]

The 6th Division's flanking operations began shortly after 1700 on 1 February when elements of the 1st Infantry started north along the west bank of the Talavera River. The regiment secured the Talavera crossing on the San Jose–Rizal road during the late afternoon of 2 February after a sharp skirmish with a small Japanese infantry-tank force. Meanwhile, other troops of the 1st Infantry

[18] 6th Div FO 12, 31 Jan 45; 6th Div FO 13, 2 Feb 45; Msgs, CG 6th Div to CO 1st Inf, 1530 and 1700 1 Feb 45, 1st Inf S–3 Jnls, 31 Jan–1 Feb and 1–2 Feb 45, respectively; Entries timed 0945 and 1300 2 Feb 45, 63d Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 2 Feb 45. The 63d Infantry returned to 6th Division control on 1 February upon release from attachment to the 43d Division.

[19] 25th Div FO 8, 1 Feb 45, and Change No. 1 thereto, 2 Feb 45; Rad, CG 25th Div to CO 161st Inf, 0915 3 Feb 45, 25th Div G–3 Jnl File, 2–3 Feb 45; Rad, CG 25th Div to CO 35th Inf, 0900 3 Feb 45, 35th Inf Jnl File, 3 Feb 45; Entry 1, 161st Inf Jnl, 3 Feb 45; Entry 2, 161st Inf Jnl, 4 Feb 45. The 161st Infantry, previously holding at San Manuel, was relieved there by elements of the 32d Division on 2 February.

[20] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–31; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–17; 161st Inf, The Battle of San Isidro, p. 2.

came up from the southeast and, bypassing Rizal to the west, turned northwest along the San Jose–Rizal road. These troops encountered only scattered opposition. By late afternoon on 3 February most of the 1st Infantry had assembled at two positions 1,000 yards south and 1,500 yards east of San Jose.[21]

The 63d Infantry, also bypassing Muñoz to the east, reached the agricultural school on Route 5 a mile and a half northeast of Muñoz on the afternoon of 2 February. Leaving a reinforced company to clean out the Japanese tank-infantry groupment at the school, the bulk of the regiment pressed on up Route 5 during the next afternoon and by dusk, having encountered little opposition, was within sight of barrios Caanawan and Abar No. 2, two miles short of San Jose.[22] The situation seemed to favor a two-regiment attack against San Jose on the 4th, and at 2000 on the 3d General Patrick ordered the execution of such an attack.[23]

The Seizure of San Jose

The prospect of an all-out battle at San Jose turned out to be a chimera. Indeed, after the costly fighting at Lupao and Muñoz and exhausting night marches entailed in the 6th and 25th Divisions' flanking maneuvers, the actual capture of the objective came as a pleasant anticlimax. Held up by the Japanese tank-infantry groupment in the vicinity of Abar No. 2, the 63d Infantry took no part in the seizure of San Jose, but two companies of the 1st Infantry walked into San Jose virtually unopposed during the morning of 4 February. By 1330 the regiment had secured the objective at a cost to the 1st Infantry of 2 men killed and 25 wounded, including 1 killed and 7 wounded when Fifth Air Force B–25's made an unscheduled strafing run across the regimental front.[24]

The seizure of San Jose turned out to be anticlimactical for at least two other reasons. Two days before the town fell, I Corps' progress as far as Lupao and Muñoz, disclosing that the Japanese had committed their forces to a piecemeal, passive defense of the approaches to San Jose, had dispelled General Krueger's remaining anxieties about counterattack from the east and the security of the XIV Corps' left rear. The Japanese, having failed to organize a strong, mobile striking force from their available armor, had themselves removed the last vestiges of threat from the east and northeast to Sixth Army and XIV Corps.

Accordingly, on the evening of 2 February, Krueger had directed XIV Corps to resume its drive to Manila with all speed. I Corps would proceed with its mission to secure the Cabanatuan–Rizal line and reconnoiter to Luzon's east coast, but henceforth, however heavy the actual fighting in the San Jose region, I Corps operations would evolve into mopping-up actions and would be partially aimed at securing lines of departure from which future attacks could be launched against the *Shobu Group* in northern Luzon.[25]

[21] 1st Inf Rpt Luzon pp. 21–23; 1st Inf S–3 Jnl, 1–3 Feb 45.

[22] 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–8; 6th Div G–3 Jnl, 1–3 Feb 45.

[23] 6th Div FO 14, 3 Feb 45.

[24] 6th Div Jnl and Jnl File, 4 Feb 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 23–24.

[25] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 32, 45; Sixth Army FO 47, 2 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 149.

From one point of view, the Japanese themselves had produced the final anticlimax for the I Corps at San Jose. By 4 February the bulk of the forces the *105th Division* that had so far been able to start northward from the *Shimbu* area had slipped through San Jose and were well on their way up Route 5 north of the town. The *Tsuda Detachment,* attached to the *10th Division,* had by the same date evacuated its now unimportant defensive positions at Baler and Dingalen Bays and had withdrawn to Rizal. On or about the 4th, the detachment had started out of Rizal along a third-class road that led north into the mountains. Finally, the last of the supplies of the *Shobu Group* needed the most for its planned protracted stand in northern Luzon had been removed from San Jose during the night of 3–4 February. Since there was no longer any reason for him to hold the town General Yamashita, sometime on the 4th, directed the elements of the *2d Tank Division* (and its attachments) still holding defenses forward of San Jose to break contact and retreat up Route 5.

That I Corps had been unable to prevent the evacuation of supplies from San Jose, the displacement of the *105th Division*'s troops, or the withdrawal of the *Tsuda Detachment* was unfortunate, but these tasks had not been among those Krueger had assigned the corps. As it was, I Corps had probably accomplished more than had been expected of it when it cut off the main body of the *2d Tank Division* in front of San Jose. The corps could now reduce the division's isolated strongpoints at its leisure, could push its troops rapidly to the east coast to break the last overland connections between the *Shimbu* and *Shobu Groups,* and could secure positions from which to launch attacks against the *Shobu Group* when so directed.

Mop-up on the Approaches to San Jose

Such was the state of Japanese communications in the San Jose area that Yamashita's orders for a general withdrawal did not reach *2d Tank Division*'s units south and west of San Jose until 6 February.[26] In the meantime, the Lupao and Muñoz garrisons continued to hold out, thwarting the best efforts of the 6th and 25th Divisions to dislodge them.

By 4 February the 20th Infantry attack against Muñoz had evolved into a siege.[27] During that day and on through the 6th, the regiment's pressure produced minor gains, but the more the Japanese force was compressed the more difficult became the 20th Infantry's task. By evening on the 6th, the 20th Infantry and its supporting forces had knocked out nearly thirty-five tanks at Muñoz, along with a few antitank guns and a number of machine guns. The Japanese still had twenty to twenty-five tanks, they still held half the town, and they still had over half of their original garrison. The 20th Infantry had so far lost 40 men killed and 175 wounded, while many

[26] SWPA Hist Series, II, 446.

[27] The remainder of this subsection is based on: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 27–32; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–25; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 4–8 Feb 45; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–10; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–34; 161st Inf, Battle of San Isidro, *passim;* 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–19.

On 5 February T. Sgt. Donald E. Rudolph of Company E, 20th Infantry, reduced or helped reduce eight Japanese pillboxes and destroyed one Japanese tank during the 20th Infantry's attacks. For these and associated actions, Sergeant Rudolph received the Medal of Honor and a battlefield promotion to second lieutenant.

others had dropped of heat exhaustion and combat fatigue. It was clear to General Patrick that something beyond the direct assault methods employed so far would have to be tried if the 6th Division was to clear Muñoz within a reasonable time and with reasonable casualties.

A large part of 7 February, Patrick planned, would be spent pounding Muñoz with air and artillery. First, about fifty planes of the Fifth Air Force were to bomb and strafe, climaxing their effort with a napalm saturation. Then division artillery and reinforcing corps artillery battalions would thoroughly plaster the town. Finally, the ground troops would resume the assault about midafternoon behind a rolling barrage laid down by the 6th Division's three 105-mm. howitzer battalions. The 63d Infantry, relieved by the 1st Infantry just south of San Jose, would redeploy to the south side of Muñoz to join the final attack of the 20th Infantry.

The Japanese did not co-operate. Under cover of a minor diversionary attack against the 20th Infantry's lines, the main body of the *Ida Detachment* attempted to escape up Route 5 during the predawn hours of 7 February, apparently not realizing that the road from Muñoz north to San Jose was in American hands. Running a gauntlet of roadblocks held by the 63d Infantry, the 53d and 80th Field Artillery Battalions, and the 2d Battalion, 161st Infantry (which had moved down to the agricultural school from the San Isidro area prepared to reinforce the 6th Division for the attack on Muñoz), the Japanese escape column was destroyed. After daylight on the 7th the 20th Infantry moved into Muñoz almost unopposed, clearing the last resistance by noon.

The defense of Muñoz and Route 5 north to San Jose cost the *2d Tank Division* 52 tanks, 41 trucks, 16 47-mm. guns, and 4 105-mm. howitzers destroyed and 1,500 men killed. In securing the same area, the 6th Division lost 90 men killed and nearly 250 wounded, exclusive of the casualties incurred by the 1st Infantry in and around San Jose.

At Lupao, meanwhile, the battle had developed along lines similar to those at Muñoz. From 4 through 7 February the 35th Infantry, placing the emphasis of its attack against the south side of Lupao, continued to compress the garrison into a smaller and smaller space. The Japanese made a breakout attempt the night after the *Ida Detachment*'s flight from Muñoz. Ten or eleven tanks started out of Lupao; five of them managed to break through the 35th Infantry's cordon and disappeared into the foothills east of town, where their crews abandoned them. The dismounted Japanese in the town melted away, and by noon on the 8th the 35th Infantry had secured Lupao against negligible opposition. The *2d Tank Division*'s losses there included over 900 troops killed and 33 tanks, 26 trucks, and 3 75-mm. guns destroyed or abandoned. The 35th Infantry and attached units lost about 95 men killed and 270 wounded.[28]

The Japanese garrison at San Isidro fled before the 161st Infantry could mount an attack, taking to the hills during the night of 5–6 February. The 161st occupied the town against scattered

[28] Although wounded, M. Sgt. Charles L. McGaha of Company G, 35th Infantry, assumed command of his platoon on 7 February when his platoon commander was wounded, and also extricated some wounded men under Japanese fire. For a combination of his actions during the day, Sergeant McGaha received the Medal of Honor.

rifle fire on the 6th, and for the next few days sought out Japanese stragglers in rising ground to the northwest, north, and northeast. The regiment destroyed or found abandoned 23 tanks, 18 trucks, 2 75-mm. artillery pieces, and a miscellany of other equipment and supplies. A hundred or more Japanese died at or near San Isidro, while the 161st Infantry lost about 15 men killed and a like number wounded in the vicinity.

The *2d Tank Division* was finished as an armored unit. In the defense of the approaches to San Jose the division had lost 180 of the 220 tanks with which it had entered combat on Luzon. The division's troop losses — exclusive of the losses of attached units—numbered nearly 2,250 men killed of the 6,500 the unit had committed to the defense of San Jose. The survivors were either already on their way up Route 5, or slowly filtered through I Corps lines and made their way northward. Reorganized as an understrength infantry division, the *2d Tank Division* would fight again, but Japanese armor would no longer be a factor with which Sixth Army would have to reckon on Luzon.[29]

San Jose to the East Coast

After the seizure of San Jose and the destruction of the *2d Tank Division* as an armored force, I Corps, to finish the tasks assigned it by General Krueger, still had to move in strength up to the Cabanatuan–Rizal line and reconnoiter to Baler and Dingalen Bays on the east coast. The corps assigned these tasks to the 6th Division, which wasted no time undertaking them after the fall of Muñoz.[30]

The 63d Infantry, on 7 February, captured Rizal against scattered opposition from *Tsuda Detachment* stragglers.[31] The next day the 20th Infantry, encountering few Japanese, secured Bongabon, six miles south of Rizal, and cleared the road from Rizal through Bongabon to Cabanatuan. A combined 20th Infantry–6th Reconnaissance Troop patrol next pushed over the hills from Bongabon to Dingalen Bay along a poor gravel road and reached the bay on 11 February. The following day a 63d Infantry–6th Reconnaissance Troop patrol, following another road out of Bongabon, reached Baler Bay. The patrols found only abandoned defenses at each objective and left the security of the bay's shores and the roads back to Bongabon to Filipino guerrillas.

In the meantime, the 25th Division had taken over from the 6th Division at San Jose and had begun patrolling both northward up Route 5 and southeastward along the road to Rizal. The two divisions continued patrolling in the areas they held until, on 10 February, I Corps began realigning forces for operations against the *Shobu Group* in north-

[29] Kawai Statement, States, II, 148; G–2 GHQ FEC, Interrogations of Japanese Officials on World War II (2 vols.) (hereinafter cited as Interrogs), in OCMH files, Interrogation of Col Shigeo Kawai, I, 321–23. I Corps (and subordinate unit) records indicate that the corps had destroyed 193 tanks of the *2d Tank Division* from 9 January through 7 February. Counting 5 or 6 more destroyed by XIV Corps units, it is doubtful that as many as 20 tanks organic to the *2d Tank Division* were still intact and in Japanese hands as of 7 February. Other tanks left to the Japanese on Luzon were from independent tank companies.

[30] Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45; I Corps FO's 8 and 9, 31 Jan and 6 Feb 45.

[31] The rest of this section derives from: 6th Cav Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 24–28; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–28; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 13; 63d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 6–14 Feb 45.

ern Luzon. Before such operations could start, more urgent battles to the south had to be brought to successful conclusions, and the I Corps' right flank units, for the time being, would hold the positions they had already attained while preparing for stiff fights they knew were in the offing.

The Destruction of the Kembu Group

Sixty miles southwest across the Central Plains from San Jose the 40th Division, fighting against the *Kembu Group,* took about a week longer to secure Sixth Army's right and XIV Corps' right rear to Krueger's and Griswold's satisfaction than I Corps had taken on the left. In the *Kembu* area, the terrain did not permit the relatively free maneuver I Corps had employed to capture San Jose. Rather, the fight at the *Kembu* positions continued to be a slug fest against a well-entrenched Japanese force holding rugged, dominating ground. Progress each day was often measured in terms of feet.

The Situation at Clark Field

By 1 February, when the XIV Corps started the 37th Division south toward Manila, the 37th and 40th Divisions had overrun the *Kembu Group* OPLR both north and south of the Bamban River. *(See Map IV.)* South of the stream the 129th Infantry, 37th Division, had breached the Japanese MLR at Top of the World Hill, just west of Fort Stotsenburg. West and southwest Top of the World remnants of the *Eguchi* and *Yanagimoto Detachments,* combined into a single force, held out in rough ground in front of the "last-stand" positions occupied by the *Kembu Group*'s naval units.

North of the Bamban the 160th Infantry, 40th Division, had pushed into the *Takaya Detachment* MLR positions. The regiment's left was on high ground overlooking the river, its right and center on a 1,000-foot-high, ill-defined hill mass known as Storm King Mountain. Elements of the *Takaya Detachment* still maintained MLR defenses on the west side of Storm King. Although, further north, the 108th Infantry had not yet closed with the *Takayama Detachment* MLR, the breach the 160th Infantry had effected along the MLR's center and right had made untenable the Japanese unit's hold. The *Takayama Detachment* was faced with the choice of fighting to death in place or making an orderly withdrawal into the naval last-stand positions.

The naval defenses were composed of five combat sectors, numbered 13 through 17. The *16th Combat Sector* centered on high ground two miles west-northwest of Top of the World and athwart the upper reaches of the Bamban River; the *17th* lay another mile or so to the west. The *15th Combat Sector* was north across a branch of the Bamban from the *16th* and nearly two miles beyond the 160th Infantry's penetration at Storm King Mountain. The *14th* and *13th Combat Sectors,* reading east to west, were northwest of the *15th.* Each combat sector held dominating ground protected on at least two sides by sharp ravines; each varied as to area and strength.

General Tsukada, commanding the *Kembu Group,* still had some 25,000 men under his control. He was prepared to offer protracted resistance, although his communications were poor and, with

all chance of resupply long gone, his food and ammunition could not last forever. But he was firmly ensconced in easily defensible terrain, his defense plan was well conceived, and the bulk of his positions were mutually supporting. To overrun any strongpoint the 40th Division would have to make careful plans for the closest co-ordination of air, artillery, and armor. Once the approaches to an objective were cleared, the Japanese defenders would have to be flushed out of hidden foxholes, caves, and bunkers. To take any piece of dominating terrain the Americans would have to destroy a series of mutually supporting strongpoints. The whole process would be difficult, costly, time consuming, and repetitive but, in General Krueger's opinion, would be necessary in order to secure the right rear of XIV Corps and push the *Kembu Group* so far back into the Zambales Mountains that it would be incapable of threatening Clark Field.

The 40th Division spent the first week of February realigning its forces, mopping up areas already secured, and patrolling to find good routes of approach to strongpoints located by ground and aerial observation. The 185th Infantry rejoined the division and replaced the 108th in the north; the 108th, in turn, took over the 129th Infantry's positions on Top of the World on 2 February.[32]

It is not known when General Brush, the division commander, intended to start a general offensive westward, but if he had any idea of waiting beyond the first week in February he was undoubtedly brought up short on the 6th. That day General Krueger instructed XIV Corps to have the 40th Division "proceed more expeditiously with the destruction" of the *Kembu Group,* not only for the reasons of which the corps was already well aware but also because the division would soon have to be relieved for operations elsewhere.[33] Griswold relayed these instructions to Brush without delay.

Brush's plan for attack called for the 185th and 160th Infantry Regiments to drive against the Japanese center while the 108th Infantry continued the advance against the Japanese right where the 129th Infantry had left off. The division's objective was high ground lying about seven miles west of Route 3 and extending almost an equal distance north to south.[34] Once this terrain had been cleared, the 40th Division would have overrun the entire *Kembu* MLR and would be poised in front of the naval last-stand positions.

Turning the Kembu Flanks

Before the divisional attack began, the 160th Infantry, mopping up at Storm King Mountain, became involved in a fight that turned into preparation for the regiment's part in the main offensive.[35] The fight focused at McSevney Point, a ridge 300 yards long and 75 yards wide forming a western nose of

[32] 40th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 1–7 Feb 45, 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 2–8 Feb 45.

[33] Rad, Sixth Army to XIV Corps, WG–85, 6 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45.

[34] 40th Div FO 11, 6 Feb 45, 108th Inf Jnl File, 6 Feb 45.

[35] This subsection is based on: 40th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 6–19 Feb 45; 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 6–19 Feb 45; 160th Inf S–3 Jnl and Jnl Files, 6–11 Feb 45; 185th Inf Unit Jnl, 6–15 Feb 45; 185th Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 6–10 Feb 45; 185th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 7–15 Feb 45; 108th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 7–19 Feb 45; 108th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 7–19 Feb 45; 108th Inf S–2 Per Rpts, 10–19 Feb 45; Anonymous, *40th Infantry Division* (Baton Rouge: Army and Navy Publishing Co., 1947), pp. 113–16.

Storm King. Here an infantry company of the *Takaya Detachment,* reinforced by one 70-mm. howitzer, three 90-mm. mortars, ten 50-mm. grenade dischargers, and 27 machine guns of various calibers, blocked the 160th Infantry's path.[36] The Japanese force was holded up in caves, bunkers, and foxholes, all well concealed by natural camouflage.

The 160th Infantry's first attack against McSevney Point took place on 6 February, and behind the close support of tanks, tank destroyers, and Fifth Air Force planes, the regiment cleared most of the point by dusk on the 8th. During the ensuing night the Japanese launched a series of banzai-type counterattacks, and it was nearly noon on the 9th before the 160th Infantry had repulsed the final Japanese assault. The next morning, 10 February, the regiment discovered that the last Japanese had withdrawn during the night. The affray cost the 160th Infantry about 20 men killed and 125 wounded, while the Japanese lost around 225 men killed.

Although the fight at McSevney Point at first appeared to have delayed the 160th Infantry's participation in the division attack—scheduled to begin on the 8th—the action turned out quite well for the 40th Division. First, the capture of McSevney Point removed a major obstacle at the division's center. Second, the loss of the point prompted General Tsukada to direct the *Takaya Detachment* to abandon its portion of the MLR and fall back to the last-stand positions. The withdrawal split the *Kembu* MLR, and the 40th Division could press on into a gap between the *Takayama Detachment,* on the north, and the combined *Eguchi–Yanagimoto Detachment* force on the south. The existence of the gap also permitted the 185th and 108th Infantry Regiments to deal in detail with the *Kembu Group*'s left and right.

On 7 February the 185th Infantry had started an attack against the *Takayama* MLR, on the Japanese left, its ultimate objective Snake Hill North, a height from which Japanese fire had harassed the 160th Infantry's right flank units 2,000 yards to the southeast. In three days of stiff fighting through thick undergrowth and over rough, steeply rising terrain, the 185th Infantry gained half the ground to Snake Hill North. The regiment had not yet closed with the Japanese MLR in its zone, and opposition had come principally from mortars, light artillery, and a very few machine guns. The most the 185th Infantry could show for its operations to the morning of 10 February was that it had brought its front line abreast of the 160th's right.

On the 40th Division left (the Japanese right), the 108th Infantry started westward from Top of the World on 8 February, its first objective a north-south line of knobs lying 1,500 to 2,000 yards west and southwest of the line of departure. The hills were honeycombed with small bunkers and foxholes; riflemen were supported by and in turn protected machine gun emplacements; defensive weapons included many 20-mm. and 25-mm. machine cannon stripped from aircraft at Clark Field; and, at least initially, the defenders boasted a plentiful supply of mortars and mortar ammunition.

[36] Additional information on the Japanese is from: Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 10, Luzon Opns of the *Kembu Gp*, pp. 11– 12; 40th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 7–9 Feb 45, 160th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 9–11 Feb 45; SWPA Hist Series, II, 451.

From 8 through 12 February the 108th Infantry fought solely to clear approaches to the Japanese hill strongpoints. The advance was daily marked by temporary gains of terrain that the Japanese rendered untenable by heavy weapons fire or by gains along approaches where the American troops spent most of their time pinned down by Japanese fire. The 108th Infantry began to make appreciable progress only after division artillery started to lay support fires dangerously close to the front lines and after Cannon Company SPM's, 640th Tank Destroyer Battalion TD's, and 754th Tank Battalion mediums laboriously rumbled forward over rough ground to place direct fire on Japanese emplacements.

By evening on 12 February the *Eguchi–Yanagimoto Detachment*, having lost over 500 men killed since the 8th, was finished as an effective fighting unit and held only one position along the *Kembu Group*'s right flank. Hill 7, as the position was designated, lay three-quarters of a mile westward of the group of knobs that the 108th Infantry had cleared by the 12th. It took the 108th Infantry until afternoon of the 16th to clear this last hill. The regiment had now turned the right of the *Kembu* MLR, and the shattered remnants of the *Eguchi–Yanagimoto Detachment* retreated into the last-stand positions.

By the time the 108th Infantry had turned the right flank, the 185th Infantry had already pushed in the Japanese left, and in the center the 160th Infantry had advanced into the naval last-stand area. Between 10 and 12 February the 185th Infantry had secured Snake Hill North against negligible opposition, simultaneously taking Hill 810, a little over two miles to the northeast, and Hill 1000, a mile west of Hill 810. With these gains, almost the last positions along the left of the *Kembu* MLR had fallen. Continuing forward, the 185th Infantry struck toward Hill 1500, located at the northwestern corner of the *14th Combat Sector* area and over a mile southwest of Snake Hill North. The 185th captured Hill 1500 on the 15th, an event that, with the 108th Infantry's seizure of Hill 7 the next day, marked the end of the *Kembu Group* MLR. The two Americans regiments engaged on the flanks had lost approximately 75 men killed and 290 wounded; the infantry alone accounted for 680 Japanese killed during the flank attacks.

The Fight in the Center

While the 108th and 185th Infantry Regiments had been turning the flanks of the *Kembu* MLR, the 160th Infantry had driven forward in the center, starting its attack on 10 February from a line of departure at McSevney Point.[37] The 160th's initial objectives were Snake Hill West, Scattered Trees Ridge, and Object Hill. The first, grass covered and about 1,500 feet high, lay a little short of a mile west-southwest of McSevney Point and at the northern apex of the triangularly shaped *15th Combat Sector* defense area. Scattered Trees Ridge formed the base of the triangle and ran along the north bank of a Bamban River tributary. Object Hill, marking the western limits of the *15th Combat Sector* area, lay

[37] This subsection is based primarily on: 40th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 10–20 Feb 45; 40th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 10–20 Feb 45; 40th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 14–17 Feb 45; 160th Inf S–3 Jnl and Jnl Files, 10–20 Feb 45; 108th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 10–20 Feb 45. Copies of many of the sources used are to be found only in the 108th Infantry's Journal Files.

about 1,500 yards southwest of Snake Hill West. South of the Bamban tributary, and between the branch stream and the main course of the river, lay Sacobia Ridge, along which the *16th Combat Sector* was dug in.

By dusk on 10 February the 160th Infantry's two forward battalions were well up the eastern slopes of Snake Hill West and Scattered Trees Ridge but were separated by nearly a mile of Japanese-controlled terrain. Even with the close support of tanks, TD's, and SPM's the regiment did not clear all Snake Hill West until 15 February, although the open crest of the hill fell on the 12th. The battalion on Snake Hill West then turned southwest toward Object Hill, and, Scattered Trees Ridge having proved an unprofitable route of advance, troops on that ridge struck northwestward toward Object Hill in a converging attack. Elements of the 160th Infantry reached the crest of Object Hill on 16 February, but the regiment took until the 20th to clear the last Japanese strongpoints from the hill and its approaches. By that time the *15th Combat Sector*'s right, along Scattered Trees Ridge, had also collapsed, and American infantry had gained a foothold on Sacobia Ridge in the *16th Combat Sector* area.

The 160th Infantry's drive into the center of the naval last-stand positions at Object Hill completed another phase of the fight with the *Kembu Group*. As of 20 February, the group's MLR no longer existed; positions on the left of the last-stand defenses, the *14th Combat Sector* area, had fallen to the 185th Infantry; the 160th Infantry, attacking into the *15th* and *16th Combat Sectors* defenses, was well across the center of the last-stand positions. The 160th Infantry's gains in the center, including the earlier fight at McSevney Point, had cost the regiment roughly 75 men killed and 330 wounded, while heat exhaustion and combat fatigue took an increasingly heavy toll. The regiment's 1st Battalion had less than 400 effectives and the 2d and 3d Battalions were both some 300 men understrength.

Whatever the costs, the 40th Division's advances to the 20th of February marked the end of the *Kembu Group* as a threat to Sixth Army and XIV Corps. Clark Field, Route 3, and the army and corps right were now secure beyond all shadow of doubt. The *Kembu Group* had defended its ground well since 24 January, when XIV Corps had first gained contact, and had inflicted nearly 1,500 casualties upon XIV Corps units—roughly 285 men killed and 1,180 wounded—but had itself lost around 10,000 men killed. The 20,000 troops General Tsukada still commanded were hardly in good shape. Supplies of all kinds were dwindling rapidly, morale was cracking, centralized control was breaking down. The only defenses still intact were those held by the naval *13th* and *17th Combat Sectors*, and those had been heavily damaged by air and artillery bombardments. Troops of the Sixth Army would continue to fight the *Kembu Group*, but after 20 February operations in the *Kembu* area were essentially mop-ups.

Epilogue

XI Corps, not XIV, would be in charge of the final mop-up operations in the *Kembu* area. By 20 February XIV Corps had its hands full in and around Manila, and the supervision of the separate battle against the *Kembu Group* placed an

intolerable administrative and operational burden on the corps headquarters. The XI Corps, on the other hand, had nearly completed its initial missions on Luzon and, commanding only one and one-third divisions when it landed, was able to take on the additional burden of controlling 40th Division operations.[38]

Under XI Corps direction the 40th Division resumed the offensive on 23 February but was relieved by elements of the 43d Division between 28 February and 2 March. In its final attacks, the 40th Division overran the last organized resistance in the *13th, 14th,* and *16th Combat Sectors,* losing another 35 men killed and 150 wounded. By the time the 43d had relieved the 40th Division, just one organized Japanese position remained, that of the *17th Combat Sector.*[39]

The 43d Division fought the *Kembu Group* for only ten days, and by the time it was relieved by elements of the 38th Division, beginning 10 March, it had overrun the *17th Combat Sector* and had driven the Japanese back another three to four miles beyond the point at which the 40th Division left off. The 43d Division lost 70 men killed and 195 wounded in the area, eliminating perhaps 2,000 Japanese.[40]

The 38th Division — to which the 169th Infantry, 43d Division, remained attached until 22 March[41]—pushed on into the untracked, ill-explored, and worse-mapped wilderness of the central Zambales Range, its progress slowed more by supply problems than Japanese resistance. In early April the division noted that the last vestiges of any controlled defensive effort had disappeared. Unknown to XI Corps General Tsukada, on 6 April, had given up and had ordered his remaining forces to disperse and continue operations, if possible, as guerrillas.[42] For the Japanese remnants, it was a case of *sauve qui peut.* Some tried to escape to Luzon's west coast, whence 38th Division troops were already patrolling inland; others tried to make their way north through the mountains, only to be cut down by American patrols working southward from Camp O'Donnell. The 38th Division had killed about 8,000 of the scattering Japanese by the time it was relieved by units of the 6th Division on 3 May. The losses of the 38th totaled approximately 100 men killed and 500 wounded.[43]

The 6th Division, elements of which remained in the *Kembu* area until 25 June, limited its operations to patrolling

[38] Sixth Army FO 53, 19 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 155; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 77. See also below, ch. XVII. The effective date of transfer of corps control was 21 February.

[39] XI Corps G–3 Jnl Files, 21 Feb–1 Mar 45; 108th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 23–28 Feb 45; 160th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 23–25 Feb 45; 185th Inf S–3 Jnl Files, 22–25 Feb 45; 185th Inf Unit and S–2/S–3 Jnls, 23 Feb–1 Mar 45; 43d Div G–2 and G–3 Per Rpts, 23 Feb–1 Mar 45.

[40] 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–30; 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 9; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, 26 Feb–10 Mar 45, pp. 1–3.

[41] During the period 10–22 March the 169th Infantry and attachments lost an additional 40 men killed and 175 wounded, while killing 800 more Japanese. The 43d Division's share in the fight against the *Kembu* forces thus cost the division a total of 110 men killed and 360 wounded, while it had killed perhaps 3,000 Japanese.

[42] SWPA Hist Series II, n. 57, p. 451.

[43] 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 47–49, 65–92; 169th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 9; 149th Inf Rpt Luzon, 7 Mar–20 Apr 45, pp. 1, 4–20; 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 3 Mar–30 Jun 45, pp. 1–2.

On 22 April, during the course of the 38th Division's mopping-up operations, Pfc. William H. Thomas of Company B, 149th Infantry, although mortally wounded, magnificently helped his platoon seize a strong Japanese position. For this action, Private Thomas was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

and setting up trail blocks along Japanese routes of escape. Troops of the 38th Division ultimately returned to the region and remained there until the end of the war.[44]

Insofar as U.S. forces were concerned, the mop-up period under XI Corps control was even more costly than had been the XIV Corps' offensive period. From 21 February to the end of June the various elements of XI Corps committed to action against the *Kembu Group* lost approximately 550 men killed and 2,200 wounded. The *Kembu Group*, during the same period, lost 12,500 killed or dead from starvation and disease. By the end of the war the original 30,000 troops of the *Kembu Group* were reduced to approximately 1,500 sorry survivors, about 1,000 of them Army personnel. Another 500 had already been taken prisoner.[45]

[44] 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 78–79; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpt, 25 Jun 45; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph, The Luzon Mop-Up Operation, p. 52. The 6th Division lost only one man killed and two wounded in the *Kembu* area between 3 May and 25 June.

[45] Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, p. 23; No. 10, Luzon Opns of the *Kembu Gp*, pp. 28–30.

PART FOUR

SECURING THE MANILA BAY AREA

CHAPTER XII

Manila: The Approach March

By the last week of January, Sixth Army had completed the first phase of the Luzon Campaign. I Corps controlled the Routes 3–11 junction and positions from which to attack toward San Jose; XIV Corps was pushing the *Kembu Group* back from Clark Field. (*See Map III.*) The army had secured its base area, carefully provided against the threat of counterattack from the north and east, and projected strength into position to protect XIV Corps' rear and lines of communication. General Krueger thus felt free to devote more attention to the capture of the Manila–Manila Bay area, the most important single strategic objective of the campaign. On 26 January he had tackled the very practical problem of actually getting troops into the city of Manila. On that date he had directed XIV Corps to send forces south as far as the Pampanga River, twenty-five miles below Clark Field and about an equal distance north of Manila.[1]

XIV Corps' Drive South

Moving Out

XIV Corps' objective along the Pampanga River was the Route 3 and Manila Railroad crossing at Calumpit, a flat land defile through which passed the only highway and rail connections providing direct access to Manila from the western side of the Central Plains. To the northeast of Calumpit lies the formidable Candaba Swamp, passable only to light vehicles even in dry weather; to the south and west are virtually impassable swamplands, fish ponds, and marshy river deltas forming the northern shore of Manila Bay. Although the Japanese had destroyed the bridges at Calumpit,[2] XIV Corps had to secure the crossing sites before the Japanese took advantage of the natural defense opportunities afforded by the deep, unfordable Pampanga to block the western approach to Manila. XIV Corps intelligence on 26 January estimated that the Japanese had few if any defenses along Route 3 at least as far south as Calumpit. If this were so, the corps might be able to secure the defile before the Japanese

[1] Sixth Army FO 45, 26 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 147–48.

[2] The southern group of MacArthur's forces, withdrawing north across the Pampanga on 1 January 1942, blew the two Calumpit bridges. See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 209–10. The Japanese replaced the bridges in 1943, employing in part bridging material left in Manila. The bridges were intact as late as 27 December 1944, but the Japanese blew them late in January, leaving two sets of bridges in the water, one on top of the other. Comments by Mr. James J. Halsema, an American civilian who was interned by the Japanese during the war. Hereinafter cited as Halsema Comments, these remarks were forwarded to the author during March 1957.

could change their minds about its defense.

On 27 January the 37th Reconnaissance Troop and the 148th Infantry, 37th Division, started south from Clark Field toward Calumpit, their first objective the Route 3 and railroad bridges over the San Fernando River at San Fernando, thirteen miles below Clark Field at the junction of Route 3 with Route 7 to Bataan. With Filipino guerrillas' aid, the 37th Division's units secured both bridges intact on 28 January.[3] By afternoon on the 30th, after a minor skirmish or two with small groups of Japanese along Route 3 south from San Fernando, 37th Division patrols were within a mile of Calumpit and the Pampanga River.[4]

When on the afternoon of 30 January General MacArthur made a personal reconnaissance south along Route 3 from San Fernando, the pace of the advance impressed him as being much too leisurely, and upon his return northward he informed General Krueger that the 37th Division units moving on Calumpit had demonstrated "a noticeable lack of drive and aggressive initiative. . . ."[5] There was no question that the advance south from San Fernando was slow, deliberate, and cautious, but this was by design on the part of Generals Griswold and Beightler. With only the 148th Infantry and the 37th Reconnaissance Troop available for the advance south from Clark Field, the corps and division commanders were unwilling to go too far too fast, for they had little information on Japanese deployment south of the Pampanga. Moreover, they knew that the Calumpit bridges were out and that no new crossing could be constructed on the 30th. Griswold, accordingly, had directed Beightler not to push his infantry far south of the Pampanga until supporting tanks and artillery could also cross.[6]

Be that as it may, the impact of MacArthur's impressions went to XIV Corps, whence Griswold passed it on to Beightler, and so on down to the 148th Infantry, which immediately began preparations to move across the Pampanga.[7] MacArthur's reactions also undoubtedly had considerable influence in prompting Krueger, late on the 30th, to direct XIV Corps to speed its drive toward Manila, orders issued simultaneously with those directing I Corps to seize San Jose.[8] After securing crossings over the Pampanga, Krueger's orders read, XIV Corps would hurry its right southeast another six miles from Calumpit to Malolos. On the left the 1st Cavalry Division, now attached to XIV Corps and assembling west of Cabanatuan, would start south along Route 5 in concert with the 37th Division's renewed drive down Route 3.[9] Krueger expected the two divisions to establish contact at Plaridel, where,

[3] These bridges had also been knocked out by MacArthur's forces in 1942, but had been repaired by the Japanese.

[4] The foregoing operational material is from: 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–33; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 4; 37th Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, 8 Jan–3 Feb 45, pp. 5–6.

[5] Rad, Krueger to Griswold (quoting MacArthur), WL–944, 30 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 29–31 Jan 45.

[6] Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

[7] Rad, Krueger to Griswold, WL–944, 30 Jan 45; Entries 1, 5, and 23, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl, 31 Jan 45; Telecons, G–3 XIV Corps and G–3 37th Div, 0140 and 0855 31 Jan 45, in XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 31 Jan 45.

[8] Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45; see also above, ch. XI.

[9] Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45.



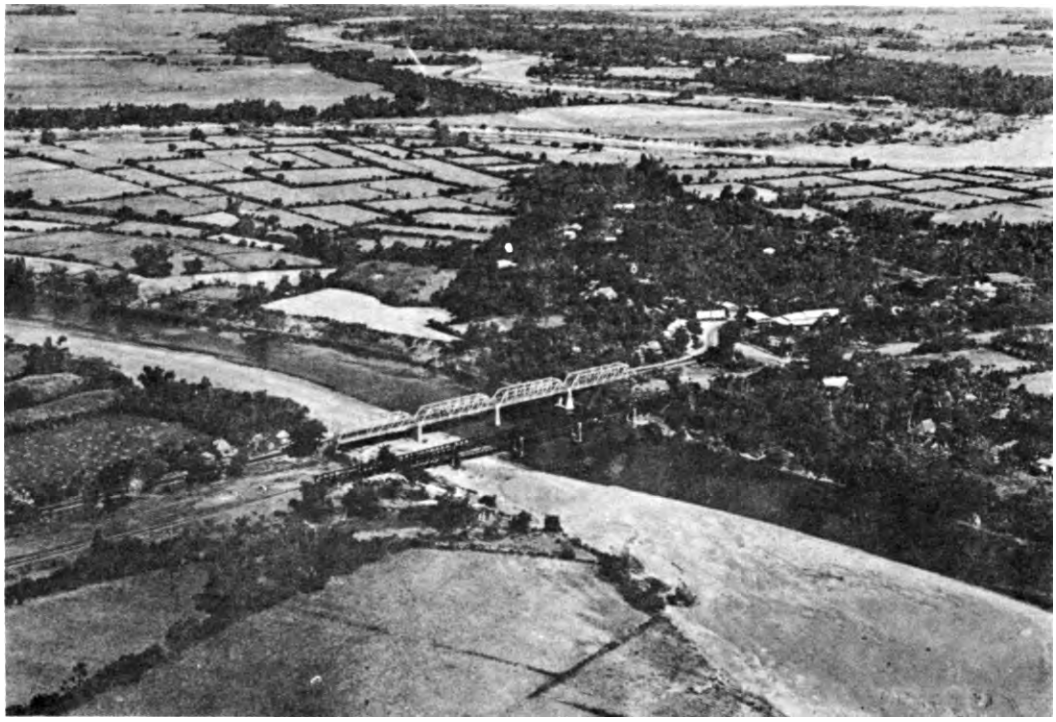
THE BRIDGES AT CALUMPIT. *(Prewar photograph)*

seven miles east of Calumpit, Route 5 crossed the Angat River. (*Map V*)

Krueger's new orders limited the XIV Corps advance to the Malolos-Plaridel line. Although he anticipated that the I Corps attack against San Jose would be well along by 1 February—the day the 1st Cavalry Division was to start south from Cabanatuan—Krueger was as yet unwilling to discount the possibility of Japanese counterattack from the San Jose area. He also had reason to believe that elements of the *2d Tank Division* had not yet moved north through Cabanatuan and might be in position to fall upon the flank of the 1st Cavalry Division. Moreover, as the 1st Cavalry Division approached Plaridel, its left would become exposed to counterattack from elements of the *Shimbu Group*, a danger that Krueger believed would increase as the cavalry division moved south beyond Plaridel. In brief, Krueger was unwilling to launch an all-out drive to Manila until he had more information on the nature and extent of the potential threats to the XIV Corps left.[10] That no threats actually existed made no difference—Krueger was basing his plans upon his estimates of Japanese capabilities.

On 31 January, as the 148th Infantry crossed the Pampanga, Beightler relieved the 145th Infantry at Clark Field and started it south along Route 3. Without waiting for the 145th to catch up, the 148th sped rapidly down Route 3

[10] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 31–32; Sixth Army FO 46, 30 Jan 45.



PLARIDEL BRIDGES (PREWAR)

through an area becoming more and more densely populated. The regiment secured Malolos against minor opposition on 1 February and on the next day sent patrols south another eleven miles to Marilao, found void of Japanese. On the same day one battalion worked east from Calumpit toward Plaridel along the south bank of the Quingua and Angat Rivers. At Plaridel one of *Shimbu Group*'s many provisional infantry battalions, about 500 men strong, in a short but bitter stand held up the 148th's battalion until noon. Then the American unit marched on through Plaridel and about 1700 established contact with elements of the 1st Cavalry Division near destroyed bridges that had once taken Route 5 and the Manila Railroad across the unfordable Angat.[11]

The 1st Cavalry Division's drive toward Manila had begun just after 1900 on 31 January, when a small force from the division started toward Cabanatuan from the assembly area west of that town. In the lead were elements of the 1st Cavalry Brigade.

The World War II brigaded structure

[11] 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 34–36; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–5; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 15-16; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 31 Jan–3 Feb 45. The records indicate that the *Shimbu Group* battalion may have been caught by surprise, or at least in the process of trying to withdraw southeast, but General Beightler, in Beightler Comments, 18 March 57, states that the unit was in well-prepared defensive positions. The Angat and Quingua are two names for different sections of the same stream that, flowing westward, joins the delta of the Pampanga just south of Calumpit.

of Maj. Gen. Verne D. Mudge's dismounted 1st Cavalry Division differed greatly from that of the triangular infantry division of the period.[12] Instead of three infantry regiments the 1st Cavalry Division had four cavalry regiments —the 5th and 12th in the 1st Cavalry Brigade, the 7th and 8th in the 2d Cavalry Brigade. Each regiment had two cavalry squadrons, each smaller than an infantry battalion, as opposed to the three battalions of an infantry regiment. Each cavalry regiment contained a weapons troop armed with 81-mm. mortars, .30-caliber and .50-caliber machine guns, and bazookas, but there was no heavy weapons troop within each squadron. The cavalry regiments lacked the antitank and cannon companies of an infantry regiment. 1st Cavalry Division Artillery was composed of one 75-mm. howitzer battalion, three 105-mm. howitzer battalions, and, for obvious reasons, an attached 155-mm. howitzer battalion. Reinforcing combat and service attachments brought the division's strength up to nearly 15,000 men, somewhat less than the strength of the reinforced 37th Division at the same time. On paper, each of the four cavalry regiments numbered 1,750 men—in contrast to the 3,000-odd of an infantry regiment—but none of the 1st Cavalry Division's regiments was up to strength. The division had received few replacements since entering combat on Leyte in October, and it had come to Luzon after very little rest from its arduous campaign through Leyte's mountains.

For the drive to Manila, General Mudge organized two reinforced motorized squadrons that soon became known as Flying Columns. Each included a cavalry squadron, a medium tank company, a 105-mm. howitzer battery, other supporting elements, and sufficient vehicles to lift all troops. Mudge placed the two Flying Columns under Brig. Gen. William C. Chase, commander of the 1st Cavalry Brigade. Chase's groupment also included the Provisional Reconnaissance Squadron, which contained the division's own 302d Reconnaissance Troop and the headquarters and light tank companies of the attached 44th Tank Battalion.[13]

On the morning of 1 February the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, nucleus of one of the Flying Columns, forded the broad Pampanga north of Cabanatuan and by 1300 had established firm contact with a force of some 250 Japanese infantrymen supported by two or three 75-mm. artillery pieces.[14] The Japanese group held up the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, until the 1st Squadron, 8th Cavalry (not part of a Flying Column), forded the Pampanga south of Cabanatuan and fought its way into town against the Japanese rear. (*See Map 5.*) By dusk the two units had cleared most of Cabanatuan, and other elements of the 5th Cavalry finished mopping up the next

[12] After World War II the 1st Cavalry Division was triangularized and reorganized as an infantry division, but kept its name.

[13] 1st Cav Div FO's 22 and 23, 8 and 31 Jan 45; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, Org, pp. 1–2; Ltr, CG 1st Cav Div to Comdrs of Units and Separate Orgs, sub: Org of Reinforced Motorized Squadron, 31 Jan 45, 1st Cav Div FO File.

[14] The general sources for the rest of this subsection are: 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, Narrative, pp. 1–3; Maj. Bertram C. Wright, *The 1st Cavalry Division in World War II* (Tokyo: Toppan Printing Co., Ltd., 1947), pp. 126–28; 1st Cav Div G–3 Per Rpts, 1–3 Feb 45; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Per Rpts, 1–3 Feb 45; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–5; 5th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 1–3 Feb 45; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Manila Phase, p. 1; 302d Recn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–12; 44th Tank Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–7.

day. On 3 February the 12th Cavalry, responsible for protecting the division's long line of communications down Route 5, took over in the Cabanatuan region as all troops of the 5th and 8th Cavalry Regiments moved south behind the Flying Columns.

About the same time that 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, started into Cabanatuan from the north, the Provisional Reconnaissance Squadron forded the Pampanga about five miles south of town and by 1330 on 1 February was at Gapan, where, thirteen miles below Cabanatuan, Route 5 crosses the Peñaranda River. So far, the provisional unit had encountered no opposition as it sped south across hot, baked farm land, but Japanese rifle fire from the south bank of the Peñaranda killed Lt. Col. Tom H. Ross, commander of the Provisional Reconnaissance Squadron and the 44th Tank Battalion, as he led a patrol onto the Route 5 bridge at Gapan. Capt. Don H. Walton, commanding the 302d Reconnaissance Troop, immediately assumed control of the men at the Gapan bridge and, leading a dash across the span, probably forestalled its destruction. Walton's force, together with Troop G, 8th Cavalry, which arrived from the vicinity of Cabanatuan before dark, set up defensive perimeters to hold the Gapan bridge for the Flying Columns.

The main body of the leading Flying Column, built around the 2d Squadron, 8th Cavalry, passed through Gapan during the night of 1–2 February and by 0900 on the 2d was moving into Sabang, on the Angat River thirty-five miles south of Gapan and seven miles northeast of Plaridel.[15] The column, after establishing contact with the 37th Division, made no attempt to cross the Angat at Plaridel—the bridges were down and the area south of the Angat in the Plaridel region was in the 37th Division's zone. Accordingly, the Flying Column forded the Angat about five miles north of Plaridel in the vicinity of Baliuag, where, three years earlier, elements of MacArthur's withdrawing forces had delayed Japanese forces attempting to reach the Calumpit bridges along the Angat River bank roads through Plaridel.[16] The Flying Column's somewhat ticklish fording job—the river was wide, although not too deep at Baliuag—was accomplished as crowds of Filipinos cheered the cavalrymen on. To neither the 37th nor 1st Cavalry Divisions had the Japanese offered serious resistance along the natural defense line of the unbridged Angat.

While the 2d Squadron, 8th Cavalry, was busy near Baliuag, the other Flying Column had reached Sabang and, fording the Angat there, struck east through gently rising farm land along Route 65 toward Norzagaray, thirteen miles distant. The aim of this maneuver was to ascertain if *Shimbu Group* units believed to be holding high ground east and southeast of Norzagaray had any intentions of sallying forth to fall on the

[15] According to the 1st Cavalry Division G–3 Periodic Report for 1 February, as well as the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2d Cavalry Brigade, and division journals for the day, Troop G had reached Sabang on 1 February. From the time and distance factors involved—especially with a return to Gapan for the night—this seems impossible. From internal evidence in the journals it is obvious that as the result of garbled radio messages Gapan and Sabang were confused in more than one instance on both 1 and 2 February.

[16] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 206–08. Both Cabanatuan and Gapan had also been scenes of minor delaying actions during MacArthur's withdrawal; see Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

left flank of the 1st Cavalry Division. If the Flying Column met strong opposition, or if the Japanese attacked it, the 1st Cavalry Division might have to halt its advance toward Manila until it could bring up additional strength. If no serious threat developed, the 5th Cavalry's group would swing back southeast from Norzagaray and follow the 8th Cavalry's Flying Column across the Santa Maria River at Santa Maria, ten miles southeast of Baliuag. At dusk on 2 February patrols of the 8th Cavalry were approaching Santa Maria, having followed circuitous, third-class roads from Baliuag in order to keep out of the 37th Division's zone.

The Dash Into Manila

By evening of 2 February, XIV Corps had progressed well beyond the Malolos-Plaridel line that General Krueger, on 30 January, had named as the corps objective. The 1st Cavalry Division, on the left, had found no more signs of significant resistance than had the 37th Infantry Division on the right, and the corps had found no indications that *Shimbu Group* intended to mount a counterattack. Opposition had been tactically unimportant, and for the most part the few organized groups of Japanese XIV Corps had found had appeared surprised and unprepared.

This favorable situation along the XIV Corps front and left, together with the progress made by I Corps through 2 February and the success of XI Corps and 11th Airborne Division landings on Luzon's west coast on 29 and 31 January, respectively, prompted Krueger, late on the 2d, to direct Griswold to drive on to Manila with all possible speed. In addition to securing the capital city, XIV Corps was to advance beyond the city to a line extending from the Cavite naval base area, on Manila Bay south of the city, northeast some twenty-five miles and then north another ten miles. This line was drawn so as to include almost the entire Manila metropolitan region within XIV Corps' zone of responsibility.[17]

On the basis of Krueger's new orders, Griswold established an intermediate corps objective line along the north bank of the Pasig River, which flows east to west through the center of Manila. At this time the XIV Corps commander expected the 37th Division to reach the city first and make the main effort to clear it. He so drew the boundary between the 37th Infantry and the 1st Cavalry Divisions that all Manila proper, as well as its most direct approaches from the north, lay well within the 37th's zone. The cavalry division would have to move on the city via secondary roads coming in from the northeast and, theoretically at least, would be barred from entering Manila even should its Flying Columns reach the city first.[18]

[17] Sixth Army FO 47, 2 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 149.

[18] XIV Corps FO 5, 3 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 31 Jan–2 Feb 45. Although dated 3 February, this field order actually started going out to subordinate units by radio and telephone before midnight on the 2d. General Beightler, in Beightler Comments, 18 March 57, took exception to the reasoning in the last sentence of this paragraph, pointing out that the new boundary left the only intact bridge on the northern and northeastern approaches to Manila in the 1st Cavalry Division's zone, and that the 1st Cavalry Division therefore could hardly help entering Manila first. On the other hand, General Griswold could not have known that the Japanese would leave the bridge intact for the 1st Cavalry Division.

On 3 February the 37th Division's van unit, the 2d Battalion of the 148th Infantry, was delayed at a number of unbridged, unfordable, tidal streams, and also had to deploy three or four times to disperse small groups of Japanese. At 1930 on 3 February the main body of the battalion was less than two miles south of Marilao, which its patrols had reached the previous day.[19] In a race for Manila, the 148th was at a decided disadvantage. With most of the bridges over unfordable streams along Route 3 down or severely damaged, the regiment had to ferry its supporting artillery and tanks across streams or wait until engineers could construct bridges across the rivers.[20] Either course involved considerably more delay than that encountered by the 1st Cavalry Division, which had been able to seize intact some important bridges and had found relatively easy fords over unbridged streams.

Well aware that the 37th Division was moving on Manila, the 1st Cavalry Division's Flying Columns, determined to beat the infantry into the city "wasted" little time sleeping during the night of 2–3 February.[21] A small Japanese defense force held up the 5th Cavalry's Flying Column along the Sabang-Norzagaray road before midnight on 2 February, but the column was under way again at 0430 on the 3d when, as the moon rose, vehicle drivers could at least locate the shoulders of the gravel road. By dawn the Flying Column had found Norzagaray in the hands of Filipino guerrillas, and had then swung back southwest toward Santa Maria, almost ten miles away. Slowed as it forded bridgeless streams, the 5th Cavalry's motorized column was not across the Santa Maria River until 1500. Once across that stream, the column raced east along rough, gravel-paved Route 64 and quickly reached the Routes 64–52 junction, eight miles from Santa Maria.[22] Then the motorized squadron turned south along Route 52 and, moving at speeds up to fifty miles an hour,[23] endeavored to catch up with the 8th Cavalry's Flying Column, an hour ahead and through Talipapa, ten miles south of the Routes 64–52 junction.

At a minor road junction on flat, open ground near Talipapa, four Japanese trucks loaded with troops and supplies nosed out into Route 52 from the east just as the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, arrived from the north. Troops aboard the cavalry's leading vehicles waved the Japanese to a halt and, momentarily stupefied, the Japanese drivers complied. As each of the 5th Cavalry's vehicles

[19] 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–5; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 3–4 Feb 45.

[20] Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57. General Beightler stated that Griswold still did not want the 37th Division's infantry to get very far beyond its supporting arms.

[21] Information on 1st Cavalry Division operations in this subsection is based primarily upon the relevant portions of the narrative sources cited in note 14 above. The following were also consulted: 1st Cav Brig Jnl, 3–4 Feb 45; 1st Cav Div G–3 Jnl, 3–4 Feb 45; 5th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 3 Feb 45; 8th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 3–4 Feb 45.

[22] The 5th Cavalry could have reached this junction by coming southeast and south out of Norzagaray along a third-class road. However, such a route had been considered too risky because it was believed that strong Japanese forces held another junction some five miles north of the Routes 64–52 junction.

[23] The author, who went over the stretch of Route 52 in April 1957, when part of it had been paved, could only conclude that anyone who drove fifty miles an hour along the road in 1945, when it was almost all gravel at least to Novaliches, must have taken leave of his senses or else had abandoned his life to the hands of St. Christopher.



TULIAHAN BRIDGE (1953)

came within range of the Japanese group, the cavalrymen fired with all the weapons they could bring to bear, and continued shooting until they had passed on southward out of range. Within seconds the Flying Column's men had set afire four Japanese trucks and had killed at least 25 Japanese. The remaining Japanese, recovering their wits sufficiently to flee, scattered in all directions. Five miles from the nearest water that would float even a PT, the 5th Cavalry had executed the classic naval maneuver of crossing the T.

A few moments later, the 5th Cavalry's force caught up with General Chase's command group. The 5th was now less than half an hour behind the 8th Cavalry's Flying Column.

Delayed at fords and slowed as it deployed to disperse a few small groups of Japanese, the 8th Cavalry's groupment had not crossed the Santa Maria River until noon on the 3d. East of the river, two Japanese outposts, attempting to block Route 64, again slowed the column. The column then broke through light opposition at the Routes 64–52

junction and started into Novaliches, seven miles to the south, about 1630. Just south of Novaliches the Japanese had prepared demolitions to blow a stone-arch bridge over the Tuliahan River, and they defended the bridge by fire from the south bank. Despite this fire, Lt. (jg) James P. Sutton (USNR), from a Seventh Fleet bomb disposal unit attached to the 1st Cavalry Division, dashed onto the bridge to cut a burning fuze leading to a large charge of dynamite. Sutton then proceeded to heave some mines over the side of the bridge into the gorge through which ran the Tuliahan.[24]

Without Lieutenant Sutton's quick action, the 1st Cavalry Division's Flying Columns would have been delayed at least twenty-four hours until engineers could have brought forward heavy equipment to build a ford across the steep-banked, deep Tuliahan gorge. As it was, the 8th Cavalry's motorized force pushed on against very light opposition and secured Talipapa about 1800. Half an hour later the Flying Column reached Grace Park, a suburban development about a mile north of the Manila city limits.

Now twelve hours ahead of the nearest 37th Division units, the 8th Cavalry's group had reached the western limits of the 1st Cavalry Division's zone. Griswold had known since noon that the cavalrymen were going to arrive at Manila before the infantry, and he gave the 1st Cavalry Division permission to enter the city. Later in the day, anticipating that if he did not take some further action the two divisions might inadvertently start shooting at each other, the corps commander moved the division boundary westward. The 37th Division got a narrow, thickly populated, partially industrialized strip along the bay front; the rest of Manila went to the 1st Cavalry Division.[25]

The 8th Cavalry's Flying Column met scattered resistance in the Grace Park area, but with tanks in the van firing on all positions suspected of harboring Japanese, the column continued forward and crossed the city limits about 1900.[26] General Chase, in contact by radio, directed the Flying Column to speed on into Manila. Guided by guerrillas, the force followed city streets and swept past hidden Japanese riflemen who sniped away at the column and, about 1930, drew up at the gates of Santo Tomas University. Within the walls and held under close guard by the Japanese Army,

[24] For a combination of this action and a later mine-clearing exploit in Manila, Sutton was awarded the Army's Distinguished Service Cross. Although a naval officer, Sutton spent almost his entire overseas tour attached to Army units and his wartime decorations—the DSC, a Silver Star, and two Purple Hearts—were all awarded by the Army. After the war, Sutton served in the U.S. House of Representatives as a Congressman from Tennessee. Interview, author with Sutton, 24 June 1953, copy of interview notes in OCMH files.

[25] Rads, XIV Corps to 1st Cav Div and 37th Inf Div, 1225 and 2100 3 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 3–4 Feb 45; Amended Version, 2000 3 Feb 45, XIV Corps FO 5, 3 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 31 Jan–2 Feb 45.

[26] The exact time the squadron crossed the city limits is highly debatable, for the division's records give times running from 1730 to 1945. Most journal entries agreed that it was about 1830 when the squadron reached Grace Park and between 1930 and 1945 when the van units reached Santo Tomas University, well within the city. The question is further complicated by the difficulty of determining the exact locations of the city limits, for the 8th Cavalry found no defining signs and the Japanese, during the war, had moved the city boundaries to include some of the prewar suburbs. Thus the 8th Cavalry may well have crossed the city limits as defined by the Japanese when it reached Grace Park.

were almost 4,000 American and Allied civilian internees who were running dangerously low on food and medical supplies.

The Approach From the South

By evening on 3 February the Japanese defenders of Manila—and as yet the Sixth Army had little information concerning the nature of the city's defenses—were about to be squeezed between the two arms of a pincers. As the 37th Infantry and 1st Cavalry Divisions of Sixth Army were closing in from the north, the 11th Airborne Division of General Eichelberger's Eighth Army was approaching the capital from the south.

The Planning Background

Plans for the employment of the 11th Airborne Division on Luzon had undergone many changes. At one time the division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, had been prepared to drop in the Central Plains in front of Sixth Army forces driving south from Lingayen Gulf. GHQ SWPA had abandoned this plan when, as the Lingayen target date approached, the Allied Air Forces reported it would have neither sufficient airfields nor transport planes to lift the entire division at the time its employment would be most meaningful.[27] Next, MacArthur's headquarters made plans to use the division in a series of minor, diversionary operations along the southern and southwestern coasts of Luzon, ultimately narrowing the series to two RCT-sized landings on the south coast. But the employment of highly specialized troops for minor operations seemed wasteful and would tend to create almost insoluble problems of supply, command, and administration. Even two landings, one at Nasugbu on the southwest coast 45 miles from Manila and the other at Tayabas Bay, 75 miles east of Nasugbu, produced one major problem. To achieve desired results and to assure that the Japanese would not destroy the two RCT's in sequence, the landings would have to take place simultaneously.[28] The Allied Naval Forces, however, could not provide sufficient escorts and fire support vessels for two simultaneous landings. If, on the other hand, the 11th Airborne Division made a single assault at Nasugbu, the Allied Naval Forces could make both fire support ships and escorts available. The Navy could solve the support problems even more easily if the airborne units landed at Nasugbu shortly after XI Corps went ashore on Luzon's west coast north of Bataan, for

[27] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 7, 10.

[28] GHQ SWPA, MUSKETEER I, 10 Jul 44; GHQ SWPA Staff Study MIKE IV (Nasugbu-Balayan), 7 Nov 44, OPD File ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43), Sec. 8–G; GHQ SWPA Staff Study MIKE VI (Batangas–Tayabas Provinces), Ed. No. 1, 2 Jan 45; GHQ SWPA OI 86, 11 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 11 Jan 45; GHQ SWPA OI 87, 14 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 14 Jan 45; Memo, Chief Strategy Sec OPD for Chief Strategy and Policy Gp OPD, sub: Opn MIKE SIX, 13 Jan 45, atchd to OPD copy of GHQ SWPA Staff Study MIKE VI. During the course of planning for two RCT landings, Eighth Army suggested substituting Balayan Bay, fifteen miles southeast of Nasugbu, for Tayabas Bay, returning to the GHQ SWPA concept of MIKE IV, 7 November 1944. The planners found that the Balayan Bay landing would make little tactical sense when they learned that the only practical route inland from that bay led directly to the Nasugbu area, where a landing was to be made anyway. General Eichelberger stated that he had been opposed to the two separate landings idea from the beginning because he felt that the two small RCT's of the 11th Airborne Division would be chewed up in short order. Eichelberger Comments, 21 Jan 57.

many of the same support vessels could participate in both operations.[29]

A single landing at Nasugbu promised to produce other desirable results. For one, it would tend to pin Japanese forces in southern Luzon, preventing them from redeploying northward to oppose Sixth Army's drive to Manila. For another, from presumably good beaches at Nasugbu the 11th Airborne Division could drive toward Manila, fifty-five miles distant, along an excellent road. Upon reaching the shores of Laguna de Bay, a large fresh-water lake lying southeast of Manila and separated from Manila Bay by the narrow Hagonoy Isthmus, the division could cut the main southern routes of reinforcement and withdrawal to and from the capital. Again, the Nasugbu beaches might prove an excellent place to land the 41st Infantry Division, a GHQ Reserve unit that was scheduled to move to Luzon to reinforce Sixth Army. Finally, the 11th Airborne Division could easily secure the Nasugbu beachhead against Japanese counterattack, since all the approaches to it ran through narrow passes in rugged hill country. No other landing points in southern Luzon combined the obvious advantages of Nasugbu Bay.

On 20 January, having weighed all the pros and cons, General Eichelberger recommended to General MacArthur that the 11th Airborne Division make a single landing at Nasugbu Bay. The Eighth Army's commander intended to send the division's two glider-infantry RCT's ashore in an amphibious assault and then push them inland about twenty miles along Route 17 to Tagaytay Ridge where the highway, having come east across steadily rising ground, turns sharply north and runs gradually down hill to Manila Bay. Two or three days after the landing at Nasugbu, the 11th Airborne Division's 511th Parachute Infantry would drop on Tagaytay Ridge to secure it for the foot troops and to seize nearby stretches of Route 17 before the Japanese could assemble to defend the highway. Once the entire division had assembled along Tagaytay Ridge, it would make ready to drive northward to Manila.[30]

While approving Eichelberger's plans for a single assault at Nasugbu, MacArthur's concept of the 11th Airborne Division's employment was by no means as ambitious, at least initially, as Eighth Army's. Instead, MacArthur directed Eichelberger to land one RCT at Nasugbu Bay in a reconnaissance-in-force to ascertain Japanese strength, deployment, and intentions in the Nasugbu-Tagaytay region. If it appeared that the Japanese had relatively weak forces at Tagaytay Ridge, then Eichelberger could assemble the entire division there and reconnoiter to the north and east to determine Japanese dispositions and to contain Japanese forces throughout southwestern Luzon—rather a far cry from mounting a drive

[29] GHQ SWPA OI 86, 11 Jan 45; Rad, CTF 77 to CTF 78, 0225 18 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–18 Jan 45; Memo, ACofS G–3 Eighth Army for CofS Eighth Army, 19 Jan 45; Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Eighth Army for ACofS G–3 Eighth Army, sub: Plan for MIKE VI Opn, 21 Jan 45; Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Eighth Army for ACofS G–3 Eighth Army, sub: Topics Discussed at Conference . . . , 22 Jan 45. Last three in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI Opn, 4–25 Jan 45.

[30] Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, FB–769, 20 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 4–25 Jan 45; Eighth Army FO 17, 22 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 24 Jan 45.

to Manila. MacArthur set the date for the Nasugbu assault for 31 January, two days after XI Corps was to land north of Bataan.[31]

The organization and missions of the forces involved in the small-scale Nasugbu landing were similar to those of previous amphibious operations undertaken within the Southwest Pacific Area. Task Group 78.2, under Rear Adm. William M. Fechteler, loaded and landed the assault troops. The task group numbered about 120 ships and landing craft of all types, its largest vessels being APD's and LST's. Fire support was provided by Task Unit 77.3.1, which consisted of a light cruiser and two destroyers. Planes of the 310th Bombardment Wing, based on Mindoro, provided air support.[32]

The 11th Airborne Division, which had been seasoned during the Leyte Campaign, numbered approximately 8,200 men. Its two glider-infantry regiments, the 187th and 188th, had about 1,500 men apiece (half the strength of a standard infantry regiment) and each contained two battalions of three rifle companies each. The regiments had no heavy weapons, cannon, or antitank companies. The 511th Parachute Infantry totaled about 2,000 men distributed among three battalions, each of which contained only three rifle companies. Artillery consisted of two 75-mm. pack howitzer battalions, a 105-mm. howitzer battalion armed with a short barrel howitzer that lacked the range of the 105's of a standard infantry division, and an airborne antiaircraft artillery battalion armed with 40-mm. and .50-caliber guns. Reinforcements included the Cannon Company of the 24th Division's 21st Infantry; Company C of the 532d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, the 2d Engineer Special Brigade; two antiaircraft automatic weapons batteries; and various service units. A Mindoro-based battalion of the 24th Division's 19th Infantry was available on call.[33]

The 11th Airborne Division expected to meet 7,000 Japanese in the Nasugbu-Tagaytay area, the bulk of them from the *17th* and *31st Infantry Regiments, 8th Division.* The airborne unit believed that about 500 Japanese defended the shores of Nasugbu Bay and that the main Japanese force, some 5,000 strong, held Route 17 at Tagaytay Ridge and a defile a few miles west of the ridge where the highway passed between the peaks of two extinct volcanoes.[34]

The estimates were correct in general but wrong in detail. *Shimbu Group,* responsible for the conduct of operations in southern Luzon, had entrusted the defense of the region south of Manila to the *Fuji Force,* a composite unit under Col. Masatoshi Fujishige, who also commanded the *8th Division*'s *17th In-*

[31] Rads, MacArthur to Eichelberger, C–56806 and CX–56903, 22 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 4–25 Jan 45.

[32] TG 78.2 Opn Plan No. 1–45, 23 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 4–25 Jan 45; AAF SWPA OI 86, 15 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 18 Jan 45.

[33] 11th A/B Div FO 10, 24 Jan 45; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, p. 57; Maj. Edward M. Flanagan, Jr., *The Angels: A History of the 11th Airborne Division, 1943–1946* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), pp. 1–2; Eighth Army FO 17, 22 Jan 45, and Amendment No. 1, 26 Jan 45, both in G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 24 Jan 45; Rad, GHQ SWPA to Eighth Army, CX–57342, 1 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 26 Jan–2 Feb 45.

[34] 11th A/B Div FO 10, 24 Jan 45.

fantry.[35] Numbering some 8,500 men, the *Fuji Force* was composed of the *17th Infantry*, less *3d Battalion*; the *3d Battalion, 31st Infantry*; a battalion of mixed artillery; and combat engineers and service troops of the *8th Division*. Co-operating with Colonel Fujishige (and soon to pass to his direct command) were about 5,000 troops of the *2d Surface Raiding Base Force*, a Japanese Army organization made up of suicide boat units, called *Surface Raiding Squadrons*, and their base support units, designated *Surface Raiding Base Battalions*.[36] The *Raiding Squadrons*, on paper, each contained 100 suicide boats and a like number of men; each *Base Battalion* numbered about 900 troops, most of them service personnel. Five or six of the *Raiding Squadrons*, which had lost most of their boats to Allied air and naval action before or shortly after the 11th Airborne Division's landing, ultimately became available to Colonel Fujishige, as did an equal number of the *Base Battalions*. Normally, the squadrons were amalgamated with their support battalions to form a single entity for ground combat operations.

With a large area and an extensive coast line to hold, Fujishige originally deployed the bulk of his troops for defense against an Allied attack from the south rather than the west. In the area of immediate interest to the 11th Airborne Division he stationed his *West Sector Unit*, an organization of 2,250 troops built on a nucleus of the *3d Battalion, 31st Infantry*. The *West Sector Unit*'s largest concentration—600 infantry with artillery support—held the defile just west of Tagaytay Ridge, while another 400 infantrymen defended a southwestern nose of the ridge. The *West Sector Unit* had only 100 troops at or near Nasugbu; the remaining men were scattered in small garrisons throughout southwestern Luzon.

The Seizure of Tagaytay Ridge

The 11th Airborne Division, less the 511th Parachute Infantry, staged on the shores of Leyte Gulf, whence the Task Group 78.2 convoy departed for Nasugbu Bay during the afternoon of 27 January.[37] The voyage to the objective area was uneventful. After destroyers conducted a short preliminary bombardment, assault troops of the 1st Battalion, 188th Glider Infantry, aboard LCP (R)'s (Landing Craft, Personnel, Ramp), launched from APD's, beached about 0815. While some troops moved off to secure the flanks of the beachhead, the main body of the 188th Infantry drove inland through the town of Nasugbu and started southeastward along gravel roads toward the Palico River and the entrance to the section of Route 17 that led to Tagaytay Ridge. The Japanese

[35] Japanese information in this and the following two subsections is mainly from: 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–16, 27–28; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 2–3, 8; Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpts 76 and 77, 21 and 28 Feb 45, copies in G–2 DA Files; Statement of Lt Col Norio Tsutsumi (CO *2d Surface Raiding Base Force*), States, IV, 426–28; Statement of Lt Col Tsugunori Kuriya (Staff *14th Area Army*), States, II, 371–73; 10th I&H, Staff Study of Japanese Operations in the Batangas Area (Nasugbu Operation), *passim*.

[36] Many different translations from the Japanese are to be found for these forces, squadrons, and battalions.

[37] The general sources for this and the next subsection are: Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu and Bataan Opns, pp. 14–20; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 67–77; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–4, 16, 27–28; 11th A/B Div Hist Narrative MIKE SIX, pp. 1–3; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 1–5 Feb 45; TG 78.2 Action Rpt Nasugbu, pp. 4–6.

had opposed the landing lightly and ineffectively with rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire from positions on hills north and south of the beach.[38]

By 1115 General Eichelberger was satisfied that the initial landing, conducted as a reconnaissance-in-force, had been successful beyond expectation. He thereupon directed the rest of the 11th Airborne Division—still less the parachute regiment—to land.[39] All combat troops of the first day's convoy were ashore by 1230, by which time artillery had started inland and the 187th Infantry, sending its 2d Battalion toward the Palico River, had relieved rear elements of the 188th.

The 188th Infantry's first important objective was a Palico River bridge carrying the shortest and best route to Tagaytay Ridge over a gorge 250 feet wide and 85 feet deep. Lying five miles inland, the Palico bridge could hold the 11th Airborne Division's heaviest loads. If the division could not seize the bridge intact, it would have to ford a river south of Nasugbu and work its way along poor roads to Route 17 east of the Palico crossing, a time-consuming process that would require considerable engineer effort and slow supply movements.

But the action went well with the 188th Infantry on 31 January.[40] The 1st Battalion ran down an open hill west of the bridge, dashed across the span, and surprised a small group of Japanese on the east bank. Apparently stunned by the sudden, unexpected appearance of American forces, the Japanese failed to explode prepared demolitions. By 1500 the entire 188th Infantry and the attached 2d Battalion, 187th Infantry, were across the Palico and at the junction of Route 17 with the main road from Nasugbu, now five miles to the west.

Hoping to continue achieving tactical surprise and planning to have troops on Tagaytay Ridge before dark on 1 February, Eichelberger directed the 11th Airborne Division to advance inland with all possible speed. He thought that the entire division, including the 511th Infantry, could assemble on Tagaytay Ridge on the 2d, and in anticipation asked the Fifth Air Force to drop the parachutists on the 2d instead of the 3d as originally planned. He also requested GHQ SWPA to ship the entire 19th Infantry, 24th Division, to Nasugbu from Mindoro to protect the 11th Airborne Division's line of communications to Tagaytay Ridge and release all the airborne unit for the advance toward Manila. The Fifth Air Force replied affirmatively, but General MacArthur agreed only to make another battalion of the 19th Infantry available in addition to the one that was already under Eichelberger's control and loading for Luzon.[41]

[38] Swing Comments, 10 Jan 57.

[39] Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur (via Navy channels), 0245 31 Jan 45, in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 26 Jan–2 Feb 45.

[40] Additional information on regimental operations is from: 188th Gli Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–4; 188th Para–Gli Inf, Draft Hist Luzon Campaign, 31 Jan–31 Mar 45, *passim*; 188th Inf S–3 Per Rpts Luzon; 187th Inf S–3 Per Rpts Luzon; 187th Inf Chron Narrative MIKE VI; 1st Bn 187th Inf Chron Narrative MIKE VI, 26 Jan–24 Feb 45. Last four documents are in 11th Airborne Division Camp Campbell (Ky.) collection.

[41] Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, 0245 31 Jan 45; Rad, MacArthur to Eichelberger, CX–57342, 1 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 26 Jan–2 Feb 45; TG 78.2 Action Rpt Nasugbu, Chron Order of Events, p. 4.

At 1800 on 31 January the 188th Infantry's advance elements halted four miles along Route 17 beyond the Palico bridge. The regiment resumed the advance at 0100 on 1 February, heading for the defile west of Tagaytay Ridge. As the lead troops approached the defile at first light, Japanese machine gun and rifle fire stopped them; when dawn broke, Japanese artillery emplaced on high ground to the left front of the 188th Infantry forced the regiment's point to withdraw slightly.

Ground and air reconnaissance disclosed that the Japanese defenses were centered on the bare, steep, southern and eastern slopes of Mt. Cariliao, north of the highway, and along the open and more rugged northern slopes of Mt. Batulao, south of the road. Raising its broken, scrub-grown crest over 2,100 feet above sea level and 1,300 feet above the Route 17 defile, Mt. Cariliao provided the Japanese with excellent defensive terrain, while the rough slopes of Mt. Batulao, almost 2,700 feet high, afforded almost innumerable hideaways. To the 11th Airborne Division, approaching along ground that gave little concealment in patches of scrub growth, the key to the Japanese defenses appeared to be Mt. Aiming, a sharp, bare height of some 1,180 feet off the southeastern slopes of Mt. Cariliao. Picking its way through what cover and concealment it could find, including a sharp gorge on the north side of Route 17, Company A of the 188th Infantry secured a foothold on the southern slopes of Mt. Aiming about noon on 1 February. The remainder of the 1st Battalion followed quickly, and in the face of Japanese machine gun and mortar fire, rapidly cleared all Mt. Aiming. This achievement split the Japanese defenses at the defile and helped reduce the volume of point-blank machine gun and rifle fire that had held up the division, which now made preparations to continue the advance on 2 February with one battalion along Route 17 and another overrunning Japanese defenses on the northern slopes of Mt. Batulao.

The delay occasioned by the fight at the defile on 1 February dashed General Eichelberger's hopes for assembling the entire division on Tagaytay Ridge by dusk on 2 February. General MacArthur had instructed Eichelberger not to call the 511th Parachute Infantry forward until he was certain that the paratroopers could make contact with the rest of the 11th Airborne Division within twenty-four hours of their drop. Since it appeared by evening on 1 February that the division might well have to spend all day on 2 February fighting its way through the defile, Eichelberger reluctantly changed the parachute drop back to 3 February.[42]

Despite strong close support by Fifth Air Force planes and division artillery, the 188th Infantry could make little progress on the morning of 2 February. However, momentum picked up shortly after 1200 when troops broke through to barrio Aga, a mile and a half east of Mt. Aiming. The Japanese had hurriedly abandoned Aga, the site of the *West Sector Unit*'s command post, and had left behind large stores of ammunition, engineer equipment, and other supplies of all sorts, including many

[42] Rad, MacArthur to Eichelberger, C–56806, 22 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 4–25 Jan 45; Rad, Eighth Army to Fifth Air Force, FB–839, 1 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 26 Jan–2 Feb 45.

weapons. By 1800 on the 2d the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry, now leading the attack along Route 17, was three miles beyond Aga and only two miles short of the west end of Tagaytay Ridge. The advance halted for the night and the battalion prepared to resume its drive at 0830 on the 3d to make contact with the 511th Parachute Infantry, scheduled to start dropping on Tagaytay Ridge at 0815.

On the morning of 3 February the 188th Infantry met no resistance until after 1000, when it began rounding a bare ridge nose on the north side of a sharp bend on Route 17 at the western end of Tagaytay Ridge. Japanese troops holding another steep, bare ridge nose south of the bend then opened up with rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire that was augmented by artillery fire from emplacements north of the highway. Leaving one battalion to deal with this new opposition, the rest of the reinforced regiment pressed on up Tagaytay Ridge along Route 17 and, about 1300, at a point nearly two miles beyond the bend, made contact with men of the 511th Parachute Infantry.

Unopposed, about 1,750 troops of the 511th had begun dropping along Tagaytay Ridge just about on schedule.[43] It was well that there was no opposition, for the 'troopers had landed in an inordinately scattered fashion. The drop zone selected for the 511th Infantry centered a mile and a half north-northeast of the Route 17 bend and was situated along the fairly gentle, grassy northern slopes of Tagaytay Ridge. Less than a third of the parachutists landed in the selected area.

The first echelon of the 511th Infantry, about 915 officers and men in all, had come to Tagaytay Ridge aboard 48 C–47 aircraft of the 317th Troop Carrier Group. The planes had flown north from Mindoro to approach Tagaytay Ridge from the northeast in order to avoid fire from Japanese antiaircraft weapons west of the drop zone. The first 18 planes, carrying about 345 troops, dropped over the assigned area. At this juncture, planes from succeeding flights were nearly six miles and three minutes behind the lead aircraft. About 0820 one of these later planes dumped out a couple of bundles of supplies. Taking this as a signal that they were over the proper drop zone, 'troopers of the succeeding 30 planes began jumping. Aircraft pilots, realizing they had not yet reached the proper point, attempted to halt the jumping, but the 511th's jumpmasters continued sending the paratroopers out. Most of them landed almost five miles east-northeast of the assigned drop zone.

A second group of fifty-one C–47's began approaching the drop area about 1210. Some 80 men from the first 5 aircraft of this group landed in the proper place. The rest started out of their planes when they saw on the ground the collapsed chutes of the first misplaced jump. In the end, of the men jumping on 3 February only 425 landed on the assigned drop zone; the others, about 1,325 in all, made scattered land-

[43] Additional sources for 511th Infantry operations are: 511th Inf S–1, S–2, and S–3 Jnls (incomplete) Luzon, 11th A/B Div Camp Campbell (Ky.) collection; Ltr, CG Fifth Air Force to CG Eighth Army, 4 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 2–19 Feb 45, with atchd Mission Rpts, 317th Tr Carrier Gp; 511th Inf S–1 Casualty and Inspection Rpts Luzon.



AIRDROP ON TAGAYTAY RIDGE

ings four and one-half to six miles to the east and northeast.

The 11th Airborne Division, blaming the 317th Troop Carrier Group for the premature dropping, reported that the "true reason was the refusal of the Air Force to co-operate in a combined training program for Airborne and Air Force troops . . . ."[44] While it is true that many of the 317th's pilots had no experience in parachute operations, the division's records indicate that the division had participated in a significant amount of combined training in the United States and again in New Guinea. In any event, it appears that some lack of jump discipline within the 511th Infantry contributed to the scattered, premature jumping.

Whether the jump was necessary is a question that cannot be answered categorically. Certainly, the drop was not

[44] 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, p. 4.

required to secure Tagaytay Ridge—there were no Japanese there and elements of the 188th Infantry were already on the west end of the ridge before the first paratroopers were out of their planes. On the other hand, with the Allied Naval Forces short of amphibious lift and escorts to move the regiment any sooner, the 511th Infantry, coming from Mindoro by sea and then overland from Nasugbu, could not have reached Tagaytay Ridge until late on 4 February at the earliest. In such an event the 11th Airborne Division, with insufficient strength to continue toward Manila, might have been forced to wait along the ridge another day, giving the Japanese ample time to redeploy forces to defend Route 17 north of the ridge. Eichelberger hoped that the division could move in strength on Manila during 3 February and catch off balance the defenders south of the city. Whatever the case, the day or two saved by the 511th Infantry's jump would prove to make no difference, for the Japanese had already fully manned strong defenses at the southern outskirts of Manila, though Eighth Army and the 11th Airborne Division could not know this on the basis of available information.

To the Outskirts of Manila

Luckily for the 511th Infantry, the area where the bulk of its men hit the ground was not too impossible, although many of the 'troopers had landed in or among banana trees. The regiment suffered about 50 jump casualties—a low rate of less than 3 percent—of whom all but two were listed as "slightly injured." One man was killed and another was carried on the casualty lists as seriously injured.[45] Despite the organizational problems the scattered jump created, Col. Orin D. Haugen, commanding the 511th Infantry, had all his troops under his control by 1400. He dispatched patrols westward to establish contact with the 188th Infantry, and his men, encountering no opposition, secured the eastern end of Tagaytay Ridge where Route 17 turned sharply north and downhill toward Manila. Haugen also sent patrols out along roads and trails leading north and south from the ridge crest and at evening reported to division headquarters that he had found no signs of Japanese.

Generals Eichelberger and Swing now intended to have the reinforced 188th Infantry hold Tagaytay Ridge and reduce the Japanese pocket on the western nose while the 511th Infantry pushed north toward Manila with all possible speed. Swing sent all of his available motor transportation forward to Tagaytay Ridge to move the 511th Infantry northward in battalion-sized shuttles and directed the 188th Infantry to follow when ready.

This plan constituted a change in mission for the 11th Airborne Division. MacArthur's original instructions to Eichelberger had envisaged that the division's primary duties would be to contain Japanese forces in southern Luzon and patrol to ascertain Japanese dispositions and intentions in its area of respon-

[45] General Swing, commenting on this passage, stated that he could not recall any fatalities (Swing Comments, 10 January 1957), but the division's records indicate that one man was either killed or later died of injuries. The division records being incomplete and confusing on this point, it may be that the two men listed in the subject sentence were one and the same.

sibility. Manifestly, the division could not carry out these duties if it drove north to Manila. Eichelberger's authority to change the mission apparently derived from personal contact with MacArthur, who had given the Eighth Army commander considerable discretion on the handling of the 11th Airborne Division.[46]

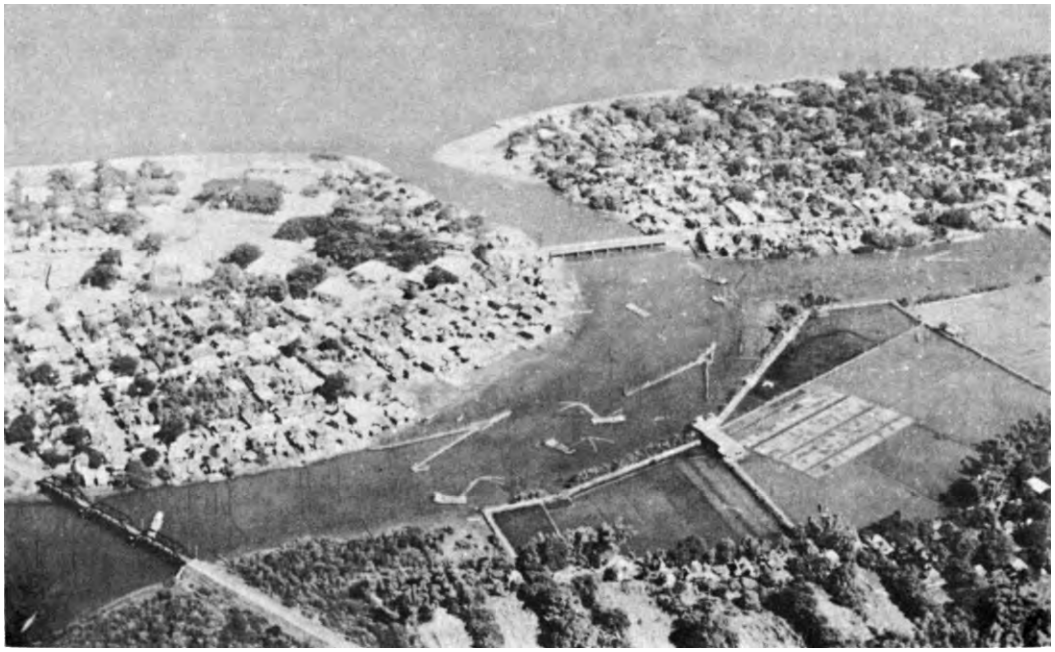
Eichelberger's hopes that the 11th Airborne Division could start its dash to Manila on 3 February did not come to fruition. It was after daylight on the 4th before the 2d Battalion, 511th Infantry, already over twelve hours behind Sixth Army elements coming into the city from the north, set out from Tagaytay Ridge. Moving as fast as the elementary requirements of caution permitted, the battalion sped rapidly northward along two-lane, concrete-paved Route 17. At every town and barrio through the open country crowds of cheering Filipinos greeted the column and, once or twice, practically halted the movement in their enthusiasm.

About 1130 forward elements detrucked at Imus, a small town almost twenty-five miles north of Tagaytay Ridge. The Route 17 bridge over the Imus River just south of the town was out, and about fifty Japanese, holed up in an old stone building dating back to the early days of the Spanish occupation, blocked an alternate bridge within Imus. Most of the infantry walked across the river along the top of a small dam south of town, while Company D, 511th Infantry, supported by some 75-mm. howitzers of the 674th Field Artillery, undertook to reduce the Japanese strongpoint so that the trucks could continue up Route 17. The 5-foot-thick walls of the old building proved impervious to the light artillery shells, so T. Sgt. Robert C. Steele climbed to the building's roof, knocked a hole through the roofing, poured in gasoline, and started a fine flash fire inside with a white phosphorus hand grenade. As the Japanese came dashing out, they were summarily cut down by the men of Company D. Steele personally dispatched two Japanese who remained inside the building.[47]

With the Imus bridge secure, the parachute battalion drove on another three miles to Zapote. Here, Route 17 ended at a junction with Route 25, which led another half mile northeast across the Zapote River to a junction with Route 1 a mile south of a bridge over the Las Piñas River at Las Piñas. The Japanese had prepared the Las Piñas bridge for demolitions and were to defend it from positions on the north bank, but the men

[46] Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu-Bataan, p. 22; Eichelberger and MacKaye, *Our Jungle Road to Tokyo*, p. 189. Both Maj. Gen. Clovis E. Byers (contemporary Chief of Staff, Eighth Army) and Brig. Gen. Frank S. Bowen (Eichelberger's G–3) stated that Eichelberger received supplementary verbal instructions from MacArthur. (See Ltr, Byers to author, 30 Jun 53, in OCMH files.) Eichelberger, reviewing the draft manuscript of this volume, stated that before the 11th Airborne Division departed Leyte, General Sutherland (MacArthur's chief of staff) came to Eighth Army headquarters on Leyte and stated that MacArthur wanted Eichelberger to capture Manila. (See Eichelberger Comments, 21 Jan 57.) No documents relevant to the change can be found in available GHQ SWPA, Eighth Army, or 11th Airborne Division files. Whatever the case, there can be no doubt that General Eichelberger would have liked a share in the honor of seizing Manila and that he would dearly have loved to beat Sixth Army into the capital city.

[47] Steele was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for this exploit. Tragically, the award had to be made posthumously, for the sergeant was killed a few days later in Manila.



PARAÑAQUE, *four miles south of Manila, where on 4 February the Japanese stopped the 511th Infantry.*

of the 511th Infantry caught the Japanese by surprise and secured the span intact after a short, sharp fire fight. The 2d Battalion held at Las Piñas while the 1st Battalion, coming north on a second truck shuttle from Tagaytay Ridge, passed through and continued toward Manila.

Driving through a densely populated area and following Route 1 up the shore of Manila Bay, the 1st Battalion left Las Piñas behind at 1800. The battalion ran into increasingly heavy harassing fire from Japanese riflemen and machine gunners. At Parañaque, two miles beyond Las Piñas, the unit found a bridge across the Parañaque River badly damaged, defended by Japanese on the north bank, and covered by Japanese mortar and artillery fire originating from Nichols Field, a mile and a half to the northeast. Here, only four miles south of the Manila city limits,[48] the Japanese stopped the 511th Infantry.

On 4 February the 511th Infantry, in various clashes, lost 8 men killed and 19 wounded. The entire 11th Airborne Division, since its landing, had lost approximately 35 men killed and 150 wounded, plus 50 injured in the Tagaytay Ridge jump. The division now faced the principal Japanese defenses south of Manila.

[48] The same questions as to the location of the city limits arise here as in the case of the 1st Cavalry Division. See above, n. 26.

Support Operations During the Approach March

Logistical Problems

One of the major problems the XIV Corps and the 11th Airborne Division faced during their drives to Manila was logistical in nature, deriving from the speed of the advances, the distances covered, the chronic shortages of motor transportation, and the destruction of bridges.[49] General Krueger's request of 20 January that the Allied Air Forces cease knocking out bridges on Luzon proved of little help to XIV Corps. By that time most of the bridges that the Allied Air Forces, the Japanese, or the Filipino guerrillas ever intended to destroy in the XIV Corps zone were already down.

It is well-nigh impossible to ascertain to whom the credit for bridge destruction on Luzon should go, for the cycle of demolitions, repairs, and redestruction was often quite involved. For example, in 1941–42 General MacArthur's withdrawing forces had destroyed fifteen major highway bridges and four major railroad bridges between the Agno River and Manila.[50] Part of this destruction had not been too successful, and the Japanese had had little trouble repairing some spans, such as those at Cabanatuan and Gapan. In 1945 the 1st Cavalry Division was able to send its heaviest loads across both bridges after engineers made relatively minor repairs. While the Japanese had repaired many spans for heavy loads, they had replaced others with light, wooden structures that could not bear Sixth Army loads. In 1945 the Japanese not only demolished bridges they had once repaired but also knocked out many spans that MacArthur's forces had not needed to destroy in 1941–42. While the Allied Air Forces bombed many of the bridges in the Central Plains (and in southern Luzon as well), it appears that the Japanese executed most of the bridge destruction south from the Agno to Manila during January and February 1945, a conclusion borne out by guerrilla reports and because the type of destruction accomplished usually resulted from carefully placed demolition charges rather than aerial bombardment. The extent of Japanese plans for bridge destruction is indicated by the fact that almost all the bridges the XIV Corps and the 11th Airborne Division captured intact had been prepared for demolition. The Allied Air Forces, and carrier-based planes too, did destroy or damage some bridges, while the guerrillas also had a hand in some of the destruction, or at least prevented the Japanese from effecting permanent repairs after 9 January.

To span the many streams on the way to Manila, Sixth Army engineers leapfrogged bridging equipment southward, sending ponton and heavy treadway bridging forward as Baileys and other semipermanent crossings were erected over the Agno River and other streams back to Lingayen Gulf. For example, at the Sulipan Canal, a mile north of Calumpit, the first bridge was a light pon-

[49] The general sources for this subsection are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, III, 55, 115; *ibid.*, IV, 86–89, 108, 118, 134, 143–44; Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu-Bataan, pp. 22, 50–54, 57, 71; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 37, 197–99, 210–11; 117th Engr Bn Rpt, 8 Jan–4 Feb 45, p. 11; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, p. 408.

[50] Ltr, Col Harry A. Skerry (Ret.), in 1942 the Engineer North Luzon Force and I Philippine Corps, to author, 26 Jun 53, copy in OCMH files. See also Morton, *Fall of the Philippines, passim.*

ton affair that the 530th Engineer Light Ponton Company set up on 1 February. On the next day heavy ponton equipment arrived from a dismantled bridge over the Bued River at Lingayen Gulf, and by 1030 on the 2d the 556th Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion, having worked at a feverish pace, had completed a new bridge that could carry 16-ton loads across the canal. As soon as the larger Sulipan bridge was in place, trucks laden with heavy treadway bridging dismantled from the Agno River crossing at Bayambang came over the canal on their way to the Pampanga River at Calumpit. The heavy treadway that the Sixth Army engineers had trucked south proved sixty feet too short to span the Pampanga but, improvising with all sorts of equipment, the 37th Division's 117th Engineer Battalion was able to complete the crossing. According to General Beightler, this contretemps at the Pampanga held up the 37th Division for a full day on its way to Manila while the division waited for its supporting tanks and artillery to cross the river.[51]

As soon as the Pampanga bridge was ready, the 530th Light Ponton Company dismantled the bridge they had erected across the Sulipan Canal and moved it south to the Bigaa River. Still further south, at Meycauyan, engineers assembled another ponton bridge, using sections removed from the Agno River at Villasis in I Corps' zone, where other engineers had completed a Bailey bridge. By a complex continuation of such processes, the engineers assured a constant flow of supplies and heavy equipment down Route 3 behind the 37th Division.

In the 1st Cavalry Division's zone the first major, unbridged water obstacle was the Angat River. After most of the division had crossed that stream via fords in the vicinity of Baliuag and Sabang, engineers began constructing a heavy treadway bridge, using equipment originally earmarked for the Pampanga River at Cabanatuan but not needed there. The cavalry seized the Tuliahan bridge near Novaliches on 3 February, but the next night a Japanese raiding party destroyed it—the division's security was not good enough. Since the Tuliahan was unfordable, an acute supply problem immediately arose and, worse still, the main body of the 1st Cavalry Division could not get into Manila for two days, leaving General Chase's Flying Columns virtually isolated at Santo Tomas University. On 4 and 5 February the division sent supplies to General Chase's force over roads and bridges in the 37th Division's zone, but on the 6th engineers built a ford near Novaliches and supplies again started crossing the Tuliahan.

Japanese infiltration parties continued to harass the 1st Cavalry Division's rather exposed, easterly supply route. Therefore, when XIV Corps engineers completed a bridge over the Angat at Plaridel, the division abandoned the Novaliches route and sent its traffic south along Route 5 three miles from Plaridel to the Routes 3–5 junction at Tabang and thence into the city. Needless to say, bridge congestion became chronic between Tabang and Manila, a situation that obtained for many crossings in XIV Corps' area. Engineers at first had been able to erect only one-lane spans at each stream. As a result, on one side of a river Manila-bound traffic soon jammed up, while on the other empty vehicles returning northward for another load

[51] Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

created a second traffic jam. Only constant, carefully co-ordinated efforts of traffic control officers prevented complete chaos.

Having captured most of the bridges along its route of advance, the 11th Airborne Division encountered no serious crossing problems until it reached the Parañaque River. Initially, the division employed small rafts made from rubber assault boats to move its supplies and equipment across the Parañaque, but within a few days division engineers had completed temporary timber repairs at the damaged Parañaque span and vehicles began crossing.

Even with adequate bridging installed, the XIV Corps and the 11th Airborne Division continued to face knotty transportation problems. The speed and distances involved in the advances toward Manila meant that all trucks were in almost constant use. All other available motor transport also had to be employed. Dukws, not designed for the job, made long overland hauls; jeeps and engineer flat-bed trailers, often overloaded, carried general supplies; LVT's, employed as ferries at many rivers, also sometimes carried cargo for long distances overland. The demands on maintenance personnel and equipment became abnormally heavy, even though vehicles were in such constant use that it was nearly impossible to pull them off duty for the most pressing repairs. If maintenance officers and men verged on nervous breakdowns, they can hardly be blamed. Trucks consumed tires at an alarming rate, especially over gravel roads in the 1st Cavalry Division's sector and along a particularly vicious stretch of sharp gravel along Route 17 between Nasugbu and Tagaytay Ridge.

Another problem arose in the 11th Airborne Division's zone. The beaches at Nasugbu, contrary to expectations, proved unsatisfactory for discharging LST's. From time to time it became relatively difficult to supply even the small 11th Airborne Division over these beaches, and the adverse conditions there convinced planners that it would be impracticable to unload and supply the 41st Infantry Division through Nasugbu. Plans to employ the 41st Division on Luzon were thereupon dropped.[52]

None of the problems proved insoluble, and troops at the front were never without at least the bare minimum of essential supplies. For a time the 11th Airborne Division faced a serious gasoline shortage, but this was eliminated when, on 5 February, C–47's began flying drums of gasoline to a hastily prepared airstrip at Nasugbu. Later, cargo planes dropped general supplies along Tagaytay Ridge, thereby overcoming the inadequacies of the Nasugbu beaches, shortening the division's supply line, and reducing the problem of tire wear. Nevertheless, the 11th Airborne Division was unable to eliminate all of its supply problems until it began receiving supplies from the north, through Manila.

In the 1st Cavalry Division General Chase's Flying Columns, reduced to two K-ration meals per day, went a bit hungry on 4 and 5 February after the Japanese destroyed the Novaliches bridge. Practically the only other supply problem in the 37th Infantry Division and 1st Cavalry Division sectors evolved from

[52] Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur (via Navy channels), 0955 31 Jan 45, and Rad, MacArthur to Eichelberger, CX–57342, 1 Feb 45, both in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 26 Jan–2 Feb 45. See also above, p. 222, and below, ch. XXIV.

delays incident to the installation of heavy bridging that trucks, tanks, and artillery could cross. As the result of such delays, supporting units sometimes did not get forward as rapidly as the infantry and cavalry unit commanders desired.

Thus, it is obvious that the success of the dash to Manila depended in large measure upon the success of Engineer, Transportation, and Quartermaster units. That the dash was successful is ample testimony to the effectiveness with which these supporting units operated.

Air Support Operations

While the XIV Corps and the 11th Airborne Division required few close air support missions during their drives toward Manila, air power assumed an important role in the operations.[53] The 511th Parachute Infantry drop is one case in point. On XIV Corps' left, air operations attained perhaps more significance. With its left exposed, the 1st Cavalry Division depended in large measure upon air for its flank protection. Beginning on 1 February Marine Air Groups 24 and 32, flying from the recently completed Mangaldan strip near Lingayen Gulf, kept nine SBD's (Douglas dive bombers) over the cavalry's leading elements. Other SBD's and Fifth Air Force P–40's, all under 308th Bombardment Wing control, undertook reconnaissance missions along the cavalry's left flank and left front. During the last stages of the dash to Manila a squadron of Fifth Air Force A–20's—medium bombers—maintained a constant ground alert at the Lingayen fields awaiting call by either of XIV Corps' leading divisions.

The SBD's flew only one close support mission—if it can be so designated. Near the Santa Maria River ford, on 3 February, the 1st Cavalry Division called upon the Marine planes to disperse a small group of Japanese holding a piece of high ground dominating the crossing point. Unable to fire because the cavalrymen were too close to the target, the planes made several simulated strafing attacks over the Japanese positions. These "dry runs" so unnerved the Japanese that most of them soon fled.[54]

Mindoro-based planes of the 310th Bombardment Wing provided the support for the 11th Airborne Division. P–47's or P–38's maintained a constant four-plane umbrella over the leading troops, and on 1 and 2 February the 310th Wing executed close support bombardment and strafing missions at the defile west of Tagaytay Ridge.

Not all the air support missions went off without a hitch. It might have been expected that after three years' experience air-ground co-operation would be such as to preclude bombing and strafing friendly troops, but the contemporary records of Sixth Army and its components reveal that there were many such incidents, most of them apparently at-

[53] The general sources for this subsection are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 99–103, 108; Hist of 308th Bombardment Wing, ch. IV, 1 January–28 May 45, pp. 8, 13–14, 17; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 74–79; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 420, 425–28, 442; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–4.

[54] Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, p. 78; Wright, *1st Cavalry Division in WW II*, p. 128. Both sources state that the incident occurred on 2 February, but according to the 1st Cavalry Division's contemporary records none of its troops were near the target area until the morning of the 3d.

tributable to pilot errors in target identification.[55]

Late in January General Krueger had informed General Kenney, the commander of the Allied Air Forces, that since the Fifth Air Force had taken over air support responsibility on Luzon from the Allied Naval Forces' CVE-based planes there had been "numerous incidents" of Fifth Air Force planes attacking I and XIV Corps troops. Krueger went on to point out that, as a result, his ground forces were rapidly losing confidence in the supporting air arm.[56] Finally, after another mistake by Fifth Air Force planes on 4 February caused more casualties,[57] Krueger sent Kenney a blistering radio:

> I must insist that you take effective measures to stop the bombing and strafing of our ground forces by friendly planes. . . . These repeated occurrences are causing ground troops to lose confidence in air support and are adversely affecting morale.[58]

General Kenney and his subordinates, having received steadily increasing criticism from Sixth Army troops, were taking many steps to prevent errors. It can be supposed that they now redoubled their efforts.[59]

The vast majority of air strikes, whatever service executed them, were both accurate and helpful. As the campaign on Luzon progressed, the incidence of mistakes rapidly diminished as Fifth Air Force pilots became more familiar with the ground situation and the Allied Air Forces and the Sixth Army modified and improved air-ground liaison and control systems. Although some of the Army divisions on Luzon preferred to have Marine Corps aircraft support them, Fifth Air Force pilots, who had previously had rather limited experience in close air support operations, became well versed in such activity, and some of the Fifth's squadrons came to provide as excellent close air support as was to be executed anywhere during World War II. In the end, the Fifth Air Force did its job and did it well.

[55] The Air Forces official history says of air operations during the Luzon Campaign that: "Air mistakes resulting in casualties to Sixth Army troops were few and limited almost entirely to the first two months of the campaign." And again that "Reactions of the air commanders to these accidents was somewhat less philosophical than those of the ground generals, one of whom spoke of having experienced short rounds from his own artillery."

The Air Forces' volume lists but three air support mistakes during the period of the drive to Manila, two involving Fifth Air Force planes strafing Sixth Army troops and the third an accidental jettisoning of a bomb on a Navy LSM by a Marine Corps SBD. (Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, p. 442.) But as indicated in this text, ground commanders were anything but "philosophical" about the errors, while the records of the ground units clearly demonstrate that there were many more errors than the Air Forces history would lead one to believe.

[56] Rad, Krueger to Kenney, WL–907, 30 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 29–31 Jan 45.

[57] The strafing of troops of the 1st Infantry, 6th Division, at San Jose. See above, ch. XI.

[58] Rad, Krueger to Kenney, WG–32, 4 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 2–4 Feb 45.

[59] Rad, Kenney to Krueger, AX–34890, 31 Jan 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 31 Jan—2 Feb 45. No reply to Krueger's 4 February radio can be found in available files.

CHAPTER XIII

Manila: The Defenders and the Defenses

The City

Manila is a city—a statement that, having been made, leaves far too much unsaid.[1] It is a city of contrasts—contrasts deriving from unbroken centuries of existence and a polyglot population. It is a city of parts, capable of being all things to all men. There are sections that cannot be called modern in any sense of the word. There are sections that are ultramodern. It boasts movie houses, filling stations, night clubs, slums, dark alleys, and broad, tree-lined boulevards. There are hospitals and universities; shipping offices and department stores; private clubs and public parks; race tracks and cockpits; an Olympic Games stadium and yacht clubs; streetcar tracks and bus lines; pony-drawn taxis and railroad stations. A touch of medieval Spain rubs harshly against modern port facilities; centuries-old churches and monasteries face gasworks and breweries. Nipa-thatched huts house part of the teeming population, while for others home is a modern air-conditioned apartment. Manila is a city.

Established at the site of an ancient Tagalog village, Manila, whose existence antedates that of any urban center of the United States except St. Augustine, was founded in 1571 by Spanish colonizer Miguel Lopez de Legaspi. Independent —that is, not under the administration of any province—the city, in 1945, covered an area of nearly 14.5 square miles. It stretched about 5.5 miles north to south along the eastern shore of Manila Bay and extended inland approximately 4 miles. With the surrounding suburbs and small towns of Rizal Province, the city formed a public utilities service area known as Greater Manila. An area of almost 110 square miles, Greater Manila extended from the Parañaque River north some ten miles to include Grace Park and inland, with irregular boundaries, about eight miles to the Marikina River.

The city's population had increased greatly since the outbreak of war, mainly as the result of a job-seeking influx from the provinces. In December 1941 Manila's population was about 625,000 and the total for Greater Manila was nearly 850,000. The peak of growth was reached in the early fall of 1944—people began to move out again after Allied air attacks started in September. Just before the air attacks began, the population of the city

[1] This section is based principally upon: AGS SWPA Terrain Study No. 94, Central Luzon, vol. I, Text and Maps, 18 Oct 44; AGS SWPA Terrain Handbook No. 41, Manila, 21 Nov 44; AGS SWPA Terrain Handbook No. 41–A, Manila City, 6 Dec 44; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1952, XIV, 806–08. Throughout this and subsequent chapters on Manila, descriptive material has been supplemented by the author's own observations, since he was stationed in Manila for almost nine months in 1945 and revisited it in April 1957.



Central Manila

proper was over 800,000, and that of Greater Manila was some 1,100,000.

The business district lay in the west-central part of Manila north of the Pasig River, which flows westward into Manila Bay through the center of the city. (*Map VI*) Likewise, most of the retail stores, movie houses, restaurants, and other service and amusement outlets, as well as many manufacturing plants, were north of the Pasig. Tondo District, on the bay front, was the most populous residential area, housing laborers, fishermen, and others in the lower income brackets, often in substandard dwellings. To the east of the business area lay better residential districts, which, antedating World War I for the most part, housed the older European families and many of the middle and upper class Filipinos. On the north bank of the Pasig, near the center of the city, was located the Filipino White House, Malacañan Palace, once the seat of Spanish and American governors-general.

South of the Pasig, near the river's mouth, lay the old Spanish walled city, Intramuros, bordered on three sides by a filled moat that had been converted into a public park. Originally located on the bay front—construction of the interior stone citadel, Fort Santiago, was begun in 1590—Intramuros, in 1945, was half a mile inland. Along its west wall the bay front was reclaimed for the construction of modern port facilities, including piers, warehousing, fuel storage, and machine shops. The advent of war interrupted development of a similar port area north of the Pasig's mouth.

Beyond Intramuros and the port area, much of Manila south of the Pasig was composed of modern residential districts, hospitals, government buildings, schools, apartment houses, and parks. In addition, there was considerable industrial development along the south bank in the eastern part of the city. Southern Manila was developed almost entirely after the American occupation, most of it during the period between the two World Wars. The residential suburbs of Greater Manila sprang up largely in the '20's and '30's, their mushrooming growth cut short in December 1941.

Most of Manila's streets were paved before the war, but many of them could not stand up under constant military traffic, and maintenance had fallen far behind during the Japanese occupation. North of the Pasig many streets were narrow, little better than alleys. There they radiated in all directions from central plazas, crossed each other at various angles, and ended abruptly to create streets along which fields of fire were limited to one or two blocks. Within the city limits one railroad and five vehicular bridges crossed the Pasig, but the Japanese destroyed all of them in 1945. South of the river the city streets were generally broader and, even in Intramuros, most were set at right angles.[2]

Types of construction within the city varied considerably. The flimsy houses of Tondo District were highly flammable, while the other residences north of the Pasig were either frame or a combination of frame and stone or brick. The buildings of the business district were of reinforced concrete; the government buildings south of the river were constructed to withstand earthquakes and, in appearance, were not unlike many of the government buildings in Washing-

[2] Like the rivers throughout Luzon, the streets in Manila are subject to sudden name changes, apparently on the basis of long usage.

ton, D.C. The outer walls of Intramuros, up to forty feet thick at the bottom and in places reaching a height of twenty-five feet, were constructed of great stone blocks, and the buildings within the walls were constructed all or partially of stone. Many of the homes south of the river combined wood with brick, stucco, or cinder block, while the apartment houses were of reinforced concrete.

Much of Manila remained relatively untouched by war until February 1945, although Japanese air raids in December 1941 had wrought some damage in the port area and Intramuros. As they evacuated the city, MacArthur's Fil-American troops undertook demolitions within the port area and fired fuel installations in the Paco, Pandacan, and Santa Ana industrial districts lying along both sides of the river in the east-central part of the city.[3] The port area and railroad facilities were struck in late 1944 and in January 1945 by land-based planes of the Allied Air Forces and by carrier-based aircraft of Halsey's Third Fleet. But destruction caused by these air attacks was minor compared with that wrought during the fighting within Manila in February and March 1945.

The Japanese Defenses

The Background

It was not Yamashita's intention to preside over the destruction of Manila.[4] Since he had decided to let the vital Central Plains–Manila Bay area go by default, the defense of Manila to him would be meaningless. He reasoned:

> First the population of Manila is approximately one million; therefore, it is impossible to feed them. The second reason is that the buildings are very inflammable. The third reason is that because [Manila] is on flat land it requires tremendous . . . strength to defend it. For these reasons my policy or plan was to leave Manila outside the combat zone.[5]

When, in December, Yamashita decided to evacuate troops and supplies from the city, he planned to leave behind a small Army force to maintain order, protect supply movements, and, ultimately, to blow bridges over the Pasig and Marikina Rivers in order to delay Allied occupation of the entire metropolitan area and slow development of an Allied drive against the *Shimbu Group,* east of the city. The Japanese would hold the Pasig bridges only so long as the spans remained useful for supply movements—they had no plan for a last-ditch stand at the bridges.

Yet, as the XIV Corps and 11th Airborne Division approached the city it became obvious that Manila was strongly defended. There had been a change in Japanese plans.

The change reflected no reversal of Yamashita's policy. Rather, it mirrored a picture of disagreement and confusion existing among the lower-level headquar-

[3] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* pp. 234–35.

[4] The general sources for the remainder of this chapter are: SWPA Hist Series, II, 452–63, and the sources cited therein, copies available in OCMH files; USA *vs.* Yamashita, Yamashita testimony, pp. 3522–23, 3527–28, 3532–33; *ibid.,* Lt Gen Shizuo Yokoyama (CG *Shimbu Gp*) testimony, pp. 2672–73, 2681–86, 2693; *ibid.,* Muto testimony, pp. 3015–18, 3062; *ibid.,* Col Hiroshi Hashimoto (CofS *Manila Defense Force*) testimony, pp. 3113–17; *14th Area Army* Opns Orders and Plans contained in Trans, III, Items 1 and 3; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, pp. 5–8; Asano Statement, States, I, 87–95; Hashimoto Statement, States I, 278–81.

[5] USA *vs.* Yamashita, Yamashita testimony, p. 3527.

ters under Yamashita's nominal control, and especially between the Army and Navy echelons of his command. Contrary to Yamashita's expressed desires, these conflicts led to a decision to give battle within the city—a development that was a cancerous growth on the *14th Area Army*'s plan for the defense of Luzon and that stemmed from a series of compromises among Japanese Army and Navy commanders in the Manila area.

Until late December 1944 the protection of Manila had been charged to Maj. Gen. Takashi Kobayashi's *Manila Defense Force,* roughly equivalent to two RCT's in strength and armament. When, on 27 December, Yamashita organized the *Shimbu Group* for a final defensive stand in the mountain country east and northeast of Manila, he placed the city and the *Manila Defense Force* under General Yokoyama, *Shimbu Group* and *8th Division* commander. Since Yamashita contemplated no defense of Manila, one of Yokoyama's principal missions was to oversee the evacuation of the city, and he directed General Kobayashi to speed the movement, which was already under way. Two Army units, responsible for carrying out the evacuation and assigned demolitions, were to remain in and around the city for the nonce. The first was the *Noguchi Detachment,* two provisional infantry battalions and supporting troops under Col. Katsuzo Noguchi. Stationed within the northern part of the city and in the northern suburbs, the detachment was to withdraw eastward once it had knocked out the Pasig bridges. Another reinforced provisional infantry battalion under Capt. Saburo Abe was stationed south of the city and was responsible for blocking the southern approaches along the narrow Hagonoy Isthmus, separating Manila Bay and Laguna de Bay.

Throughout December and January, however, while Army units were pulling out of the city and environs, naval troops were moving in. As it had for Yamashita, the Allied move to Mindoro in December had prompted a flurry of changes in plans by Vice Adm. Denshichi Okochi, the commander of the *Southwestern Area Fleet* and the ranking Japanese naval officer in the Philippines.[6] Okochi, apparently on his own initiative, decided to strengthen the Navy's defenses of Manila and he assigned some 4,000 men to a new organization that he designated the *Manila Naval Defense Force*—not to be confused with General Kobayashi's *Manila Defense Force.* To head the new force, Okochi called upon Admiral Iwabuchi, also the commander of the *31st Naval Special Base Force,* which already had troops in and around Manila.

Okochi planned to send the remainder of the large number of naval troops in and around Manila up to the *Kembu* area, but supply and transportation problems forestalled completion of this movement. Thus, when he departed for Baguio with Yamashita early in January, Okochi left Admiral Iwabuchi in command of a *Manila Naval Defense Force* that, with subsequent minor accretions,

[6] Additional material on Japanese naval plans and depositions is from: USA *vs.* Yamashita, Okochi testimony, pp. 2546–47; Statement of Capt Masayoshi Koma, IJN (Staff *Southwest Area Fleet*), States, II, 293; Statement of Comdr Shigeichi Yamamoto (Staff *Southwest Area Fleet*), States, IV, 488; Statement of Lt Comdr Koichi Kayashima (Staff *Manila Naval Defense Force* and *31st Naval Special Base Force*), States, II, 157–70; Statement of Col Shujiro Kobayashi (Staff *Shimbu Group,* not to be confused with General Kobayashi), States, II, 241.

numbered nearly 16,000 naval troops. Iwabuchi's missions were to hold Nichols Field and the Cavite naval base area, mine Manila Bay, direct Navy suicide boat operations in the bay, arrange for the evacuation of ships and small craft of the *31st Naval Special Base Force,* and, ultimately, assure the destruction of all Japanese naval installations and supplies in the Manila and Cavite areas. The program of demolitions Okochi directed Iwabuchi to undertake was far more extensive than that assigned to the Army troops.

When he left for Baguio, Admiral Okochi transferred the operational control of the *Manila Naval Defense Force* to General Yokoyama and the *Shimbu Group*. But operational control under the principles of unity of command did not mean the same thing within the Japanese armed forces that it did in the Allied services during World War II—it also did not mean the same thing to the Japanese Navy that it did to the Japanese Army. Thus, the control authority Okochi actually transferred was so limited as to contain the seeds of many disagreements between General Yokoyama and Admiral Iwabuchi. When it came down to cases, the *Shimbu Group* would have complete operational control of the *Manila Naval Defense Force* only within an area plainly of primary Army interest and even then only after Iwabuchi's command had successfully completed all the missions Okochi had assigned it.

Manifestly, some of these missions involved operations on land—theoretically, on Luzon, the exclusive responsibility of the Japanese Army. But to the Japanese Navy, the assignment of troops to the Army for operational control meant control only for ground combat operations actually conducted under Army command in an Army area. The fact that Admiral Iwabuchi could carry out his naval assignments while conducting ground combat operations as directed by the *Shimbu Group* did not alter the situation. He would not withdraw his forces from Manila until he felt he had executed his naval missions, and, whatever operations he might conduct under *Shimbu Group* directives, his prior naval orders would continue to take precedence over any directives General Yokoyama might issue.[7]

It was not until 6 January that the *Shimbu Group* commander learned that his operational control over the *Manila Naval Defense Force* would be limited to the degree implicit in the peculiarly naval missions assigned to Admiral Iwabuchi. And at the same time General Yokoyama was informed, to his evident surprise, that Iwabuchi had 16,000-odd naval troops in and around Manila. Yokoyama had based his plans for delaying action, bridge destruction, and supply evacuation on the assumption that there were no more than 4,000 naval troops in the area in addition to the approximately 3,750 Army troops of the *Noguchi Detachment* and the *Abe Battalion*. He considered these forces sufficient to carry out assigned missions and he could evacuate that number from the city without undue trouble once Allied forces arrived, an event he estimated would occur no earlier than 20 February.

General Yokoyama called a series of *Manila Naval Defense Force–Shimbu*

[7] For further analysis of this peculiar command situation, see A. Frank Reel, *The Case of General Yamashita* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).

Group staff conferences to discuss the obvious complications arising from Iwabuchi's divided responsibilities and the size of the naval commitment. In the course of the discussions, which took place between 8 and 13 January, naval officers made it clear that, no matter what *Shimbu Group*'s plans, it was the consensus of the naval staff that Manila should be defended to the bitter end. Any withdrawal from the city, naval representatives pointed out, would prevent the *Manila Naval Defense Force* from executing the missions Admiral Okochi had assigned it. Moreover, most of the naval staff officers felt that Manila was a natural fortress that could easily be defended at great cost to Allied forces. Therefore, the naval staff was not anxious to abandon the city meekly without a struggle. In addition, many members of Iwabuchi's staff were dissatisfied with the positions in the mountains east of Manila that Yokoyama had assigned to the *Manila Naval Defense Force* for a last stand. Admiral Iwabuchi just about settled all arguments when he pointed out that his force had "no alternative but to carry out its primary duty of defending naval facilities." [8]

Faced with the *fait accompli* of prior naval orders that he could not countermand, Yokoyama had little choice but to assent to Iwabuchi's general concept for the defense of Manila, however unwise he might feel that concept to be. And, in accordance with the practice in the Japanese and Allied services, he provided for unified command within the city, placing the Army troops still stationed there under Admiral Iwabuchi as the senior officer on the spot—thereby making the best out of a bad situation. Extracting such concessions from the *Manila Naval Defense Force* as his limited operational control powers permitted, the *Shimbu Group* commander persuaded Iwabuchi to organize a special naval force to defend the San Juan del Monte area, lying between the city and the *Shimbu Group*'s main positions to the east. He further convinced Iwabuchi of the necessity for strengthening the defenses at Fort McKinley, southeast of Manila, and of the wisdom of setting up an alternate headquarters there, presumably in anticipation of ultimate withdrawal from the city. Expecting existing communications between Manila and the *Shimbu Group* command post in the mountains to be severed once the Allies reached the city, Yokoyama also saw to it that a secondary wire communications net was established between his mountain headquarters and Fort McKinley.

Not losing sight of his principal mission—protracted defensive operations in the mountainous terrain east and northeast of Manila—General Yokoyama, late in January, issued somewhat ambiguous orders concerning the defense of the city and its immediate environs. The *Shimbu Group,* while concentrating its main force in its mountain strongholds, was to "firmly defend Manila and Fort McKinley and check their use by the enemy, at the same time destroying the enemy's fighting strength and preparing to counterattack the enemy rear from the main positions when a favorable situation arises." The *Manila Naval Defense Force,* in turn, was directed to "defend

[8] The words are Colonel Asano's, repeating Iwabuchi, and appear in Asano Statement, Statements, I, 93. Yokoyama, in his testimony cited previously, makes essentially the same point.

its already-established positions and crush the enemy's fighting strength."[9]

Despite the seemingly definitive wording of these orders, an ambiguity arises from the fact that Yokoyama used the term *koshu,* usually rendered as "firm defense," in regard to the plans for holding Manila. Quite weak as the wording of Japanese orders go, *koshu* by no means implied a fight to the death. Moreover, since Japanese Army orders did not lean toward understatement in such matters, the term seems indicative of a desire to conduct a rather limited holding action followed by an early withdrawal. Even Admiral Iwabuchi's operations officer interpreted the use of *koshu* as meaning that Yokoyama would order a general withdrawal once battle had been joined within the city.[10] Apparently the fact that no specific mention of withdrawal was contained in the *Shimbu Group* orders merely reflected a reluctance on the part of Yokoyama to impair the morale of the troops in Manila—a regard for the sensibilities to which the Japanese forces were singularly addicted.

Defensive Dispositions and Plans

Iwabuchi's mainland area of responsibility extended inland from a point on Manila Bay about two and a half miles north of the city northeast to Novaliches, east to the Marikina River, south to Laguna de Bay's western shores, and then west across the Hagonoy Isthmus to the base of Cavite Peninsula.[11] The whole area covered an area of approximately 250 square miles. To defend this zone Iwabuchi had under his command nearly 17,000 troops—about 12,500 Navy personnel and 4,500 Army troops. The remaining 3,500 naval troops included in Iwabuchi's total of 16,000-odd naval personnel the admiral had either left on islands in Manila Bay or had sent into the mountains east of Manila to join the main body of the *Shimbu Group.* Iwabuchi assigned some 14,000 of the troops he controlled in and around Manila to three combat organizations for defensive operations. A fourth command contained forces nominally afloat but actually based either on the city's waterfront or on the bay islands; a fifth command was composed of engineers, supply troops, medical units, and so forth. Iwabuchi gave this fifth group the blanket title "attached units."[12]

Iwabuchi retained approximately 10,000 troops within the Manila city limits, 8,000 of them members of the three combat commands. The northernmost combat command, labeled *Northern Force,* was commanded by Colonel Noguchi, whom Iwabuchi made responsible for the defense of the entire city north of the Pasig, Intramuros south of the river, and the suburbs north, northeast, and east of Manila to the boundaries of the *Manila Naval Defense Force.* In addition to the *2d* and *3d Provisional Infantry Battalions* and supporting Army troops of his own *Noguchi Detachment,*

[9] The quotations are from SWPA Hist Series, II, 458.

[10] Kayashima Statement, States, II, 170.

[11] Additional information on Japanese strengths and dispositions presented in this subsection is from: ATIS SWPA, Enemy Publication No. 389, Organization Chart of *Manila Naval Defense Force,* 19 Sep 45, copy in OCMH files; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities as Exemplified by The Battle for Manila, p. 3; *ibid.,* an. 2, Disposition Chart, and an. 4, Org Chart *Kobayashi Gp;* Entry 2, 0100 10 Feb 44, G–2 Jnl 1st Cav Div, giving information from a Japanese POW; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–14, 16, 29; *ibid.,* Maps 1, 2, and C.

[12] See app. D.

Noguchi had under his command the *1st Independent Naval Battalion.* His force totaled about 4,500 men in all.

Posting small Army detachments along the northern approaches to Manila, Noguchi stationed the *1st Independent Naval Battalion* in the San Juan del Monte suburb, east of the city. One of his Army battalions held the Pasig River bridges; the other, with miscellaneous service units attached, set up defenses in Intramuros. General Yokoyama transferred various Army shipping units, previously forming part of the *3d Maritime Transport Command,* to Noguchi's control; the colonel left these troops in the port areas north and south of the Pasig's mouth.

The *Central Force,* commanded directly by Admiral Iwabuchi and comprising about 5,000 naval troops, held the remainder of Manila. *Central Force's 1st* and *2d Naval Battalions* were in defensive positions throughout the southern part of the city. *Headquarters Sector Unit*[13] and the *5th Naval Battalion* (the latter withdrew from Cavite on 2 February after completing demolitions there) concentrated in the government building, park, and private club area of Ermita District, east and south of Intramuros. Here Iwabuchi had his headquarters, protected by a *Headquarters Battalion* of 750 men. The *Central Force* was also responsible for holding Nielson Field and Makati, a suburb just southeast of the city, but had few troops stationed at those places.

The *Southern Force,* over 5,000 men under Capt. Takusue Furuse, IJN, defended Nichols Field, Fort McKinley to the northeast of the airfield, and the Hagonoy Isthmus. Furuse stationed the *3d* and *4th Naval Battalions* at Nichols Field and Fort McKinley and made the Army's *Abe Battalion* responsible for holding the Hagonoy Isthmus. Captain Abe's mission was to defend along Route 1 and Route 59, the latter lying along the western shore of Laguna de Bay. With minor detachments to the south and a company at Parañaque, the bulk of the *Abe Battalion* was dug in at and near Mabato Point, on the Laguna de Bay shore across the isthmus from Parañaque. So disposed, the unit was hardly in position to execute all of its missions.

Generally, the defenses on the south were stronger than those on the north, for two reasons. When General Kobayashi's *Manila Defense Force* withdrew from the northern area it had left behind only the *Noguchi Detachment* to fill the void created by the evacuation. True, Kobayashi, his command now redesignated the *Kobayashi Force,* retained control of the *3d Surface Raiding Base Force*—another group of boat squadrons and base battalions like those stationed in the 11th Airborne Division's area—but the 3,000-odd men of this unit were disposed about five miles northwest of Manila and had been cut off by the 37th Division.

Second, Japanese naval headquarters on Luzon had believed that the principal Allied invasions would come from the south and had therefore long devoted its energies to preparing defenses on that side of Manila. It was, indeed, not until the last week in January that Iwabuchi seems to have learned of XIV Corps'

[13] By the time he had completed his organization Iwabuchi was wearing four hats: *31st Naval Special Base Force, Manila Naval Defense Force, Central Force,* and *Headquarters Sector Unit.* Apparently the staffs for all except the last were virtually identical.

progress, or at least until he attached any significance to that corps' drive down the Central Plains. By then, of course, it was too late for him to redeploy his forces.

For the rest, Iwabuchi's plan for the defense of Manila was rather vague, promising only a suicidal fight to the death in place. By such a static defense he hoped to inflict heavy casualties upon Sixth Army and deny to the Allies for some time the facilities of Manila and Manila Bay. To help realize the latter objective, he planned extensive demolitions that ostensibly called for the destruction of purely military installations and whatever supplies were left in the city. "Military installations" or "military facilities" are loose terms at best, and for Iwabuchi they included the port area, bridges, transportation facilities, the water supply system, and electric power installations.

While the admiral apparently did not plan wholesale, wanton demolitions, even the destruction of the purely military installations would have its effect upon the civil population. Once started by a body of half-trained troops hastily organized into provisional units and whose only future is death in combat, demolitions are impossible to control. Leaving aside this problem, it is obvious that a fire resulting from demolitions set off in a supply dump will not necessarily obey "orders" to confine itself to the dump. Intent is one thing—the results of the performance another.

The Means of Defense

Tactically, Iwabuchi's defensive preparations left much to be desired. One line of defensive positions, while usually (but not always) containing mutually supporting strongpoints, did not necessarily give way to a second line of prepared positions; seldom were any two lines mutually supporting. Little provision seems to have been made for routes of withdrawal from one line to another. The core of the defenses, if any existed, was Intramuros, the approaches to which were protected by a semicircle of fortified government buildings and schools extending from the General Post Office, on the south bank of the Pasig about three blocks off the northeast corner of Intramuros, around to the Army-Navy Club, on the bay front a few hundred yards south of the walled city.

A prime characteristic of the defenses within the city was improvisation based upon the ready, man-made defenses of heavily reinforced concrete buildings. The Japanese fortified building entrances with sandbags; they set up barricades along corridors and stairways; they chopped firing slits for rifles and machine guns through outside walls; they dug tunnels that connected the basements of various buildings or led to outside pillboxes and bunkers. While the defenders constructed many bunkers and pillboxes throughout the city, they depended principally on the buildings, and most of the standard military defensive installations were located in the *Southern Force*'s area of responsibility.

The *Manila Naval Defense Force* barricaded streets and intersections throughout the city with all types of obstacles: barbed-wire entanglements; oil drums filled with dirt or cement; rails set into the pavement; hastily dug ditches; trolley cars, trucks, and automobiles; even heavy factory machinery wrenched from interior mountings. The defenders em-

ployed mines of every conceivable type and improvisation, including Japanese Navy beach mines and depth charges, artillery shells, aerial bombs, mortar shells, and standard Japanese Army antipersonnel and antitank mines. Most mine fields were poorly camouflaged and although the Japanese covered some with fire from prepared positions, they had established no pattern that tied one mine field into another or related a field to major defenses.

Another outstanding characteristic of the Japanese defense preparations was the great number of automatic weapons, a number all out of proportion to the troop strength. The basic infantry weapon, the rifle, played a very secondary role, being used mainly for the protection of the automatic weapons and for last-ditch personnel defense. The much publicized—but seldom encountered—Japanese sniper played no significant part. Indeed, after the battle XIV Corps reported:

> Despite frequent mention by our troops of "snipers," the sniper as a carefully placed individual rifleman specializing in long-range selective firing seldom made an appearance (hardly any telescopic rifle sights were found in Manila).[14]

On the other hand, the Japanese used various types of grenades with great abandon, especially in the defense of buildings.

In preparing for extensive employment of automatic weapons, the *Manila Naval Defense Force* had removed many such arms from ships sunk in the bay and from aircraft lying destroyed or damaged on the numerous outlying air-



JAPANESE BARRICADE ON PADRE BURGOS

fields.[15] Ordnance troops adapted these for ground use, and also set up for employment against ground targets many of the antiaircraft weapons with which Manila and environs bristled before the Allies entered the city. The principal automatic weapons upon which the defenders set great store were the aircraft and antiaircraft 20-mm. and 25-mm. machine cannon. They had also a few 40-mm. antiaircraft weapons, as well as innumerable infantry and antiaircraft machine guns of lesser caliber. Mortars

[14] XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, p. 10.

[15] Subsequent description of Japanese weapons is based largely upon: XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 10–13; 11th A/B Div Luzon Rpt, p. 29; WD Tech Manual, TM–E–30–480, Handbook on Japanese Military Forces, 15 Sep 44, and changes thereto dated 1 Jan and 1 Jun 45. The XIV Corps and manual descriptions of calibers and model numbers of the arms encountered are not always in agreement.

played a large part in the defense; literally hundreds of these weapons, varying from 50-mm. to 150-mm in caliber, were available to Iwabuchi's men.

The basic heavy artillery weapon was the Japanese Navy's dual-purpose 120-mm. gun. The *Manila Naval Defense Force* emplaced over fifty of these weapons in and around the city, most of them in the Nichols Field–Fort McKinley area. In addition, the Japanese had some 76.2-mm. dual-purpose guns, a few Army 75-mm. antiaircraft weapons adapted for ground fire, a scattering of 75-mm. Army field artillery pieces, and some Army 47-mm. antitank guns. Finally, for the first time during the war in the Pacific, the Japanese employed rockets to an appreciable extent. Most of those available to the *Manila Naval Defensive Force* were 200-mm. Navy rockets, but the force also possessed some 200-mm. Army rockets and a few Navy 450-mm. giants.

Practically none of Iwabuchi's troops had any unit training in ground combat operations and many had very little individual infantry training. The proficiency of men assigned to crew-served weapons usually left much to be desired. Perhaps the best units were the Army provisional infantry battalions, many members of which were infantry or other ground force replacements stranded in Manila. But few of these men were first line, and the vast majority of even the Army personnel were members of the service branches.

Naval units were in even worse state. The only troops among them having any semblance of ground combat training were the few members of the ground defense sections of the *31st Naval Special Base Force*. For the rest, the naval troops were aircraft maintenance men, airfield engineers, crews from ships sunk in the bay, casuals, other service personnel of all types, and even some Japanese civilians pressed into uniform.

Admiral Iwabuchi had time neither to train his troops nor to complete defensive preparations. Even so, his defenses were strong and, although held by inferior troops, could prove formidable when manned by men with little thought of escape. He defended Manila with what he had, and what he had was sufficient to cause XIV Corps great trouble.

CHAPTER XIV

Isolating the Battlefield

The Concept of the Attack

When XIV Corps reached Manila on 3 February, no definite Allied plan existed for operations in the metropolitan area other than the division of the northern part of the city into offensive zones. Every command in the theater, from MacArthur's headquarters on down, hoped — if it did not actually anticipate—that the city could be cleared quickly and without much damage. GHQ SWPA had even laid plans for a great victory parade, à la Champs Elysées, that the theater commander in person was to lead through the city.[1]

Intelligence concerning Manila and its environs had been pretty meager, and it was not until the last week or so of January that GHQ SWPA and Sixth Army began to receive definite reports that the Japanese planned to hold the city, although General Krueger had felt as early as the middle of the month that the capital would be strongly defended.[2] The late January reports, often contradicting previous information that had been supplied principally by guerrillas, were usually so contradictory within themselves as to be useless as a basis for tactical planning. Thus, much of the initial fighting was shadowboxing, with American troops expecting to come upon the main body of the Japanese around each street corner. Only when the troops actually closed with the principal strongpoints did they discover where the main defenses were. When XIV Corps began to learn of the extent and nature of the defenses, the plans for a big victory parade were quietly laid aside—the parade never came off. The corps and its divisions thereupon began developing tactical plans on the spot as the situation dictated.

In an effort to protect the city and its civilians, GHQ SWPA and Sixth Army at first placed stringent restrictions upon artillery support fires and even tighter restrictions upon air support operations. The Allied Air Forces flew only a very few strikes against targets within the city

[1] A host of documents concerning the parade are to be found in the files of all levels of the command. See, *inter alia*: Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 1 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 31 Jan–2 Feb 45; Memo, ACofS G–3 XIV Corps for CofS XIV Corps, 4 Feb 45, sub: Notes Taken at Conf at GHQ 4 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 2–4 Feb 45; Rad, Sixth Army to I, XI, and XIV Corps, WG–53, 5 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45; 40th Inf Div, Memo for Components, 6 Feb 45, sub: Manila Victory Parade, 108th Inf S–3 Jnl File, 6–9 Feb 45.

[2] Subsequent material on Manila planning problems is based on: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 86–87; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 13, 19–22, 26.

limits before General MacArthur forbade such attacks, while artillery support was confined to observed fire upon pinpointed targets such as Japanese gun emplacements.

These two limitations were the only departures from orthodox tactics of city fighting. No new doctrines were used or developed—in the sense of "lessons learned," the troops again illustrated that established U.S. Army doctrine was sound. Most troops engaged had had some training in city fighting, and for combat in Manila the main problem was to adapt the mind accustomed to jungle warfare to the special conditions of city operations. The adjustment was made rapidly and completely at the sound of the first shot fired from a building within the city.

The necessity for quickly securing the city's water supply facilities and electrical power installations had considerable influence on tactical planning.[3] Considering the sanitation problems posed by the presence of nearly a million civilians in the metropolitan area, General Krueger had good reason to be especially concerned about Manila's water supply. Some eighty artesian or deep wells in the city and its suburbs could provide some water, but, even assuming that these wells were not contaminated and that pumping equipment would be found intact, they could meet requirements for only two weeks. Therefore, Krueger directed General Griswold to seize the principal close-in features of the city's modern pressure system as rapidly as possible.

Establishing priorities for the capture of individual installations, Sixth Army ordered XIV Corps to secure first Novaliches Dam, at the southern end of a large, man-made lake in rising, open ground about two and a half miles east of the town of Novaliches. (*See Map V.*) Second came the Balara Water Filters, about five miles northeast of Manila's easternmost limits and almost seven miles east of Grace Park. (*See Map VI.*) Third was the San Juan Reservoir, on high ground nearly two miles northeast of the city limits. Fourth were the pipelines connecting these installations and leading from them into Manila. Ultimately, Sixth Army would secure other water supply facilities such as a dam on the Marikina River northeast of Manila, but not until it could release men for the job from Manila or other battlegrounds on Luzon.

XIV Corps would secure portions of the electrical power system at the same time its troops were capturing the water supply facilities. During the Japanese occupation much of the power for Manila's lights and transportation had come from hydroelectric plants far to the south and southeast in Laguna Province, for the Japanese had been unable to import sufficient coal to keep running a steam generator plant located within the city limits. It appeared that Laguna Province might be under Japanese control for some time to come, and it could be assumed that the hydroelectric plants and the transmission lines would be damaged. Therefore, Sixth Army di-

[3] The remainder of this section is based principally upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 36; Memo, Engr Sixth Army for CofS Sixth Army, 4 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 2–4 Feb 45; Rad, Sixth Army to XIV Corps, WG–40, 5 Feb 45, and Teletype Msg, Sixth Army to XIV Corps, 6 Feb 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45; XIV Corps FO 6, 7 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 8–10 Feb 45.

rected XIV Corps to secure the steam power plant, which was situated near the center of the city on Provisor Island in the Pasig.

XIV Corps was also to take two transmission substations as soon as possible. One was located in Makati suburb, on the south bank of the Pasig about a mile southeast of the city limits; the other was presumed to be on the north bank of the river in the extreme eastern section of the city. It is interesting commentary on the state of mapping, considering the number of years that the United States had been in the Philippines, that the second substation turned out to be a bill collecting office of the Manila Electric Company.

Operations North of the Pasig

Clearing the City North of the River

Plans for securing the water and electric installations were far from the minds of the men of the 2d Squadron, 8th Cavalry, as they moved into Manila on the evening of 3 February.[4] Their immediate mission was to free the civilian internees at Santo Tomas University; further planning would have to wait until the cavalrymen could ascertain what the morrow would bring.



LIBERATED INTERNEES AT SANTO TOMAS, 6 FEBRUARY

Upon their arrival at Santo Tomas, the advance elements of the 8th Cavalry,[5] a medium of the 44th Tank Battalion serving as a battering ram, broke through the gates of the campus wall. Inside, the Japanese Army guards—most of them Formosans—put up little fight and within a few minutes some 3,500 internees were liberated amid scenes of pathos and joy none of the participating American troops will ever forget. But in another building away from the internees' main quarters some sixty Japa-

[4] The general sources for 1st Cavalry Division operations covered in this chapter are: 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, Narrative, pp. 4–14; Wright, *1st Cavalry Division in World War II*, pp. 130–33; 1st Cav Div G–3 Jnl, 3–12 Feb 45; 1st Cav Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 3–12 Feb 45; 1st Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pt. I, Narrative, pp. 1–4; 1st Cav Brig Unit Jnl, 3–12 Feb 45; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Per Rpts, 3–12 Feb 45; 2d Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–7; 2d Cav Brig S–3 Opns Rpts, 3–12 Feb 45; 2d Cav Brig Jnl File, 3–12 Feb 45; 44th Tank Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–11; 44th Tank Bn S–3 Per Rpts, 3–12 Feb 45; 44th Tank Bn S–2/S–3 Jnl, 3–12 Feb 45.

[5] Additional information on the 8th Cavalry operations is from: 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Manila Phase, pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, Novaliches Water Shed Phase, pp. 1–2; 8th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 3–20 Feb 45; 8th Cav Unit Per Opns Rpts, 3–20 Feb 45.

nese under Lt. Col. Toshio Hayashi, the camp commander, held as hostages another 275 internees, mostly women and children. Hayashi demanded a guarantee for safe conduct from the ground for himself and his men before he would release the internees. General Chase, who had come into the university campus about an hour after the 8th Cavalry entered, had to accept the Japanese conditions.[6]

While the release of the internees was in progress, elements of the 8th Cavalry had received a bitter introduction to city fighting. Troop G had continued southward from Santo Tomas toward the Pasig River and, after an uneventful advance of about six blocks, came upon the intersection of Quezon Boulevard—its route of advance — and Azcarraga Street, running east and west. The great stone bulk of Old Bilibid Prison loomed up on the right; on the left rose the modern, three-story concrete buildings of Far Eastern University. The prison seemed deserted, but as the troopers came on down Quezon they were subjected to a veritable hail of machine gun and rifle fire from the university buildings and a few rounds of 47-mm. gun fire from an emplacement at the northeast corner of the intersection.

When drivers tried to turn vehicles around to beat a hasty retreat, other groups of the regiment began jamming Quezon Boulevard to the rear. Chaos was narrowly averted but the entire column, again guided by guerrillas, got safely back to Santo Tomas where, by 2330, the squadron (less Troop F) and the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, had assembled. Troop F, 8th Cavalry, had moved along side streets and secured Malacañan Palace, on the Pasig a mile southeast of the university.

The next morning General Chase learned that the Japanese had knocked out the Novaliches bridge, cutting his line of communications and delaying the arrival of reinforcements for some twenty-four hours. The force he had under his control was too small to attempt much more than local patrolling, for he had, as yet, no definite information about Japanese defenses and none about the progress of the 37th Division. His situation was rather precarious for these twenty-four hours. Had Colonel Noguchi's *Northern Force* counterattacked, Chase would have had to withstand a siege at Santo Tomas or abandon the internees in order to fight his way out of an encirclement. Either course would probably have led to heavy losses. But Noguchi, not expecting the Americans to arrive for another two weeks, was unprepared. He found it impossible to carry out all his assigned missions and he was unable to withdraw all his forces in accordance with plans, let alone mount any strong counterattacks.

Late on the afternoon of 4 February General Mudge directed General Chase to seize Quezon Bridge, located at the foot of Quezon Boulevard a mile south of Santo Tomas. According to the spotty information then available, this was the only crossing over the Pasig that the Japanese had not yet destroyed. Chase assigned the task to part of the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry. The Japanese opposed the squadron with fire from Far Eastern University again and stopped the Ameri-

[6] Negotiations between Chase and Hayashi actually took place on the 4th, and it was not until morning of the 5th that Hayashi and his men left, releasing their hostages.



NORTHERN MANILA, BILIBID PRISON AT LOWER LEFT. *Note roadblock on Quezon Boulevard, left center.*

can column at a formidable roadblock on Quezon Boulevard just south of Azcarraga Street. Here the Japanese had laid a small mine field in the pavement and had driven rows of steel rails into the roadbed. A line of truck bodies, wired together, also blocked passage. The roadblock contained four machine gun positions, and other machine guns covered it from emplacements on the grounds of Far Eastern University and from another intersection a block to the east. The 5th Cavalry's group, like the force from the 8th Cavalry the night before, had to withdraw under fire. The cavalrymen were unable to seize their objective and, during the attempt, Noguchi's troops blew the bridge.[7]

By the time the 5th Cavalry squadron had returned to Santo Tomas, the situation within Manila had begun to look brighter, for the 37th Division's van units had entered the city and established contact with the cavalrymen at

[7] Additional information on the 5th Cavalry's participation in this and other actions covered in this chapter is from: 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–27; *ibid.*, an. 4, Casualties; 5th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 3–12 Feb 45; 5th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 3–12 Feb 45.

the university.[8] Marching into Manila, the 148th Infantry advanced southward through the Tondo and Santa Cruz Districts, west of Santo Tomas.[9] About 2000 on the 4th the 2d Battalion reached the northwest corner of Old Bilibid Prison, only three short blocks from the 5th Cavalry, which was just beginning its fight near the Quezon-Azcarraga intersection off the prison's southeastern corner. Busy with their fights at Far Eastern University, neither the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, nor the 2d Squadron, 8th Cavalry, had attempted to get into the prison, but the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, broke in and discovered approximately 800 Allied and American prisoners of war and 530 civilian internees inside. Since there was no better place for them to go at the time both prisoners and internees remained in the prison, happy enough for the moment that they were in American hands once again.[10] Fighting raged around Bilibid through much of the night, but the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, and the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, did not establish contact with each other. At least the infantry knew the cavalry was in the vicinity—for the rest, the danger of shooting friendly troops kept both units channeled along single routes of advance during the night.

On 5 February, as the remainder of the 37th Division began moving rapidly into Manila, General Griswold more equitably divided the northern part of the city, giving the western half to the 37th Division and the eastern to the 1st Cavalry Division.[11] That morning the 145th Infantry, 37th Division, began clearing the densely populated Tondo District along the bay front.[12] By the afternoon of 6 February the battalion assigned to this task had reduced Japanese resistance to a pocket of some 200 men (and at least one 75-mm. artillery piece) holed up in the extreme northwestern corner of the district. The 145th's unit launched a final assault against the pocket on 8 February, an assault that cost the life of the battalion commander, Lt. Col. George T. Coleman. By the time the American battalion had finished mopping up on the 9th, it had suffered more casualties, and 37th Division artillery and the M7's of Can-

[8] General sources for 37th Division operations covered in this chapter are: 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 37–77; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 4–12 Feb 45; 37th Div G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 4–12 Feb 45.

[9] Additional information on 148th Infantry action is from: 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 5–9; 148th Inf S–1 and S–3 Per Rpts, 4–12 Feb 45; 148th Inf S–3 Jnl, 4–12 Feb 45.

[10] Chase Comments, 3 Dec 56; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57; Halsema Comments, Mar 57. According to General Chase the probable reason that none of his troops had discovered the prisoners was that no one had the slightest inkling they were in Old Bilibid. On 5 February the 37th Division had to remove both prisoners and internees from the prison to temporary quarters at Grace Park when fire threatened the area and it appeared that the Japanese might be forming a counterattack. The prisoners and civilians departed so hurriedly that they had to leave their few pitiful belongings behind—when they returned a few days later looters had stolen almost everything.

[11] XIV Corps changed the boundary within the city three times between 1820 4 February and 2310 5 February; it is the last change that is described above. Entry timed 1820 4 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl, 4 Feb 45; Rads, XIV Corps to 37th Div and 1st Cav Div, 0215 and 2310 5 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 5 Feb 45. Additional information on Griswold's command decisions during the battle is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 89–113; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 2, 10, 13–14, 19–23.

[12] Additional sources for 145th Infantry action are: 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–19; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 4–12 Feb 45; 145th Inf S–1 and S–3 Jnls, 5–12 Feb 45.

non Company, 145th Infantry, had wrought considerable destruction to the lower class residential district and to some industrial buildings and stores.[13]

Further south other elements of the 145th Infantry, passing through Tondo District, reached San Nicolas and Binondo Districts along the western stretches of the Pasig River's north bank by evening on 5 February. To the left (east) the 148th Infantry had likewise continued toward the river, cleaning out machine gun nests and a few riflemen from business buildings in the eastern section of Binondo District and on eastward into Santa Cruz District.[14] The regiment hoped to seize the two westernmost vehicular bridges over the Pasig—Jones and Santa Cruz Bridges—and by 1600 on the 5th was within 200 yards of them. Then, as forward patrols reported that the bridges had just been blown, a general conflagration began to drive all troops of both the 145th and the 148th Infantry Regiments back from the river.

Throughout the 5th the 37th Division's men had heard and observed Japanese demolitions in the area along and just north of the Pasig in the Binondo and San Nicolas Districts as well as in the North Port Area, on the 145th's right front. The *Northern Force* was firing and blowing up military stores and installations all through the area and, as these tasks were completed, was withdrawing south across the river. Insofar as XIV Corps observers could ascertain, there was no wanton destruction, and in all probability the fires resulting from the demolitions would have been confined to the North Port Area and the river banks had not an unseasonable change in the wind about 2030 driven the flames north and west.[15] The 37th Division, fearing that the flames would spread into residential districts, gathered all available demolitions and started destroying frame buildings in the path of the fire. The extent of these demolitions cannot be ascertained — although it is known that the work of destruction continued for nearly twenty-four hours—and is an academic point at best since the demolitions proved largely ineffectual in stopping the spread of the flames. The conflagration ran north from the river to Azcarraga Street and across that thoroughfare into the North Port Area and Tondo District. The flames were finally brought under control late on 6 February along the general line of Azcarraga Street, but only after the wind again changed direction.

While the 37th Division was fighting the fires and clearing its sector of the city north of the river, additional elements of the 1st Cavalry Division had been coming into the metropolitan area. From 5 through 7 February the 5th and

[13] While most of the information concerning artillery support of 37th Division operations in Manila (in both this and the next chapter) comes from the infantry regimental sources cited previously or subsequently, the following were also employed: 37th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–10; *ibid.*, an. 5, Manila Overlays; 135th FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 14–15; 135th FA Bn Unit Jnl, 5–23 Feb 45; 140th FA Bn Unit Jnl, 5–23 Feb 45; 6th FA Bn Rpt Luzon, 4 Feb–3 Mar 45, pp. 2–3; Daily S–3 Per Rpts of the 6th, 135th, 136th, and 140th FA Bns and the 637th TD Bn, 4–23 Feb 45, copies in 37th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 4–24 Feb 45.

[14] 2d Lt. Robert M. Viale, a platoon leader of Company K, 148th Infantry, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic action during the regiment's advance southward through Manila. Viale was the first of four men of the 37th Division, all from the 148th, to win Medals of Honor in Manila.

[15] See, for example, Msg, Asst ACofS G–3 XIV Corps to ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 1500 6 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45.

8th Cavalry Regiments, their provisional task force organizations now dissolved, cleaned out the eastern section of the city north of the Pasig against very weak opposition. On the 7th the 37th Division took over this eastern portion of the city proper,[16] while the cavalrymen continued across the city limits to clear the suburbs east to the San Juan River, which, flowing generally south, joined the Pasig at the eastern corner of Manila. The cavalrymen encountered little opposition in the area as far as the San Juan, and had cleaned out the suburbs by evening on the 7th.

Capturing the Water Supply Facilities

Meanwhile, far to the north, the 7th Cavalry captured one of the important water supply installations, Novaliches Dam.[17] On 5 February, when troopers first reached the dam, they found no prepared demolitions, but they did intercept three Japanese who were carrying explosives toward the installation. The next day, against little resistance, the regiment secured the Balara Water Filters, which were found undamaged but wired for demolitions.

On 7 and 8 February the troopers patrolled southwest along the main water pipeline from the filters four miles to San Juan Reservoir, which they captured intact about 1530 on the 8th. Forty-five minutes later a Japanese artillery shell fired from high ground across the Marikina River hit the reservoir's main outlet valve. Fortunately, damage was not so severe that the valve could not be worked by hand. For most of the rest of the period that it remained in the Manila area, the 7th Cavalry (the only major element of the 1st Cavalry Division not to fight within the city limits) continued to protect Novaliches Dam, the Balara Filters, and the pipelines connecting the two installations.

The 8th Cavalry secured a water facility still closer to Manila, but not before the regiment fought a pitched battle against the strongest resistance any troops of the 1st Cavalry Division encountered in the area north of the Pasig. Moving east across the San Juan River on 7 February, the 8th Cavalry pushed up to the northwest corner of New Manila Subdivision, where fire from the *1st Independent Naval Battalion* and a supporting heavy weapons detachment stopped the advance. The subdivision extended northeast to southwest three blocks (about 850 yards) and twelve blocks (roughly 1,500 yards) southeast to the northern edge of San Juan del Monte Subdivision. The Japanese had heavily mined the streets within New Manila; pierced rock walls along the streets with slits through which 20-mm. machine cannon could fire; turned many homes into machine gun nests; and, at the southern edge of the subdivision, emplaced three dual-purpose naval guns so as to cover much of the suburb with point-blank, flat-trajectory fire.

On 8 February the 8th Cavalry attacked again, supported by a company of mediums from the 44th Tank Battalion and by the 61st (105-mm. howitzers) and 947th (155-mm. howitzers) Field Artillery Battalions. The 105's fired

[16] As directed by XIV Corps Opns Memo 15, 6 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 8–10 Feb 45.

[17] Additional information on the 7th Cavalry operations is from: 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–14; 7th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 4–20 Feb 45; 7th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 4–20 Feb 45.

1,360 rounds of high explosive into New Manila and San Juan del Monte suburbs and the 155's added another 350 rounds of the same type of ammunition. While this support succeeded in knocking out many Japanese strongpoints — and destroying many homes—it was inadequate to overcome all the opposition. The mine fields limited the effectiveness of tank support. The 8th Cavalry had to make short infantry rushes from one strongpoint to another to gain ground, but by the end of the day had substantially completed the reduction of the area. The task cost the 8th Cavalry 41 men wounded; the 44th Tank Battalion 11 men killed and 12 wounded. Three tanks were knocked out; one of them was completely demolished by a huge Japanese land mine. The 8th Cavalry and division artillery each claimed credit for all Japanese losses of men and matériel: the cavalry regiment averred it killed 350 Japanese and captured or destroyed 22 20-mm. machine cannon, 3 6-inch naval guns, and 5 13.2-mm. machine guns; the artillery's claims were the same 350 Japanese killed, and 23 20-mm. machine cannon, a 105-mm. howitzer, and a 6-inch naval gun destroyed.[18] Be that as it may, the cavalry cleared the rest of the suburban area northeast and east of the city during the next few days with little trouble. The *1st Independent Naval Battalion*, apparently deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, started withdrawing eastward with its 800 remaining troops on 10 February. The unit left behind about 500 dead and all its heavy weapons.[19]

On 9 February the 8th Cavalry moved on from New Manila to San Juan del Monte and secured El Deposito, an underground reservoir fed by artesian wells and located about a mile southwest of San Juan Reservoir. Following the seizure of El Deposito, the last of the close-in water installations, the 8th Cavalry continued south until it reached the north bank of the Pasig River at a point just east of the city limits. The 5th Cavalry, which had been relieved in the center of the city by the 37th Division on 7 February, went south on the 8th's left and, encountering only scattered opposition, reached the Pasig a mile east of the 8th Cavalry on the morning of 10 February.

The 37th Division and the 1st Cavalry Division had accomplished much during the week ending 10 February. They had cleared all Manila and its suburbs north of the Pasig; pushed Colonel Noguchi's *Northern Force* either south across the Pasig or east across the Marikina; captured or destroyed almost all the *Northern Force*'s heavy support weapons; and secured intact the close-in water supply installations. The *Northern Force*, as a matter of fact, had made no concerted effort to hold northern Manila. Noguchi had executed his assigned demolitions and then withdrawn most of his troops south over the Pasig, destroying the bridges behind him. His *1st Independent Naval Battalion* had escaped to

[18] Additional material on the operations of 1st Cavalry Division artillery in this and the next chapter is from: 1st Cav Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Chron Rcd, pp. 5–15; *ibid.*, pt. III, Unit Jnl, 4–23 Feb 45; 947th FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Unit Jnl, 5–23 Feb 45; *ibid.*, pt. V, S–3 Work Sheets, 5–23 Feb 45.

[19] The Japanese battalion had started evacuating the San Juan del Monte–New Manila area on 6 February but had been ordered back into its defenses. It seems probable that the bulk of the unit was never engaged at New Manila and that before the battalion had reoccupied all of its positions it had begun its final withdrawal.

the east. The two American divisions had killed perhaps 1,500 Japanese in the region north of the Pasig, but it appears that less than half of these were members of Noguchi's combat units—the majority were ill-armed service troops and stragglers. Despite the limitations placed on it, artillery fire, supplemented by tank and mortar fire, caused the vast bulk of the Japanese casualties north of the river. That infantry assault operations accounted for relatively few Japanese is at least partially attested to by the fact that American casualties were not more than 50 men killed and 150 wounded.

Except for the fires that had raged out of control along the north bank of the Pasig, burning down or gutting many buildings, damage to the city had so far been limited largely to Japanese bridge destruction and to destruction resulting from American artillery and tank fire in the Tondo District and the New Manila and San Juan suburbs. The Americans had discovered few evidences of atrocities against the Filipino population north of the Pasig. It appeared that the rest of the battle might be fought according to the rules and that the city might yet escape with only superficial damage.

To date operations had served principally as a "get acquainted session" for both the Japanese and Americans. Admiral Iwabuchi had learned that XIV Corps was in Manila to stay; General Griswold had learned that the task of securing the city and environs was not going to be as easy as anticipated. Finally, in clearing the northern portion of the metropolitan area, the troops of the 37th Division and the 1st Cavalry Division had gained invaluable experience in city fighting that would serve them in good stead in operations south of the Pasig. Even as the 1st Cavalry Division was securing the water supply system, the 37th Division was putting this experience to the test.

Across the River and Into the Buildings

By the morning of 7 February two factors were prompting Griswold to head his troops across the Pasig. First, the 1st Cavalry Division and the 37th Division had cleared the city proper north of the river except for the pocket in Tondo District, and Griswold foresaw that the cavalrymen were going to have little difficulty clearing the eastern suburbs and securing the water facilities. Second, late on the 6th, Krueger had directed XIV Corps to seize the Provisor Island generating plant forthwith. Accordingly, on the morning of the 7th, Griswold ordered the 37th Division across the Pasig and assigned it most of the city proper south of the river. The 1st Cavalry Division, when it finished its job in the northern suburbs, would also cross the river and then swing westward toward Manila Bay on the 37th Division's left.[20]

The 37th Division Crosses

General Beightler, the 37th Division commander, ordered the 148th Infantry to make the assault across the Pasig. The

[20] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 89–90, 96–97; Teletype Msg, Sixth Army to XIV Corps, 6 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45; XIV Corps FO 6, 7 Feb 45; Msg, G–3 XIV Corps to 37th Inf Div and 1st Cav Div, 1205 7 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 6–7 Feb 45; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

129th Infantry would follow the 148th and be followed in turn by the 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, division reserve. The remainder of the 145th was to protect the division's line of communications north of Manila. Beightler turned the northern section of the city over to a provisional organization designated the Special Security Force, which contained the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion, the 37th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, and Company A of the 754th Tank Battalion.[21]

Beightler directed the 148th Infantry to cross just east of Malacañan Palace and land on the south shore at Malacañan Gardens, a partially developed botanical park opposite the residency. Except at the gardens and at the mouths of *esteros* (small, canallike streams), sea walls—impassable to LVT's and unscalable from the assault boats in which the crossing was to be made—edged both river banks. The 37th Division had sufficient information to indicate that the gardens lay east of the principal Japanese concentrations in southern Manila and that most of the industrial Paco and Pandacan Districts in the eastern section of the city, south of the Pasig, might be lightly defended. The 148th Infantry would first clear the Paco and Pandacan Districts and then wheel southwest and west toward Intramuros and Manila Bay. The 129th Infantry, once on the south bank, would immediately swing west along the river to secure Provisor Island and the steam power plant.[22]

The 37th Division was to strike into a sector held by the *Central Force*'s *1st Naval Battalion*, some 800 riflemen and machine gunners supported by various provisional heavy weapons units. The battalion was concentrated in the western section of Paco District south from Provisor Island — half a mile west of Malacañan Gardens — generally along the line of the Estero de Paco, which extended south-southeast a little over a mile. One group from the battalion held a strongpoint east of the Estero de Paco at Paco Railroad Station, almost a mile south of the 148th Infantry's landing point and on the 37th–1st Cavalry Division boundary, here marked by the tracks of the Manila Railroad.

In preparation for the assault the 672d Amphibian Tractor Battalion, which had accompanied the 37th Division south from Lingayen Gulf, assembled its LVT's behind the protection of an indentation in the north bank near the palace. The 117th Engineers, who had scrounged all the engineer assault boats they could from Manila back to San Fernando, gathered its craft at the same point, ready to co-operate with the LVT's in shuttling the 37th Division across the river.

Behind a 105-mm. artillery barrage the 3d Battalion, 148th Infantry, began crossing in assault boats at 1515 on 7 February. The first wave encountered no opposition, but, as the second crossed, intense machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire began to hit the river, the landing site, and the Malacañan Palace area. However, the 148th Infantry found only a few Japanese at the Malacañan Gardens and established its bridgehead with

[21] 37th Div FO 28, 7 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 6–8 Feb 45.

[22] 37th Div FO 28, 7 Feb 45; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 43–48; Verbal Orders, CG 37th Div to CO 148th Inf, 1100 7 Feb 45, and 148th Inf Opns Memo 16, 2100 7 Feb 45, both in 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 6–8 Feb 45; 129th Inf Unnumbered Opns Order, 7 Feb 45, 129th Inf Opns Orders File.

little difficulty. By 2000 two battalions were across the Pasig, holding an area stretching south from the river about 300 yards along Cristobal Street to a bridge over the Estero de Concordia, northeast approximately 1,000 yards, and then back to the river along the west bank of an inlet. The crossing had cost the regiment about 15 men killed and 100 wounded, almost all as the result of machine gun and mortar fire. Many of the casualties had actually occurred on the palace grounds, where the 148th Infantry had its command post and where General Beightler had set up an advanced headquarters.[23]

Between 8 and 10 February the 148th Infantry cleared Pandacan District with little trouble, but in the eastern section of Paco District had very great trouble reducing the Japanese strongpoint at Paco Railroad Station and the nearby buildings of Concordia College and Paco School. Support fires of the 136th and 140th Field Artillery Battalions nearly demolished the station and the school, but as of evening on 9 February the Japanese, originally over 250 strong, were still holding out, and the 148th Infantry made plans for a final assault on the 10th. Happily, most of the surviving Japanese withdrew from the three buildings during the night of 9–10 February, and the final attack was less bloody than had been anticipated.[24]

By late afternoon on 10 February the 148th Infantry's left had moved a half mile beyond Paco Railroad Station and had gained the east bank of the Estero de Paco. The right flank elements had initially been held up by Japanese fire from Provisor Island, while in the center troops had had to fight their way through a lesser Japanese strongpoint at the Manila Gas Works, about a quarter of a mile south of the Pasig River,[25] but by afternoon on the 10th the right and center were also up to the Estero de Paco. The last troops of the *1st Naval Battalion* east of the *estero* had either been killed or had withdrawn across the stream. As the 148th drew up along the *estero*, the volume of Japanese fire from the west increased sharply. Hard fighting seemed certain before the regiment could cross the water obstacle, and the regiment's operations south of the Pasig had already cost nearly 50 men killed and 450 wounded.

Provisor Island

As planned, the 129th Infantry crossed the Pasig on the afternoon of 8 February and swung west toward Provisor Island.[26] One company attempted to cross the unbridged Estero de Tonque to the east end of the island that evening, but Japanese rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire pinned the troops in place. The effort was called off in favor of an assault behind artillery support the next morning.

[23] Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57. According to General Beightler, General MacArthur had made a personal tour of the Malacañan Palace grounds during the morning of the 7th and had observed that it was so quiet in the area that XIV Corps could cross the river and clear all southern Manila with a platoon.

[24] T. Sgt. Cleto Rodriguez and Pfc. John N. Reese, Jr., both of Company B, 148th Infantry, were awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic action during this fight, Reese's award being made posthumously.

[25] Pfc. Joseph J. Cicchetti was awarded, posthumously, the Medal of Honor for heroic action at the Gas Works on 9 February. Cicchetti was a member of Company A, 148th Infantry.

[26] Additional information on 129th Infantry action comes from: 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–7; 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, pp. 62–66; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 6–12 Feb 45; 129th Inf Regtl Jnl, 8–12 Feb 45.

Provisor Island, about 400 yards east to west and 125 yards north to south, was bordered on the north by the Pasig River, on the east by the Estero de Tonque, and on the south and west by the Estero Provisor. Five large buildings and many smaller shedlike structures covered almost every foot of the island's surface. Three of the large buildings were of concrete, the rest were frame structures sided and roofed with sheet metal. The Japanese garrison, probably members of the *1st Naval Battalion*, fluctuated in strength, being reinforced as the need arose by means of a bridge across the Estero Provisor on the west side of the island. Japanese fortifications were of a hasty nature, most of them sandbagged machine gun emplacements within buildings or at entrances. From positions to the west, southwest, and south other Japanese forces could blanket the island with all types of support fire.

Following the scheduled artillery preparation, Company G, 129th Infantry, moved up to the mouth of the Estero de Tonque at 0800 on 9 February. The company planned to shuttle across the *estero* in two engineer assault boats to seize first a boiler plant at the northeast corner of the island. The first boat, eight men aboard, got across safely, but the second was hit and two men were killed; the survivors swam and waded to the island. By 0830 fifteen men of Company G had entered the boiler plant, only to be thrown out almost immediately by a Japanese counterattack. They then took refuge behind a coal pile lying between the boiler house and the west bank of Estero de Tonque.

Rifle and machine gun fire from the boiler plant and from the main powerhouse just to the south pinned the fifteen down. The 129th Infantry was unable to reinforce them, for the Japanese had the Esteros Provisor and de Tonque covered with rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire. Immediate withdrawal proved equally impossible — two other men had already been killed in an attempt to swim back across the Estero de Tonque.

With close support—so close that the fifteen survivors had to keep prone—from the 2d Battalion's mortars, Company G's isolated group hung on for the rest of the day while the battalion made plans to evacuate them so that artillery could again strike the island. After dark Company G's commander, Capt. George West, swam across the Estero de Tonque dragging an engineer assault boat behind him. Although wounded, he shuttled his troops back to the east bank in the dim light of flames from burning buildings on and south of the island. When a count was taken about midnight, Company G totaled 17 casualties — 6 men killed, 5 wounded, and 6 missing — among the 18 men, including Captain West, who had reached Provisor Island during the previous eighteen hours.

For the next hour or so the 37th Division's artillery and mortar fire blanketed the island as Company E prepared to send ninety men over the Estero de Tonque in six engineer assault boats. The fires had died down by the time the craft started across the stream at 0230, but the moon chose to come out from behind a cloud just as the first two boats reached shore safely. A hail of Japanese machine cannon and mortar fire sunk the next three boats while on the island a small fuel tank flared up to expose the



PROVISOR ISLAND, *lower left center.*

men already ashore. Hugging the coal pile, Company E's troops remained pinned down until almost 0500, when the moon disappeared and the fuel fire burnt itself out.

Quickly, the men dashed into the boiler plant. A macabre game of hide and seek went on around the machinery inside until dawn, by which time Company E had gained possession of the eastern half of the building. The Japanese still held the western half.

On the 10th, Company E slowly cleaned out the rest of the boiler house, but every attempt to move outside brought down the fire of every Japanese weapon within range of Provisor Island —or so it seemed to the troops isolated in their industrial fortress. Therefore, Company E held what it had while division artillery and mortars pounded the western part of the island, as did tanks and tank destroyers from positions on the north bank of the Pasig. In the afternoon TD fire accidentally killed 2 men and wounded 5 others of Company E, which, through the day, also suffered 7 men wounded from Japanese fire. During the night Company E sent another 10-man squad across the Estero de Tonque to reinforce the troops already on the island. Artillery, tanks, tank destroyers, and 81-mm. mortars kept up a steady fire in preparation for still another attack the next morning.

After dawn on the 11th, Company E found that resistance had largely collapsed on the island and that as division artillery continued to pound known or suspected Japanese mortar and artillery positions to the south and west, the volume of Japanese fire previously sent against the island had greatly diminished. Searching cautiously and thoroughly through the rubble of the now nearly demolished buildings of the power plant, Company E cleared all Provisor Island by midafternoon and secured a foothold on the mainland, west across Estero Provisor.

The task of securing the island had cost the 2d Battalion, 129th Infantry, approximately 25 men killed and 75 wounded. From one point of view the losses had been in vain. The Americans had hoped to secure the power plant intact, but even before troops had reached the island the Japanese had damaged some equipment, and what was left the Japanese and American artillery and mortars ruined. There was no chance that the plant would soon deliver electric power to Manila.

The 1st Battalion, 129th Infantry, on the 2d Battalion's left, had been stalled until the 10th both by the Japanese fire supporting the Provisor Island garrison and by lesser Japanese strongpoints in an industrial area west of Cristobal Street. But by evening on the 10th, the 1st Battalion had moved its left up to the Estero de Paco, abreast of the 148th Infantry, while its right had pushed on to the Estero de Tonque. These gains cost the 129th Infantry another 5 men killed and nearly 20 wounded.

Lifting the Restrictions on Artillery Fire

The artillery, mortar, tank, and tank destroyer fire that had destroyed the Provisor Island power plant and turned Paco Station, Paco School, and Concordia College into a shambles represented a striking departure from the limitations placed upon support fires during the clearing of northern Manila

and the eastern suburbs. For the 37th Division, at least, cancellation of the earlier limitations had become a necessity. For one thing, sufficient information had now become available from aerial observation, patrolling, and reports from civilians and guerrillas for XIV Corps's G–2 Section to conclude that the Japanese had turned almost every large building from Estero de Paco west to Manila Bay into a veritable fortress, far stronger even than the defenses already encountered south of the Pasig.

In addition, the operations south of the river had forced the XIV Corps and the 37th Division to the reluctant decision that all pretense at saving Manila's buildings would have to be given up—casualties were mounting at a much too alarming rate among the infantry units. The 148th Infantry had suffered 500-odd casualties (about 200 did not require hospitalization) from 7 through 10 February. The regiment was now nearly 600 men understrength, and its rifle companies averaged about 50 men understrength. Through the seizure of Provisor Island the 129th Infantry had incurred about 285 casualties—35 killed, 240 wounded, and 10 missing—and was nearly 700 men understrength. Company G had only 90 effectives; Company E was little better off. The 148th Infantry had apparently received only five replacements since 9 January; the 129th Infantry, none.[27]

The losses had manifestily been too heavy for the gains achieved. If the city were to be secured without the destruction of the 37th and the 1st Cavalry Divisions, no further effort could be made to save the buildings; everything holding up progress would be pounded, although artillery fire would not be directed against structures such as churches and hospitals that were known to contain civilians. Even this last restriction would not always be effective, for often it could not be learned until too late that a specific building held civilians.[28] The lifting of the restrictions on support fires would result in turning much of southern Manila into a shambles; but there was no help for that if the city were to be secured in a reasonable length of time and with reasonable losses. Restrictions on aerial bombardment, on the other hand, would remain in effect.

The 1st Cavalry Division Crosses

While the 37th Division was fighting its costly battle to clear Provisor Island and advance to the east bank of the Estero de Paco, the 1st Cavalry Division started across the Pasig and came up on the infantry's left. One troop of the 8th Cavalry crossed near the Philippine Racing Club, just east of the city limits, during the evening of 9 February; the rest of the regiment was across the river at the same point by 0950 on the 10th. The cavalry encountered practically no opposition in the crossing area, but progressed slowly because the Japanese had thoroughly mined many of the streets south and west of the club. By dusk on the 10th the 8th Cavalry had secured a bridgehead about a thousand yards deep. Its right flank crossed the city limits into Santa Ana District and patrols established contact with 37th Di-

[27] This conclusion is based upon a thorough examination of all relevant 37th Division, 129th Infantry, and 148th Infantry records.

[28] XIV Corps Luzon Rpt, pt. I, p. 93; 37th Div Luzon Rpt, pp. 51–53.

vision troops along the division boundary near Paco Station; on its left (east) other patrols met men of the 5th Cavalry.

Shuttling troops across the Pasig at the suburb of Makati, a mile east of the 8th Cavalry's crossing site, the 5th Cavalry got one squadron to the south bank of the river by 1500 on 10 February and secured the Makati electrical power substation. The troops met no ground opposition, but considerable machine gun and mortar fire, originating from the Fort McKinley area to the southeast, harassed them at the crossing area throughout the day.

Dusk on 10 February found XIV Corps firmly established—with two separate bridgeheads—south of the Pasig. The 37th Division, in its drive to the Estero de Paco, had secured a quarter of the city proper south of the river; the 1st Cavalry Division had cleared some of the southern suburban areas and was ready to move on into the city on the 37th's left. Enough had been learned about the Japanese defenses for the corps' G–2 Section to conclude that the hardest fighting was still ahead —and not all of it necessarily within the city itself, for XIV Corps was about to become involved in the fighting south of the city previously conducted by the 11th Airborne Division under Eighth Army control.

XIV Corps' area of responsibility was enlarged on the 10th of February when the 11th Airborne Division passed to its control, solving some problems and creating others. But the most immediately significant feature of the passage of command was that—in concert with the 1st Cavalry Division's crossing of the Pasig—XIV Corps had an opportunity to cut the last routes of withdrawal and reinforcement available to the *Manila Naval Defense Force* in the metropolitan area. The corps planned that while the 37th Division pushed on across the Estero de Paco, the 5th and 8th Cavalry Regiments would drive generally southwest toward Manila Bay and gain contact with the 11th Airborne Division, thus effecting an encirclement of the city.

Encircling the City

The 11th Airborne Division's Situation

When the 11th Airborne Division had halted on 4 February at the Route 1 bridge over the Parañaque River, three miles south of the Manila city limits, the major force opposing it was the *Southern Force's 3d Naval Battalion*, reinforced by a company of the *1st Naval Battalion* and artillery units of varying armament.[29] In many ways the *3d Naval Battalion* positions were the strongest in the Manila area, having the virtue of being long established. Reinforced concrete pillboxes abounded at street intersections in the suburban area south of the city limits, many of them covered with dirt long enough to have natural camouflage; others were carefully concealed in clumps of trees. Northeast of Parañaque, Nichols Field —used by the Japanese Naval Air Service and defended by part of the *3d Naval Battalion*—literally bristled with antiaircraft defenses. Most of the gun positions were as well camouflaged as the generally flat terrain permitted, and

[29] Japanese information in this section is based primarily upon 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 16, 29; see also above, ch. XIII.

the emplacements, useful in themselves as fortifications, were supplemented by scattered bunkers and pillboxes housing machine gunners and supporting riflemen.

As of 4 February the Japanese had few troops at Nielson Field, two miles north-northeast of Nichols Field, but the *4th Naval Battalion* and heavy weapons attachments held Fort McKinley, two miles east of Nielson. Other Japanese troops manned a group of antiaircraft gun positions about midway between the Army post and Nichols Field, guns that could and did support the *3d Naval Battalion.*

On the morning of 5 February the 11th Airborne Division's 511th Parachute Infantry forced a crossing of the Parañaque and started north along Route 1 over a quarter-mile-wide strip of land lying between the river, on the east, and Manila Bay, on the west.[30] During the next two days the regiment fought its way 2,000 yards northward house by house and pillbox by pillbox. Supported only by light artillery—and not much of that—the 511th depended heavily upon flame throwers, demolitions, and 60-mm. mortars in its advance. In the two days it lost 6 men killed and 35 wounded, and killed about 200 Japanese.[31]

On the 6th the 511th Infantry halted to wait for the 188th Infantry (with the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry, attached) to come north from Tagaytay Ridge and launch an attack toward Nichols Field, whence Japanese artillery fire had been falling on the 511th's right. The division planned to send the 188th Infantry against the airfield from the south and southeast, while one battalion of the 511th would attack from the west across the Parañaque River. In preparation for the effort, the reinforced 188th Infantry moved up to a line of departure about a mile and a half southeast of Nichols Field under cover of darkness during the night of 6–7 February.

The Attack on Nichols Field

The 188th Infantry attack on 7 February was almost completely abortive in the face of concentrated artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire from the Japanese defenses on and around the air field.[32] On the west the 511th Infantry managed to get its right across the north-south stretch of the Parañaque to positions near the southwest corner of Nichols Field, but there it stopped. During the next two days the 511th Infantry secured a narrow strip of land between the Parañaque River and the airfield's western runway and overran some defenses

[30] The general sources of information concerning 11th Airborne Division operations are: Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu-Bataan, pp. 22–28; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 38; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 91–94; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–6; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 81–88; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 4–23 Feb 45; 11th A/B Div Arty, Unit Hist, 31 Jan–9 Feb 45, pp. 4–6; *ibid.*, 10 Feb–4 May 45, pp. 1–5.

[31] Additional information on 511th Infantry operations is from: 511th Inf S–1, S–2, and S–3 Jnls, 4–23 Feb 45; 511th Inf S–1 Casualty and Insp Rpts Luzon.

[32] Most of the 11th Airborne Division's records were lost when the division moved to Japan at the end of the war or were destroyed in a fire at the division's headquarters building during the occupation. Therefore, it is impossible to reconstruct the details of the fighting for the Nichols Field area on and after 7 February. Fragmentary information is available in: 188th Inf Draft Hist Luzon, pp. 4–10; 188th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–8; 1st Bn 187th Inf Chron Narrative, 26 Jan–24 Feb 45, pp. 4–7, 11th A/B Div Camp Campbell Ky. collection; 187th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 8–23 Feb 45; 187th Inf Chron Narrative MIKE VI Opn, pp. 2–4; 2d Bn 187th Inf Chron Narrative MIKE VI Opn, pp. 3–5.

at the northwest corner of the field. The 188th Infantry made contact with the 511th at the southwest corner but could gain little ground on the south and southeast. On the 10th, its last day under Eighth Army control, the division consolidated its gains and established a solid line from the northwest corner around to the southwest corner of the field, eliminating the last Japanese resistance on the western side. Meanwhile, elements of the 511th Infantry had continued up Route 1 nearly a mile beyond Nichols Field's northwest corner.

Four days' effort had effected little reduction in the amount of Japanese fire originating from the Nichols Field defenses. Support fires of Mindoro-based A–20's and the division's light artillery (75-mm. pack howitzers and the short 105-mm. howitzers) had not destroyed enough Japanese weapons to permit the infantry to advance without taking unduly heavy casualties. In fact, the volume of fire from Japanese naval guns of various types was still so great that one infantry company commander requested: "Tell Halsey to stop looking for the Jap Fleet. It's dug in on Nichols Field." [33] The 11th Airborne obviously needed heavier artillery support.

For some days the division's situation had been a bit anomalous, especially in regard to co-ordination of its artillery with that of XIV Corps to the north. Sixth Army had directed XIV Corps not only to seize Manila but also to drive south to an objective line running from Cavite northeast across the Hagonoy Isthmus to Tagig on Laguna de Bay.[34] The 11th Airborne Division had crossed this line as early as 6 February, and every step it took northward toward Manila increased the danger that XIV Corps Artillery might inadvertently shoot it up.

The Sixth and Eighth Armies had both apparently made some effort to have General MacArthur establish a formal boundary south of Manila, but with no success. From the beginning GHQ SWPA had intended that the 11th Airborne Division would ultimately pass to Sixth Army control, and it appears that theater headquarters, anticipating an early contact between the 11th Airborne Division and the XIV Corps, saw no need to establish a formal boundary. Instead, GHQ SWPA only awaited the contact to make sure Sixth Army could exercise effective control when the transfer was made.

General Eichelberger had become increasingly worried as the uncertain situation persisted. GHQ SWPA made no provision for direct communication between Sixth and Eighth Armies until 7 or 8 February, and until that time each Army had learned of the others' progress principally through GHQ SWPA channels.[35] When direct communication began, the 11th Airborne Division and the XIV Corps quickly co-ordinated artillery fire plans and established a limit of fire line to demark their support zones about midway between Nichols Field and the Manila city limits. Under the provisions of this plan XIV Corps Artillery fired sixteen 155-mm. and 8-inch howitzer concentrations in support of the air-

[33] Flanagan, *The Angels*, p. 85.

[34] Sixth Army FO 47, 2 Feb 45.

[35] Eichelberger stated that he kept Krueger constantly informed of the 11th Airborne Division's progress by direct radio, but received no information from Sixth Army until 4 February. Eichelberger Comments, 21 Jan 57. On the other hand, the earliest message to Sixth Army that can be found in Eighth Army files is dated 5 February.

borne division's attack at Nichols Field before the division passed to XIV Corps control about 1300 on 10 February.[36]

"Welcome to the XIV Corps," Griswold radioed General Swing, simultaneously dashing whatever hopes Swing may have had to continue north into Manila in accordance with Eichelberger's earlier plans. For the time being, Griswold directed Swing, the 11th Airborne Division would continue to exert pressure against the Japanese at Nichols Field but would mount no general assault. Instead, the division would ascertain the extent and nature of the Japanese defenses at and east of the airfield and prepare to secure the Cavite naval base area, which the division had bypassed on its way north from Nasugbu. Further orders would be forthcoming once XIV Corps itself could learn more about the situation south of Manila.[37]

On 11 February the 511th Infantry attacked north along the bay front in its sector to Libertad Avenue, scarcely a mile short of the city limits, losing its commander, Colonel Haugen, during the day. Griswold then halted the advance lest the 511th cut across the fronts of the 5th and 8th Cavalry Regiments, now heading directly toward the bay from the northeast, and upset artillery support plans.[38] Meanwhile, in a series of patrol actions, the 187th Infantry had secured the southeast corner and the southern runway of Nichols Field. Griswold authorized the 11th Airborne Division to mount a concerted attack against the field on the 12th.

The attack was preceded by artillery and mortar concentrations and by an air strike executed by Marine Corps SBD's from the Lingayen Gulf fields, support that succeeded in knocking out many Japanese artillery positions. The 2d Battalion, 187th Infantry, attacked generally east from the northwest corner of the field; the 188th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry, drove in from the south and southeast. By dusk the two regiments had cleared most of the field and finished mopping up the next day. The field was, however, by no means ready to receive Allied Air Force planes. Runways and taxiways were heavily mined, the runways were pitted by air and artillery bombardments, and the field was still subjected to intermittent artillery and mortar fire from the Fort McKinley area.

With the seizure of Nichols Field, the 11th Airborne Division substantially completed its share in the battle for Manila. Since its landing at Nasugbu the division had suffered over 900 casualties. Of this number the 511th Infantry lost approximately 70 men killed and 240 wounded; the 187th and 188th Infantry Regiments had together lost about

[36] The foregoing analysis of liaison problems is based on: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 38; *ibid.*, III, 68; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 98; XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 11; Rad, G–3 XIV Corps to G–3 37th Div, 1225 8 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 6–8 Feb 45; Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, 0900 3 Feb 45; Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, 1130 5 Feb 45; Rad, Eichelberger to Krueger, 1130 5 Feb 45; Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, 1208 7 Feb 45; Rad, Krueger to Eichelberger, WG–139, 8 Feb 45. Last five in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VI, 2–19 Feb 45. Eichelberger Comments, 21 Jan 57.

[37] Rad, Griswold to Swing, 10 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 10 Feb 45.

[38] Rad, XIV Corps to 11th A/B Div, 37th Div, 1st Cav Div, and XIV Corps Arty, 11 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 11 Feb 45. This radio also established a formal boundary between the 11th Airborne and 1st Cavalry Divisions, running east along Libertad Avenue and Route 57 four miles inland to the southwest corner of Fort McKinley.

100 men killed and 510 wounded, the vast majority in the action at Nichols Field.[89] The division and its air and artillery support had killed perhaps 3,000 Japanese in the metropolitan area, destroying the *3d Naval Battalion* and isolating the *Abe Battalion*. From then on the division's activities in the Manila area would be directed toward securing the Cavite region, destroying the *Abe Battalion,* and, in co-operation with the 1st Cavalry Division, assuring the severance of the *Manila Naval Defense Force*'s routes of escape and reinforcement by clearing Fort McKinley and environs. For the latter purpose the airborne division would have to maintain close contact with the cavalry, already moving to complete the encirclement of the Japanese defenders in the city.

Completing the Encirclement

The 1st Cavalry Division planned that the 5th Cavalry, the unit with the most direct approach to the Nichols Field area, would be the first to make contact with the 11th Airborne Division. But delays in getting the rest of the regiment across the Pasig on 11 February, combined with the necessity for patrolling eastward along the south bank of the river to seek out Japanese machine gun and artillery positions near the crossing site, prevented the 5th Cavalry from making general advances on that day. On the right the 8th Cavalry, maintaining contact with the 37th Division, drove up almost to the Estero de Paco along the division boundary against scattered opposition. The left remained in essentially the same position it had held the previous night, just south of the Philippine Racing Club. In the area of South Cemetery, across the tracks of the Manila Suburban Electric Line (trolley cars) from the club, a 511th Infantry patrol made contact with an 8th Cavalry outpost late in the day.

The next day, 12 February, the 5th Cavalry swept rapidly across Nielson Field against scattered rifle fire and about 0900 came up to Culi-Culi and Route 57, an eastern extension of the same street that, known as Libertad Avenue further to the west, the 511th Infantry had reached on 11 February. Turning west along this road, the 5th Cavalry made contact with the 511th Infantry on Libertad Avenue proper about 1040. A few minutes later the cavalry's leading elements were on the shore of Manila Bay and sped north another 1,000 yards to Villaruel Street.

The 8th Cavalry had also continued westward during the morning but in the afternoon was relieved by the 12th Cavalry. The latter, in turn, had been relieved along the line of communications by the 112th Cavalry RCT, which Krueger had attached to the 1st Cavalry Division on 9 February. General Mudge, the division commander, found in this relief a welcome opportunity to reconstitute his normal brigade structure and so sent the 12th Cavalry south to rejoin the 5th Cavalry under the control of the 1st Brigade headquarters. The 8th Cavalry then moved north to go back under 2d Brigade command.

Wasting little time, the 12th Cavalry, during the afternoon of 12 February, halted its right to contain Japanese who had already stalled the 8th Cavalry and

[89] Since there are few division records, casualty figures are fragmentary, and the figures presented here are the author's estimates based upon study of all relevant sources.

advanced its left rapidly southwestward past Nielson Field and on to Villaruel Street, where it made contact with the 5th Cavalry troops already along that thoroughfare. About 1430, the 2d Squadron, 12th Cavalry, reached the bay shore.

The 1st Cavalry Brigade's advance to the shores of Manila Bay on 12 February, together with the establishment of contact between that unit and the 11th Airborne Division, completed the encirclement of the Japanese forces in Manila. Admiral Iwabuchi and the now isolated troops of his *Manila Naval Defense Force* could choose only between surrender and a fight to the death. And by evening on 12 February any private in the 1st Cavalry Division, the 11th Airborne Division, or the 37th Infantry Division could have told all who cared to ask that Iwabuchi had already selected the second course.

CHAPTER XV

The Drive Toward Intramuros

Iwabuchi Entrapped

Although patently determined at the end of January to defend Manila to the last, Admiral Iwabuchi apparently wavered in his resolution during the week or so following the arrival of the first American troops in the city.[1] On the morning of 9 February, two days after the 37th Division began crossing the Pasig, the admiral decided that his position in the Manila area had deteriorated so rapidly and completely that he should devote some attention to evacuating his remaining forces. Accordingly, he moved his headquarters to Fort McKinley, evidently planning to direct a withdrawal from that relatively safe vantage point. This transfer precipitated a series of incidents that vividly illustrates the anomalies of the Japanese command structure in the metropolitan area.

About the same time that Iwabuchi moved to Fort McKinley, the first definite information about the course of the battle in Manila reached General Yokoyama's *Shimbu Group* headquarters. The *Shimbu* commander immediately began planning a counterattack, the multiple aims and complicated preparation of which suggest that Yokoyama had so little information that he could not make up his mind quite what he wanted to, or could, accomplish.

Estimating the strength of the Americans in the Manila area at little more than a regiment, General Yokoyama apparently felt that he had a good opportunity to cut off and isolate the Allied force. Conversely, he was also interested in getting the *Manila Naval Defense Force* out of the city quickly, either by opening a line of retreat or by having Iwabuchi co-ordinate a breakthrough effort with a *Shimbu Group* counterattack, scheduled for the night of 16–17 February. Not knowing how far the situation in Manila had deteriorated—communications were faulty and Admiral Iwabuchi had supplied Yokoyama with little information—Yokoyama at first directed the *Manila Naval Defense Force* to hold fast. The question of a general withdrawal, he told Iwabuchi, would be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the counterattack.

There is no indication that the *Shimbu Group* commander intended to reinforce or retake Manila. Rather, his primary interest was to gain time for the *Shimbu Group* to strengthen its defenses north and northeast of the city and to move more supplies out of the city to its

[1] The general Japanese sources used in the preparation of this section are: SWPA Hist Series, II, 461–64; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, pp. 29–32; Asano Statement, States, I, 94–95; Hashimoto Statement, States, I, 278–81; Colonel Koboyashi Statement, States, II, 250–52; Kayashima Statement, States, II, 157–70.

mountain strongholds, simultaneously creating a good opportunity for the *Manila Naval Defense Force* to withdraw intact.

Such was the state of communications between Iwabuchi and Yokoyama that Iwabuchi had decided to return to Manila before he received any word of the counterattack plans. When Admiral Iwabuchi left Manila he had placed Colonel Noguchi, the *Northern Force* commander, in control of all troops remaining within the city limits. Noguchi found it impossible to exercise effective control over the naval elements of his command and asked that a senior naval officer return to the city. Iwabuchi, who now feared that Fort McKinley might fall to the Americans before the defenses within the city, himself felt compelled to return, a step he took on the morning of 11 February.

On or about 13 February, General Yokoyama, having received more information, decided that the situation in Manila was beyond repair, and directed Iwabuchi to return to Fort McKinley and start withdrawing his troops immediately, without awaiting the *Shimbu Group* counterattack. Two days later General Yamashita, from his Baguio command post 125 miles to the north, stepped into the picture. Censuring General Yokoyama, the *14th Area Army* commander first demanded to know why Admiral Iwabuchi had been permitted to return to the city and second directed Yokoyama to get all troops out of Manila immediately.

Not until the morning of 17 February did Iwabuchi receive Yokoyama's directive of the 13th and Yamashita's orders of the 15th. By those dates XIV Corps had cut all Japanese routes of withdrawal, a fact that was readily apparent to Admiral Iwabuchi. As a result, he made no attempt to get any troops out of the city under the cover of the *Shimbu Group*'s counterattack, which was just as well, since that effort was unsuccessful.

Yokoyama had planned to counterattack with two columns. On the north, a force composed of two battalions of the *31st Infantry, 8th Division,* and two provisional infantry battalions from the *105th Division* was to strike across the Marikina River from the center of the *Shimbu Group*'s defenses, aiming at Novaliches Dam and Route 3 north of Manila.[2] The southern prong, consisting of three provisional infantry battalions of the *Kobayashi Force*—formerly the Army's *Manila Defense Force*—were to drive across the Marikina toward the Balara Water Filters and establish contact with the northern wing in the vicinity of Grace Park.

The 112th Cavalry RCT, which had replaced the 12th Cavalry along the 1st Cavalry Division's line of communications, broke up the northern wing's counterattack between 15 and 18 February. In the Novaliches–Novaliches Dam area, and in a series of skirmishes further west and northwest, the 112th Cavalry RCT dispatched some 300 Japanese, losing only 2 men killed and 32 wounded. Un-co-ordinated from the start, the northern counterattack turned into a shambles, and the northern attack

[2] Additional information on the counterattack effort is from: 1st Cav Div G–2 Summary Luzon, pp. 12–15; 112th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–8; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–14; 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–14; 1st Cav Div G–2 Jnl, 15–20 Feb 45; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Novaliches Water Shed Phase, pp. 1–2; 2d Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–7.

force withdrew in a disorganized manner before it accomplished anything.

The *Kobayashi Force*'s effort was turned back on the morning of the 16th, when American artillery caught this southern wing as it attempted to cross the Marikina River. During the next three days all Japanese attacks were piecemeal in nature and were thrown back with little difficulty by the 7th and 8th Cavalry Regiments, operating east and northeast of Manila. By 19 February, when the southern counterattack force also withdrew, the 2d Cavalry Brigade and support artillery had killed about 650 Japanese in the area west of the Marikina from Novaliches Dam south to the Pasig. The brigade lost about 15 men killed and 50 wounded.

The fact that the counterattack was completely unsuccessful in either cutting the XIV Corps lines of communications or opening a route of withdrawal for the *Manila Naval Defense Force* does not seem to have greatly concerned or surprised General Yokoyama. He did not have much hope of success from the beginning, and, indeed, his ardor for the venture was undoubtedly dampened by Admiral Iwabuchi's adamant attitude about making any further attempt to withdraw from the city, an attitude the admiral made amply clear on the morning of the 17th, the very day that the counterattack was to have reached its peak of penetration.

That morning Iwabuchi, truthfully enough, informed Yokoyama that withdrawal of the bulk of his forces from Manila was no longer possible. He went on to say that he still considered the defense of Manila to be of utmost importance and that he could not continue organized operations in the city should he attempt to move his headquarters or any other portion of his forces out. Again on 19 and 21 February Yokoyama directed Iwabuchi to withdraw. Iwabuchi was unmoved, replying that withdrawal would result in quick annihilation of the forces making the attempt, whereas continued resistance within the city would result in heavy losses to the attacking American forces. General Yokoyama suggested that Iwabuchi undertake night withdrawals by infiltrating small groups of men through the American lines. Past experience throughout the Pacific war, the *Shimbu Group* commander went on, had proven the feasibility of such undertakings. There was no recorded answer to this message, and on 23 February all communication between the *Shimbu Group* and the *Manila Naval Defense Force* ceased. Admiral Iwabuchi had made his bed, and he was to die in it.

Meanwhile, the fighting within Manila had raged unabated as XIV Corps compressed the Japanese into an ever decreasing area. Outside, the 11th Airborne Division had cut off the *Southern Force*'s *Abe Battalion* on high ground at Mabato Point, on the northwest shore of Laguna de Bay. There, between 14 and 18 February, a battalion-sized guerrilla force under Maj. John D. Vanderpool, a special agent sent to Luzon by GHQ SWPA in October 1944, contained the Japanese unit.[3] From 18 through 23 February an 11th Airborne Division task force, composed of three infantry battalions closely supported by artillery, tank destroyers, and Marine Corps SBD's, besieged the *Abe Battalion*. In this final

[3] G–2 GHQ FEC, Intelligence Activities in the Philippines During the Japanese Occupation, 10 Jun 48, pp. 87–88, in OCMH files.

action the Japanese unit lost about 750 men killed; the 11th Airborne Division lost less than 10 men killed and 50 wounded—the burden of the attack had been borne principally by the artillery and air support elements. The *Abe Battalion*'s final stand made no tactical sense, and at least until 14 February the unit could have escaped northeastward practically unmolested.[4]

The *4th Naval Battalion,* cut off at Fort McKinley when the 5th and 12th Cavalry Regiments pushed to Manila Bay, played the game a bit more shrewdly. From 13 through 19 February elements of the 11th Airborne Division, coming northeast from the Nichols Field area, and troops of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, moving east along the south bank of the Pasig River, cleared all the approaches to Fort McKinley in a series of patrol actions. When, on the 19th, troops of the 11th Airborne and elements of the 1st Cavalry Division completed the occupation of the Fort McKinley area, they found that the bulk of the Japanese had fled. Whether by Iwabuchi's authority or not, the *4th Naval Battalion,* together with remnants of the *3d Naval Battalion* from Nichols Field, had withdrawn eastward toward the *Shimbu Group*'s main defenses during the night of 17–18 February. Some 300 survivors of the *3d Naval Battalion* thus escaped, while the *4th* probably managed to evacuate about 1,000 men of its original strength of nearly 1,400.[5]

Inside the city, as of 12 February, Admiral Iwabuchi still had under his control his *Central Force* (*1st* and *2d Naval Battalions*), the *Headquarters Sector Unit,* the *5th Naval Battalion,* the *Northern Force*'s *3d Provisional Infantry Battalion* and service units, remnants of Colonel Noguchi's *2d Provisional Infantry Battalion,* and, finally, the many miscellaneous naval "attached units." The 37th Division had decimated the *1st Naval Battalion* at Provisor Island and during the fighting through Paco and Pandacan Districts; the *2d Provisional Infantry Battalion* had lost heavily in action against the 1st Cavalry and 37th Divisions north of the Pasig; the *2d Naval Battalion,* originally holding the extreme southern section of the city, had lost considerable strength to the 1st Cavalry Brigade and the 11th Airborne Division; all the rest of the Japanese units had suffered losses from American artillery and mortar fire. The total strength now available to Iwabuchi within Manila probably numbered no more than 6,000 troops.

Perhaps more serious, from Iwabuchi's point of view, were the Japanese heavy weapons losses. By 12 February XIV Corps had destroyed almost all his artillery. Carefully laid American artillery and mortar fire was rapidly knocking out his remaining mortars as well as all machine guns except for those emplaced well within fortified buildings. Soon Iwabuchi's men would be reduced to

[4] Detailed information on the Mabato Point action is to be found in: 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 6, 17, 29; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 19–23 Feb 45; 1st Bn 187th Gli Inf Chron Narrative MIKE VI Opn, p. 9.

[5] Information on the Fort McKinley actions is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 94–96, 99, 227–29; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 6, 17, 29; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 13–20 Feb 45; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 14–17; 12th Cav Rpt Luzon, p. 11; 188th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–9.

On 13 February, during the attack toward Fort McKinley from the south, Pfc. Manuel Perez, Jr., of Company A, 511th Parachute Infantry, won the Medal of Honor for heroic action in reducing Japanese pillboxes that had held up the advance of his company.

fighting principally with light machine guns, rifles, and hand grenades. Even so, they were to demonstrate that they were capable of conducting a most tenacious and fanatic defense.

The Battles at the Strongpoints

A Forecast

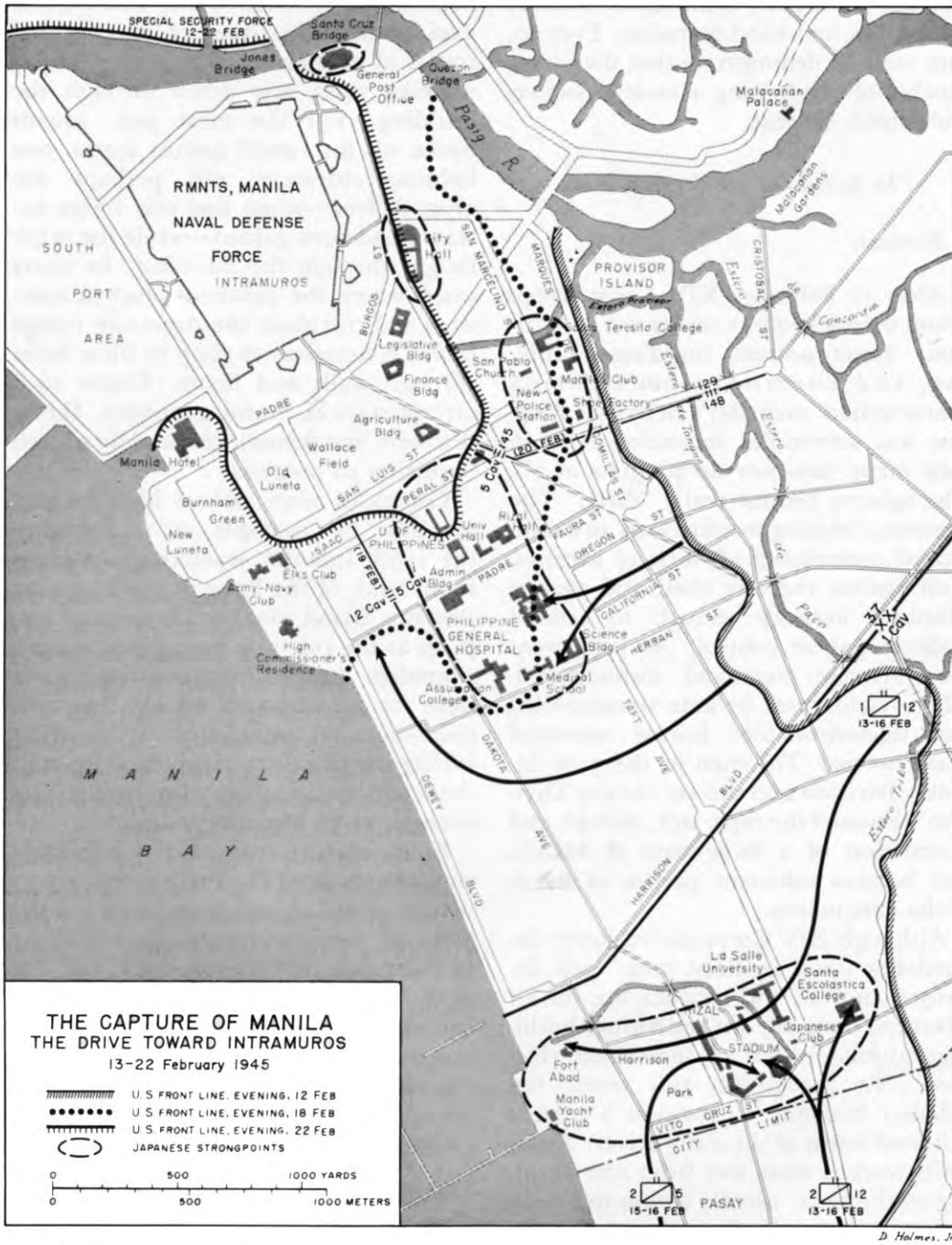
After 12 February XIV Corps troops found themselves in a steady war of attrition. Street-to-street, building-to-building, and room-to-room fighting characterized each day's activity. Progress was sometimes measured only in feet; many days saw no progress at all. The fighting became really "dirty." The Japanese, looking forward only to death, started committing all sorts of excesses, both against the city itself and against Filipinos unlucky enough to remain under Japanese control. As time went on, Japanese command disintegrated. Then, viciousness became uncontrolled and uncontrollable; horror mounted upon horror. The men of the 37th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division witnessed the rape, sack, pillage, and destruction of a large part of Manila and became reluctant parties to much of the destruction.

Although XIV Corps placed heavy dependence upon artillery, tank, tank destroyer, mortar, and bazooka fire for all advances, cleaning out individual buildings ultimately fell to individual riflemen. To accomplish this work, the infantry brought to fruition a system initiated north of the Pasig River. Small units worked their way from one building to the next, usually trying to secure the roof and top floor first, often by coming through the upper floors of an adjoining structure. Using stairways as axes of advance, lines of supply, and routes of evacuation, troops then began working their way down through the building. For the most part, squads broke up into small assault teams, one holding entrances and perhaps the ground floor—when that was where entrance had been gained—while the other fought through the building. In many cases, where the Japanese blocked stairways and corridors, the American troops found it necessary to chop or blow holes through walls and floors. Under such circumstances, hand grenades, flame throwers, and demolitions usually proved requisites to progress.[6]

Casualties were seldom high on any one day. For example, on 12 February the 129th Infantry, operating along the south bank of the Pasig in the area near Provisor Island, was held to gains of 150 yards at the cost of 5 men killed and 28 wounded. Low as these casualty figures were for a regimental attack, the attrition—over 90 percent of it occurring among the front-line riflemen—depleted the infantry companies' effective fighting strength at an alarming rate.

Each infantry and cavalry regiment engaged south of the Pasig found a particular group of buildings to be a focal point of Japanese resistance. While by 12 February XIV Corps knew that the final Japanese stand would be made in Intramuros and the government buildings ringing the Walled City from the east around to the south, progress toward Intramuros would be held up for days as each regiment concentrated its efforts on

[6] Further details of the methods of fighting employed south of the Pasig are to be found in XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 2, 10, 13–14, 19–23.


SPECIAL SECURITY FORCE 12-22 FEB
Santa Cruz Bridge
Jones Bridge
General Post Office
Quezon Bridge
Pasig R.
Malacañan Palace
Malacañan Gardens
RMNTS, MANILA
NAVAL DEFENSE
FORCE
INTRAMUROS
SOUTH
PORT
AREA
City Hall
SAN MARCELINO
MARQUES
PROVISOR ISLAND
Estero Provisor
Sta. Teresita College
CRISTOBAL
Concordia
Legislative Bldg
BURGOS
San Pablo Church
Finance Bldg
PADRE
New Police Station
Agriculture Bldg
Manila Hotel
Wallace Field
Old Luneta
SAN LUIS
PERAL ST
5 Cav
145
120 FEB
OMILLAS ST
FAURA ST
OREGON ST
Burnham Green
New Luneta
ISAAC
Univ Hall
Rizal Hall
Elks Club
Army-Navy Club
19 FEB
5 Cav
12 Cav
Admin Bldg
PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL
Science Bldg
HERRAN
CALIFORNIA ST
High Commissioner's Residence
Medical School
Assumption College
TAFT AVE
DAKOTA
GEWEY AVE
BLVD
HARRISON
Estero de Paco
37 XX CAV
1 12 13-16 FEB
Estero Tripa
M A N I L A
B A Y
La Salle University
Santa Escolastica College
RIZAL
STADIUM
Japanese Club
Fort Abad
Harrison Park
Manila Yacht Club
VITO CRUZ ST
CITY LIMIT
2 5 15-16 FEB
PASAY
2 12 13-16 FEB
THE CAPTURE OF MANILA
THE DRIVE TOWARD INTRAMUROS
13-22 February 1945
U.S. FRONT LINE, EVENING, 12 FEB
U.S. FRONT LINE, EVENING, 18 FEB
U.S. FRONT LINE, EVENING, 22 FEB
JAPANESE STRONGPOINTS
0 500 1000 YARDS
0 500 1000 METERS
D. Holmes, Jr.

Map 6

eliminating the particular strongpoints to its front. There was, of course, fighting practically every step of the way west from Estero de Paco and north from Pasay suburb in addition to the battles at the strongpoints. This other fighting was, however, often without definite pattern—it was laborious, costly, and time consuming, and no single narrative could follow it in detail. It was also usually only incidental to the battles taking place at the more fanatically defended strongpoints. In brief, the action at the strongpoints decided the issue during the drive toward Intramuros.

Harrison Park to the Manila Hotel

When the 5th and 12th Cavalry Regiments reached Manila Bay in Pasay suburb on 12 February, completing the encirclement of Admiral Iwabuchi's forces, they immediately turned north toward the city limits.[7] (*Map 6*) The first known Japanese strongpoint in this area was located at Harrison Park and at Rizal Memorial Stadium and associated Olympic Games facilities near the bay front just inside the city limits. The park-stadium complex extended from the bay east 1,200 yards to Taft Avenue and north from Vito Cruz Street—marking the city limits—some 700 yards to Harrison Boulevard, the 1st Cavalry Division–37th Division boundary. On the bay front lay the Manila Yacht Club and the ruins of Fort Abad, an old Spanish structure. Harrison Park, a generally open area surrounded by tree-lined roadways, was next inland. East of the south end of the park lay a baseball stadium similar to any of the smaller "big league" parks in the United States. Due north and adjacent to the ball field was Rizal Stadium, built for Olympic track and field events and including, *inter alia*, a two-story, covered, concrete grandstand. Still further east, near the banks of a small stream, was an indoor coliseum, tennis court, and a swimming pool, reading south to north. Beyond the small stream and facing on Taft Avenue lay the large, three-story concrete building of La Salle University. The *2d Naval Battalion* and various attached provisional units defended all these buildings.

The 12th Cavalry and the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, took two days to fight their way north through Pasay suburb to Vito Cruz Street, rooting out scattered groups of Japanese who had holed up in homes throughout the suburb.[8] During the attack, the 2d Squadron of the 12th Cavalry extended its right flank across Taft Avenue to Santa Escolastica College, two blocks southeast of La Salle University.

On the morning of 15 February, after an hour of preparatory fire by one battalion of 105-mm. howitzers and a second

[7] The general sources for U.S. operations described in this chapter are: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 89–113; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, *passim*; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 37–77; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 10–23 Feb 45; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, Narrative, pp. 4–14; Wright, *1st Cavalry Division in WW II*, pp. 130–33; 1st Cav Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 12–26 Feb 45; 1st Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 2–6; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Per Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45; 37th Div G–3 Jnls and Jnl Files, 10–23 Feb 45; 1st Cav Div G–3 Jnl, 10–26 Feb 45; 2d Cav Brig Jnl Files, 10–23 Feb 45; XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–12; 37th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–10; 1st Cav Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Chron Rcd, pp. 5–15; *ibid.*, pt. III, Unit Jnl, 10–23 Feb 45.

[8] Additional material on 5th and 12th Cavalry operations is from: 12th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–14; 12th Cav Unit Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–27; 5th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45; 5th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 12–23 Feb 45.



RIZAL BASEBALL STADIUM

of 155-mm. howitzers, the 12th Cavalry forced its way into La Salle University and the Japanese Club, just to the south of the university on the same side of Taft Avenue. The regiment also made an unsuccessful attempt to get into Rizal Stadium. Meanwhile, the 5th Cavalry's squadron drove north along the bay front, forcing Japanese defenders caught in the open at Harrison Park into the stadium. Late in the afternoon cavalrymen broke into both the baseball park and the stadium from the east but were forced out at dusk by Japanese machine gun, rifle, and mortar fire.

The 5th Cavalry cleared the baseball grounds on 16 February after three tanks, having blasted and battered their way through a cement wall on the east side of the park, got into the playing field to support the cavalrymen inside. Resistance came from heavy bunkers constructed all over the diamond, most of them located in left field and in left center, and from sandbagged positions under the grandstand beyond the third base–left field foul line. Flame throwers and demolitions overcame the last resistance, and by 1630 the 5th Cavalry had finished the job. Meanwhile, elements of the 12th Cavalry had cleaned out the coliseum, Rizal Stadium, and the ruins

of Fort Abad. The two units finished mopping up during the 18th.

In the fighting in the Harrison Park–Rizal Stadium–La Salle University area, the 5th and 12th Cavalry Regiments lost approximately 40 men killed and 315 wounded.[9] The *2d Naval Battalion*, destroyed as an effective combat force, lost probably 750 men killed, the remnants fleeing northward to join units fighting against elements of the 37th Division. The success at the park-stadium area paved the way for further advances north along the bay front, and the 12th Cavalry had begun preparations for just such advances while it was mopping up.

On 16 February, in the midst of the fighting in the stadium area, the 1st Cavalry Brigade (less the 2d Squadron, 12th Cavalry) passed to the control of the 37th Division. General Beightler directed the brigade to secure all the ground still in Japanese hands from Harrison Park north to Isaac Peral Street—fifteen blocks and 2,000 yards north of Harrison Boulevard—and between the bay shore and Taft Avenue. The 5th Cavalry, under this program, was to relieve the 148th Infantry, 37th Division, at another strongpoint, while the 12th Cavalry (less 2d Squadron) was to make the attack north along the bay front. The 12th's first objective was the prewar office and residence of the U.S. High Commissioner to the Philippines, lying on the bay at the western end of Padre Faura Street, three blocks short of Isaac Peral.[10]

The 1st Squadron, 12th Cavalry, began its drive northward at 1100 on 19 February, opposed by considerable rifle, machine gun, and 20-mm. machine cannon fire from the High Commissioner's residence and from private clubs and apartment buildings north and northeast thereof. With close support of medium tanks, the squadron's right flank reached Padre Faura Street by dusk, leaving the residence and grounds in Japanese hands. During the day a Chinese guerrilla informant—who claimed that his name was Charlie Chan—told the 12th Cavalry to expect stiff opposition at the Army-Navy and Elks Clubs, lying between Isaac Peral and the next street north, San Luis.[11] The units also expected opposition from apartments and hotels across Dewey Boulevard east of the clubs. The two club buildings had originally been garrisoned by Admiral Iwabuchi's *Headquarters Sector Unit*, and the *Manila Naval Defense Force* commander had apparently used the Army-Navy Club as his command post for some time. Apartments and hotels along the east side of Dewey Boulevard were probably defended by elements of *Headquarters Battalion* and some of the provisional attached units.

Behind close artillery support, the cavalry squadron attacked early on 20 February and by 0815 had overrun the last resistance in the High Commissioner's residence and on the surrounding grounds. The impetus of the attack carried the squadron on through the Army-Navy and Elks Clubs and up to San Luis Street and also through most of the apartments, hotels, and private homes lying on the east side of Dewey Boulevard

[9] About half the wounded were returned to duty without hospitalization.

[10] XIV Corps Opns Memo 19, 16 Feb 45, in file of corps opns memos; XIV Corps FO 7, 17 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 16–18 Feb 45; 37th Div Opns Memo 7, 17 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 17–18 Feb 45; 12th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–12.

[11] 12th Cav Unit Rpt 19, 19 Feb 45.

from Padre Faura north to San Luis. Only 30 Japanese were killed in this once-important *Manila Naval Defense Force* command post area; the rest had fled into Intramuros or been used as reinforcements elsewhere. The 1st Squadron, 12th Cavalry, lost 3 men killed and 19 wounded during the day, almost the exact ratio of casualties being incurred by other U.S. units fighting throughout Manila.

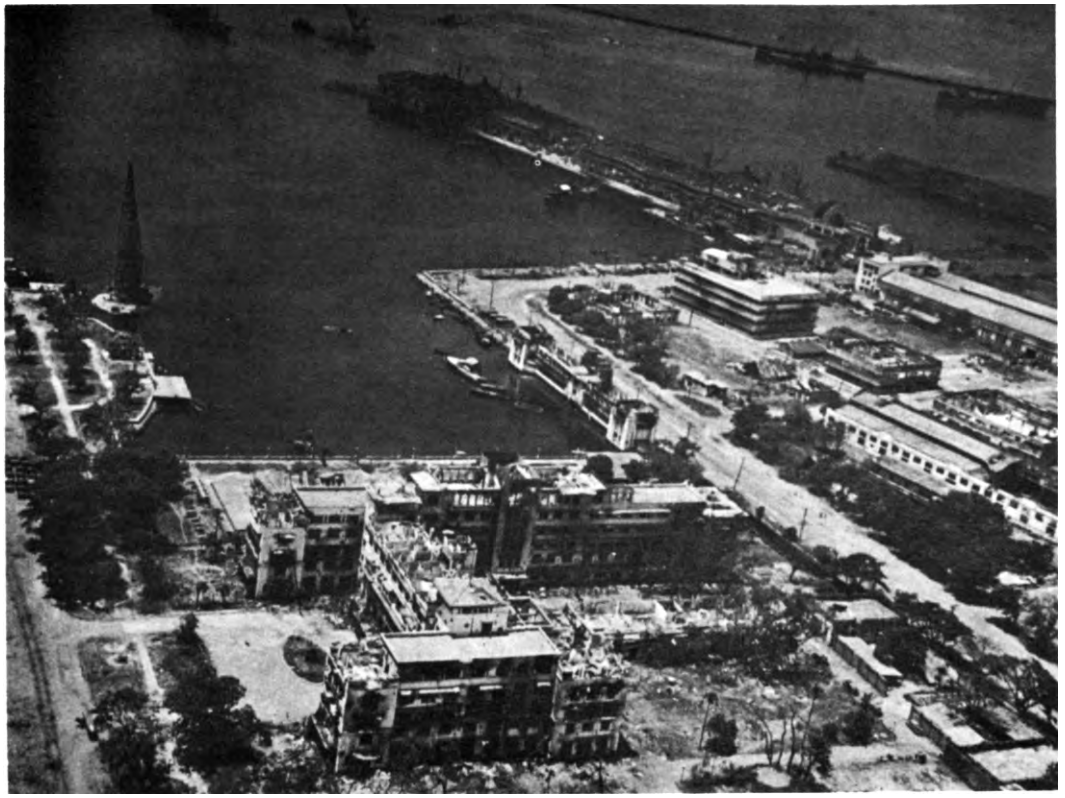
Now facing the cavalrymen across San Luis Street were the wide, open park areas of New Luneta, Burnham Green, Old Luneta, and the western portion of Wallace Field, reading from the bay inland. About 500 yards north across Burnham Green loomed the five-story concrete bulk of the Manila Hotel, and north of Old Luneta and Wallace Field lay Intramuros. The South Port Area lay just northwest of the Manila Hotel, the next objective. In preparation for the attack on the hotel, the 82d Field Artillery Battalion intermittently shelled the building and surrounding grounds throughout the night. A patrol of Troop B dug in along the north edge of Burnham Green to prevent Japanese in the hotel from breaking out to reoccupy abandoned bunkers in the open park area.

With artillery support and the aid of two 105-mm. self-propelled mounts and a platoon of medium tanks, the 1st Squadron dashed into the hotel on the morning of 21 February. As was the case in other large buildings throughout the city, the hotel contained a series of interior strongpoints, the basement and underground passages being especially strongly held. Nevertheless, the hotel's eastern, or old, wing was secured practically intact by midafternoon. Some Japanese still defended the basement and the new (west) wing, but the cavalrymen cleaned them out the next day. The new wing, including a penthouse where General MacArthur had made his prewar home, was gutted during the fight, and the general's penthouse was demolished.[12]

The New Police Station

Just as one Japanese strongpoint was located on the left (west) of the American forces fighting in Manila, so there was another blocking the road to Intramuros on the American right, in the sector of the 129th Infantry, which had completed the reduction of Provisor Island on 12 February. The 129th's particular bête noire was a block of buildings bounded on the north by an unnamed east-west extension of the Estero Provisor, on the east by Marques de Comillas Street, on the south by Isaac Peral Street (here the boundary between the 129th and 148th Infantry Regiments), and on the west by San Marcelino Street — the whole area being about 200 yards wide east to west and 400 yards long. The focal point of Japanese resistance in this area was the New Police Station, located on the northwest corner of San Marcelino and Isaac Peral Streets. At the northeast corner was a three-story concrete shoe factory, north of which, covering the block between San Marcelino and Marques de Comillas, was the Manila Club. North of the club were the buildings of Santa Teresita College, and west of the college, across

[12] Personal observation of the author. In April 1945 the old wing was repaired and here, ultimately, were domiciled many male officers of GHQ SWPA, though one floor was given over to WAC officers assigned to that headquarters. No attempt was made to repair the new wing during the war.



MANILA HOTEL IN RUINS

San Marcelino, lay San Pablo Church and attached convent. All approaches to these buildings lay across open ground and were covered by grazing machine gun fire. The Japanese had strong defenses both inside and outside each building and covered each with mutually supporting fire. The New Police Station, two stories of reinforced concrete and a large basement, featured inside and outside bunkers, in both of which machine gunners and riflemen holed up. The 129th Infantry, which had previously seen action at Bougainville and against the *Kembu Group*, and which subsequently had a rough time against the *Shobu Group* in northern Luzon, later characterized the combined collection of obstacles in the New Police Station area as the most formidable the regiment encountered during the war.[13] The realization that the strongpoint was well defended was no comfort to the 129th Infantry, since until the regiment cleared the area neither its left nor the 148th Infantry's right could make any progress. The 37th Division, moreover,

[13] 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 6. Additional material on 129th Infantry operations in this chapter is from: 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–9; 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, pp. 62–66; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 10–23 Feb 45; 129th Inf Regtl Jnl, 10–23 Feb 45.

could not simply contain and bypass the strongpoint, for to do so would produce a deep and dangerous salient in the division lines as the drive toward Intramuros progressed.

While the 129th Infantry's right—the 2d Battalion—had been completing the reduction of Japanese defenses on Provisor Island, the left and center, on 10 and 11 February, had moved westward in the area between Isaac Peral Street and Provisor Island generally up to the line of Marques de Comillas Street. During the 12th the 2d Battalion crossed to the mainland from the west shore of Provisor Island but despite close and plentiful artillery support could make scarcely 150 yards westward along the south bank of the Pasig. On the same day the rest of the regiment did little more than straighten out its lines along Marques de Comillas. Attacks on the New Police Station and the Manila Club on 13 February were unsuccessful. Shells of supporting 155-mm. howitzers had little effect on the two buildings, and even point-blank fire from a tank destroyer's high-velocity 76-mm. gun and 105-mm. high-explosive shells from Cannon Company's self-propelled mounts did little to reduce the volume of Japanese fire.

On the morning of the 14th, Company A, 754th Tank Battalion, came up to reinforce the 129th Infantry.[14] Behind close support from the tanks, Company B, 129th Infantry, gained access to the Manila Club; Company A, 129th Infantry, entered windows on the first floor of the New Police Station; and a platoon of Company C made its way into the police station's basement. Having attacked at first light, Company A had surprised the Japanese before they had reoccupied positions vacated during the American preassault artillery and tank bombardment, but the Japanese soon recovered and put up a strong fight through the corridors and rooms of the police station's first floor. Some extent of the strength and nature of the defenses is indicated by the fact that the 129th Infantry destroyed three sandbagged machine gun positions in one room alone.

Progress through the basement and first floor was slow but satisfactory until the Japanese started dropping hand grenades through holes chopped in the second story's floor. With stairways destroyed or too well defended to permit infantry assault, Company A found no way to counter the Japanese tactics—a good example of why the troops usually tried to secure the top story of a defended building first. Evacuation proved necessary, and by dusk the Company A and C elements were back along Marques de Comillas Street, Company B holding within the Manila Club.

On 15 and 16 February only probing attacks were made at the New Police Station, the shoe factory, and Santa Teresita College, while tanks, TD's, M7 SPM's, and 105-mm. artillery kept up a steady fire against all buildings still in Japanese hands. Even these probing actions cost the 1st Battalion, 129th Infantry, 16 men killed and 58 wounded. During the morning of the 17th the battalion secured the shattered shoe factory and entered Santa Teresita College, but its hold at the college, tenuous from the beginning, was given up as the 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, moved into the area to relieve the 129th. The New Po-

[14] Additional information on tank action is from 754th Tank Battalion Report Luzon, Phase VI, Battle of Manila.

lice Station, still the major stronghold, was still firmly in Japanese hands when the 129th Infantry left.

The 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, took up the attack about 1015 on the 18th behind hundreds of rounds of preparatory fire from tanks and M7's.[15] The battalion cleared the shoe factory and Santa Teresita College for good, and once more gained a foothold inside the New Police Station. Nevertheless, opposition remained strong all through the interior of the police station, while every movement of men past holes blown in the northwest walls by supporting artillery brought down Japanese machine gun and rifle fire from San Pablo Church, two blocks to the north. The 145th Infantry, like the 129th before it, found its grip on the New Police Station untenable and withdrew during the afternoon.

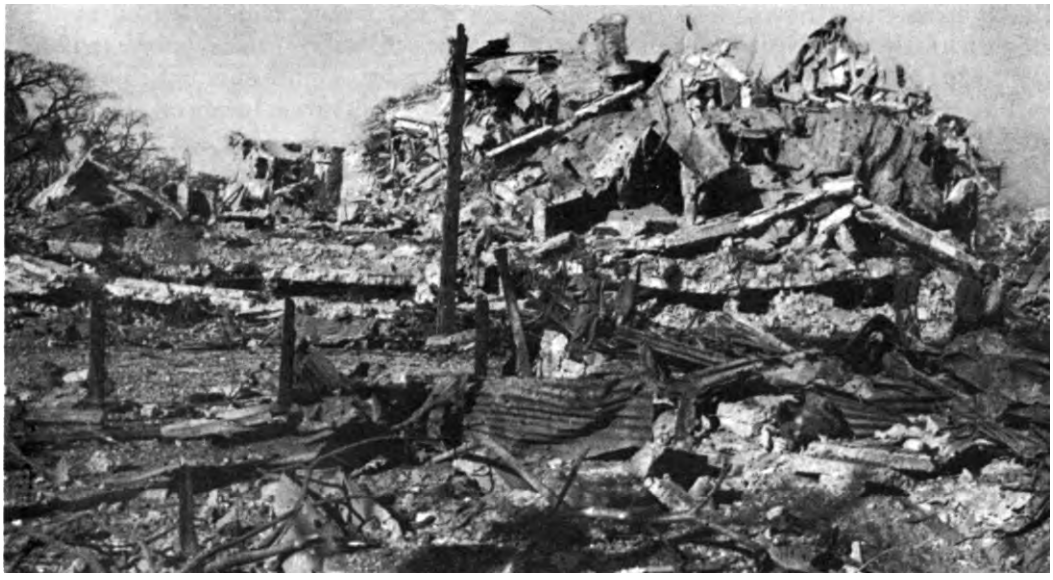
Throughout the morning of 19 February the police station and the church were bombarded by the 75-mm. guns of a platoon of Sherman M3 tanks, a platoon of M4 tanks mounting 105-mm. howitzers, a platoon of 105-mm. SPM's, and most of a 105-mm. field artillery battalion. During the afternoon Company B, 145th Infantry, fought its way into the east wing of the police station, while other troops cleaned out San Pablo Church and the adjoining convent against suddenly diminished opposition. The hold on the New Police Station—the Japanese still defended the west wing—again proved untenable and again the troops had to withdraw. Finally, after more artillery and tank fire had almost demolished the building, Company C, 145th Infantry, secured the ruins on 20 February.

The reduction of the New Police Station strongpoint and the nearby defended buildings had consumed eight full days of heavy fighting. The seizure of the police station building alone had cost the 37th Division approximately 25 men killed and 80 wounded, while the 754th Tank Battalion lost three mediums in front of the structure. The 37th Division could make no accurate estimate of Japanese casualties since the Japanese, who still controlled the ground to the west, had been able to reinforce and evacuate at will. During the fight the 37th Division and its supporting units had demolished the New Police Station, virtually destroyed the shoe factory, and damaged severely San Pablo Church and the Manila Club. Having reduced the strongpoint, the 37th Division's center was now able to resume its advance toward Intramuros. Meanwhile, its right and its left had been engaged at other centers of resistance blocking the approaches to the final objective.

The City Hall and the General Post Office

Each strongpoint of the Japanese defenses and each building within each strongpoint presented peculiar problems, and the attacking infantry, while operating within a general pattern, had to devise special offensive variations for each. Such was the case at the General Post Office, located near the south end of Jones Bridge, and at the City Hall, a few blocks south along Padre Burgos Street

[15] Additional information in this chapter on 145th Infantry operations is from: 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–29; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45; 145th Inf S–1 and S–3 Jnls, 12–23 Feb 45; 716th Tank Bn Rpt Luzon, Assault Gun Platoon Action in Manila.



NEW POLICE STATION

from the post office and across Padre Burgos from the filled moat along the east side of Intramuros. The 129th Infantry had cleared buildings along the south bank of the Pasig from Provisor Island to within 300 yards of Quezon Bridge and north of the New Police Station strongpoint to positions a block from the City Hall. The 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, relieved units of the 129th along the Pasig on 17 February, while the 3d Battalion, 145th, took over in the vicinity of the City Hall on the 19th.

The 81-mm. mortars of the 129th Infantry had once set afire the four-story concrete City Hall, but the fire had done little damage and had failed to drive out the Japanese defenders who numbered, as of 20 February, approximately 200 men. On the 20th the 105-mm. SPM's of Cannon Company, 145th Infantry, aided by a single 155-mm. howitzer, blew a hole in the building's east wall through which a platoon of the 145th Infantry, covered by machine gun and rifle fire as it dashed across intervening open ground, gained access. Japanese fire forced the platoon out almost as fast as it had entered. The next day all of Company I, 145th Infantry, got into the City Hall after SPM's and TD's had knocked down the outer walls of the east wing. Again the hold proved untenable. On the morning of 22 February tanks, TD's, SPM's, and 155-mm. howitzers laid point-blank fire against the east wing, pulverizing it, while 105-mm. howitzers, 4.2-inch mortars, and 81-mm. mortars plastered the roof and upper floors with indirect fire.

Company I re-entered the City Hall about 0900 on the 22d. Using submachine guns, bazookas, flame throwers, demolitions, and hand grenades, the company fought its way through the

sound part of the structure room by room and overcame most of the resistance by 1500, but 20-odd Japanese held out in a first floor room. Since they showed no inclination to surrender—although invited to do so—Company I blew holes through the ceiling from above and, sticking the business end of flame throwers through the holes, summarily ended the fight. Removing 206 Japanese bodies from the City Hall, the 145th Infantry also quickly cleared the rubble from the west wing, where it set up machine gun positions in windows to support the assault on Intramuros.[16]

The fight for the General Post Office, conducted simultaneously with that for the City Hall, was especially difficult because of the construction of the building and the nature of the interior defenses. A large, five-story structure of earthquake-proof, heavily reinforced concrete, the Post Office was practically impervious to direct artillery, tank, and tank destroyer fire. The interior was so compartmented by strong partitions that even a 155-mm. shell going directly through a window did relatively little damage inside. The Japanese had heavily barricaded all rooms and corridors, had protected their machine gunners and riflemen with fortifications seven feet high and ten sandbags thick, had strung barbed wire throughout, and even had hauled a 105-mm. artillery piece up to the second floor. The building was practically impregnable to anything except prolonged, heavy air and artillery bombardment, and why the Japanese made no greater effort to hold the structure is a mystery, especially since it blocked the northeastern approaches to Intramuros and was connected to the Walled City by a trench and tunnel system. Despite these connections, the original garrison of the Post Office received few reinforcements during the fighting and, manifestly under orders to hold out to the death, was gradually whittled away by American artillery bombardment and infantry assaults.

For three days XIV Corps and 37th Division Artillery pounded the Post Office, but each time troops of the 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, attempted to enter the Japanese drove them out. Finally, on the morning of 22 February, elements of the 1st Battalion gained a secure foothold, entering through a second story window. The Japanese who were still alive soon retreated into the large, dark basement, where the 145th Infantry's troops finished off organized resistance on the 23d. Nothing spectacular occurred—the action was just another dirty job of gradually overcoming fanatic resistance, a process with which the infantry of the 37th Division was by now all too thoroughly accustomed.[17]

The Hospital and the University

The focal point of Japanese resistance in the 148th Infantry's zone was the area covered by the Philippine General Hospital and the University of the Philippines.[18] The hospital-university complex

[16] GHQ SWPA ultimately used the west wing—repaired by mid-April—for office space during the headquarters' stay in Manilla.

[17] Additional information on the Post Office fight came from: Milton Comments, 15 Dec 56; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

[18] Additional information on 148th Infantry operations is from: 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 6–9; 148th Inf S–1 and S–3 Per Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45; 148th Inf S–3 Jnl, 12–23 Feb 45.

stretched about 1,000 yards south from Isaac Peral Street along the west side of Taft Avenue to Herran Street. The hospital and associated buildings extended west along the north side of Herran about 550 yards to Dakota Avenue while, about midway between Isaac Peral and Herran, Padre Faura Street separated the hospital and the university grounds.

Fortified in violation of the Geneva Convention — Japan, like the United States, was not a signatory power, but both had agreed to abide by the convention's rules—the hospital buildings, all of reinforced concrete, were clearly marked by large red crosses on their roofs, and they contained many Filipino patients who were, in effect, held hostage by the Japanese. XIV Corps had initially prohibited artillery fire on the buildings, but lifted the restriction on 12 February when the 148th Infantry discovered that the hospital was defended. The presence of the civilian patients did not become known for another two or three days.

On 13 February the 148th Infantry, having fought every step of the way from the Estero de Paco, began to reach Taft Avenue and get into position for an attack on the hospital. On that day the left flank extended along Taft from Herran south four blocks to Harrison Boulevard, the 148th Infantry–12th Cavalry boundary. The infantry's extreme right was held up about three blocks short of Taft Avenue, unable to advance until the 129th and 145th Infantry overran the New Police Station strongpoint. By evening the center and most of the right flank elements had learned the hard way that the Japanese had all the east-west streets east of Taft Avenue covered by automatic weapons emplaced in the hospital and university buildings. The 148th could not employ these streets as approaches to the objectives, and the regiment accordingly prepared to assault via the buildings and back yards on the east side of Taft.

On 14 February the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, trying to push across Taft Avenue, found that the Japanese had so arranged their defenses that cross fires covered all approaches to the hospital and university buildings. The defenders had dug well-constructed machine gun emplacements into the foundations of most of the buildings; inside they had sandbagged positions on the first floors; lastly, Japanese riflemen and machine gunners were stationed at the windows of upper stories to good advantage. The Japanese, in brief, stopped the American battalion with mortar, machine gun, and rifle fire from the Science Building and adjacent structures at the northwest corner of Taft and Herran, from the main hospital buildings on the west side of Taft between California and Oregon, and from the Nurses' Dormitory at the northwest corner of Taft and Isaac Peral. On the left the 3d Battalion, pushing west across Taft Avenue south of Herran Street, had intended to advance on to Manila Bay, but halted, lest it become cut off, when the rest of the regiment stopped.

On the 14th, at the cost of 22 killed and 29 wounded, the 148th Infantry again could make only negligible gains. Indeed, the progress the regiment made during the 14th had depended largely upon heavy artillery and mortar support. The 140th Field Artillery fired 2,091 rounds of high-explosive 105-mm. ammunition, and 4.2-inch mortars of

the 82d Chemical Mortar Battalion expended 1,101 rounds of high explosive and 264 rounds of white phosphorus.[19] The white phosphorus, setting some fires in a residential district south of the hospital, helped the advance of the 3d Battalion, but neither this nor the high-explosive shells appreciably decreased the scale of Japanese fire from the hospital and university.

On 15 February the 3d Battalion reached Manila Bay via Herran Street—before the 12th Cavalry was that far north—and then wheeled right to assault the hospital from the south. That day the 2d Battalion, in the center, was again unable to make any gains westward across Taft Avenue, but on the 16th had limited success in a general assault against the main hospital buildings, the Science Building (at the northwest corner of Taft and Herran), the Medical School (just west of the Science Building), and the Nurses' Dormitory. The Nurses' Dormitory, dominating the northern approaches to the university buildings, actually lay in the 129th Infantry's zone, but the 148th attacked the dormitory because the 129th was still held up at the New Police Station.

By afternoon of the 16th the 148th Infantry had learned that some Filipino civilians were in the hospital. Making every possible effort to protect the civilian patients, the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, which had to direct the fire of tanks, tank destroyers, and self-propelled mounts against every structure in its path in order to gain any ground at all, limited its support fires at the hospital to the foundation defenses insofar as practicable. With the aid of the close support fires, the battalion grabbed and held a foothold in the Nurses' Dormitory after bitter room-to-room fighting. Further south, other troops, still unable to reach the Medical School, had to give up a tenuous hold in the Science Building when most of the 2d Battalion withdrew to the east side of Taft Avenue for the night. The cost of the disappointing gains was 5 men killed and 40 wounded —the attrition continued.

During 17 February, with the aid of support fires from the 1st Battalion, now on the south side of Herran Street, the 2d Battalion smashed its way into the two most easterly of the hospital's four wings and overran the last resistance in the Nurses' Dormitory and the Science Building. The advance might have gone faster had it not been necessary to evacuate patients and other Filipino civilians from the hospital. By dusk over 2,000 civilians had come out of the buildings; the 148th Infantry conducted 5,000 more to safety that night. At the end of the 17th the 148th had overcome almost all opposition except that at the Medical School and in a small group of buildings facing Padre Faura Street at the northwestern corner of the hospital grounds.

Throughout the 18th the 148th Infantry mopped up and consolidated gains, and on the morning of the 19th the 5th Cavalry relieved the infantry regiment. The cavalrymen were to complete the occupation of the hospital buildings, destroy the Japanese at the university, and clear Assumption College, lying west of the Medical School. The 148th Infantry relinquished its hold on the Medical School before the 5th Cavalry completed

[19] Almost all information on the 148th Infantry's mortar and artillery support comes from the regimental S–3 reports. See also 140th FA Bn Unit Jnl, 12–23 Feb 45; 140th FA Bn S–3 Per Rpts, 12–23 Feb 45.

its relief,[20] and the cavalry regiment started its fighting with a new assault there, moving in behind point-blank fire from supporting medium tanks. Troop G, 5th Cavalry, gained access by dashing along an 8-foot-high wall connecting the Medical School to the Science Building. Employing flame throwers and bazookas as its principal assault weapons, the troop cleared the Medical School by dark on the 19th, claiming to have killed 150 Japanese in the action.[21] The cavalry also secured Assumption College and a few small buildings on the hospital grounds that the 148th Infantry had not cleared. The 5th's first day of action at the hospital-university strongpoint cost the regiment 1 killed and 11 wounded.

The 5th Cavalry, leaving elements behind to complete the mop-up at the hospital, turned its attention to Rizal Hall, the largest building on the university campus. Centrally located and constructed of reinforced concrete, Rizal Hall faced south on the north side of Padre Faura Street. The Japanese had strongly fortified the building, cutting slits for machine guns through the portion of the foundations lying just above ground, barricading doors and windows, emplacing machine guns on the flat roof, and setting up the ubiquitous sandbagged machine gun nests inside.

After a two-hour tank and tank destroyer bombardment, a Troop B platoon entered from the east about 1130 on 20 February. During the shelling most of the Japanese had taken refuge in the basement, but reoccupied defenses on the three upper floors before the cavalry could gain control of the stairways. Nevertheless, the platoon cleared the first floor and secured a foothold on the second after two hours of fighting. The small force then stalled, but the squadron commander declined to send reinforcements into the building. First, the interior was so compartmented that only two or three men could actually be engaged at any one point; more would only get in each other's way. Second, he feared that the Japanese might blow the building at any moment.

Accordingly, the Troop B platoon resumed its lonely fight and, without losing a single man, reached the top floor about 1700. Half an hour later the squadron commander's fear of demolitions proved well founded, for Japanese hidden in the basement set off a terrific explosion that tore out the entire center of Rizal Hall, killing 1 cavalryman and wounding 4 others. The platoon withdrew for the night.

A similar experience had been the lot of Troop G in the Administration Building at the southwest corner of the university campus. The troop had cleared about half its building by 1700, when explosions on the Japanese-held third floor forced it out. Action at Rizal Hall, the Administration Building, and other structures in the university-hospital area cost the 5th Cavalry another 9 men killed and 47 wounded on the 20th.

The regiment took the Administration Building against little opposition on 21 February, but did not secure Rizal Hall,

[20] General Beightler, commenting on this passage, called it "a misstatement of fact" and an "attempt to belittle the 37th Division." Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57. The author's account is based upon the 5th Cavalry's records: 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, p. 17; 5th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 19 Feb 45; 5th Cav S–2 Per Rpt 14, 19–20 Feb 45; 5th Cav S–3 Per Rpts 15 and 16, 18–19 and 19–20 Feb 45. The 148th Infantry records contain no information on the point.

[21] The claim probably includes dead found within the building.



RIZAL HALL

which it left in a shambles, until the 24th. The Japanese garrison at Rizal Hall alone had numbered at least 250 men, the last 75 of whom committed suicide during the night of 23–24 February.

The 5th Cavalry cleared other buildings on the campus during 22 and 23 February, and ran into some new defensive installations at University Hall, between Rizal Hall and the Administration Building. Here Troop E found caves dug through the walls of the basement and could not dislodge the Japanese even with flame throwers. Thereupon engineers poured a mixture of gasoline and oil into the various caves and ignited it. That appeared to take care of the situation neatly, but through a misunderstanding of orders Troop E withdrew for the night. Immediately, Japanese from buildings to the west reoccupied University Hall, which the cavalrymen had to recapture the next morning in a bitter fight. After that, only a little mopping up was necessary to complete the job at the university.

The battle for the hospital-university strongpoint had occupied the time and energies of the 148th Infantry and the 5th Cavalry for ten days. Success here played a major part in clearing the way for further advances toward Intramuros and the government buildings, but the success had been costly. The total American battle casualties were roughly 60 men killed and 445 wounded, while the 148th Infantry alone suffered 105 nonbattle casualties as the result of sickness,

heat exhaustion, and combat fatigue.[22] The rifle companies of the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, which had borne the brunt of the fighting at the hospital, were each nearly 75 men understrength when they came out of the lines on 19 February.[23]

For the Japanese the battle at the hospital-university strongpoint marked the virtual destruction of the *Central Force* as an organized fighting unit. The *5th Naval Battalion* and the "attached units" also suffered staggering losses. The remnants — and a sorry few they were—of all these Japanese units withdrew to the government buildings and Intramuros.

With the capture of the university and hospital buildings, the New Police Station and associated structures, the Manila Hotel, the City Hall, the General Post Office, and the stadium area, the battles of the strongpoints were over. In their wake the 37th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division had left, inevitably and unavoidably, a series of destroyed and damaged public and private buildings. But whatever the cost in blood and buildings, the American units had successfully concluded the drive toward Intramuros. The last organized survivors of the *Manila Naval Defense Force* were confined in the Walled City, the South Port Area, and the Philippine Commonwealth Government buildings off the southeastern corner of Intramuros. The 37th Division was now ready to begin the reduction of this last resistance and planned an assault against Intramuros for 23 February, the very day that the last of the university strongpoint buildings fell.

[22] No reliable figures for the 5th Cavalry's nonbattle casualties can be found in available records, but it appears that they were in proportion to those of the 148th Infantry.

[23] The three companies had entered the fight with an average understrength of 43 men, making the net loss during the battle 32 men per company. The 5th Cavalry's troops were also understrength, but no usable figures can be found.

CHAPTER XVI

Manila: The Last Resistance

After the fighting at the strongpoints, the seizure of Intramuros must in some ways have been anticlimactical to the troops involved. Clearing the Walled City was primarily a victory of U.S. Army artillery, tanks, and tank destroyers over medieval Spanish walls and stone buildings. The subsequent reduction of the government buildings represented the triumph of the same weapons over modern, American-built, reinforced concrete structures. Thus, the investiture of Intramuros and the government buildings was a classical siege conducted with modern weapons. But this is not to detract from the part the infantry—and the dismounted cavalry fighting as infantry—played in these final phases of the battle for Manila. The artillery alone could not win the fight; as usual the last battle belonged to the infantry. Infantry had to move in to secure the ground the artillery had prepared, and infantry took many casualties before the battle ended.

Intramuros

Plans and Preparations

Plans for the attack on Intramuros were long in the making, and from the beginning planners had to take into account a number of closely interrelated tactical considerations.[1] Available information led to the conclusion that the Japanese defenses were strongest on the southern and eastern sides of the Walled City and that the Japanese expected attack from these, the most logical directions. Japanese garrisons in the Legislative, Finance, and Agriculture Buildings just across Padre Burgos Street southeast of Intramuros could cover these approaches. The 37th Division could, of course, take the government buildings before launching an assault on Intramuros, but it would be easier to attack the government buildings after Intramuros fell.

Conversely, planners deemed it feasible to strike into Intramuros from the west, since Japanese defenses along the west wall, across Bonifacio Street from the Manila Hotel and the South Port Area, appeared weak. But in this case, American troops would first have to clear the South Port Area and then, advancing from the west, would have to attack toward much of their own supporting

[1] General sources for planning information are: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 114–19; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 24–25; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57. Headquarters, 37th Division, actually did most of the detailed planning for the assault, consulting closely with XIV Corps headquarters during the process. The division's complete plan was presented to and approved by Griswold only the day before the actual assault.

artillery. The artillery's best positions for close support were on the north and northeast, across the Pasig, and on the east, in the area south from the General Post Office to the City Hall, and much of the artillery ultimately did fire from these areas.

About halfway from the northeast to the northwest corner of Intramuros the ancient wall ended, providing direct access into the Walled City at the Government Mint. The only other obstacle on the north was a low sea wall running along the south bank of the Pasig, and Japanese defenses along the north face appeared weak except at the northeast corner. Planners therefore decided that there would be an excellent chance to execute a successful amphibious assault from the north bank of the Pasig against the north-central side of the Walled City. The planners realized that a prime requisite to such a move would be the emplacement of artillery, tanks, and tank destroyers to provide extremely close support for the attacking infantry.

Since the 37th Division knew that the Japanese had devised an elaborate tunnel system to move troops quickly from one section of Intramuros to another, the division considered it necessary to make more than one assault in order to keep the Japanese off balance and to divide their forces. The division selected a point near the northeastern entrance, Quezon Gate, as the site for the second assault. Because the Japanese blocked and covered both Quezon Gate and Parian Gate, 200 yards to the south, from strong pillboxes just inside the walls, the division decided it would have to employ heavy artillery to blast an additional point of entry through the thick wall just south of Quezon Gate.

An assault near Quezon Gate would require especially strong artillery support, because the Japanese had major defenses near the gate and because they could subject the attacking troops to enfilade fire from the three government buildings to the south. Therefore, artillery would have to neutralize the government buildings during the assault on Intramuros, and smoke would be laid between the government buildings and the east wall of Intramuros to conceal the attackers' movements. Finally, the 1st Cavalry Brigade, operating to the west and southwest of Intramuros, would thwart any attempt of Japanese troops to escape from the Walled City.

Planners devoted considerable attention to the problem of timing the attack. They gave thought to night operations, both to achieve surprise and to ease some of the problems of amphibious assault. Earlier artillery fire had crumbled the sea wall in many places along the south bank of the Pasig and, as a result, much of that bank along the north side of Intramuros was rubble strewn. At high tide, which would occur during the dark of early morning and again in the early afternoon of 23 February, LVT's could make their way across the rubble, while landing craft could float over it in some places to put troops ashore on the quay that ran along the north side of the Walled City.

But the tide could not be allowed to become the controlling factor. The element of surprise to be achieved during the night high tide was not of great moment, for the Japanese knew an assault was imminent and would be prepared for it no matter what the hour. Moreover, a two-pronged attack into such a small area demanded the closest

possible co-ordination between artillery support and infantry action, as well as among the various infantry units. Such co-ordination could not be achieved in a night assault.

Planners also decided that the attack could not wait for the afternoon high tide. If the Japanese defenses proved especially strong the assault troops might be unable to gain a foothold within Intramuros before dark, a circumstance that might well lead to the inevitable shambles of a night withdrawal. Having weighed all the factors the 37th Division, with XIV Corps concurrence, finally decided to launch the assault on both the north and the northeast at 0830 on 23 February.[2]

Having disposed of the problems of time and place, corps and division planners still had to determine how to prepare the way for the infantry. General Beightler, who realized that the attack on Intramuros and the government buildings would probably prove costly, began to think in terms of employing aerial bombardment to raze the Walled City and the other objectives as well. Griswold, the corps commander, agreed to this plan with some reluctance after he had concluded that Intramuros was so strongly defended that the assault there might produce prohibitive casualties unless preceded by intensive aerial bombardment.[3]

After XIV Corps had made unsuccessful attempts to induce the Japanese within Intramuros to surrender or at least to release the many Filipino civilians they held hostage, General Griswold informed Krueger of the aerial bombardment plan. The corps commander asked Krueger for all the dive bomber squadrons of Marine Air Groups 24 and 32 (from Mangaldan Field at Lingayen Gulf) and for a squadron of Fifth Air Force P–38's equipped to conduct napalm strikes.[4]

The proposals inevitably had repercussions. So far, General MacArthur had severely restricted the employment of air in the metropolitan area. In late January and early February Marine Corps SBD's had bombed or strafed a few pinpointed targets in the North and South Port Areas and had also hit some obvious Japanese gun positions in the open areas of Luneta Park and Burnham Green. One or two strikes may also have taken place against specific targets within Intramuros, but all in all it appears that planes of the Allied Air Forces flew no more than ten or twelve individual sorties against targets within the city after 3 February. Before that time both carrier-based and land-based aircraft had presumably limited their strikes to targets within the port areas and to oil storage facilities in Pandacan and Paco

[2] 37th Div FO 30, 22 Feb 45; Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57.

[3] Entry timed 2010 16 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl, 16 Feb 45; 37th Div, Synopsis of Plan for Capturing Walled City, 16 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 15–19 Feb 45; Rad, Support Air Party with 37th Div to Fifth Air Force, 0845 17 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 17–18 Feb 45; Teletype Msg, Griswold to Krueger, 1410 16 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 15–16 Feb 45. General Beightler (in Beightler Comments, 18 Mar 57) denied that he ever had any intention of razing the Walled City and other objectives, but merely wanted to raze a small portion of Intramuros at the northeast corner, site of the initial assault. This is not borne out by the messages cited above, and it is certain that General Griswold believed it was Beightler's intent to raze all of Intramuros.

[4] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 114–16; Teletype Msg, Griswold to Krueger, 1410 16 Feb 45.

Districts.[5] Of course some bombs had gone astray during these strikes and had caused damage within Intramuros,[6] while additional damage within the Walled City had resulted from both American and Japanese artillery fire the first two weeks of the battle for Manila.

Knowing and understanding General MacArthur's position on the destruction of Manila — and large sections of the city had already been battered beyond recognition—Krueger sought the theater commander's views on the proposed air attacks, stating that XIV Corps' request would be approved unless MacArthur objected.[7]

General MacArthur did indeed object:

> The use of air on a part of a city occupied by a friendly and allied population is unthinkable. The inaccuracy of this type of bombardment would result beyond question in the death of thousands of innocent civilians. It is not believed moreover that this would appreciably lower our own casualty rate although it would unquestionably hasten the conclusion of the operations. For these reasons I do not approve the use of air bombardment on the Intramuros district.[8]

Griswold and Beightler were not willing to attempt the assault with infantry alone. Not expressly enjoined from employing artillery, they now planned a massive artillery preparation that would last from 17 to 23 February and would include indirect fire at ranges up to 8,000 yards as well as direct, point-blank fire from ranges as short as 250 yards. They would employ all available corps and division artillery, from 240-mm. howitzers down. In addition, 75-mm. tank weapons, 76-mm. tank destroyer guns, and infantry 105-mm. self-propelled mounts would be used for point-blank fire. Organic infantry 81-mm. and 60-mm. mortars and 4.2-inch chemical mortars would add the weight of their fires, while from high buildings such as the City Hall and office buildings on the north side of the Pasig infantry heavy and light machine guns would blanket the walls and interior of Intramuros before the assault.[9] Just how civilian lives could be saved by this type of preparation, as opposed to aerial bombardment, is unknown. The net result would be the same: Intramuros would be practically razed.

The bombardment of Intramuros in preparation for the actual assault began on 17 February when 8-inch howitzers, with indirect fire, started blasting a breach in the east wall, which, at the point of breaching, was 40 feet thick at the base, 16 feet high, and about 20 feet across the top. This was by no means the first artillery fire directed at Intramuros. In support of previous operations throughout the city, 37th Division

[5] Practically no information on air operations in the Manila area after 3 February can be found in available documents, although earlier strikes by carrier-based planes are well documented. For the period 3–23 February, see: Teletype Msg, G–2 Sixth Army to G–2 XIV Corps, Mission Rpt, 10 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 10 Feb 45 (Classified Folder); Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, p. 86; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 57.

[6] A Third Fleet photograph, taken during a strike by Third Fleet planes, also showed a bomb hole in the roof of the Legislative Building.

[7] Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WG–417, 16 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 14–16 Feb 45.

[8] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CA–50503, 16 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 16–18 Feb 45. It is interesting to note that this radio implies that General MacArthur did not know that both land-based and carrier-based aircraft had previously hit parts of Manila.

[9] 37th Div FO 30, 22 Feb 45; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 77–79.

and XIV Corps Artillery had earlier fired on pinpointed targets, mainly Japanese artillery and mortar positions, throughout the Walled City. Considerable damage to the ancient buildings had already resulted, and by the time the assault preparation began most of the Japanese artillery and mortars had long since been knocked out.[10]

The 8-inch howitzers of Battery C, 465th Field Artillery Battalion, made a neat breach in the central portion of the east wall between Parian and Victoria Gates with 150 rounds of high explosive. Later, a single 155-mm. howitzer of the 756th Field Artillery, firing at a range of about 800 yards, started blasting away to form the planned breach south of Quezon Gate. With 150 rounds this weapon produced a break 50 feet long that extended about 10 feet down from the top of the wall. An 8-inch howitzer smoothed out the resulting pile of debris at the outer base of the wall with 29 rounds of indirect fire, making an easy ramp.

The 240-mm. howitzers of Battery C, 544th Field Artillery, began bombardment to breach the north wall and knock out a Japanese strongpoint at the Government Mint on the morning of 22 February, 8-inch howitzers lending a hand from time to time. The 76-mm. guns of a platoon of the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion used point-blank fire from across the Pasig to blast footholds along the south quay and in the rubble along the river's bank in order to provide the assault troops with landing points.[11]

Throughout the night of 22–23 February, in advance of a final barrage before the infantry assault the next morning, 37th Division and XIV Corps Artillery kept up harassing fires against the walls and interior of Intramuros.[12] Meanwhile, during the 22d, more guns moved into firing positions. As of morning on the 23d artillery to fire in support of the assault was disposed as shown in Table 3. In addition, many of the 105-mm. SPM's of the 37th Division's three cannon companies took up positions along the north bank of the Pasig or east of Intramuros. The 148th Infantry set up twenty-six heavy and light machine guns in buildings north of the river to provide cover for the men of the 129th who were to make the amphibious assault. The 145th Infantry, which was to attack overland from the east, would have cover from its own machine guns, which would fire from such points of vantage as the upper floors of the City Hall.

The final preparatory barrage lasted from 0730 to 0830 on the 23d. Using both area and point fire, the artillery, tanks, TD's, SPM's, and mortars plastered the walls of Intramuros and covered the entire interior except for a section roughly three blocks wide and four blocks long in the west-central portion of the Walled City. At 0830 the

[10] Entry timed 0930 13 Feb 45 and Entry timed 0930 17 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl, 13 and 17 Feb 45; XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 11.

[11] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 116, 119–20; XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 12; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 77–79; 756th FA Bn Rpt Luzon, p. 6.

[12] The remainder of the subsection is based upon: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 120–21; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, p. 25; XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–12, 16; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 77–81; 37th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 12; *ibid.*, app. 5, Action in Manila; *ibid.*, app. 6, Preparation for Assault on Intramuros; *ibid.*, app. 7, Arty Direct Fire Positions; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpt 46, 22–23 Feb 45, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 23–24 Feb 45; ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, Rpt on Obsns of Attack on Intramuros, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 22–23 Feb 45.

TABLE 3—ARTILLERY IN SUPPORT OF THE ASSAULT ON INTRAMUROS

Units and Their Locations	Weapons
North Bank of Pasig	
Battery B, 136th Field Artillery	4 155-mm. howitzers
6th Field Artillery	12 105-mm. howitzers
Platoon, 637th TD Battalion	4 76-mm. guns
East of Intramuros	
Battery A, 136th Field Artillery	4 155-mm. howitzers
Battery A, 140th Field Artillery	4 105-mm. howitzers
One piece, 756th Field Artillery	1 155-mm. howitzer
Six tanks, 754th Tank Battalion	6 75-mm. tank guns
Two platoons, 637th TD Battalion	8 76-mm. guns
Division and Corps Artillery at Rear Positions	
Companies A & D, 82d Chemical Mortar Battalion	24 4.2-inch mortars
135th Field Artillery	12 105-mm. howitzers
82d Field Artillery	12 105-mm. howitzers
Batteries B & C, 140th Field Artillery	8 105-mm. howitzers
Battery C, 136th Field Artillery	4 155-mm. howitzers
756th Field Artillery (less 1 weapon)	11 155-mm. howitzers
Battery C, 465th Field Artillery	4 8-inch howitzers
Battery C, 544th Field Artillery	2 240-mm. howitzers

Source: Relevant sources cited in n. 12.

support fire ceased, and the infantry assault began. Ten minutes later artillery began firing again, this time laying the high explosive, smoke, and white phosphorus along a 100-yard-wide strip between the east and west walls to seal off the southern third of Intramuros and prevent the Japanese in that area from observing movements to the north or sending reinforcements northward. This fire lasted approximately half an hour. Table 4 gives the amounts of artillery fire expended in support of the assault. The total weight of the artillery fire was roughly 185 tons, to which the 4.2-inch mortars of Companies A and D, 82d Chemical Mortar Battalion, added about 45 tons—over 3,750 rounds—of smoke and high explosive.[13]

XIV Corps Artillery reported that by reason of their great accuracy the 8-inch howitzers were the best weapon used against the walls while the 240-mm. howitzers, with their heavier and more powerful projectile, proved most effective against buildings. With 155-mm. howitzers, considerable advantages seemed to have accrued by employing unfuzed high-explosive shells to open

[13] No breakdowns between the two types of 4.2-inch ammunition can be found, nor do available records contain complete information on the ammunition expenditures of the infantry 105-mm. self-propelled mounts, infantry mortars, and infantry machine guns.

TABLE 4—ARTILLERY EXPENDED IN SUPPORT OF THE ASSAULT ON INTRAMUROS

Caliber	Rounds		
	High-Explosive	Armor-Piercing	Smoke and White Phosphorus
75-mm. tank guns	450	150	—
76-mm. TD guns	450	150	—
105-mm. field artillery howitzers	4,753	—	93
155-mm. field artillery howitzers	1,723	—	23
240-mm. howitzers	39	—	—
8-inch howitzers	72	—	—
Total	7,487	300	116

Source: Relevant sources cited in n. 12.

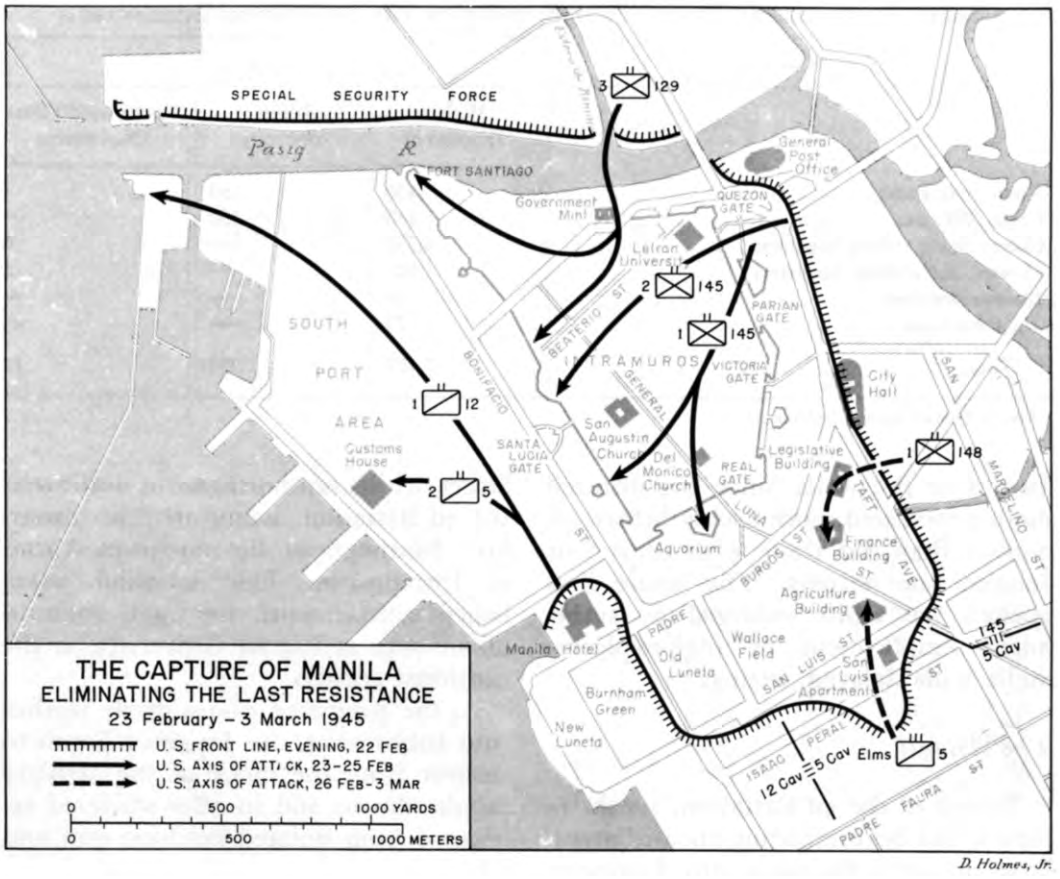
fissures in the walls, since the unfuzed shells penetrated more deeply before explosion than did those with impact or delayed fuze settings. The fissure thus opened was easily enlarged by subsequent employment of high-explosive shells with delayed settings.

The Assault

Troops of the 3d Battalion, 129th Infantry, had begun loading aboard assault boats manned by the 117th Engineers about 0820 on 23 February, their line of departure the mouth of the Estero de Binondo, opposite the Government Mint.[14] (*Map 7*) The first boats reached the south shore unopposed between 0835 and 0840, and the infantry quickly dashed through and by the Mint into Intramuros. Putting its left on Beaterio Street, which ran northeast to southwest, the 3d Battalion swung its right toward Fort Santiago, at the northwest corner of Intramuros. The battalion established contact with the 145th Infantry about 0850 at Letran University, at the northeast corner.

As the American troops drove further into Intramuros, the Japanese began to recover from the shock of the artillery bombardment and to offer scattered resistance from isolated machine gun and rifle positions. Company I, 129th Infantry, on the left, and Company L, in the center, reached the west wall shortly after 1200, having suffered no casualties and having killed only 10 Japanese on the way. The battalion soon isolated resistance in its sector to Fort Santiago, toward which Company L, attacking along the west wall and through adjacent buildings, turned. Company K had some difficulty reaching the west wall in the area south of Fort Santiago but got its right on the wall to make contact with Companies I and L late in the day. In concert, the three rifle companies cleared the west wall north from Beaterio Street. About 1830 Company K

[14] The principal sources for this subsection are: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 120–26; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 77–83; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts 46–49, 23–26 Feb 45; 117th Engr Bn Hist, 4 Feb–3 Mar 45, pp. 5–6; 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, pp. 67–68; 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 7; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 23–27 Feb 45; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 30–33; 145th Inf S–1 Jnl, 23 Feb–4 Mar 45; 145th Inf S–3 Jnl, 23 Feb–4 Mar 45; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 23 Feb–4 Mar 45.



MAP 7

made contact with elements of the 1st Cavalry Brigade in the South Port Area, beyond the west wall.

Company L had a nasty fight on its hands at Fort Santiago. The preassault artillery bombardment had demolished the outlying defenses of this ancient Spanish citadel and had also battered the walls of the fort proper. The Japanese inside had retired into inner recesses, a few undamaged outbuildings, some subterranean dungeons, tunnels, and holes. One by one, the 129th Infantry reduced the separate strongpoints—no co-ordinated defense existed—with fragmentation and white phosphorus grenades, demolitions, bazookas, and flame throwers. In a few instances engineers poured gasoline or oil into holes and dungeons and then ignited it. Company L had actually surrounded and entered the fort quickly, but faced a bitter battle throughout the afternoon and had to leave mopping up for the morrow.

The 145th Infantry's experiences during the day were not dissimilar. Clambering across the breach south of Quezon Gate and then through the gate itself, the two leading platoons of the 2d Bat-



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talion, 145th, were within Intramuros at 0833 without a casualty. Following troops walked through Quezon and Parian Gates unopposed, and by 1030 the battalion had secured the first two blocks southwest of Quezon Gate and had cleared the damaged building of Letran University. Fifteen minutes later the 1st Battalion came through Parian Gate. The two units then started southward with the 2d Battalion's right on Beaterio Street, in contact with the 129th Infantry, and the 1st Battalion's left along the east wall.

Progress slowed as troops sought cover from automatic weapons and rifle fire originating in the southern section of Intramuros. At 1300 the two battalions were four blocks southwest of Quezon Gate and had established a line stretching from Beaterio almost to the east wall. At this juncture the advance stopped as the Japanese began letting nearly 3,000 civilian hostages dribble out of San Augustin and Del Monico Churches, farther south. The refugees were women, children, and some Roman Catholic nuns and priests. There were very few male civilians in the group—the 129th Infantry had discovered most

of the men dead in Fort Santiago's dungeons, where the Japanese had murdered them.[15]

After the civilian evacuation was complete, American tanks and self-propelled mounts fired on Japanese positions within the two churches and at other strongpoints in the southwestern section of Intramuros, including a few pillboxes. Against stubborn opposition, troops of the 145th Infantry were unable to reach the south or west walls before dark, and the two battalions halted for the night generally two blocks short of the west wall and four short of the southwest corner of Intramuros.

The casualties of the 145th Infantry's two battalions for 23 February numbered about 15 men killed and 45 wounded; the regiment had killed some 190 Japanese and captured 20 Formosan labor troops.[16]

By 1030 on 24 February the 145th Infantry had compressed the last resistance in its zone into the Aquarium, located in a bastion off the southwest corner of Intramuros. Since Japanese holed up in the government buildings across Padre Burgos Street covered the Aquarium's outer walls with rifle and machine gun fire, the 145th Infantry was hard put to devise a plan of attack until the 1st Battalion discovered a tunnel connecting the bastion to the main wall. Company C used the tunnel as an assault route, while the rest of the Battalion provided fire support for the attack from the south wall and Cannon Company SPM's conducted a preparatory shelling. The Japanese neglected to defend the tunnel approach, and Company C, employing hand grenades and bazookas liberally, broke into the Aquarium with little trouble. The final assault began about 1600. An hour and a half and 115 dead Japanese later, the 145th Infantry had overcome the last organized resistance within Intramuros.

The 3d Battalion, 129th Infantry, on 24 February, finished mopping up at Fort Santiago, and continued to mop up and patrol in its zone until noon the next day, when it had to withdraw to get out of the line of fire of artillery units supporting infantry attacks against the government buildings to the east and southeast. The battalion returned to Intramuros when this fire ceased and resumed its search of the rubble until the 145th Infantry relieved it about noon on the 27th.

The casualties of the 3d Battalion, 129th Infantry, were amazingly low considering the opposition the unit met at Fort Santiago. The battalion reported that it lost about 5 men killed and 25 wounded in Intramuros; it killed perhaps 500 Japanese, 400 of them at Fort Santiago alone. The 145th Infantry suffered more heavily at Intramuros from 23 February through 1 March, when the regiment passed to the control of the Provost Marshal General, United States Army Forces in the Far East, for police duties in Manila. The 145th Infantry's casualties were approximately 20 men killed and 240 wounded, while the regiment killed or found dead some 760 Japanese.

The 37th Division's total losses—roughly 25 killed and 265 wounded—during the reduction of Intramuros were quite low in comparison to the Japanese losses. The infantry units alone

[15] The fact of this atrocity is well documented in such sources as USA *vs.* Yamashita.

[16] Entry 1434, 1840 23 Feb 45, 145th Inf S–3 Jnl, 23 Feb 45.



INTRAMUROS AFTER THE BATTLE

killed over 1,000 Japanese and took 25 prisoner. This hardly provides an accurate figure of Japanese strength in Intramuros. All infantry reports are extremely generous to the supporting artillery and mortar units—both the infantry records and eyewitness accounts indicate that the artillery preparation fire from 17 February through the morning of the 23d killed many hundreds of Japanese. It would not, indeed, be surprising to learn the Japanese garrison numbered over 2,000 troops on 17 February.

Manifestly, artillery had done an unusually effective job at Intramuros, and one proof of the effectiveness of the bombardment was the fact that American infantry casualties were so low in comparison with the Japanese losses. That the artillery had also almost razed the ancient Walled City could not be helped. To the XIV Corps and the 37th Division at this stage of the battle for Manila, American lives were understandably far more valuable than historic landmarks. The destruction had stemmed from the American decision to save lives in a battle against Japanese troops who had decided to sacrifice theirs as dearly as possible.

The Government Buildings

While part of the 37th Division had been clearing Intramuros, other troops of that division as well as the men of the

attached 1st Cavalry Brigade had been devoting their attention to the government buildings and to the South Port Area. Between 23 and 25 February the 1st Squadron, 12th Cavalry, and the 2d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, cleared the South Port Area against opposition that was relatively light except at one strongpoint.[17] Most of the Japanese troops in the area were Formosan, Chinese, and Korean labor personnel, of whom almost 250 surrendered on 24 February alone. With poor morale and poorer armament, they inflicted few casualties upon the cavalrymen, who finished their job rapidly.

Far different was the action at the government buildings, where the 1st Squadron, 5th Cavalry, and elements of the 148th Infantry had contained Japanese forces during the fighting for Intramuros and the South Port Area.[18] The imposing, columned façade of the Philippine Commonwealth's Legislative Building—the Philippine Capitol—fronted on Padre Burgos Street opposite the southeast corner of Intramuros and lay 150 yards south of the City Hall. About 100 yards south of the Legislative Building was the Bureau of Finance, and another 250 yards to the south-southeast, near the intersection of General Luna and San Luis Streets, lay the main building of the Bureau of Agriculture and Commerce.

Despite the fact that the Japanese in the three buildings had advantages of position and elevation that permitted them to endanger American and Filipino movements over large areas of Manila, the XIV Corps and the 37th Division at first considered starving the Japanese garrison out. But the two headquarters soon decided this would take too long. Information from prisoners and Filipino hostages who had escaped from the buildings indicated that the Japanese garrisons in the three structures had sufficient strength, ammunition, food, and water to withstand a protracted siege. Moreover, to permit the Japanese to hold the buildings would unduly delay the development of base and headquarters sites in the area that Japanese machine gunners and riflemen could dominate. Accordingly, Generals Griswold and Beightler reluctantly concluded that they would have to call upon their battle-weary troops to assault the buildings.

The strength of the three Japanese garrisons is unknown, and it is probable that the numbers of Japanese within each building varied considerably. The headquarters of one of Admiral Iwabuchi's *Central Force* battalions had operated in the Legislative Building,[19] and the garrison there probably numbered over 250 men as of 23 February. Apparently, the garrisons in the other two buildings were smaller, but permanence of abode was not one of the characteristics of the Japanese naval troops in the three structures. During the last phases of the battle for Manila Japanese control had broken down almost completely, and even before the siege of the government buildings and Intramuros Japanese troops had rather aimlessly wandered

[17] For saving his troop commander's life at the cost of his own during the fight at this strongpoint, the Customs House, Pfc. William J. Grabiarz of Troop E, 5th Cavalry, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

[18] Background and planning information in this section is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 127; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, pp. 22–23; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 81–84; 37th Div, Field Msg 4, 27 Feb 45, 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 25 Feb–6 Mar 45.

[19] Hashimoto Statement, States, II, 278–81.

back and forth between the buildings and Intramuros and among the three buildings.

Architecturally similar to the old Senate and House Office Buildings in Washington, D.C., the three government structures were modern, earthquake-proof edifices constructed of heavily reinforced concrete.[20] The oblong Legislative Building, with wings four stories high and a central portion rising another two and a half floors, was constructed around two open courtyards. The Finance and Agriculture Buildings, both five-story trapezoids, each featured a central courtyard. The buildings were strong not only by virtue of their construction but because all approaches to them led across wide open ground. Sandbag emplacements and barricades of other types blocked all readily accessible doors and windows, and window-emplaced machine guns covered all approaches. Interior fortifications were similar to those XIV Corps troops had already encountered throughout Manila.

The XIV Corps–37th Division plan of assault called for intensive preparatory bombardment of each building by 155-mm. howitzers, Cannon Company 105-mm. SPM's, 75-mm. tank guns, 76-mm. TD weapons, and 4.2-inch and 81-mm. mortars. Upon the completion of bombardments, the 148th Infantry, 37th Division, would attack first the Legislative Building and then move on to seize the Finance Building. The 5th Cavalry would simultaneously reduce the Agriculture Building. Artillery fire was to begin on the morning of 24 February; the first infantry assaults would not take place until the morning of the 26th. Undeniably, the preparatory bombardments would lead to the severe damage, if not the destruction, of all three buildings, but again XIV Corps really had no choice.

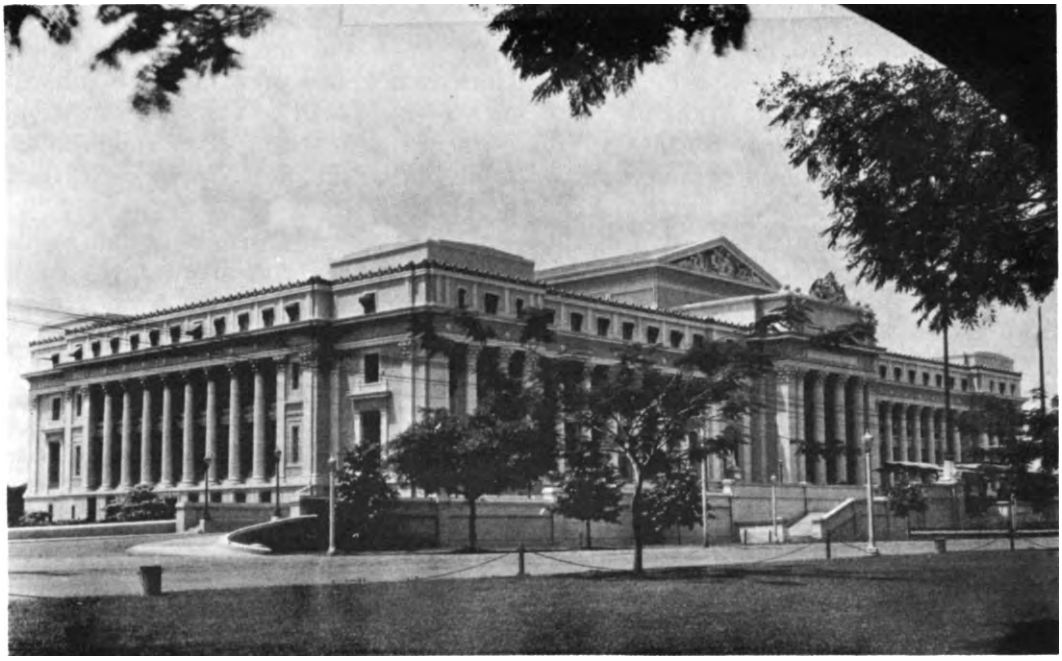
The 155-mm. howitzers of the 136th Field Artillery Battalion, providing point-blank fire at ranges from 150 to 800 yards, proved the most effective weapon during the preassault bombardment.[21] To the artillerymen concerned, the credit and honor that thus accrued to them was hardly commensurate with the risks involved. Bringing its weapons forward to exposed positions where only the thin gun shield provided any protection from Japanese fire, the 136th Field Artillery gained a quick appreciation of the facts of life as seen by the infantry and cavalry. By the time the last of the government buildings had fallen, the artillery battalion had lost 5 men killed and 54 wounded to Japanese machine gun and rifle fire.

Shortly after 0900 on 26 February, following a final hour's artillery preparation, troops of the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry, entered the ground floor of the Legislative Building from the rear, or east.[22] Inside, the Japanese conducted a

[20] The exterior of the Finance Building, for example, bore a striking resemblance to the Old Senate Office Building in Washington.

[21] Information on support fires comes mainly from: 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 83–86; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts 47–51, 24–28 Feb 45; 37th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–13; *ibid.*, app. 7, Arty Direct Fire Positions; 136th FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 19–23.

[22] Further information on the reduction of the buildings is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 130–34; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 9–10; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 25 Feb–2 Mar 45; 148th Inf S–3 Jnl, 25 Feb–2 Mar 45; 148th Inf S–1 Per Rpts, 26 Feb–3 Mar 45; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 27–29; *ibid.*, an. 4, Casualties; 5th Cav S–2/S–3 Jnl, 26 Feb–1 Mar 45; 5th Cav S–2 and S–3 Per Rpts, 26 Feb–1 Mar 45.



LEGISLATIVE BUILDING—BEFORE

defense as stubborn as that the Americans had encountered anywhere in Manila, and by 1300 the 1st Battalion had secured only the first floor of the north wing and the first and second floors of the central section. Then, "exceedingly heavy resistance" stopped the attack completely.[23] Since it appeared that further effort could produce only many casualties and little or no progress, the troops withdrew behind smoke. The day's attacks had cost the 148th Infantry 2 men killed and 52 wounded.

On the morning of 27 February artillery and mortars attempted to smoke the Japanese out of the building. This failed, and 155-mm. howitzers and 105-mm. SPM's thereupon resumed point-blank fire for about two hours. At the end of this bombardment, the north wing had been demolished and the south wing had been damaged beyond repair. Only the battered central portion, roofless and gutted, still stood above its wings like a ghost arising from between toppled tombstones.

Just after 1400 on the 27th the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry, attacked again and by 1600 had retaken the sorry remnants of the first floor. The battalion cleaned out the rest of the building except for isolated pockets in the basement by 1800, and completed mopping up before noon on the 28th. By that time the battalion had lost another 7 men wounded.

Meanwhile, the 5th Cavalry had assaulted the Agriculture Building. On the 26th, behind artillery support, the

[23] 37th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 85.



LEGISLATIVE BUILDING—AFTER

regiment attacked twice, but fire from a suicide-bent detachment of Japanese riflemen in the nearby San Luis Terrace Apartments forced the cavalrymen to seek cover after they had lost about 5 men killed and 30 wounded. The next day, losing another 15 men wounded, the 5th Cavalry cleaned out the apartment house and a few neighboring buildings in preparation for another assault on the Agriculture Building on the 28th.

Action on the 28th began with a three-hour preparatory artillery bombardment on the following schedule:

0800–0900	155-mm. point-blank fire from the west and north
0900–1000	75-mm. tank fire and 76-mm. tank destroyer fire, also point-blank, from the south and east
1000–1100	155-mm. point-blank fire from the west and north

The howitzers, tanks, and tank destroyers, so as to avoid endangering troops attacking the other two government buildings, aimed none of their fires higher than the first floor. As a result, much of the Agriculture Building collapsed on its own first floor. By 1100 the bombardment had disintegrated the entire northeastern corner and had damaged beyond repair the rest of the building. The destruction appeared so complete that as the cavalrymen moved in from the south they felt that not a single Japanese could be alive amid the mass of twisted steel and concrete rubble.

Encountering no opposition, the troopers easily gained access to the remains of the first floor, but soon ran into strong resistance from pockets at the northwest and southeast corners. A tank mounting a flame thrower thereupon

came forward to reduce a pillbox at the southeast corner of the building, while other tanks lumbered forward to cover all sides of the structure with point-blank 75-mm. fire. Using small arms, bazookas, and portable flame throwers, the 5th Cavalry cleared the above-ground ruins by dusk, but left a few Japanese hidden in basement holes. On 1 March, after a surrender appeal had failed, demolitions and burning gasoline and oil took care of the last Japanese resistance.

The 5th Cavalry reckoned that it had killed at least 150 Japanese during the assault, that artillery fire had killed many more, and that riflemen had cut down others as they tried to escape during the preceding five nights. The 5th Cavalry's own casualties during the reduction of the Agriculture Building were 7 men killed and 75 wounded.

Just as the 1st Cavalry Division had had the honor of first entering Manila, the 37th Infantry Division now had the honor of reducing the last organized resistance within the city, that in the Finance Building. Throughout 28 February and 1 March 155-mm. artillery, 105-mm. SPM's, 76-mm. TD's, and 75-mm. tank guns lambasted the Finance Building from all angles. About 1430 on 1 March the fire stopped as a loudspeaker blared forth an invitation to surrender. Twenty-two Japanese responded.[24]

After another bombardment lasting from 0800 to 1000 on 2 March, the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry, began an assault, but halted when three more Japanese came out under a white flag. The Japanese remaining inside took advantage of the lull to open up with machine gun and rifle fire, catching many of the assault troops in exposed positions. Completely disgusted, the infantry withdrew for a final artillery and tank barrage, which lasted until 1300. At the end of this concentration the Finance Building was a shambles; the portions not knocked down seemed to be standing only from sheer force of habit.

What proved to be the final attack began at 1300, and by dark only a small pocket on the top floor remained to be eliminated the next day. This last effort cost the 148th Infantry 1 man killed and 13 wounded. About 75 Japanese were killed within the Finance Building on 2 and 3 March.

Late on 3 March, after he had made sure that all opposition in the Intramuros and government buildings area had been eliminated, General Griswold happily reported to General Krueger that organized resistance in the Manila area had ceased.[25] This information the Sixth Army commander relayed to General MacArthur the next day.[26] The Battle of Manila was over.

Conclusions

The cost of retaking Manila had not been light. XIV Corps lost over 1,000 men killed and 5,500 wounded in the metropolitan area from 3 February through 3 March. The breakdown among major units is shown in Table 5.

The Japanese lost some 16,000 men killed in and around Manila. Of this

[24] The 148th originally planned to attack at 1430 on 1 March, but the surrender appeal postponed the effort. 148th Inf, Plan for Assault on Finance Bldg, 28 Feb 45, in 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 25 Feb–6 Mar 45.

[25] Rad, Griswold to Krueger, 2030 3 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–3 Mar 45.

[26] Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WG–107, 4 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 3–5 Mar 45.

TABLE 5—CASUALTIES IN BATTLE FOR MANILA

Unit	Killed	Wounded	Total Casualties
37th Infantry Division	300	2,700	3,000
1st Cavalry Division	250	1,250	1,500
11th Airborne Division	210	865	1,075
XIV Corps troops	250	750	1,000
Total	1,010	5,565	6,575

Source: Based upon a study of relevant corps, divisional, and regimental sources, all of which, as usual, provide contradictory and irreconcilable information.

total the *Manila Naval Defense Force* lost at least 12,500 men, the remainder of Admiral Iwabuchi's 17,000-man garrison having escaped across the Marikina River. The other 3,500 men killed were members of various *Shimbu Group* units overrun on the periphery of the metropolitan area or chopped down during the abortive counterattack effort.[27] Japanese equipment captured in the Manila area, either intact or damaged, is shown in Table 6.

The cost of the battle for Manila cannot be measured in military terms alone. The city was a shambles after the battle was over—much of it destroyed, damaged beyond repair, or reparable only at great expense in time and money. The public transportation system no longer existed; the water supply and sewage systems needed extensive repairs; the electric power facilities did not function; most of the streets needed repaving; 39 of 100 or more large and small bridges had been destroyed, including the 6 over the Pasig River.

The University of the Philippines and the Philippine General Hospital were largely irreparable. Lower class residential districts north of the Pasig and upper class apartments south of the river had been destroyed; the Philippine Commonwealth's government's center had been wiped out; the 400-year-old landmark of Intramuros had been nearly razed; severe damage had been inflicted on the economically important installations in the North and South Port Areas; the industrialized Paco and Pandacan Districts had been badly battered. Many buildings still standing would ultimately have to be torn down as unsafe for occupancy. Millions upon millions of dollars' worth of damage had been done and, as a final shocking note of tragedy, an estimated 100,000 Filipino civilians had lost their lives during the battle.

In brief, Manila's economic, political, and social life would have to start over almost from scratch. For a city left in Manila's condition there could be no return to normalcy—instead, a new normalcy would ultimately develop. The Battle of Manila was indeed over, but its effects would long be felt.

[27] These figures are estimates based upon a study of relevant Japanese and American sources previously cited. As might be expected, the claims of all U.S. units engaged provide a total divorced from reality and far greater than the strength of the Japanese garrison in the metropolitan area.

TABLE 6—JAPANESE EQUIPMENT CAPTURED IN MANILA AREA

Caliber and Type	Number
7.7-mm., 7.92-mm., and 13-mm. machine guns, various mounts	[a]600
20-mm. dismounted aircraft machine cannon and antiaircraft weapons	990
25-mm. machine cannon, various mounts	110
37-mm. guns, various mounts	15
40-mm. antiaircraft guns, various mounts	15
47-mm. antitank weapons	5
75-mm. field artillery and antiaircraft guns	10
76-mm. (3-inch) naval guns	15
100-mm. and 105-mm. guns and howitzers	10
120-mm. dual-purpose naval guns	60
127-mm. (5-inch) guns	5
150-mm. (6-inch) weapons	5
150-mm. mortars	5
200-mm. rocket launchers	5

[a] Minimum estimate.

Source: XIV Corps Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 10; 37th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, app. 4, Japanese Arty in Sector of 37th Div During Advance to and Capture of Manila; XIV Corps, Japanese Defense of Cities, p. 11; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, p. 29; 1st Cav Div G–2 Summary Luzon, p. 40. The calibers listed for some of the artillery pieces are open to question—for example, the 6-inch vs. 150-mm.

CHAPTER XVII

Back to Bataan

The Plans for Opening Manila Bay

Although the seizure of Manila had gained important military advantages for the Allies, the exploitation of those advantages would be severely limited until MacArthur's forces also secured Manila Bay. It availed little to have captured Manila's port, railhead, and storage facilities if access to those facilities could not be obtained by sea—even repairs to port and transportation installations would have to wait until Manila Bay was safe for Allied shipping.

The necessity for developing Manila's base facilities became more pressing with each passing day. The Lingayen Gulf beaches and the temporary subbase established at Nasugbu Bay for the 11th Airborne Division were strained to the utmost to support Sixth Army. An extended period of bad weather would make it next to impossible to continue moving supplies over the Lingayen beaches and down the Central Plains, and the rainy season was approaching.

During the battle for Manila XIV Corps had cleared the eastern shore of Manila Bay. To assure the security of the rest of the bay, it would be necessary to clear Bataan Peninsula, forming the bay's western shore; Corregidor Island, lying across the entrance to the bay; smaller islands off the southwestern shore; and, finally, the southwestern shore itself from Cavite to Ternate, an area the 11th Airborne Division had bypassed during its drive on Manila from the south.

On the eve of the entry into Manila, General Krueger had asked General MacArthur if GHQ SWPA had developed any plans for opening Manila Bay.[1] At that time it had appeared to Krueger that the capture of Manila might not take long and that XIV Corps would soon be able to participate in operations to clear the bay's shores. Moreover, XI Corps had recently landed on the west coast of Luzon northwest of Bataan. XI Corps, it seemed, would soon establish contact with XIV Corps in the Central Plains and would then be ready to turn its attention toward Bataan, securing the bay's western shore.

General MacArthur informed Krueger that GHQ SWPA plans called for the earliest possible seizure of Bataan, to be followed by the capture of Corregidor and the clearing of the bay's south shore to Ternate.[2] It would be up to General Krueger to formulate detailed plans for the execution of these tasks. Now feeling that XIV Corps might have its hands

[1] Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WL–1230, 2 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 31 Jan–2 Feb 45.

[2] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CA–50232, 3 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 113.

full for some time at Manila and subsequently against the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east of the capital, Krueger made that corps responsible only for clearing the Cavite-Ternate shore. To the XI Corps, in better position for the tasks than the XIV, he assigned responsibility for securing Bataan and capturing Corregidor.[3] Krueger expected XI Corps to be ready to undertake the Bataan and Corregidor operations by mid-February,[4] but first the corps had to complete the missions assigned to it when it had landed on Luzon on 29 January.

Maj. Gen. Charles P. Hall's XI Corps, consisting of the 38th Infantry Division and the 24th Division's 34th RCT, had once been prepared to land at Vigan, on Luzon's northwest coast a hundred miles above Lingayen Gulf.[5] GHQ SWPA had canceled this operation on 11 January, two days after Sixth Army's assault at Lingayen Gulf. At that time, in the light of the Japanese air reaction at the gulf, planners at GHQ SWPA felt that it would be too risky to send an assault convoy closer to Formosa, where, MacArthur thought, many of the Japanese counterattack aircraft were based. Also, GHQ SWPA had learned that guerrillas already controlled much of the coast in the Vigan region; it was not conceivable that the Japanese troops stationed there posed a threat to Sixth Army's beachhead. MacArthur thereupon directed XI Corps to land on the Zambales coast of Luzon northwest of Bataan.[6]

The locale selected for the new landing was the San Antonio area of Zambales Province, lying some forty miles west of the southwest corner of the Central Plains and twenty-five miles northwest of the northwest corner of Bataan. The coast is separated from the Central Plains by the Cabusilan Mountains, which form part of the great Zambales Chain stretching northward from the tip of Bataan to the Bolinao Peninsula on the west side of Lingayen Gulf. Providing the only military significant plains area along the west coast, the San Antonio region was the site of San Marcelino Airstrip, about six miles inland via Route 7. Route 7, which runs down the west coast from the Bolinao Peninsula, leads south from San Marcelino over gently rising ground thirteen miles to the U.S. Navy base at Olongapo, at the head of Subic Bay and at the northwest corner of Bataan. From Olongapo the highway follows a twisting route eastward through rough, jungled country across the base of Bataan Peninsula fifteen miles to Dinalupihan. The highway runs northeast another twenty-five miles from Dinalupihan to the junction with Route 3 at San Fernando, which XIV Corps had secured on 28 January.[7]

In 1942 the Japanese might well have landed on the Zambales coast and cut across Bataan before MacArthur's

[3] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 39, 49; Sixth Army FO's 47, 48, and 53, dated 2, 7, and 19 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 149–51, 155.

[4] Sixth Army FO 48, 7 Feb 45.

[5] GHQ SWPA, Staff Study MIKE III (Vigan), 23 Nov 44, OPD File ABC 384 Pacific (1–17–43) Sec. 8–F; GHQ SWPA OI 85, 21 Dec 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 23 Dec 44.

[6] Rad, Advance GHQ SWPA to GHQ SWPA, 11 Jan 45, and Rad, Advance Hq Seventh Fleet to TF 77, 11 Jan 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 13–15 Jan 45. The formal order, GHQ SWPA OI 87, changing XI Corps' assignment was issued on 14 January.

[7] See above, ch. XII.

Fil-American forces had completed their withdrawal into the peninsula, a contingency that MacArthur had not then overlooked.[8] Recalling in 1945 the opportunity that the Japanese had missed three years earlier, MacArthur's decision to land XI Corps at San Antonio bid fair to lay to rest General Willoughby's fears that the Japanese might conduct a "historically repetitive delaying action" on Bataan.[9] Thus, XI Corps' primary mission was to drive rapidly across the base of Bataan in order to prevent any substantial Japanese withdrawal into the peninsula. Second, the corps would seize and secure airfield sites in the San Antonio–San Marcelino area so that the Allied Air Forces could broaden the base of its air deployment on Luzon and more easily project air power over the South China Sea. Finally, XI Corps was to fall upon the *Kembu Group*'s right rear if that Japanese force was still holding up the XIV Corps advance to Manila Bay by the time General Hall's troops reached the Central Plains from the west coast.[10]

Yamashita had no plans to retire into Bataan for the purpose of denying Manila Bay to the Allies—or for any other purpose.[11] Having decided that the defense of Manila Bay was beyond the capabilities of his forces, Yamashita believed that if he concentrated his troops in the cul-de-sac of Bataan they would be cut to pieces more rapidly (and by lesser Allied ground strength) that they would in the three mountain strongholds he had established. In northern Luzon, where he concentrated the bulk of his strength and most of his best troops, he would have far greater opportunity for maneuver and a considerably greater chance to provide his forces with the food requisite to a protracted stand that he would on Bataan. He considered he could longer delay the reconquest of Luzon and, thereby, Allied progress toward Japan, from the *Shobu, Kembu,* and *Shimbu* positions than he could from Bataan. As it was, Japanese forces—acting against Yamashita's orders, it is true—were able to deny Manila Bay to the Allies for some two months after Sixth Army's landing at Lingayen Gulf.[12] It seems self-evident that the Luzon Campaign of 1945, taken as a whole, would have been over far sooner had Yamashita decided to concentrate in the blind alley of Bataan.[13]

Allied intelligence agencies estimated that the Japanese had nearly 13,000 troops in the Bataan–Zambales Province area, 5,000 of them in the region immediately north of Bataan and the rest on

[8] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* pp. 166, 223.

[9] G–2 GHQ SWPA DSEI 1017, 8 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File 8 Jan 45. See also above, ch. II.

[10] GHQ SWPA OI 87, 14 Jan 45, G–3 Jnl File, 14 Jan 45; Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CAX–50027, 17 Jan 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 112–13. See also above, ch. VIII.

[11] Japanese information in this section is mainly from: Statement of Col Sanenobu Nagayoshi (CO *39th Inf, 10th Div,* and Comdr *Nagayoshi Detachment*), States, II, 625–26; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 27, 43, 58; *14th Area Army* Opn Order No. A–464, 28 Jan 45, Trans, III, Item 3; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List. For additional background, see above, ch. V.

[12] Actually, so great were the clearing and repair problems that it was well into April before the Allies were able to make much use of Manila Bay and Manila's port facilities.

[13] For an opposite point of view, see Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* p. 163. Japanese officers who reviewed *The Fall of the Philippines* in manuscript disagreed with Morton and put forth interpretations similar to those of the present volume. See Morton, *op. cit.,* n. 9, p. 163.

the peninsula.[14] GHQ SWPA expected that XI Corps would meet the first significant resistance along Route 7 across the base of Bataan Peninsula, and further believed that operations to clear the peninsula would probably follow the pattern established by the Japanese in 1942.[15]

Actually, the Japanese had less than 4,000 troops in the XI Corps objective area. The principal force was the *10th Division*'s *39th Infantry* (less *1st Battalion*), which Yamashita diverted to Bataan late in December when he canceled plans to ship the unit to Leyte.[16] The regimental commander, Col. Sanenobu Nagayoshi, also had under his control two provisional infantry companies, a platoon of light tanks, a reinforced battery of mixed artillery, and minor Army and Navy base defense and service force detachments. The entire force, including the *39th Infantry,* was designated the *Nagayoshi Detachment,* which was nominally under General Tsukada, *Kembu Group* commander. Having once instructed the *Nagayoshi Detachment* to block Route 7 in order to protect the *Kembu Group* right rear, Tsukada, when XIV Corps reached the Clark Field area, directed Colonel Nagayoshi to pull his troops out of the Bataan-Zambales area into the main *Kembu* positions. Before these orders reached the *Nagayoshi Detachment,* that Japanese force was under attack by XI Corps, and all opportunity to make an orderly withdrawal had vanished.

The *Nagayoshi Detachment*'s strongest concentration—some 2,750 men—was dug in athwart Route 7 along the base of Bataan Peninsula. Here, Colonel Nagayoshi stationed the *3d Battalion, 39th Infantry,* his tanks, most of his artillery, and his regimental troops. One provisional infantry company garrisoned Olongapo; a company of the *2d Battalion, 39th Infantry,* was at San Marcelino Airstrip; and the rest of the *Nagayoshi Detachment*—about 1,000 trooops—held scattered outposts along the eastern, western, and southern shores of Bataan.

Against Nagayoshi's 4,000, XI Corps landed with nearly 40,000 troops, including 5,500 Allied Air Forces personnel who were to prepare a fighter base at San Marcelino Airstrip. Staged at Leyte by Eighth Army, XI Corps sailed to Luzon aboard vessels of Task Group 78.3, Admiral Struble commanding. A small force of cruisers, destroyers, and escort carriers was available to provide gunfire and air support at the beachhead. Fifth Air Force planes, responsible for protecting the convoy on its way from Leyte to Luzon, were to take over air support tasks within a day or two after XI Corps landed. Once XI Corps had secured a beachhead and captured San Marcelino Airstrip, it would pass from Eighth to Sixth Army control.[17]

Already well along in its preparations for the Vigan operation, XI Corps encountered few difficulties in making ready for its new assignment other than

[14] Information on Allied estimates is from: G–2 GHQ SWPA, Monthly Summary of Enemy Dispositions, 31 Dec 44, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 31 Dec 44; G–2 GHQ SWPA DSEI's, 1–31 Jan 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl Files, 2 Jan–1 Feb 45; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 115–20; Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu-Bataan, pp. 92–94; 34th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 5.

[15] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* chs. XII–XXVI.

[16] See above, ch. V.

[17] GHQ SWPA OI 87, 14 Jan 45; Eighth Army FO 15, Amended, 16 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VII, 12–20 Jan 45; XI Corps FO 3, 19 Jan 45, XI Corps FO File; TG 78.3 Opn Plan No. 1–45, 20 Jan 45, Navy Dept files.

those involved in collecting and disseminating terrain data. Sufficient information was available for tactical plans to be drawn up quickly, and only a few minor changes had to be made in logistical plans. Again, planning in the Southwest Pacific Area proved remarkably flexible. Loading and movement to the objective area were accomplished without untoward incident; at dawn on 29 January the ships of the assault convoy were in position off San Antonio, ready to begin landing operations.

Sealing Off Bataan: A Study in Command

Maneuvering Inland

Preassault bombardment of the XI Corps beachhead was scheduled to begin at 0730 on the 29th, but Admiral Struble canceled it when Filipino guerrillas, sailing out in small craft to greet the American convoy, reported that there were no Japanese in the landing area.[18] XI Corps then proceeded to land with four regiments abreast, the 34th Infantry on the right (south) and each regiment in column of battalions, across a front extending almost six miles north along the coast from San Antonio. The first wave, reaching shore on schedule at 0830, was greeted by cheering Filipinos who eagerly lent a hand at unloading.

The 149th Infantry, 38th Division, dashed inland to take San Marcelino Airstrip, but upon arrival found that guerrillas under Capt. Ramon Magsaysay, later President of the Republic of the Philippines, had secured the field three days earlier. The 24th Reconnaissance Troop, attached to the 34th RCT, sped on south along Route 7 to the north shore of Subic Bay before dark. Nowhere did XI Corps troops encounter any opposition during the day, and the only casualty of the assault seems to have been an enlisted man of Company F, 151st Infantry, 38th Division, who was gored by one of the notoriously ill-tempered Filipino carabao.[19] Tactical surprise had been complete. Colonel Nagayoshi did not even learn of the landing until the next day, and then he thought that XI Corps had come ashore at Subic Bay.[20]

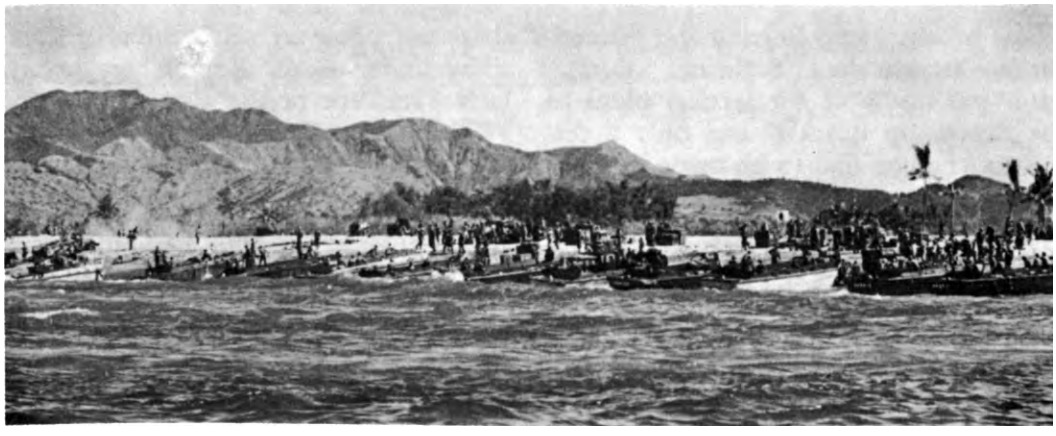
General Hall assumed command ashore about 0800 on 30 January, and simultaneously Eighth Army passed control of XI Corps to Sixth Army. A few hours later the reinforced 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry, seized Grande Island, lying across the entrance to Subic Bay, against no opposition, and after a sharp skirmish at the outskirts of Olongapo the 34th Infantry took the town.

With these two actions XI Corps had completed its initial tasks. Subic Bay was secure for base development; the San Marcelino Airstrip had been taken, and work on the fighter field had already started. The entire XI Corps was ashore, and the only significant difficulty yet encountered had resulted from poor beach conditions, which had delayed dis-

[18] This subsection is based generally upon: Eighth Army Rpt Nasugbu-Bataan, pp. 77, 99; XI Corps Hist Sec, Hist of XI Corps, 15 Jun 42–15 Mar 46, p. 34; XI Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–4; *ibid*, an. 3, Supply and Evacuation, p. 2; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–15, 166; Rpt, Asst ACofS G–3 Eighth Army, Obsns M–7 Opn, 30 Jan 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File MIKE VII, 23 Jan–1 Feb 45; TG 78.3 Rpt Zambales, *passim*; 34th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 5.

[19] 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Account for 29 Jan 45. The 151st Infantry's report is divided into day-by-day narratives.

[20] Nagayoshi Statement, States, II, 626.



XI CORPS LANDING AREA ON WESTERN COAST OF LUZON, *Zambales Mountains in background.*

charge of heavy equipment. All in all, the operation had gone unexpectedly well so far, and XI Corps was ready to begin its next job—the drive across the base of Bataan Peninsula to cut Japanese routes of access and establish contact with XIV Corps.

General Hall's plan called for the 38th Division, less the 151st RCT in XI Corps Reserve, to pass through the 34th Infantry at Olongapo and drive rapidly eastward. He directed Maj. Gen. Henry L. C. Jones, the commander of the 38th Division, to advance along Route 7 and "routes north thereof," the advance to be so conducted that the two columns, moving along separate axes, could be mutually supporting.[21] General Jones, in turn, decided to push the 152d Infantry east along Route 7 while the 149th Infantry, less 1st Battalion in division reserve, was to strike eastward via a rough trail that XI Corps headquarters believed paralleled Route 7 on rising ground about 1,200 yards north of the highway. General Hall apparently expected that the 149th Infantry, bypassing whatever opposition might be found along Route 7, would reach Dinalupihan quickly. Then the regiment could, if necessary, turn back west along the highway to help the 152d Infantry reduce any Japanese defenses that might still be holding out. While he set no time limit for the operation, subsequent events indicate that General Hall felt that the two regiments of the 38th Division could clear Route 7 through to Dinalupihan by evening on 5 February.[22]

Neither the XI Corps nor the 38th Division as yet had much detailed infor-

[21] Msg, XI Corps to 38th Div, 2020 30 Jan 45, Entry 82, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 30 Jan 45. (There are two sets of folders containing 38th Division G–3 Journal and Journal File materials for Luzon, one labeled "G–3 Journal 38th Infantry Division" and the other "G–3 Journal, 38th Division." The first set of folders is cited as 38th Inf Div G–3 Jnl File; the second set as 38th Div G–3 Jnl.)

[22] XI Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 5; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 15; 38th Div FO 10, 31 Jan 45, 38th Div G–3 Jnl File, 19 Jan–10 Feb 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56.

mation about Japanese strength and deployment along Route 7.[23] Lt. Col. Gyles Merrill, commanding guerrillas in Zambales and Bataan Provinces, estimated that 2,000 to 5,000 Japanese, armed with machine guns, artillery, tanks, antitank guns, and mortars, were well dug in along Route 7, but XI Corps seems to have taken this estimate with a grain of salt.[24] As a matter of fact, the 152d Infantry began its drive across Bataan with an estimate that it might meet as few as 900 Japanese on Route 7 instead of the 2,750 or more that Colonel Nagayoshi actually had stationed there.[25]

As had been the case for XIV Corps troops in Manila, the XI Corps' advancing infantry would not discover the main body of the Japanese on Route 7 until actually in contact at the principal defenses, for Colonel Nagayoshi had established only one relatively weak outpost position between Olongapo and his strongest concentrations. He deployed his main strength in a series of mutually supporting strongpoints along and on both sides of Route 7 in an area that began approximately three miles northeast of Olongapo and extended eastward another three miles through rough terrain known as ZigZag Pass. The Japanese defenses ran from northwest to southeast across Route 7, which meant that the left of the 152d Infantry would come into contact with the Japanese right before the 152d's right even approached the Japanese left.

Nagayoshi had chosen his ground well. While more rugged terrain than the Zig-Zag Pass area is to be found on Luzon, few pieces of ground combine to the same degree both roughness and dense jungle. Route 7 twists violently through the pass, following a line of least terrain resistance that wild pigs must originally have established. The jungle flora in the region is so thick that one can step five yards off the highway and not be able to see the road. The Japanese had honeycombed every hill and knoll at the Zig-Zag with foxholes linked by tunnels or trenches; at particularly advantageous points they had constructed strongpoints centered on log and dirt pillboxes. All the defenses were well camouflaged, for rich, jungle foliage covered most positions, indicating that many had been prepared with great care and had been constructed well before Nagayoshi's *39th Infantry* had reached the area in December.[26] Few if any of the installations dated back to 1942, when elements of MacArthur's command that were deployed in the ZigZag Pass area had withdrawn into Bataan before constructing many defenses and had left the Japanese to occupy the pass against no opposition.[27]

Colonel Nagayoshi had plenty of food and ammunition for a prolonged stand,

[23] Information on Japanese defenses is based mainly on: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13, 16–18, 116–18, and maps between pp. 15 and 16; XI Corps Rpts Luzon, an. 2, G–2 Rpt, p. 33.

[24] XI Corps G–2 Rpts 2 and 3, 30 and 31 Jan 45. Merrill, formerly with the 26th Cavalry, Philippine Scouts, was a supply officer under Wainwright during the 1941–42 campaign.

[25] 152d Inf FO 2, 31 Jan 45.

[26] If no work had been undertaken earlier, which seems impossible, it certainly started immediately upon the arrival of the *39th Infantry*. See Diary, 2d Lt. Saburo Kitano, *6th Company, 2d Provisional Infantry Battalion*, XI Corps G–2 Periodic Report No. 13, 10 February 1945. There are some indications that many of the defenses at the ZigZag had originally been constructed by Japanese naval troops who, previously stationed at Olongapo, had moved to the main *Kembu* defenses in January.

[27] Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 166, 246, 279.



VISIBILITY ZERO, ZIGZAG PASS

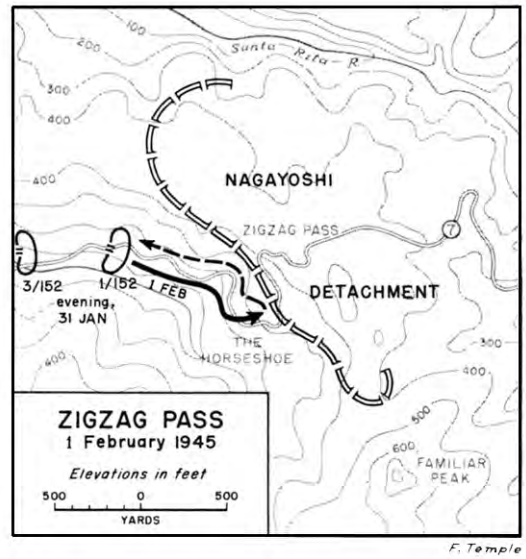
and he also possessed numerous mortars and machine guns. His artillery, however, was inadequate for the task at hand and he lacked certain types of medical supplies, especially malaria preventatives and cures. Having left only one minor outpost along Route 7 between Olongapo and the ZigZag, he made no attempt to cover that open, three-mile stretch of road with fire. He had so scattered his mortars and artillery in order to protect them against American artillery and air strikes that his troops would often have difficulty massing their fires. Finally, his defensive line was scarcely 2,000 yards wide northwest to southeast, thus rendering his whole position susceptible to vigorous outflanking maneuvers. On the other hand, he had good troops, well-prepared positions, and excellent defensive terrain.

Into Contact

On the morning of 31 January the 152d Infantry, leaving one battalion to reduce the Japanese outpost a mile and a half northeast of Olongapo, marched on another mile and a half to the point where Route 7 began climbing jungled

hills into the ZigZag.[28] Opposition so far had been limited to scattered rifle fire and a few bursts of long-range machine gun fire, but as attacks against the first Japanese strongpoints began the next morning, 1 February, the 152d Infantry ran into increasingly determined resistance.[29] On 1 February the problem of the actual location of the various American units arose to plague the 152d Infantry, the 38th Division, and the XI Corps. Route 7 twisted so violently and the terrain through which it passed was so densely jungled that the 152d had considerable trouble orienting itself on the map, which was none too accurate to begin with. Secondly, the 38th Division was employing a map code that soon proved highly susceptible to garblings and misunderstandings as one echelon reported its supposed locations to another.[30] Finally, the 152d Infantry often had trouble getting its radios to work properly in the thick vegetation of the ZigZag area.

The 152d Infantry, during the morning of 1 February, approached the west-



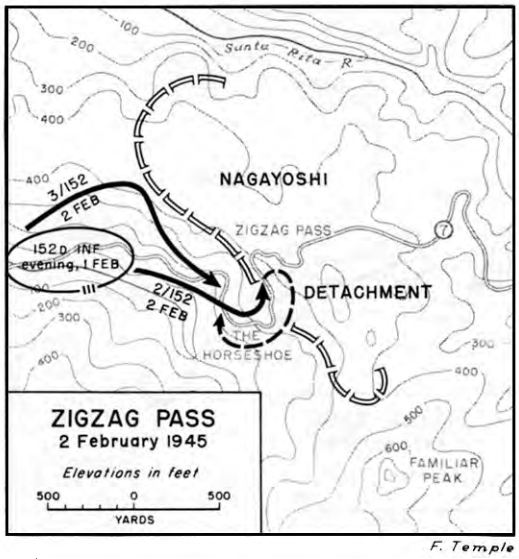
MAP 8

ern entrance to an irregularly shaped horseshoe curve on Route 7. *(Map 8)* The horseshoe curve rounded, and partly crossed, the nose of a northwest-southeast ridge. Open on the north, the horseshoe measured some 200 yards west to east across its northern points; the western leg was about 250 yards long, north to south; the eastern leg 325 yards long; and the southern leg, almost 275 yards across, west to east. In the center, at its broadest, the horseshoe measured nearly 300 yards. At 38th Division headquarters on 1 February it was the consensus that the 152d Infantry's leading battalion had fought its way around the horseshoe and by dusk was anywhere from 150 to 300 yards east along Route 7 beyond the horseshoe's northeastern corner. According to the regimental operations officer, the leading battalion did not even reach the horseshoe on 1 February. Rather, the battalion, which faced strong opposition all day, made only 500 yards in an easterly direction and dug in for

[28] The general sources for the story of the reduction of the ZigZag are: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–29; 38th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 1–5 Feb 45; 38th Div G–3 Jnl Files, 19 Jan–28 Feb 45; Ltrs, Hall to Krueger, 3, 4, 5, and 6 Feb 45, Decker Papers, folder 4; Intervs, Falk with Lt Col David J. Wilson (S–3 152d Inf), 14 and 22 Aug 52, and Interv, Falk with Brig Gen John A. Elmore (CofS XI Corps), 3 Apr 52, copies of interv notes in OCMH files; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56 and 26 Jan 57.

[29] Additional material on 152d Infantry operations is from: 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 29 Jan–2 Mar 45, pp. 2–6; 152d Inf Unit Jnl, 1–15 Feb 45; 2d Bn 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–2; 2d Bn 152d Inf Unit Jnl, 1–15 Feb 45; Maj Noble F. Schlatter (S–2 152d Inf), Rpt for 152d Inf, 1730 1 Feb–0800 2 Feb 45, 38th Inf Div G–3 Jnl File, 19 Jan–10 Feb 45; Ltr, Hall to Jones, 4 Feb 45; sub: Opns of 38th Div . . . , 31 Jan 5 to 2 Feb, enclosed in Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 6 Feb 45.

[30] The basic trick of the map code was to measure co-ordinates on the 1:50,000 map the troops were using by means of the yard scale from a 1:20,000 map.



MAP 9

the night of 1–2 February at a point almost 200 yards west of the horseshoe's northwestern corner.[31] A study of all available regimental and battalion records indicates that on 1 February at least one company of the 152d's leading battalion reached the southeastern corner of the horseshoe but withdrew before dark to rejoin the rest of the battalion west of the horseshoe.[32]

Whatever its location, the 152d Infantry had begun to fight its way into a veritable hornet's nest of Japanese. The leading battalion, the 1st, had rough going all day, and had had to spend most of its time trying to find and isolate Japanese positions. During the following night, the Japanese launched a number of small-scale counterattacks against the battalion and harassed it with mortar and artillery fire, which inflicted some casualties not only on the 1st Battalion but also on the 2d and 3d, now about 1,500 yards to the west along Route 7. By dawn on 2 February the regiment's casualties since it had begun moving through the 34th Infantry about noon on 31 January totaled 17 men killed, 48 wounded, and 2 missing.

Plans for 2 February called for the 152d to sweep rising ground along both sides of Route 7, simultaneously smashing through the ZigZag along the highway. That day the 3d Battalion discovered strong Japanese defenses along a northwest-southeast ridge north of the horseshoe. (*Map 9*) Unable to locate the north flank of these Japanese positions, the battalion hit the defenses in the center but gained nothing. Japanese pressure forced the unit generally southeast along the western slope of the ridge, and the battalion sideslipped back to Route 7 near the northwestern corner of the horseshoe. The 2d Battalion, operating south of the highway, more than kept abreast of the 3d but, because of the southeastward slant of the Japanese line, located no strong defenses. Since there seemed to be little point in holding ground no Japanese occupied, and since the 3d Battalion had made no progress against the Japanese right north of Route 7, the 2d Battalion pulled back to the highway. In the center, meanwhile, the 1st Battalion had gained no new ground along Route 7 through the horseshoe.

[31] Interv, Falk with Wilson, 22 Aug 52. Wilson stated that he was often surprised to find where 38th Division G–2 and G–3 reports placed the regiment and stated that division locations were often at variance with locations he had sent to division headquarters. The present author found many amazing disagreements, especially during the first week of the action, among locations recorded in regimental division G–2, division G–3, and division artillery reports. XI Corps reports sometimes disagreed with all four!

[32] General Jones believed that the entire battalion had reached "a point a little beyond the horseshoe." Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56.

The 152d's positions at dark on 2 February were again a matter of some dispute. General Jones now believed that the 2d and 3d Battalions were on the horseshoe's eastern leg near the northeastern corner,[33] and that the 1st Battalion was well into the horseshoe. Other reports indicate, however, that the entire regiment reassembled for the night west of the horseshoe. From subsequent developments, it appears that elements of the 152d had reached the northeastern corner of the horseshoe on 2 February but that the 2d and 3d Battalions actually held for the night along the western leg while the 1st Battalion occupied its previous night's bivouac to the west.

Casualties on 2 February numbered 5 men killed, 26 wounded, and 1 missing, for a total since noon on 31 January of 22 killed, 74 wounded, and 3 missing. It is perhaps indicative of the nature of the terrain in which the 152d Infantry was fighting that the regiment claimed to have killed only 12 Japanese from noon on 31 January to dark on 2 February.

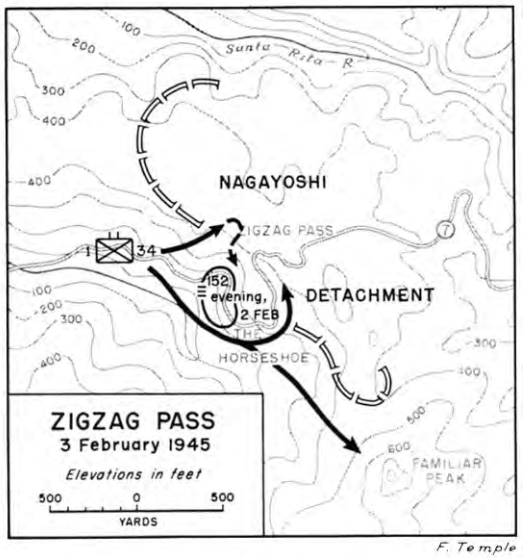
The attack of 2 February had developed somewhat slowly, primarily because the 1st and 3d Battalions had been shaken up by the Japanese counterattacks and artillery and mortar fire of the previous night and, having lost some key company officers and NCO's, faced serious reorganization problems. At any rate, when General Hall came up to the front about noon, he found the 152d Infantry barely under way. Dissatisfied with the progress, Hall informed General Jones that the exhibition of Jones's division was the worst he had ever seen[34] —a rather severe indictment of an entire division, only one regiment of which, the 152d Infantry, had yet seen any real action on Luzon. The 152d was a green unit that had been in combat scarcely forty-eight hours by noon on 2 February. General Jones, in turn, was none too happy about the conduct of the 152d and had been especially displeased by the performance of the 3d Battalion. Late that day he relieved the regimental commander, Col. Robert L. Stillwell. Lt. Col. Jesse E. McIntosh, the regimental executive officer, thereupon took over the command. Not satisfied that this change would produce the results he desired, General Hall directed the 34th Infantry to pass through the 152d and continue the attack eastward. The 34th would operate under the direct control of Headquarters, XI Corps; the 152d Infantry, remaining under Jones's command, would follow the 34th through the ZigZag to mop up bypassed pockets of Japanese resistance.[35] Dividing the command at the point of contact, General Hall in effect left General Jones in command of only one regiment, the 152d Infantry. The 151st Infantry was still in XI Corps reserve and the 149th, while ostensibly under Jones's control, was still off on the bypassing mission to Dinalupihan that had been undertaken at corps direction.

The relief of the 152d Infantry and its commander, and the insertion of the 34th Infantry at the horseshoe under corps control, reflected primarily a com-

[33] Note that General Jones no longer believed the 152d was beyond the horseshoe. Either he was in error the previous night or the 152d had lost ground on 2 February.

[34] Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 3 Feb 45.

[35] *Ibid.*; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 18; Lt Col Alexander G. Kirby (G–3 38th Div), Notes of Conf with Col Colin S. Monteith (G–3 XI Corps), 2000 2 Feb 45, 38th Div G–3 Jnl File, 19 Jan–10 Feb 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56.



MAP 10

bination of Hall's expectation of a rapid drive across Bataan and a misapprehension on his part concerning the strength and location of the Japanese defenses along Route 7. Hall believed that the 152d Infantry had at most encountered only an outpost line of resistance, that the principal Japanese defenses lay a mile or so east of the horseshoe, and that the 152d Infantry had found "nothing that an outfit ready to go forward could not overcome quickly."[36] The 38th Division and the 152d Infantry, on the other hand, were convinced that the 152d was up against something "big" and had reached the Japanese main line of resistance. As events were to prove, the 38th Division and the 152d Infantry were more nearly correct as of evening on 2 February than was XI Corps.

Frustration at the Horseshoe

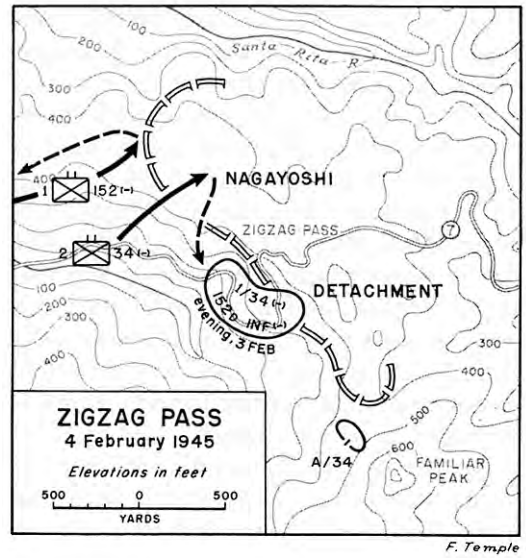
The 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, encountered some harassing fire from Japanese mortars and artillery on the morning of 3 February as it passed through the 152d Infantry and moved deep into the horseshoe.[37] (*Map 10*) While one company struck north and northeast from the horseshoe's northwestern corner, the rest of the battalion followed Route 7 around to the eastern leg, retracing the 152d Infantry's path. The 34th's company on the north, hitting some of the same ridge line defenses that the 3d Battalion, 152d Infantry, had previously encountered, slid back southeast just as had the 152d's battalion, and dug in for the night not far east of the horseshoe's northwestern corner. The main body of the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, was unable to move more than halfway north along the eastern leg before Japanese fire from high, dominating terrain 200 yards east of that arm halted it. Seeking to outflank this opposition, Company A struck off to the southeast from the horseshoe's southeastern corner. The company reached a point on the northern slopes of Familiar Peak about 700 yards southeast of its line of departure, but was then pinned down and surrounded. Meanwhile the 2d and 3d Battalions, 152d Infantry, patrolling behind the 34th Infantry's battalion, had knocked out a few isolated Japanese strongpoints and dug in for the night both north and east along Route 7 from the horseshoe's southwestern corner. The 1st Battalion, 152d, remained west of the horseshoe.

If one thing was obvious by dusk on 3 February it was that the 34th Infantry

[36] Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 3 Feb 45.

[37] Additional material on the 34th Infantry is from: 34th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–99; 34th RCT Unit Rpts, 3–6 Feb 45, and other materials in 34th RCT Jnl File Luzon, 4–7 Feb 45; 34th Inf Unit Jnl Luzon, 3–6 Feb 45.

had employed insufficient strength for the task at hand—it had committed only one battalion to do a job that three battalions of the 152d had been unable to accomplish. Accordingly, Col. William W. Jenna, commanding the 34th, decided to employ his entire regiment in a three-pronged attack. His 1st Battalion would concentrate against the Japanese on the dominating ground east of the horseshoe's eastern leg; the 2d Battalion would clear the Japanese from the northeastern corner area, undertaking flanking maneuvers north of Route 7; and the 3d Battalion would clear the highway to and beyond the northeastern corner, initially following the 2d Battalion.



MAP 11

On 4 February the 34th's attack went well at first, but in the face of continued strong opposition, including heavy mortar and artillery fire, the regiment before dusk had to give up much of the ground it gained during the day. The 1st Battalion dug in for the night farther south along the horseshoe's eastern leg than it had the previous night, although it retained a hold on some terrain east of that leg. The 2d Battalion had knocked out some strongpoints along the southern end of the Japanese right flank defenses in the area north of Route 7, but Japanese fire drove most of the unit back to the road late in the afternoon. (*Map 11*) The 3d Battalion, because the 2d had made no permanent progress, had not gone into action.

General Jones had meanwhile directed the 152d Infantry to renew its attacks against the Japanese right, north of Route 7. The 1st Battalion, 152d, in a wide envelopment from the west, at first had considerable success, but late in the afternoon, just when it seemed that the battalion was about to overrun the strongest positions along the ridge line, a vicious Japanese mortar and artillery barrage drove the unit back south to Route 7. This was the fourth time in three days that the Japanese had thwarted American attempts to clear the ridge north of the horseshoe.

The fighting at the horseshoe on 3 and 4 February cost the 34th Infantry 41 men killed, 131 wounded, and 6 missing while on the same days the 152d Infantry lost 4 men killed, 48 wounded, and 1 missing. The 34th Infantry had extended the front a little to the north of the horseshoe and a bit east of the eastern leg, but neither the 34th Infantry nor the 152d Infantry had made any substantial gains beyond the point the 152d had reached on 2 February. The Japanese still held strong positions north of the horseshoe and they still controlled the northeastern corner and about half the eastern leg. The 34th Infantry's greatest contribution during the two

days, perhaps, was to have helped convince General Hall that the Japanese had strong defenses throughout the Zig-Zag area and that the regiment had indeed reached a Japanese main line of resistance. It had not been until evening on 3 February that the XI Corps' G–2 Section had been willing to concede that the Japanese might have strong defenses at the ZigZag, and it was not until the next evening that General Hall was convinced that the 34th and 152d Infantry Regiments had encountered a well-defended Japanese line.[38]

Apparently, Hall's conviction that his troops had come up against a Japanese main line of resistance led to a second conviction that the fight at the horseshoe would henceforth go better if he unified the command there. At any rate, late on the 4th, Hall attached the 34th Infantry to the 38th Division and directed Jones to attack eastward early on 5 February with all the strength he could bring to bear. Speed, General Hall went on, was essential.[39]

General Jones planned to reduce the Japanese strongpoints methodically with a series of simultaneous, co-ordinated, battalion-sized attacks. He expected the 152d Infantry to do most of the work initially, while the 34th Infantry completely cleared the horseshoe area and then drove eastward on the south side of Route 7. Foreseeing difficulties in arranging artillery support, Jones limited general artillery support fires to targets east of the Santa Rita River, which crossed Route 7 a mile east of the horseshoe, and required that requests for closer support be cleared through regimental headquarters.[40] Individual infantry battalions under this arrangement would be able to get close support only after some delay. The plan also split the 152d Infantry, placing two of its battalions north of the 34th and the third south. Colonel Jenna, commanding the 34th Infantry, objected, suggesting that control and co-ordination would be easier if the 34th Infantry concentrated its efforts south of Route 7 while all the 152d remained north of the road. Jones did not agree, and directed Jenna to execute his attacks as scheduled.[41]

General Jones realized that his plan left something to be desired and that he was calling for a comparatively slow course of action. Actually, he would have liked to undertake an even slower course by pulling the 34th Infantry back, adjusting all his artillery and mortars carefully, and then staging a co-ordinated, two-regiment attack behind heavy artillery and mortar concentrations. This would have taken about two days, and he knew that General Hall would brook no such delay. He therefore felt that his plan, which called for extensive out-

[38] G–2 XI Corps, Photo Interpretation 8, 3 Feb 45; Ltrs, Hall to Krueger, 4 and 5 Feb 45.

[39] Rad, XI Corps to 38th Div, 2040 4 Feb 45, Entry 50, in 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 4 Feb 45; Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 4 Feb 45. General Jones felt that the transfer of the 34th Infantry to his control was an attempt by General Hall "to push the blame on me for the failure of the 34th Infantry." Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56.

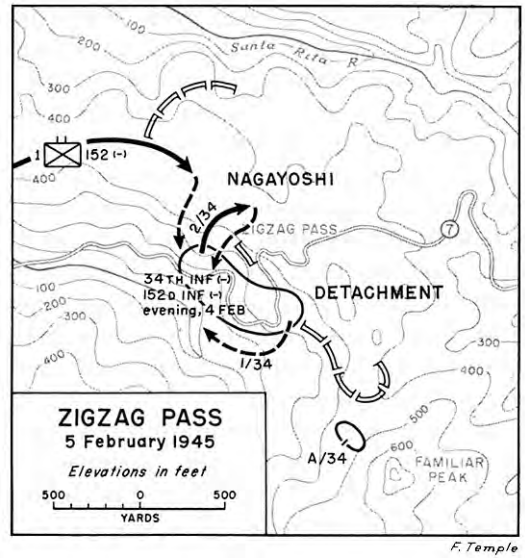
[40] This crossing of the Santa Rita is in accordance with the AMS S712, 1:50,000 map of 1944 the troops were using at the time. According to the AMS S711 1:50,000 map of 1952, Edition 2, the proper name for the stream is the Jadjad River.

[41] Proposed Plan CG 38th Div, 4 Feb 45, and 38th Div FO 11, 5 Feb 45, both in 38th Inf Div G–3 Jnl File, 19 Jan–10 Feb 45; Rad, Jenna to Bns of 34th Inf, 0730 5 Feb 45, Entry 592, 34th RCT Jnl File 4–6 Feb 45; Rad, Jones to Jenna, 0955 5 Feb 45, Entry 658, 34th RCT Jnl File 4–6 Feb 45; 152d Inf FO 4, 5 Feb 45, atchd to 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 29 Jan–2 Mar 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56.

flanking maneuvers north of Route 7 by the 152d Infantry, was the only one that promised success under the circumstances, and he indicated to General Hall that if the plan did not work out he would change it. Jones premised his plan on the belief that the 34th Infantry would be able to carry its share of the load in the new attack, but it appears that he did not have a clear idea of the regiment's situation and condition, probably because the regiment had been operating under corps control for two days.[42]

Although operations on 5 February started out in a promising manner, the situation in the horseshoe area soon turned into a shambles. The 2d Battalion, 34th Infantry, which had been harassed by Japanese mortar fire throughout the night of 4–5 February, started off on the 5th trying to reduce a Japanese strongpoint near the northeastern corner of the horseshoe. Maneuvering to outflank the strongpoint, the battalion moved well north of Route 7, upsetting plans for close artillery support of the 152d Infantry's battalions. (*Map 12*) About the time that the 2d Battalion, 34th Infantry, felt it was making good progress, Japanese artillery fire pinned it down. Around 1130, having received a number of casualties, the battalion requested permission to withdraw. Jenna assenting, the battalion began moving back to the west side of the horseshoe. About the same time, increasingly concerned over the casualties his regiment was taking from Japanese mortar and artillery fire, Jenna radioed Jones:

I am convinced that the entire Japanese position opposing XI Corps cannot be cracked unless there is a withdrawal to a point where entire Corps Artillery and all available air work it over with every possible means for at least 48 hours. My 1st and 2nd [Battalions] have suffered terrific casualties and it is becoming questionable how long they can hold up under this pounding. . . .[43]



MAP 12

Jenna's thinking was obviously in line with that of General Jones, but the 38th Division commander, mindful of Hall's insistence upon speed, did not act upon Jenna's recommendation and sent no immediate reply to the regimental commander.

Shortly after 1200, when his 1st Battalion, on the horseshoe's eastern leg, began reporting heavy casualties from Japanese artillery, Colonel Jenna decided to withdraw that unit west of the horseshoe. His reserve battalion, the 3d, had moved up to the northwestern corner of the horseshoe and had started

[42] Proposed Plan CG 38th Div, 4 Feb 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56 and 26 Jan 57.

[43] Rad, Jenna to Jones, 1136 5 Feb 45, Entry 629, 34th RCT Jnl File, 4–6 Feb 45.

to probe across its open end, over the ridge line, in preparation for its share in the attack. When the 1st and 2d Battalions began withdrawing, the 3d had to hold to cover. The 1st Battalion, during its withdrawal in the afternoon, was harassed by Japanese artillery and mortar fire, which also hit forward elements of the 3d. By 1740 on the 5th the entire 34th Infantry was again west of the horseshoe — the regiment was, indeed, behind its line of departure of the morning of 3 February.

Having received information that the 152d Infantry's attacks were going well, Jenna apparently felt that his withdrawal could not redound to the advantage of the Japanese. He was, however, primarily concerned with the welfare of his regiment, which had lost another 20 men killed and 60 wounded during the previous twenty-four hours. The 34th Infantry had suffered a total of 325 battle casualties and 25 psychoneurosis cases since coming ashore on 29 January, almost all of them during the period 3–5 February. In its three days at the ZigZag the regiment had lost nearly half as many men as it had during 78 days of combat on Leyte.[44] Many of the casualties at the ZigZag had been among key personnel and included the regimental executive officer, 1 battalion commander, 4 company commanders, and 3 first sergeants. The 34th was no longer an effective combat unit, and about 1900 on 5 February General Hall directed General Jones to replace it with the 38th Division's 151st Infantry, which so far had seen practically no fighting.[45]

The 152d Infantry's operations on 5 February met with limited success. The 2d Battalion relieved Company A, 34th Infantry, at the latter's isolated perimeter some 700 yards off the horseshoes's southeastern corner with little difficulty, the Japanese who had surrounded the company having disappeared during the night. The 2d Battalion remained in the area for the rest of the day and that night, finding only abandoned Japanese positions. North of the horseshoe the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry, resumed its attacks against the Japanese ridge line defenses, again moving in from the west. The battalion made good gains during the morning and cleared much of the northern and central portions of the ridge. The attack slowed during the afternoon, however, as Japanese opposition stiffened.[46] By now the battalion was nearing the southern end of the Japanese-held ridge and was located about 600 yards north-northwest of the horseshoe's northwestern corner. The unit began setting up night defenses in apparently abandoned Japanese positions when suddenly, from a maze of previously undiscovered foxholes, tunnels, and trenches within and without the perimeter Japanese riflemen and machine gunners started pouring out point-blank fire. The 1st Battalion could not employ artillery or mortar support to disperse the Japanese and the battalion's men found it virtually impossible to return the Japanese rifle fire without hitting each other. The best thing to

[44] Jenna Comments, 5 Jan 57.

[45] Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 5 Feb 45; Rad, Hall to Jones, 1910 5 Feb 45, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 5 Feb 45.

[46] General Jones believed the stiffening opposition marked redeployment of Japanese after the withdrawal of the 34th Infantry. Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56. The author has been unable to find any evidence of such redeployments in either Japanese or American records.

do seemed to be to escape from the Japanese ambush and the battalion started withdrawing, apparently in a rather disorganized fashion. About dark the first troops began reaching the perimeter of the 3d Battalion of the 34th Infantry, which was in reserve near the northwestern corner of the horseshoe, but it was noon the next day before all the 1st Battalion, 152d, had completely reassembled and reorganized. The battalion's losses for 5 February numbered 9 men killed and 33 wounded, including many key NCO's and company-grade officers. For example, Company C had no officers left and Company B had only one.

Thus, by evening on 5 February, the attack at the ZigZag had ended in failure. Except for the terrain held by the 2d Battalion, 152d Infantry, southeast of the horseshoe, the 152d and 34th Infantry Regiments were no farther forward than the 152d had been on the evening of 2 February. The fighting at the ZigZag had cost the 34th Infantry roughly 70 men killed and 200 wounded, and many of the men left in its three infantry battalions could not be counted as combat effectives. The 152d Infantry, with casualties of about 40 men killed and 155 wounded, was actually little better off, for it had lost an even greater proportion of junior officers and senior NCO's. The 1st Battalion, for instance, had only 15 officers and 660 enlisted combat effectives, and the entire regiment faced serious reorganization problems. Yet 5 February had not been entirely void of good news. The 38th Division's 149th Infantry, which had taken the "high road" eastward, had reached Dinalupihan and had made contact with XIV Corps troops there.

149th Infantry Mix-up

At dusk on 31 January the 149th Infantry had assembled at a branching of the Santa Rita River three and a half miles northeast of Olongapo and about a mile and a quarter northwest of the 152d Infantry's forward elements on Route 7 half a mile west of the horseshoe.[47] On 1 February Col. Winfred G. Skelton, the regimental commander, intended to march eastward along the trail XI Corps had designated as far as a north-south line through Bulate, a tiny barrio on Route 7 at the eastern exit of the ZigZag and some four miles east of the horseshoe. Once on this line, the regiment would halt pending new orders.

The march started on 1 February with guerrillas and local Negritos guiding. About 1300 Skelton reported to General Jones that the 149th would reach its objective line within three hours, and also that he was on the XI Corps' trail at a point nearly two miles east of the horseshoe and roughly 1,200 yards north of Route 7. Jones, mindful of XI Corps' admonition to keep the 149th and 152d Infantry Regiments within supporting distance of each other, now felt that the 149th was getting too far east of the 152d, and directed Colonel Skelton to halt approximately 2,500 yards west of the original objective line. Well before dark, Skelton reported that his leading battalion was at General Jones's new objective and was digging in along the XI Corps' trail at a point about 750 yards north of

[47] Additional information on 149th Infantry operations in this and the next two subsections is from: 149th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–20; 149th Inf Unit Jnl, 1–15 Feb 45; 149th Inf, Summary of Lessons Learned M–7 Opn, pp. 2–5.

Route 7 at barrio Balsic, a mile west of Bulate.

At this juncture General Jones began receiving reports from 38th Division Artillery liaison planes that the 149th Infantry was no place near the locations Colonel Skelton had reported for it. Jones believed that the 149th's leading elements were about three miles northwest of their reported location.[48] Colonel Skelton, on the other hand, insisted that his troops were in the position he had reported, while an XI Corps Artillery liaison plane placed the regiment a mile and a third northwest of Skelton's claim and over a mile and a half southeast of the area in which Jones believed the regiment was located. General Hall evidently chose to believe the report of the XI Corps Artillery aircraft.

In the end, it appears, nobody was right. First, the trail that the XI Corps thought paralleled Route 7 simply did not exist. Instead, almost two miles east the Santa Rita River branching the trail swung off to the northeast. Second, the area through which the 149th Infantry was moving was not only densely wooded but was also unmapped—the 1:50,000 maps the troops were using showed only white for a large area beginning some 2,000 yards north of Route 7—and the liaison planes' reports could at best only be guesses. Third, the guides that Skelton had taken with him had proved unreliable and he had sent them back to camp. Finally, a study of all relevant sources of information indicates that, when it halted, Skelton's leading battalion was almost two miles due north of the position he thought it had reached.

There then ensued a complete breakdown of communications between 38th Division headquarters and the 149th Infantry that created more confusion. About 2100 on the 1st of February General Jones radioed Skelton to return to Santa Rita and start over. The 149th Infantry never received the message. On the other hand, three times by 1130 on the 2d, Skelton radioed Jones for new orders. Before receiving an answer, Skelton had learned that he had incorrectly reported his previous positions, but guerrillas informed him that he need only follow the trail he was already on to swing back southeast to Route 7 near Dinalupihan. Though he relayed this information to General Jones by radio, division headquarters never received the message.

By now, mutual misunderstanding was leading from confusion to chaos. Believing that the 149th Infantry was already on its way back to Santa Rita, Jones had seen no necessity for replying to Skelton's first two requests for new orders. Skelton's third request, which division received about 1115, finally brought forth instructions from Jones for Skelton to move the whole regiment back to the Santa Rita fork at once. Jones apparently had decided to employ the 149th along Route 7, for he informed Skelton that his regiment could be used "to better advantage here."[49] Skelton received this message about noon, and immediately started back over the trail, followed by his regiment.

[48] Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56. General Jones states that he had three reports from Division Artillery planes that the 149th was about three miles northwest of Skelton's reported position. The author could find only one report of such a nature in 38th Division Artillery and other division records, and this report placed the regiment four miles northwest of the location Skelton had reported.

[49] Rad, 38th Div to 149th Inf, 1145 2 Feb 45, Entry 31, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 2 Feb 45.

Colonel Skelton reached the 38th Division's command post a mile northeast of Olongapo about 1930 on 2 February, and explained the situation to General Jones. Despite Jones's apparent desire to employ the 149th on Route 7, XI Corps wanted the regiment to try again to reach Dinalupihan on the bypass trail, and now General Hall lifted his previous restriction that the 149th Infantry keep within supporting distance of units on Route 7. At 2330, accordingly, Jones directed Skelton to start back over the trail at 0700 on the 3d. Jones ordered Skelton to try to follow the line of the trail XI Corps had mapped out, but felt that it would not make much difference which trail the 149th followed as long as it reached Dinalupihan quickly.[50]

Taking off as directed on the 3d, the 149th Infantry followed the trail that arcked to the northeast, swung back southeast at a point about two and a quarter miles north of Balsic, and about 0245 on 5 February made contact near Dinalupihan with patrols of the 40th Division, XIV Corps, which had already reached the town. The march back over the trail had gone without incident, but the bypass maneuver to Dinalupihan had taken five days rather than the two it would have consumed had XI Corps' original orders been less restrictive and had communications been better. Nevertheless, the 149th Infantry had completed one of XI Corps' most important missions, that of denying the Japanese access to Bataan from the Central Plains. The real credit for this accomplishment, however, had to be given to XIV Corps, for its troops, already in Manila by 5 February, had had the Japanese cut off from Bataan for at least three days.[51]

A Change in Command

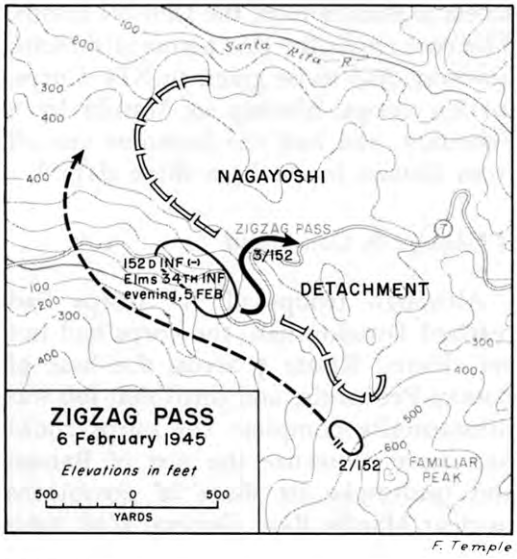
Although troops of XI Corps had reached Dinalupihan, the corps had not yet cleared Route 7 across the base of Bataan Peninsula, and until that job was substantially complete the corps could not move to secure the rest of Bataan and undertake its share of operations to clear Manila Bay. General Hall, who had apparently expected that his work in northern Bataan would be over by 5 February, was far from pleased with the course of events so far, and he laid the blame for the failure of his forces to break through the ZigZag on the shoulders of General Jones, the commander of the 38th Division. Hall had, indeed, been thoroughly dissatisfied with the 38th Division's performance for some days, and had already informed General Jones in considerable detail what he thought was wrong with the division.[52] The climax of General Hall's dissatisfaction came on 6 February.

As of the morning of the 6th General Jones had under his command in the vicinity of the horseshoe only the 152d Infantry. XI Corps had released the 151st Infantry to him from XI Corps Reserve, but the first elements of that regiment, the 1st Battalion, would not reach the forward area until after 0900, and the rest of the regiment not until morning of the 7th. General Hall had

[50] Msg, 38th Div to 149th Inf, 2330 2 Feb 45, Entry 70, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 2 Feb 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56. Jones felt that since XI Corps had directed the 149th Infantry to undertake the march along the trail, the regiment was now under XI Corps control. General Jones, however, issued the actual march orders to the regiment.

[51] See above, ch. XII.

[52] Ltr, Hall to Jones, 4 Feb 45.



MAP 13

pulled the 34th Infantry out of the fight and had sent it back to the rear for rest and recuperation. He had also taken the 149th Infantry away from General Jones and had directed that regiment to start an attack westward from Dinalupihan on the morning of 7 February.[53]

General Jones felt that he probably could not break through with only the one battalion of the 151st Infantry and the two battalions of the 152d that were available to him (the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry, was not fit for combat on the 6th). Jones had also decided to move the 2d Battalion, 152d Infantry, back from its isolated position southeast of the horseshoe in order to concentrate his forces. The time required to reorganize and redeploy his units for a new attack, together with the relatively slow arrival of the echelons of the 151st Infantry at the front, gave General Jones what he considered a heaven-sent opportunity to adjust artillery and undertake concentrated bombardments before pushing his infantry back into the Zig-Zag. Jones (and Jenna of the 34th Infantry, as well) had previously recommended that one or two days of aerial and artillery bombardment be thrown against the Japanese, but until the morning of the 6th Jones had had no opportunity to even start employing his artillery in such a manner.

The scheduled artillery concentrations were delayed while the 38th Division waited for an air strike that was late in coming. Shortly after the artillery finally began firing late in the morning General Hall arrived in the forward area. Incensed when he found the infantry was not attacking, Hall asked Jones how long the artillery fire was to last. When Jones replied that he expected to take all day to make sure the artillery carefully registered on all known and suspected targets, Hall told the 38th Division commander "to cut out such precise stuff" and get the attack under way again. Reluctantly, Jones started the 152d Infantry forward.[54] The artillery registration that Jones had been able to execute apparently did some good, for the 3d Battalion, 152d Infantry, behind close artillery support, reduced the last Japanese defenses at the northeast corner of the horseshoe during the day and spent the following night along Route 7 just east of that corner. (*Map 13*) Neither the rest of the 152d Infantry nor the 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry, gained new ground on the 6th, and the 2d Battalion,

[53] Rad, XI Corps to 38th Div, 1630 5 Feb 45, Entry 53, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 5 Feb 45; Rad, XI Corps to 38th Div, 2030 6 Feb 45, Entry 70, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 6 Feb 45; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56. The last elements of the 34th Infantry left the horseshoe area about 1030 on 6 February.

[54] Ltr, Hall to author, 15 Mar 52; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56. The quotation is from the Hall letter.

152d Infantry, gave up terrain as it withdrew to Route 7 from its position southeast of the horseshoe.

About noon on the 6th, while on his way back to XI Corps' command post, General Hall decided that the fight at the ZigZag would go better under a new commander, and he took the step that he had apparently been contemplating as early as evening on 2 February. He relieved General Jones and placed Brig. Gen. Roy W. Easley, the assistant division commander, in temporary control.[55] The next day, 7 February, General Chase, who had led the advance elements of the 1st Cavalry Division into Manila and who was in line for a promotion, arrived to take permanent command of the 38th Division.[56]

General Hall, whose action had not surprised General Jones,[57] gave as his reasons for the relief of Jones:

. . . lack of aggressiveness on the part of his division, unsatisfactory tactical planning and execution and inadequate reconnaissance measures. He failed to produce the results with his division which might be reasonably expected.[58]

The Reduction of the ZigZag

Just what General Hall expected to result from the change of command at the 38th Division is not clear, although it appears that he anticipated that the division might be able to clear the ZigZag by evening on 7 February.[59] If so, Hall was again to be disappointed.

Operations at the ZigZag after 6 February varied little in nature from those before that date.[60] Complicated maneuvers through dense jungle and over rough, broken ground characterized each day's action. Again there was considerable backing and filling as some ground gained had to be given up in the face of Japanese artillery and mortar fire and local counterattacks. For example, on 8 February elements of the 151st Infantry, making a bypassing movement south of Route 7, reached the Santa Rita River crossing over a mile east of the horseshoe, but returned to the horseshoe on the 10th.

During the period to 6 February, General Jones had had only one regi-

[55] Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 6 Feb 45; Ltr, Hall to author, 15 Mar 52; Interv, Falk with Elmore, 3 Apr 52; Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56; 38th Div G–1 Jnl, 5 and 6 Feb 45. Strangely, at 1640 on 5 February, the Chief of Staff, 38th Division, informed the Division G–1 that Jones was about to be relieved, and late that night the G–1 Section prepared orders for Easley's assumption of command. Neither Hall nor Elmore (the XI Corps chief of staff) could offer any explanation of this action, and Hall insisted that he did not make up his mind to relieve Jones until noon on the 6th. Jones did not comment on the strange circumstances. It is probable that the 38th Division staff sensed what was obviously about to happen and prepared itself accordingly, or it may be that Jones, feeling that his relief was imminent, alerted his chief of staff.

[56] 38th Div G–1 Jnl, 6 and 7 Feb 45. General Krueger selected Chase for the command of the 38th Division. Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

[57] Jones Comments, 20 Dec 56 and 26 Jan 57. It was Jones's opinion that General Hall had expected that the 34th Infantry, operating under XI Corps control, would have broken through the ZigZag in a day or two, thus giving Hall an excuse to relieve Jones. Then, Jones continued, when the 34th Infantry failed to produce, Hall placed it under Jones's command so that Hall could blame Jones for the 34th Infantry's failure. The attempted adjustment of the artillery on 6 February was, in Jones's opinion, simply the incident that Hall was waiting for to precipitate Jones's relief. There was, in Jones's opinion, "nothing that I could have done to keep my command." Jones Comments, 26 Jan 57.

[58] Ltr, Hall to Krueger, 6 Feb 45.

[59] Rad, XI Corps to 149th Inf, 2000 6 Feb 45, and Rad, XI Corps to 38th Div, 2030 6 Feb 45, both in XI Corps G–3 Jnl File, 5–6 Feb 45.

[60] Additional general sources employed for this subsection are: 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Accounts for 6–11 Feb 45; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 424, 429.

ment under his command at the ZigZag most of the time. By contrast, General Chase was able to employ three regiments, less one infantry battalion, from the time he assumed command on 7 February.[61] The 151st and 152d Infantry Regiments attacked from the west side of the ZigZag while the 149th Infantry, less one battalion, struck from the east beginning on the 7th. General Chase had another advantage that Jones had not enjoyed. On 6 February Fifth Air Force P–47's started operating from the San Marcelino Airstrip, making close air support readily available. That day the planes began an intensive bombing and strafing program, and simultaneously started giving the ZigZag a good going over with napalm. At the same time, corps and division artillery were able to step up the pace of their support firing.[62] Nevertheless, the Japanese continued to hang on doggedly, and almost foot-by-foot progress, attained in a series of small unit actions, marked the 38th Division's operations for nearly a week following General Jones's relief. In fact, the only difference troops on the ground could see in the fighting after 6 February was that daily gains could usually—but not always—be measured.

The 151st and 152d Infantry Regiments reduced the last important defenses in the vicinity of the horseshoe by evening on 8 February, and by dusk on the 11th the two units had made sufficient progress east of the horseshoe to permit the relief of the 151st Infantry for operations elsewhere on Bataan Peninsula. (*Map 14*) It was not until afternoon of 13 February that the 149th and 152d Infantry were able to make their first fleeting contact from their respective sides of the ZigZag. The 149th Infantry overran the last organized Japanese strongpoint on the 14th and on the following day that regiment and the 152d completed mopping-up operations.

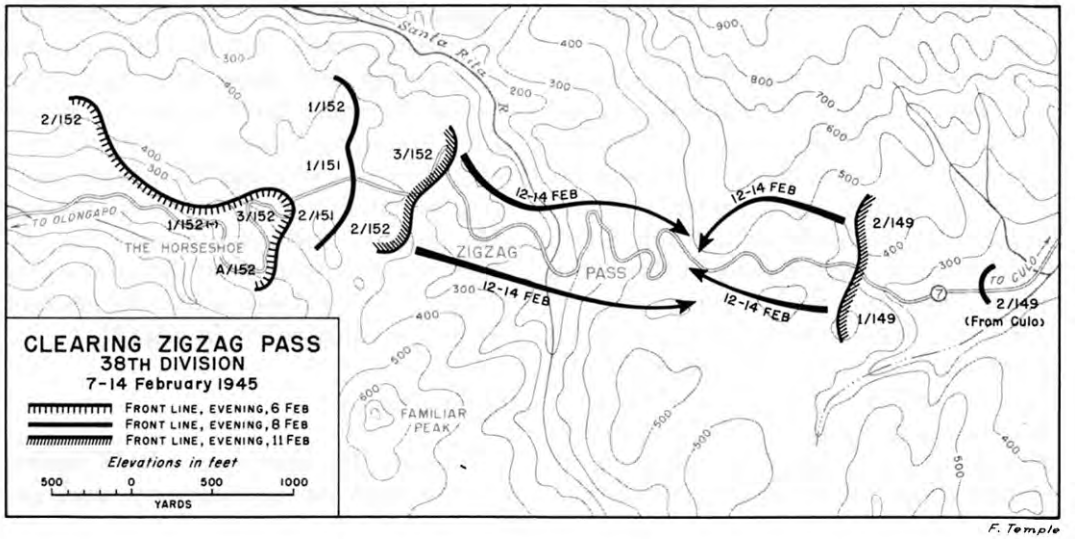
Through 15 February, the 38th Division and attached units, including the 34th Infantry, had killed nearly 2,400 Japanese in the ZigZag region and had taken 25 prisoner. The 300-odd men remaining alive from the original Japanese garrison on the highway retreated south into Bataan with Colonel Nagayoshi.[63] The 38th Division and the 34th Infantry had suffered about 1,400 combat casualties, including 250 men killed, during the process of destroying the *Nagayoshi Detachment.*

By 15 February, then, XI Corps had completed the task at the ZigZag and had secured positions from which to launch subsequent operations aimed more directly at securing Manila Bay, operations that had, indeed, begun before the ZigZag Pass fight was quite over. The "campaign" from San Antonio to Dinalupihan had not gone as General Hall had expected, and the corps commander had been bitterly disappointed with the turn of events at the ZigZag. Not every operation can go according to plan and expectation—too many imponderables are involved. XI Corps' attack

[61] On the 5th, it is true, both the 152d and 34th Infantry Regiments were under Jones's command, but the 34th had to be withdrawn that day. On the 6th, Jones had the 152d plus a battalion of the 151st, but on that day one battalion of the 152d had to spend its time reorganizing. During most of the final stages for the fight for the ZigZag, one battalion of the 149th Infantry held and patrolled in the Dinalupihan area and did not enter the fight.

[62] See artillery ammunition expenditure charts following page 164 in the 38th Division's Report, Luzon.

[63] Nagayoshi Statement, States, II, 626; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 116.



MAP 14

across Bataan strikingly illustrated the degree to which some of the imponderables could and did affect the outcome of the operation.

Clearing Bataan Peninsula

The Situation and the Plans

General Krueger's plan for XI Corps operations to clear Bataan Peninsula south of Route 7 called for one RCT to drive down the east coast while another seized Mariveles, at the southern tip of the peninsula, by an amphibious assault from Subic Bay. Krueger initially set D-day for the two attacks as 12 February, but as planning progressed it became evident that XI Corps was much too involved at the ZigZag to meet that target date or to release from the ZigZag all the forces required. Accordingly, Krueger rescheduled D-day for 15 February and, to make up General Hall's troop shortages, sent south the 6th Division's 1st Infantry, which had recently completed its part in I Corps operations to seize San Jose.[64]

Hall divided his Bataan Peninsula forces into two groups, East Force and South Force. East Force—the reinforced 1st RCT, 6th Division—would operate under the control of Brig. Gen. William Spence, commander of 38th Division Artillery. It would push south along Bataan's east coast road, the same road the Japanese had followed in 1942, starting its drive south on 14 February in order to divert Japanese attention from the Mariveles landing, which Hall set for the 15th. South Force — the 38th Division's 151st RCT — would operate directly under General Chase's command. After landing at Mariveles, South Force would establish control over southern Bataan and then strike up the east

[64] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 49–51; Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WG–194, 9 Feb 45, and Rad, Krueger to Hall, WG–199, 10 Feb 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 8–10 Feb 45.

coast road to make contact with Spence's East Force.[65]

The amphibious phases of the operation were directed by Admiral Struble, commander of Task Group 78.3, which was supported by cruisers and destroyers of Task Group 77.3 under Admiral Berkey. In addition to landing South Force, Task Group 78.3 would also sweep mines from the waters across the entrance to Manila Bay, paying especial attention to the area between Mariveles and Corregidor and the channel between Corregidor and Caballo Island, a mile to the south. Fifth Air Force planes from Mindoro and Luzon would provide necessary preliminary bombardment for the landing at Mariveles and would support subsequent ground operations on Bataan.[66]

Sixth Army and XI Corps estimated that 6,000 Japanese were still on Bataan south of the ZigZag. One concentration, believed to include a battalion of the *39th Infantry,* was thought to be holding the Pilar-Bagac road, running east to west across the center of the peninsula; the remaining Japanese presumably garrisoned the Mariveles area.[67] Actually, Nagayoshi probably had less than 1,400 troops, including remnants of his ZigZag Pass force, on Bataan south of Route 7. Of these, around 1,000 held positions in the Bagac area on the west coast or along the Pilar-Bagac road. About 300 Japanese, scattered in various small detachments, were located in southern Bataan, but few were near Mariveles. Nagayoshi must have expected attack from the west, for the few formal defenses he had along the Pilar-Bagac road were oriented in that direction. He was also able to incorporate into his defenses on the road some positions that MacArthur's Fil-American forces had originally constructed in 1942.[68]

Bataan Secured

The 38th Division's 151st RCT loaded at Olongapo on 14 February, and the ships of Task Group 78.3 sortied the same day.[69] The 6th Division's 1st RCT started out of Dinalupihan on the afternoon of 12 February, planning to be seven miles to the southeast, at Orani, by morning of the 14th. (*Map 15*) Mine sweeping and preliminary bombardment began on the 13th. During that day and the next Task Group 78.3 swept about 140 mines from the bay, 28 of them left over from the days of the American defense in 1942. Mines at the entrance to Mariveles Harbor damaged two destroyers of Task Group 77.3, but sweeping continued without other incident except for some fire from Japanese guns on Corregidor.

Task Group 78.3 completed a final

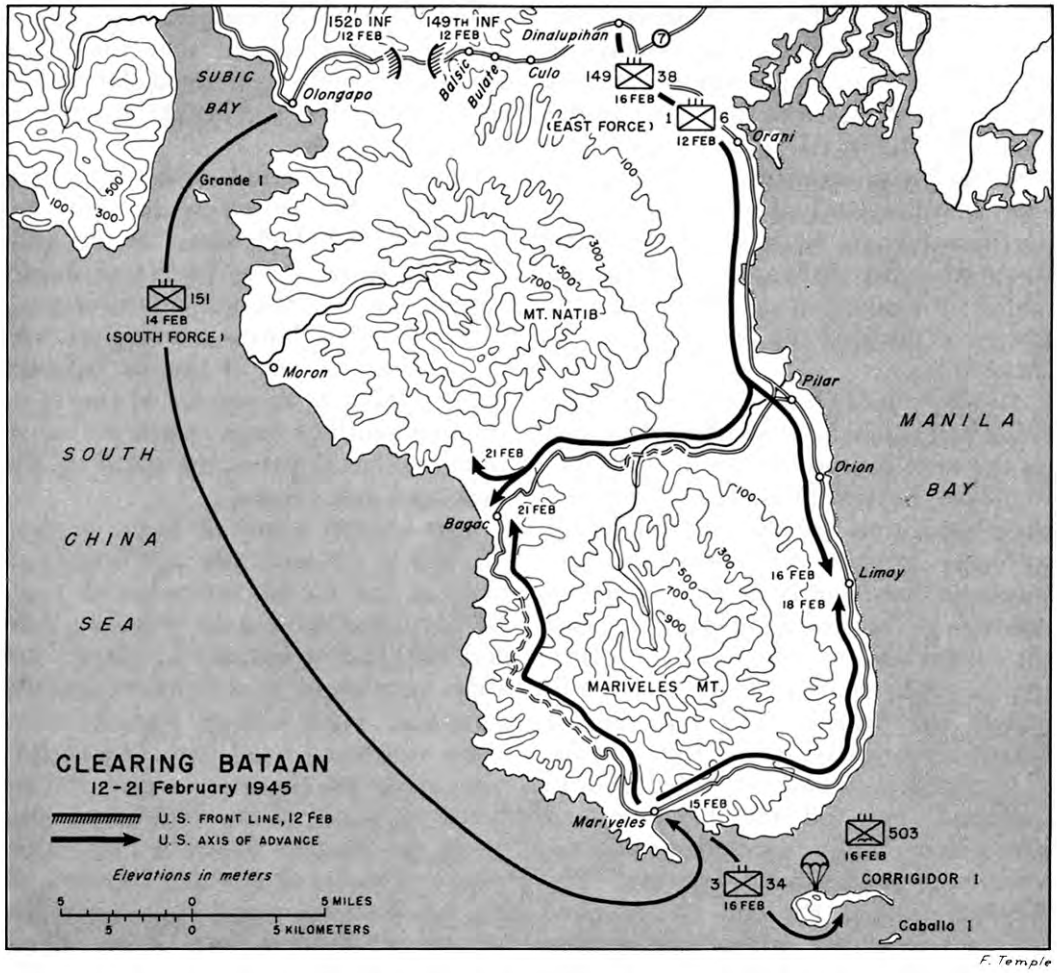
[65] XI Corps FO 5, Confirmed Copy, 10 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 12–14 Feb 45.

[66] TG 78.3 Opn Plan No. 4–45, 10 Feb 45, and TG 77.3 Opn Order No. 1–45, 9 Feb 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 16–18 Feb 45; Sixth Army FO 48, 7 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 149–50.

[67] XI Corps FO 5, 10 Feb 45; an. I, Intel, to XI Corps FO 6, 17 Feb 45; Sixth Army G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation With Reference to Bataan-Corregidor, 4 Feb 45, G–2 Sixth Army, Former Top Secret Jnl.

[68] 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 30, 119–22; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, p. 16; Nagayoshi Statement, States, II, 626; Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* ch. XVIII.

[69] General sources for this subsection are: TG 78.3 Action Rpt Mariveles-Corregidor, *passim*; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–43, 120; 38th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 11–21 Feb 45, and other materials in 38th Inf Div G–3 Jnl File, 11–28 Feb 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–34; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 11–16 Feb 49; 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Mariveles-Bataan Account; 149th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–23.



MAP 15

sweep of Mariveles Harbor at 0900 on 15 February as destroyers moved in for close support fire and Fifth Air Force B–24's bombed the landing beaches. The 151st Infantry started ashore in LCVP's at 1000, opposed by a little machine gun and rifle fire. A near miss from a Japanese gun on Corregidor wounded 17 infantrymen as they boarded an LCPR at the side of an APD (Transport, High Speed), while somewhat later an LSM carrying the 24th Reconnaissance Troop shoreward struck a mine and caught fire, with resultant casualties and the loss of most of the unit's equipment. Poor beach conditions slowed all discharge, but at 1400 General Chase, who had accompanied South Force, assumed command ashore.

The 151st Infantry found no Japanese before sunset, but during the night 75–100 Japanese attacked the perimeter of the 3d Battalion about three miles northeast of Mariveles. The battalion beat off

the attack after killing 60 or more Japanese. South Force's casualties during the day were 3 killed, 43 wounded, and 14 missing, all incurred in the course of the landing. The 151st Infantry spent the next few days securing the Mariveles area, simultaneously dispatching patrols northward along both sides of Bataan Peninsula. On 18 February a patrol established contact with East Force at Limay, a third of the way up the east coast.

Moving out of Orani on the 14th, East Force had reached Pilar before dark and on the next day probed south to Orion, four miles beyond Pilar. There had been little opposition and the only hindrance to faster progress had been the too-thorough job guerrillas had done in destroying the many bridges carrying the coastal road over tidal streams. During the night of 15–16 February an estimated 300 Japanese attacked the 1st Infantry's perimeter near Orion, but the U.S. regiment, losing 11 killed and 15 wounded, beat off the Japanese and killed 80 of them in a melee of confused, sometimes hand-to-hand fighting. The incident marked the end of organized Japanese resistance in southern Bataan.

The next day General MacArthur had a narrow escape from injury if not death. Visiting East Force's zone, the theater commander proceeded south along the coastal road to a point nearly five miles beyond the 1st Infantry's front lines. His party encountered no Japanese, but patrolling Fifth Air Force P–38's, observing the movement, assumed that they had discovered a Japanese motor column and requested permission to bomb and strafe. Before granting permission General Chase directed a further investigation, an investigation that disclosed that the small group of vehicles contained Americans only. MacArthur and his party returned northward safely.

During the period 17–20 February East Force, augmented by the 149th Infantry and other elements of the 38th Division, drove across Bataan to Bagac, finding only abandoned defensive positions and a few Japanese stragglers. On 21 February troops of the 1st Infantry made contact with patrols of the 151st Infantry south of Bagac, while the 149th Infantry started patrolling north up the west coast from Bagac.

The contact south of Bagac marked the end of the tactically significant portions of the Bataan campaign of 1945. XI Corps had not met the resistance General Hall had expected—the corps' casualties were about 50 men killed and 100 wounded, while known Japanese casualties numbered 200 killed. Nagayoshi's remaining troops, about 1,000 in all, holed up north of the Pilar-Bagac road along the jungled slopes of Mt. Natib, where elements of the 38th Division, of the 6th Division, and Filipino guerrillas successively hunted them down. These Japanese presented no threat to Allied control of Bataan, and most of them died of starvation and disease before American and Filipino troops could find and kill them.

With the clearing of Bataan, XI Corps had executed the first step of the GHQ SWPA–Sixth Army plan for opening Manila Bay. And as XI Corps troops, on 16 February, broke the last organized Japanese resistance on the peninsula, operations to secure Corregidor Island began.

CHAPTER XVIII

Corregidor

The Plan of Assault

Four salient features marked the planning for and the recapture of Corregidor Island.[1] First, unlike the situation in 1941–42 when MacArthur's forces held the island as a final fortress, Corregidor had no significant place in Japanese plans for the defense of Luzon. Second, planning was based upon intelligence estimates that reckoned the Japanese garrison at less than one-sixth of its actual strength. Third, the assault plan called for a parachute regiment to drop onto a small, rough area ill suited to such an undertaking. Fourth, the operation involved the most difficult of all modern military maneuvers—a co-ordinated parachute and amphibious attack, which had so far during the war met with only limited success.

Corregidor, logically the key to the defense of Manila Bay, was important to forces occupying Luzon only if the defenders elected to hold the strategically vital bay region. Thus, when Yamashita turned to a static defense in his mountain strongholds, the Japanese garrison on Corregidor became an isolated outpost of no strategic significance to him. Nevertheless, until the island was secured, the Japanese on Corregidor could harass Allied shipping within Manila Bay and could also use the island as a refuge for escapees from the mainland. Even if all military reasons for the early seizure of Corregidor could be brushed aside as of no moment, there still remained the matter of sentiment. Many officers at GHQ SWPA fervently awaited the recapture of "The Rock," and if it could be done dramatically—by means of a parachute drop, for instance—so much the better.

When MacArthur had outlined GHQ SWPA plans for securing Manila Bay to General Krueger, he had told the Sixth Army commander that those plans envisaged taking Corregidor by parachute drop, by amphibious assault, or by both. The final decision, the commander in chief went on, would await the results of an intensive aerial bombardment.[2] Upon receipt of this information on 3 February, the Sixth Army's G–3 Section quickly prepared a plan calling for the principal effort to be an airborne assault by the separate 503d Parachute RCT

[1] This section is based principally upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 49–54; G–2 Sixth Army, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation With Reference to Bataan-Corregidor, 4 Feb 45; USAFFE Board, Rpt 308, Corregidor Island Operation, 503d Parachute RCT, 16 February–8 March 1945 (hereinafter cited as USAFFE Bd Rpt Corregidor), 16 May 1945 (2 vols.), I, 1–6, OCMH files; 503d RCT Rpt Corregidor, pp. 1–2; an. 1, Intel, to 503d Prcht Inf FO (Corrected Copy), 13 Feb 45, USAFFE Bd Rpt Corregidor, II.

[2] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CA–50232, 3 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 113.

from Mindoro, where the regiment had been stationed since its landing on 15 December. Krueger's planners also proposed a nearly simultaneous and supporting shore-to-shore operation, to be conducted by a reinforced battalion of the 34th Infantry, 24th Division, from Mariveles, Bataan. The date of the attack was set for 16 February.

MacArthur approved the combined parachute-amphibious plan on 5 February,[3] and simultaneously canceled his proposal to await the results of air bombardment—which had not yet begun in earnest—before deciding upon a definite course of action. Indeed, the Sixth Army's plan was prepared and approved so quickly as to suggest that planners were so familiar with the concept of the dual assault on Corregidor that only a bare hint was needed for a preconceived plan to become a reality.[4]

The decision to employ paratroopers to make the principal assault against an objective of Corregidor's size and terrain merits attention. Shaped like a tadpole, with its bulbous head pointing west toward the South China Sea, Corregidor is but three and a half miles long and one and a half miles across at its point of greatest width. (*Map VII*) The eastern —tail—section is sandy, wooded, and gently sloping, its highest point not much more than 150 feet above the bay. Near the center of the island, tunneled Malinta Hill rises abruptly to a height of some 350 feet, while immediately to the west the ground falls away just as steeply to a 500-yard-wide waist rising from sea level to a saddle about 100 feet high.

Known as Bottomside to the two generations of American soldiers who garrisoned Corregidor before World War II, the waist boasted small docks on both the north and the south and was the site of the demolished barrio of San Jose. Bottomside's sandy beaches provided good points for amphibious assault. Equally good and wider beaches were to be found along the tail section—it had been on the north shore of the tail that the Japanese had made their main assault in 1942.

West of Bottomside lay a gradually rising area known as Middleside, giving way on the west to steeper slopes leading to Topside, as the central portion of the tadpole's head was labeled. Covering a fairly even surface from 400 to 500 feet in height, Topside dropped precipitately to Manila Bay on the north, west, and south. Other than the slopes from Middleside, there were only two feasible approaches to Topside: James Ravine on the north and Cheney Ravine on the west, both easily defensible. Access to the western part of Middleside and to Topside's eastern slopes could also be had at Ramsay Ravine, at the southeast corner of the tadpole's head.

Topside is the key terrain feature on Corregidor, and against a defense centered there conquest of the island could be an extremely bloody affair. From Topside almost all logical sites for amphibious attack can be brought under fire, and even troops landing on the tail section, masked from flat trajectory fire by Malinta Hill, would be exposed once they tried to move past the hill toward Middleside and Topside. Amphibious assault at any point could prove costly, as the

[3] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CAX–50271, 5 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 113–14.

[4] "The plan for opening Manila Bay had been in process of formulation at Headquarters Sixth Army for some time." Krueger, *From Down Under to Nippon*, p. 262.

Japanese had learned in May 1942, when they had lost approximately half their initial assault force.[5]

The prospective cost of amphibious assault was, indeed, one of the chief factors that led to a decision to use paratroopers. Planners saw the obvious risks in sending parachute troops against such a small and rough target, but in view of the GHQ SWPA estimate that the Japanese garrison numbered only 850 men, the cost of the airborne operation promised to be less than that involved in an amphibious attack. Krueger intended to land almost 3,000 troops on Corregidor on 16 February, over 2,000 of them by parachute. Another 1,000 men or more would come in by parachute or landing craft the next day. Planners hoped that such preponderant strength, combined with intensive air and naval bombardment, might render the seizure of the island nearly bloodless.

An equally important (if not even more decisive) factor leading to the decision to employ paratroops was the desire to achieve surprise. GHQ SWPA and Sixth Army planners hoped that the Japanese on Corregidor would judge that no one in his right mind would even consider dropping a regiment of parachutists on such a target. The defenses, the planners thought, would probably be oriented entirely toward amphibious attack.

There was only one really suitable dropping ground on Corregidor, a prewar landing strip, known as Kindley Field, on the central part of the tail. This area was quite small and, not having been utilized by the Japanese, badly overgrown. Nevertheless, Col. George M. Jones, commanding the 503d RCT, recommended that Kindley Field be used as the drop ground after he had made a personal aerial reconnaissance over the island.[6] General Krueger overruled the proposal quickly. A drop at Kindley Field, he thought, would not place the 'troopers on the key terrain feature quickly enough, and, worse, the men landing on the airstrip would be subjected to the same plunging fire that troops making an amphibious assault would have to face.

The only other possible locations for dropping paratroopers were a parade ground and a golf course on Topside, which was otherwise nearly covered by the ruins of prewar barracks, officers' homes, headquarters buildings, gun positions, and other artillery installations. The parade ground provided a drop zone—that is, an area not dotted with damaged buildings and other obstacles—325 yards long and 250 yards wide; the sloping golf course landing area was roughly 350 yards long and 185 yards wide. Both were surrounded by tangled undergrowth that had sprung up since 1942, by trees shattered during air and naval bombardments, and by wrecked buildings, while the open areas were pockmarked by bomb and shell craters and littered with debris as well. Both fell off sharply at the edges and, on the west and south, gave way to steep cliffs. Despite these disadvantages, planners selected the parade ground and the golf course as the sites for the 503d's drop. The planners based this decision largely upon the thought that if the Japanese

[5] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, ch. XXXI.

[6] Rad, Jones to MacArthur, 6 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45.

considered the possibility of a parachute invasion at all, they certainly would not expect a drop on Topside.[7]

In formulating final plans for the drop, planners had to correlate factors of wind direction and velocity, the speed and flight direction of the C–47 aircraft from which the 503d RCT would jump, the optimum height for the planes during the drop, the time the paratroopers would take to reach the ground, the 'troopers' drift during their descent, and the best flight formation for the C–47's. Planners expected an easterly wind of fifteen to twenty-five miles per hour with gusts of higher velocity. The direction corresponded roughly to the long axes of the drop zones, but even so, each C–47 could not be over the dropping grounds for more than six seconds. With each man taking a half second to get out of the plane and another twenty-five seconds to reach the ground from the planned drop altitude of 400 feet, the wind would cause each paratrooper to drift about 250 feet westward during his descent. This amount of drift would leave no more than 100 yards of ground distance at each drop zone to allow for human error or sharp changes in the wind's speed or direction.

The 503d RCT and the 317th Troop Carrier Group—whose C–47's were to transport and drop the paratroopers—decided to employ a flight pattern providing for two columns of C–47's, one column over each drop zone. The direction of flight would have to be from southwest to northeast because the best line of approach—west to east—would not leave sufficient room between the two plane columns and would bring the aircraft more quickly over Manila Bay, increasing the chances that men would drop into the water or over cliffs. Since each plane could be over the drop zone only six seconds, each would have to make two or three passes, dropping a "stick" of six to eight 'troopers each time. It would be an hour or more before the 1,000 or so troops of the first airlift would be on the ground. Then, the C–47's would have to return to Mindoro, reload, and bring a second lift forward. This second group would not be on the ground until some five hours after the men of the first lift had started jumping.

Planners knew that they were violating the airborne experts' corollary to ground warfare's principal of mass—that is, to get the maximum force on the ground in the minimum time. But there was no choice. Terrain and meteorological conditions played their share in the formulation of the plan; lack of troop-carrying aircraft and pilots trained for parachute operations did the rest. The margin of safety was practically zero, and the hazards were such that planners were reconciled to accepting a jump casualty rate as high as 20 percent—Colonel Jones estimated that casualties might run as high as 50 percent. To some extent the casualty rate would depend upon whether or not the parachute drop took the Japanese on Corregidor by surprise. And, if air and naval bombardments had not reduced the Japanese on Topside to near impotency by the time of the drop, a tragic shambles might ensue.

Planners were also concerned over casualties during the amphibious phase of the assault, for they realized that losses could run even higher during landings on the beach than during the parachute drop. But the planners had several im-

[7] Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

portant reasons for including the amphibious attack, primary among them being the difficult problem of aerial resupply and the impossibility of aerial evacuation. Amphibious assault troops, planners believed, would probably be able to establish an early contact with the paratroopers on Topside and thus open an overwater supply and evacuation route.

Moreover, the amphibious attackers stood a good chance of seizing Malinta Hill before the Japanese garrison could recover from the shock of preparatory air and naval bombardment and the surprise of the parachute drop. In any case, American troops would have to secure the hill before they could clear the tail of Corregidor, Bottomside, and parts of Middleside. Without the help of amphibious forces, the 503d RCT would have to attack Malinta Hill across the open area of Bottomside—an operation that, planners believed, would be most unpleasant.

To minimize expected casualties during the shore-to-shore attack, the amphibious troops would make their assault two hours after the paratroopers started jumping. By that time, planners expected, the parachutists would be able to provide some fire support for the amphibious assault, while Japanese attention would be largely diverted to the manifest enormity of the situation on Topside.

To allow visually directed air and naval bombardment as well as good visibility for the airborne assault, planners scheduled the parachute jump for 0830 and set the amphibious attack for 1030. The whole plan, of course, depended upon generally fair weather; an inclement dawn on 16 February would force postponement of both assaults.

Thus, carefully, planners made provision for most eventualities. The great imponderable was, of course, the Japanese reaction, and here Sixth Army and all other forces involved were due for a surprise. Information concerning the isolated Japanese garrison on Corregidor had been so scanty that the estimate of 850 had, in fact, hardly attained the status of an educated guess, even though it was necessary to use that figure as a basis for planning. Actually, the Japanese had over 5,000 troops on Corregidor, all but 500 of them naval personnel.[8]

Corregidor and the other islands in Manila Bay were garrisoned by the *Manila Bay Entrance Force* under Capt. Akira Itagaki, IJN, who reported to Admiral Iwabuchi in Manila and whose headquarters was on Corregidor. Itagaki's forces, which included three Army provisional infantry companies and two Army provisional artillery batteries, were organized into provisional units and assigned defensive sectors.

As Sixth Army expected, Captain Itagaki did not anticipate an airborne envelopment. He had deployed his troops for defense against amphibious attack and had placed his strongest positions at James, Cheney, and Ramsay Ravines and at Malinta Hill. Over half his troops were ready for action at these points; the rest of the garrison he apparently kept in reserve on Malinta Hill or in the tunnels below. A few men held

[8] Japanese information is principally from: Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, p. 12, and No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, p. 16; Statement of Capt Masayoshi Koma (IJN) (Staff, *Southwest Area Fleet*), States, II, 293; Col Kobayashi Narrative, pp. 2, 6, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon; XI Corps G–2 Per Rpt, 26 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 25–27 Feb 45; an. 1, Org Chart, to 503d RCT S–2 Rpt Corregidor; USAFFE Bd Rpt Corregidor I, 2–3.

isolated positions along the tail. Itagaki's ravine defenses had no communication with each other or with Malinta Hill. Wire communications from each strongpoint led back to a central location on Topside, but even so it would be difficult for Itagaki to move forces quickly from one position to another around the periphery of Topside. Moreover, the early destruction of the communications center would lead to complete disruption of control. Thus, while he commanded a strong and fairly well-armed force, Itagaki's means of controlling the operations of his troops were extremely precarious.

Securing "The Rock"

Preparations

Corregidor had been under attack by Allied Air Forces planes ever since 22 January, when General MacArthur first designated the island as a target.[9] The Allied Air Forces stepped up its attacks at the beginning of February and by the 16th of the month Fifth and Thirteenth Air Force planes had dropped some 3,125 tons of bombs on the island. On the morning of 16 February 24 B–24's hit known and suspected gun positions, 11 B–25's struck antiaircraft gun emplacements and the entire south coast, and 31 A–20's bombed and strafed generally, some of them paying attention to tiny Caballo Island, a mile to the south.

Naval bombardment began on 13 February in conjunction with the bombardment and mine sweeping in preparation for the seizure of Mariveles. The cruisers and destroyers of Task Group 77.3 directed most of their fire at the north side of Corregidor, where the Japanese defenses seemed strongest. The next day Japanese fire from Corregidor damaged a mine sweeper and two destroyers, the mine sweeper so severely that it later had to be sunk. Admiral Berkey's ships proved unable to silence all the fire from Corregidor and had made large inroads in their ammunition supply in the attempt. Therefore, Admiral Kinkaid sent 3 heavy cruisers and 5 destroyers south from Lingayen Gulf to augment the fire of the 5 light cruisers and 9 destroyers Berkey already had under his command. The new arrivals joined in the bombardment about 1230 on 15 February.

During the morning of the 16th cruisers and destroyers blasted the south shore of Bottomside, where the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, was to land; expended considerable ammunition on Caballo Island gun positions; and stood by for call fire the rest of the day. PT boats, which had already strafed some Corregidor shore batteries, were in position to rescue paratroopers who might land in Manila Bay. As the troop carrying C–47's hove into view, seventy A–20's of the Allied Air Forces bombed and strafed the eastern section of Corregidor and also worked over Caballo.

The 503d RCT had staged at Mindoro under the direction of Eighth Army. At dawn on the 16th the paratroopers boarded planes of the 317th Troop Carrier Group, a task completed quickly and without incident. Just as the troops making an amphibious assault are under control of the naval command from the time of staging until a beachhead is es-

[9] This subesction is based principally upon: Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 340–34; TG 78.3 Action Rpt Mariveles-Corregidor, *passim*; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 53; Sixth Army FO 48, 7 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 149–51.

tablished, so the 503d RCT was under the control of the Commanding General, Fifth Air Force, from the time the troop-carrying C–47's took off until the drop was executed. Upon reaching the ground, the RCT passed to the control of Sixth Army and Hall's XI Corps. For the purposes of centralizing control of operations on Corregidor, General Hall had organized Rock Force—the 503d RCT and the reinforced 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry. The organization of Rock Force, which was commanded by Colonel Jones of the 503d RCT, was to become effective when Jones reached Corregidor with the first lift from Mindoro.

Aerial and Amphibious Assault

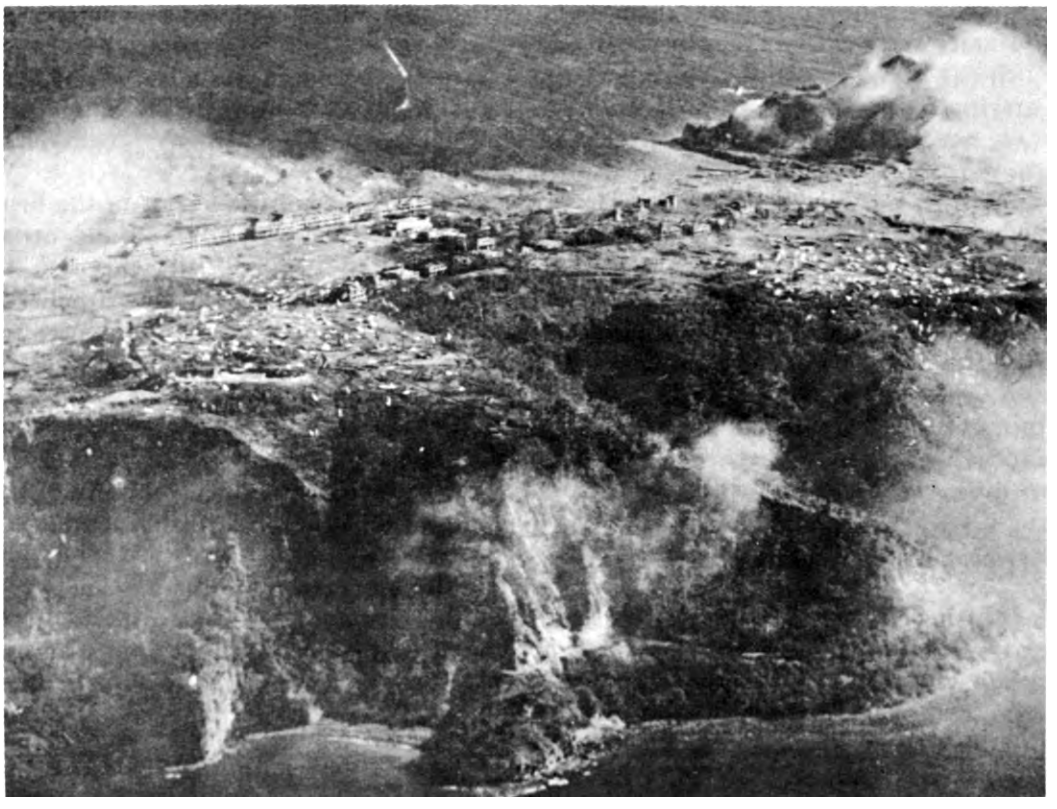
Floating earthward without being fired upon by the Japanese, the first man of the first lift of paratroopers was on the ground at 0833, 16 February, three minutes behind schedule.[10] Jumpers from following aircraft encountered sporadic Japanese rifle and machine gun fire, but on the ground at Topside drop zones the paratroopers found only a few small groups of Japanese armed with light machine guns and rifles. These the parachutists either killed or drove off with little trouble. By 0945 the first lift was on the ground and assembled at Topside drop zones—the 3d Battalion, 503d Infantry; Battery C, 162d Parachute Field Artillery Battalion; a platoon of Battery D, 462d Parachute Field Artillery; Company C, 161st Airborne Engineer Battalion; and about two-thirds of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 503d RCT, including Colonel Jones.

The missions of the troops in the first lift were to secure and hold the drop zones for the second lift; prepare to move out to clear all Topside upon the arrival of the second lift; provide fire support for the assault of the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, at Bottomside; and, finally, establish physical contact with the latter unit as soon as possible. By 1000 the troopers had successfully accomplished the first mission, had completed preparations for the second, and had moved two .50-caliber machine guns in position on the southeast side of Topside to help cover the amphibious attack. The machine gunners, whose support fire was not needed initially, had a magnificent view of the assault at Bottomside.

The 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, had come to Mariveles with the 151st RCT on 15 February,[11] and had left Mariveles Harbor aboard twenty-five LCM's of the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment at 0830 on the 16th. Taking a circuitous route around the west end of Corregidor, the first boats hit the south beach at 1028, two minutes ahead of schedule. Contrary to all expectations, there was no opposition as the men of the first four waves poured ashore. But as the fifth wave came in Japanese machine guns opened up from Ramsay Ravine and Breakwater Point, to the left rear—southeast—and from cliffs at San Jose Point, lying at the southwest corner of Malinta Hill.

[10] The sources for the remainder of the Corregidor action, unless otherwise indicated, are: USAFFE Bd Rpt Corregidor, I, 3–9; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 53–55; 503d RCT Rpt Corregidor, pp. 3–6; 503d RCT S–2 Rpt Corregidor, pp. 1–7; 503d Inf S–2 Per Rpts, 16 Feb–2 Mar 45; 503d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 16 Feb–2 Mar 45; 1st Bn 503d Prcht Inf Hist, Phase XII, 16–29 Feb 45, *passim*; 503d Prcht Inf S–1 Rpt Corregidor, an. 3, Casualties; 34th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 138–54.

[11] See above, ch. XVII.



AIRDROP, TOPSIDE

As vehicles reached shore they began detonating mines along the Bottomside beaches. In rapid succession a medium tank of the 603d Tank Company, an M7 self-propelled mount of Cannon Company, 34th Infantry, and a 37-mm. antitank gun of Antitank Company, 34th Infantry, were destroyed. Nevertheless, Companies K and L, 34th Infantry, pushed rapidly forward and gained a firm hold atop Malinta Hill by 1100. To that time amphibious landing casualties had been 2 men killed and 6 wounded, far below the anticipated rate.

Surprise was complete. The lack of opposition to the first parachute drops and to the initial landing waves at Bottomside can be attributed both to the shock of preparatory naval and air bombardment and to the fact that the Japanese had not expected a parachute attack. Evidently circling bombers and fighters of the Allied Air Forces had kept the Japanese under cover while the LCM's and escorts approaching from Mariveles apparently diverted Japanese attention from the incoming C–47's. Indeed, since the C–47's resembled "Betty" bombers of the Japanese Army Air Force, the Japanese naval troops on Corregidor may have assumed that the troop-carrying aircraft were more American bombers.



AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT, BOTTOMSIDE

In turn, the parachute drop diverted Japanese attention from the amphibious craft moving on Corregidor. Obviously confused by the co-ordinated assault, the Japanese did not know what to do first. By the time they had recovered their wits sufficiently to take meaningful action, the 3d Battalions of the 34th and 503d Infantry Regiments had secured their initial objectives with negligible combat losses.

However, jump casualties among the paratroopers of the first lift had run higher than anticipated — roughly 25 percent of the 'troopers of that lift had been injured, and many others had failed to land on Topside. There had been a number of contributing factors. For one thing, in their first pass over the drop zones the leading planes had disgorged paratroopers from an altitude of 550–600 feet instead of the planned 400 feet. This increased descent drift and sent some men onto the cliffs south and southwest of the drop zones while others barely hit the narrow beaches below the bluffs. Drift also had increased because the wind velocity was over twenty miles per hour (five miles or more per hour stronger than the velocity then considered safe for parachute operations) and because the wind came more from the

north than planners had expected. Colonel Jones and the commander of the 317th Troop Carrier Group, circling overhead in a command plane, were in radio contact with the C–47's. They were able to have the troop carriers progressively reduce their altitude until by the time the first drop had ended all planes were flying at the right height. Nevertheless, most of the men of the first lift missed the assigned drop zones and landed on, in, and among buildings and trees away from the two fields.

Some of the officers who came down with the first lift felt that conditions were too hazardous to risk dropping the rest of the 503d and wanted to halt the second lift.[12] But no command action was taken to stop the second lift, which began dropping at 1240 hours, twenty-five minutes behind schedule. This lift was composed of the 2d Battalion, 503d Parachute Infantry; Battery B, 462d Parachute Field Artillery Battalion; Service Company, 503d Infantry; and the remainder of Headquarters, 503d RCT. The planes came in at the proper altitude, and, although the wind was still strong, most of the 'troopers landed on the drop zones. The second lift encountered some fire from Japanese automatic weapons, but suffered fewer casualties than had the first drop.[13]

Of the 2,050 men dropping on 16 February, jump casualties numbered approximately 280. The resultant rate of 14 percent was 6 percent lower than that the planners had been willing to accept. Japanese fire and crashes into buildings had killed approximately 20 'troopers, roughly 210 were injured on landing, and Japanese fire had wounded another 50 men during the descent.

While Colonel Jones talked with his staff about the advisability of continuing jump operations on 17 February, the troops on the ground began expanding a hurriedly formed perimeter around the drop zones. The 2d Battalion took over at the two drop fields and the 3d Battalion's Companies G and H—there were only three companies per battalion in the 503d Infantry—set out to secure the rest of Topside. Company H, assembling at the parade ground, rapidly cleared the main barracks building of a few Japanese stragglers and then moved 300 yards northward to secure the gutted hospital, whence one platoon dashed 600 yards northeast to seize a knoll dominating the entire northeast section of Topside. Company G, meanwhile, advanced eastward down the slopes toward Middleside to set up night positions near the head of Ramsay Ravine, only 250 yards from the closest elements of the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry. The rest of the 503d's troops, patrolling all over Topside, discovered that Japanese strength seemed to be located west and south of the drop zones. By dusk combat casualties numbered about 55 men wounded, a much lower figure than anticipated.

In the meantime, the question of additional drops had been settled. Colonel Jones felt that since the operation had been successful beyond hope, opposition had been lighter than expected, and the Japanese were obviously surprised and

[12] Anonymous, Combat Over Corregidor, 16 February 1945, Carried Out by the 503d Parachute Combat Team . . . , p. 38. This personal account, prepared by a 503d RCT medical officer, is available in photostat in OCMH files. It is hereinafter cited as Anon., Combat Over Corregidor.

[13] Fire against the second lift came from a Japanese 20-mm. machine cannon and two American .50-caliber machine guns that, dropping wide of their mark during the first lift, had quickly been put into action by the Japanese. Jones Comments, 8 Feb 57.

disorganized, there was no need to risk further jump casualties. Accordingly, he requested XI Corps to cancel the drop of the rest of the regiment in favor of sending it forward by landing craft to Bottomside. The request was approved, and only supplies were dropped on the 17th.[14]

One unexpected blessing resulted from the scattered drop of paratroopers in the 0830 lift. Captain Itagaki, having been informed that landing craft were assembling off Mariveles, had hurried with a small guard to an observation post near Breakwater Point, obviously more concerned with the imminent amphibious assault than with the possibility that paratroopers might drop out of the C–47's already in sight of Corregidor. Suddenly, his attention was rudely diverted as twenty-five to thirty paratroopers who had been blown over the cliffs near the point began pelting down around the observation post. Fired on by the Japanese, the small American group quickly assembled and attacked. In the ensuing skirmish eight Japanese, including Captain Itagaki, were killed. Effective control among the Japanese units, already rendered practically impossible by the destruction of the communications center during the preassault air and naval bombardment, now ceased altogether. Leaderless, the remaining Japanese were no longer capable of coordinated offensive or defensive efforts. Each group would fight on its own from isolated and widely separated strongpoints.

Clearing the Island

Once Rock Force was ashore, operations on Corregidor evolved into a large-scale mop-up. The size of the island and the nature of the terrain precluded maneuver by units much larger than a platoon, while the generally static and disorganized defense of the Japanese led to a "campaign" of small unit assaults. Colonel Jones's plan called for the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, to secure Malinta Hill and contain the Japanese on the eastern end of the island while the 503d Infantry cleared Middleside and Topside. After the 503d's job had been finished, Rock Force would overrun the tail. Within this framework, operations proceeded in a series of generally uncorrelated incidents.

On the afternoon of 17 February the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry, and other reinforcements reached Bottomside by landing craft. Japanese rifle and machine gun fire, most of which passed overhead, "expedited" the movement ashore, and the battalion soon joined the rest of the regiment on Topside. The troops already on Topside had spent the day expanding their hold, systematically reducing the first of the many Japanese bunkers, pillboxes, and underground defenses they were to encounter, and had developed a pattern for the destruction of the Japanese installations.

First, aircraft or naval fire support ships — the air arm using napalm extensively—were called upon to strike positions accessible to these types of bombardment; then the infantry attacked almost as the last shell or bomb burst. When this method failed, the 503d's own 75-mm. pack howitzers and lesser weapons were brought forward for direct fire. Next, having stationed men with submachine guns and rifles at

[14] Rad, XI Corps to Sixth Army, QP–3748, 16 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 16–18 Feb 45.

advantageous points to cover approaches to a Japanese position, infantry assault teams moved forward behind white phosphorus hand grenades and the extremely close support of flame thrower teams. To avoid backflash and assure the deepest possible penetration of cave defenses, flame thrower operators often projected their fuel unignited, and then used white phosphorus grenades to fire it. If the Japanese within the caves still could not be induced to give up the fight, engineer demolition experts blocked the cave entrances.

One Japanese tactic was both advantageous and disadvantageous to the 503d Infantry. Each night small groups of Japanese would attempt to reoccupy positions cleared during the previous day. To the 503d, this often meant some dirty, repetitive work, and additional casualties. On the other hand, the Japanese sometimes reoccupied tactically indefensible positions that proved easy to take out. The 503d Infantry seems to have been happy to let the Japanese occasionally return to such positions, secure in the knowledge that the only result would be more Japanese killed at no cost to the attackers. The only way to keep the Japanese from reoccupying less vulnerable positions was to stop night infiltration, a process that in turn required the blocking of the underground passageways that abounded on Topside.

By these methods Japanese casualties began to mount rapidly. On the 17th, for example, over 300 Japanese were killed; nearly 775 were killed the next day. In the same two days Rock Force's casualties were approximately 30 killed and 110 wounded.

Apparently in an effort to redeem their losses in a blaze of glory, Japanese at the southern and southwestern sections of Topside attempted a counterattack in the predawn hours of 19 February. Shortly after 0200 about 40 Japanese committed suicide by blowing up an ammunition dump a few hundred yards north and inland from Breakwater Point, simultaneously killing or wounding 15–20 men of the 503d Infantry who, unaware of their danger, had been occupying a building directly over the ammunition. About the same time Japanese from Cheney Ravine and Wheeler Point, 800 yards southeast of the ravine, started a ground counterattack that reached its peak around 0600. The Japanese force, nearly 400 strong, pushed some of its troops all the way to the barracks area on Topside, but the 503d Infantry finally drove them back after 0800.[15] By 1100 the 503d had hunted down the last stragglers from the counterattack and had resumed its daily process of small unit actions against known strongpoints. Operations on the 19th, including the events during the night, cost Rock Force over 30 men killed and 75 wounded, the Japanese nearly 500 killed. In addition, the 503d had captured 3 Japanese, the first prisoners of the battle.

The effort of the morning of 19 February was the last major offensive action taken by the Japanese on Topside, although small groups continued to execute un-co-ordinated banzai attacks from time to time. Some Japanese officers retained control of forces at the south-

[15] Pvt. Lloyd G. McCarter of the 503d Parachute Infantry was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic action in helping to repel this counterattack and for another heroic deed on the 16th.

western corner, and here resistance continued to bear some semblance of organization. The last significant opposition, centered at Wheeler Point, ended with a small-scale banzai charge on the morning of 23 February, and by 1800 that day the 503d Infantry had substantially cleared the western section of Corregidor. Colonel Jones could now direct Rock Force's full energies toward clearing the area east of Malinta Hill, which the 3d Battalion of 34th Infantry had held since the 16th.

The battalion had not been inactive at Malinta Hill. The very first night ashore it had to beat off a series of small but determined Japanese counterattacks along the north side of the hill. In these skirmishes 10 Americans were killed and a like number wounded, while about 35 Japanese lost their lives.

On the 17th the battalion devoted most of its time to securing the roads leading through Middleside so that the wounded of the 503d Infantry could be evacuated and supplies could be sent to Topside. Here, as on Malinta Hill and Topside, much of the fighting involved the laborious process of cleaning out small caves or, failing that, sealing them with explosives. At Malinta Hill every night was marked by numerous small counterattacks, executed by Japanese from Corregidor's tail or from within the hill's tunnels. Everyone feared that at any time the Japanese might set off tons of ammunition and explosives known to be stored in the tunnels, and during the night 21–22 February the expected happened. At 2130 a deafening explosion literally rocked the hill; flames shot out of tunnel entrances; rocks and other debris flew in every direction; fissures opened along the slopes; 6 men of Company A, 34th Infantry, were buried alive by a landslide on the south side.

Apparently, the Japanese had planned a controlled explosion to set the stage for a counterattack or to allow the troops inside—now estimated to number 2,000—to escape to the tail area in the ensuing confusion. If so, the explosion had gotten completely out of hand, killing an unknown number of Japanese within the tunnels. Troops of the 34th Infantry killed other Japanese who counterattacked westward, but several hundred Japanese did manage to make their way eastward under cover of the explosion and the counterattack. Additional explosions, apparently marking the suicide of Japanese still in the tunnels, shook the hill during the night of 23–24 February.

Meanwhile, Rock Force had prepared plans for the final assault against the east end of the island. The attack was to be undertaken by the 1st and 3d Battalions, 503d Infantry, while the regiment's 2d Battalion continued to mop up at Topside and the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, continued to hold Malinta Hill, Bottomside, and Middleside. Especially heavy air and naval bombardment preceded the attack, which began on 24 February, and the 503d's light artillery laid down the heaviest concentration of which it was capable.

The 503d's battalions first encountered serious resistance at Engineer Point, off the northeast corner of Malinta Hill, and when they overcame this they developed still stronger opposition at Infantry Point, 800 yards eastward along the north shore. Here some 600 Japanese attempted to assemble for a counterattack, but 300 of them were killed by artillery and infantry defen-

sive fires before the attack got well under way. The remaining Japanese retreated eastward, and by nightfall on the 24th units of the 503d held all but the last 3,000 yards of the tail.

On the 25th the American troops decreased this distance about 1,000 yards. That night's lines ran from Cavalry Point, on the north shore, south-southeast some 700 yards to the south shore at Monkey Point. The 503d had encountered stiff resistance, including some banzai charges, near Monkey Point, and during the afternoon many of the Japanese still remaining on the tail attempted to escape by swimming to Bataan or Caballo Island. Those refusing to surrender to cruising PT's or engineer LCM's were killed by the boats' gunners and strafing planes.

As dark came on the 25th, Rock Force was confident that the morrow would see the end of significant resistance on Corregidor. The 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, would not be there to share in the glory, for with the 24th Division assembling on Mindoro for operations in the southern Philippines, the battalion had to leave. Its place was taken by the 2d Battalion of the 38th Division's 151st Infantry, which moved over from Mariveles.

Shortly after 1100 on 26 February the Japanese on Corregidor executed their final, suicidal tour de force, blowing an underground arsenal at Monkey Point amid scenes of carnage on both sides. As the dust from terrific explosions settled, a hollow appeared where a small knoll had previously stood. Debris had flown as far as Topside where one man, almost a mile from the explosion, was injured by flying rock. Other debris hit a destroyer 2,000 yards offshore. A medium tank was hurled 50 yards through the air, most of its crew killed.[16] Bits and pieces of American and Japanese troops splattered the ground; rock slides buried alive other men of both forces. Over 200 Japanese were killed outright, while Rock Force lost some 50 men killed and 150 wounded. Medics took an hour and a half to clear the casualties from the area, and at the end of that time one medical officer, an eyewitness to the horrors, could only report:

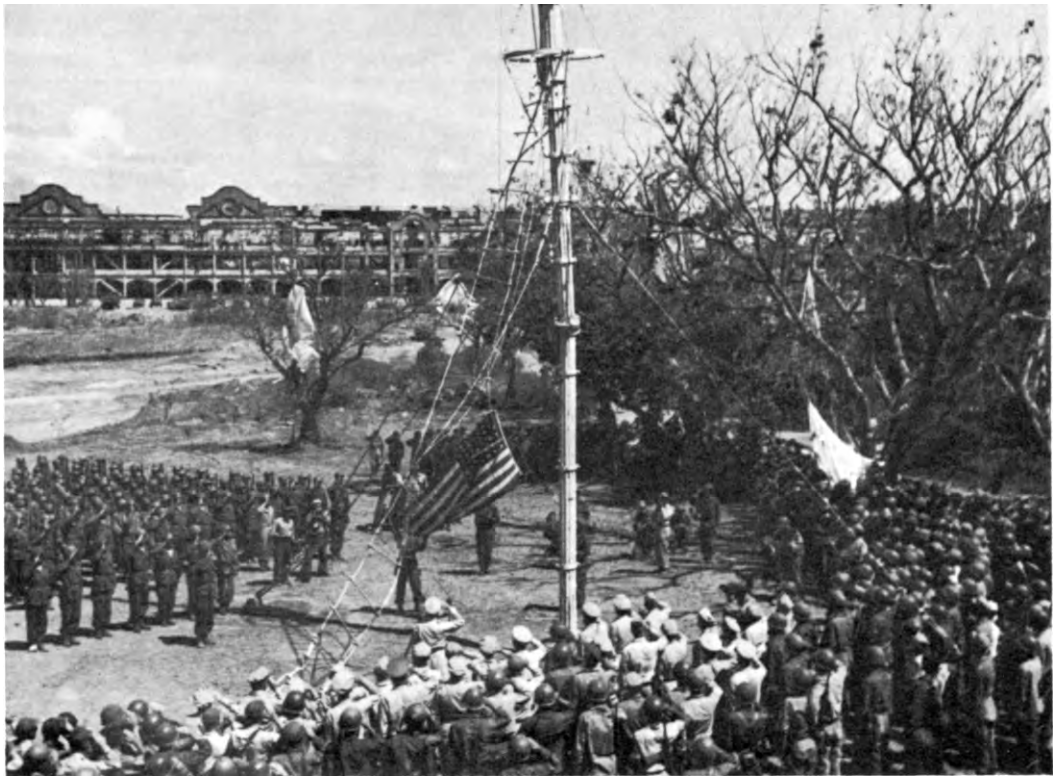
> As soon as I got all the casualties off, I sat down on a rock and burst out crying. I couldn't stop myself and didn't even want to. I had seen more than a man could stand and still stay normal. . . . When I had the cases to care for, that kept me going; but after that it was too much.[17]

The explosion marked the end of organized resistance on Corregidor, and by 1600 on 26 February elements of the 503d Parachute Infantry had reached the eastern tip of the island. The battle was over except for mopping up small groups of Japanese holed up in waterline caves. This process the 503d Infantry had to hurry along since the regiment had been alerted to get back to Mindoro no later than 10 March in order to make ready for participation in operations to clear the southern Philippines.

By 2 March General Hall and Colonel Jones had concluded that mopping up had progressed to the point that they could set an official terminal date for the Corregidor operation. Casualties to 2 March, including those from the parachute drop, numbered over 1,000 killed,

[16] The 503d Infantry borrowed an acetylene torch from a Seventh Fleet destroyer and cut open the tank to save the sole survivor. Jones Comments, 8 Feb 57.

[17] Anon., Combat Over Corregidor, p. 107.



RAISING THE FLAG, CORREGIDOR

wounded, injured, and missing. (*Table 7*) Japanese losses—actually counted—numbered about 4,500 killed and 20 captured. An additional 200 Japanese were estimated to have been killed while trying to swim away, and it was thought that at least 500 might have been sealed in caves and tunnels; a few remained alive in various hideaways.[18]

On 2 March 1945 General MacArthur returned to Corregidor, just nine days short of three years after his departure. A simple yet impressive flag-raising ceremony was held. The theater commander and those members of his staff who had shared the terrible days of 1942 on The Rock must have had large lumps in their throats as Colonel Jones stepped forward, saluted, and reported: "Sir, I present to you Fortress Corregidor."[19]

[18] The 503d RCT left Corregidor on 8 March and the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry, departed in mid-April, being relieved by the 1st Battalion. Elements of the 6th Infantry Division garrisoned the island after early May.

[19] Harold Templeman, *The Return to Corregidor* (New York: Strand Press, 1945). Mr. Templeman, American Red Cross Field Director with the 503d RCT, jumped with the infantry on Corregidor.

TABLE 7—CASUALTIES IN CORREGIDOR OPERATIONS TO MARCH 1945

Unit	Killed	Wounded	Injured	Missing	Total
503d Parachute RCT	165	285	330	0	780
3d Battalion, 34th Infantry (Reinforced)	38	150	10	5	203
2d Battalion, 151st Infantry	7	15	0	0	22
Total	210	450	340	5	1,005

Source: Unit records cited in preceding footnotes.

CHAPTER XIX

Manila Bay – Minor Operations

The clearing of Bataan and the capture of Corregidor concluded the major operations involved in the opening of Manila Bay. The task of securing the bay area was not, however, completed until XIV Corps cleaned out the southern shore from Cavite to Ternate and XI Corps cleared the small islands between Corregidor and the south shore. (*See Map VII.*)

The South Shore

XIV Corps cleared the southern shore of Manila Bay while XI Corps was making its drive to secure Bataan.[1] In fact, elements of the 511th Parachute Infantry, 11th Airborne Division, occupied Cavite Peninsula and adjacent mainland areas on the same day that the 151st Infantry, 38th Division, landed at Mariveles, Bataan.

Important as the Cavite area was to the security of Manila Bay, the 11th Airborne Division had bypassed the prewar naval base during its drive to Manila because guerrilla reports and aerial reconnaissance had indicated no Japanese were in the Cavite region. From 15 through 20 February troops of the 511th Infantry, thoroughly combing the Cavite Peninsula and the nearby mainland, found only a few Japanese stragglers. The regiment seized a large quantity of Japanese equipment on the peninsula, for the *Manila Naval Defense Force's 5th Naval Battalion*, together with Japanese antiaircraft units once stationed at Cavite, had left supplies and heavy weapons behind when they hurriedly withdrew northward into Manila on 2 February.[2]

Affairs at Ternate, about twenty miles southwest of Cavite, moved in a different fashion. Here was located a Japanese garrison of about 1,000 men built around the *111th Surface Raiding Base Battalion* and attached units, including a few pieces of artillery. In addition, around 350 naval personnel who had recently evacuated Carabao Island in Manila Bay also holed up at Ternate.

A small guerrilla force under the control of the 11th Airborne Division began probing into the Japanese defenses at Ternate on 19 February, but found the Japanese positions too strong to attack without artillery support. The 188th Glider Infantry, 11th Airborne Division, started moving into the Ternate area on 27 February and launched an assault on 1 March behind the close

[1] This section is based upon: 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 7, 15–18, 30; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 15 Feb–4 Mar 45; 511th Prcht Inf S–3 Jnl, 15–20 Feb 45; 188th Gli Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–12.

[2] See above, ch. XIII.

support of Fifth Air Force A–20's, a medium tank company, and 75-mm. and 105-mm. artillery battalions. Hard fighting took place on 2 March, but the 188th and attached guerrillas secured the entire Ternate area by midafternoon the next day. The regiment ultimately discovered that most of the Japanese once dug in at Ternate had escaped into rough, rising ground to the south and southeast. At Ternate the 188th Infantry killed about 350 Japanese, captured or destroyed the bulk of the artillery the Japanese had manned in the area, and seized intact some 30 Japanese Army suicide boats. The casualties of the reinforced 188th Infantry are unknown.[3]

The capture of Ternate marked the completion of XIV Corps' share in operations to secure Manila Bay, for on the same day the corps' troops had overcome the last organized resistance within Manila. XI Corps had already reduced all Japanese opposition along other points on the bay's shores and had secured Corregidor. All that remained was to clear the small islands between Corregidor and the south shore.

The Small Islands

The small islands that XI Corps had to secure were Caballo, a mile south of Corregidor; Carabao, hugging the Ternate shore; and El Fraile, about midway between the other two. The Japanese on those islands posed no threat to Allied shipping — their ordnance was too light—but, like other bypassed Japanese garrisons, they had to be taken sometime. Although the islands had little or no military significance, the operations to secure them offer interesting examples of military ingenuity and unorthodox tactics.

Caballo Island

There was no great hurry to launch attacks against the three minor objectives and it was, indeed, past mid-March before XI Corps could spare any troops for the job. On the 18th General Chase, the 38th Division commander, requested and received permission from XI Corps to reconnoiter Caballo Island.[4] The next day a platoon of the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry, took off from Corregidor by LCM and landed unopposed at the eastern end of Caballo. Patrolling inland, the platoon discovered strong Japanese defense on high ground in the center of the island, which was only a mile long, east to west, and 500 yards wide.

Withdrawing the platoon, General Chase scheduled an assault with the reinforced 2d Battalion for 27 March. In preparation Fifth Air Force planes, which had been using Caballo for a practice bombing range, bombed and strafed while Allied Naval Forces destroyers shelled Japanese positions along Caballo's beaches. On the morning of the 27th, B–25's and P–51's bombed, strafed, and dropped napalm; destroyers

[3] The author could find no casualty figures for the Ternate action in available records, but General Swing, the 11th Airborne Division's commander, stated that the battle cost the 188th Infantry "significant casualties." Swing Comments, 10 Jan 57.

[4] The account of the capture of Caballo is from: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 50–54, 123–24 and map after p. 49; 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Caballo Account; 151st Inf S–2 and S–3 Jnls, 27 Mar–13 Apr 45; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 78; TU 78.9.11, Action Rpt, 27–28 Mar 45, Opns Caballo Island, *passim*.

and rocket-equipped PT's bombarded for twenty minutes; artillery on Corregidor and Bataan joined in; and 151st Infantry 81-mm. mortars lobbed shells over from Corregidor. At 0900 LCM's of the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment began putting the assault infantry ashore.

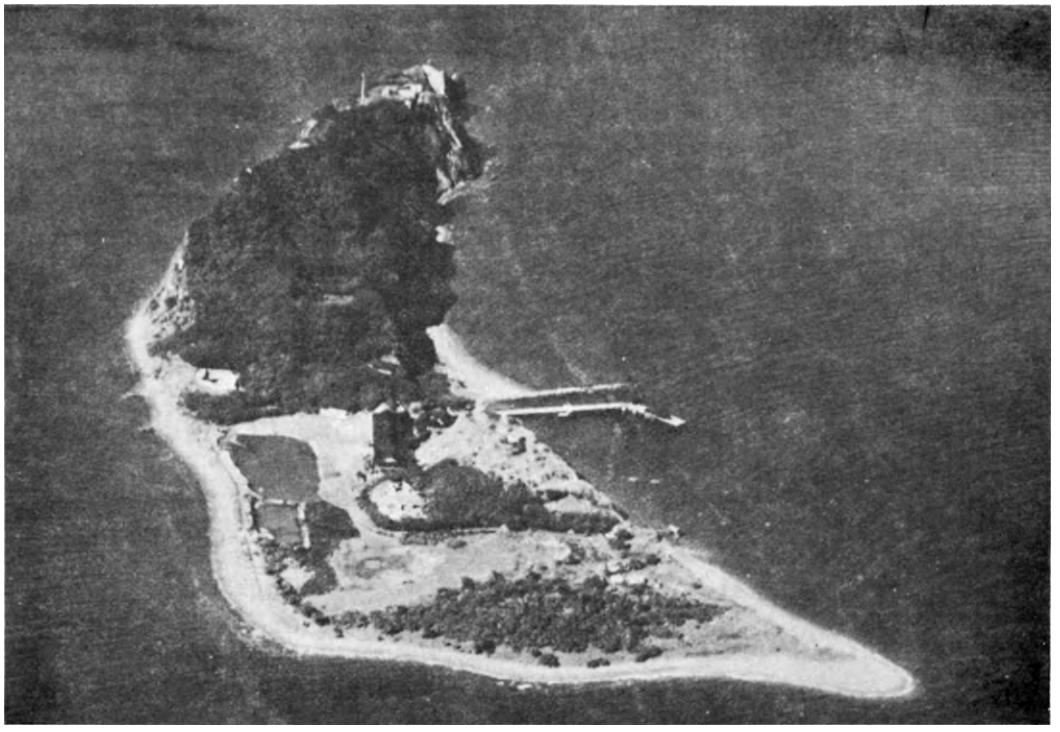
At first there was no opposition. The Japanese garrison of some 400 Army and Navy troops was stunned or was hiding in defenses centering around three small knolls that, varying from 150 to 250 feet in height, lay near the middle of the island.[5] Within fifteen minutes the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry had secured Hill 1, the most easterly, and had begun an advance toward Hill 2. At Hill 2 concentrated machine gun, mortar, and rifle fire as well as the hill's rough, steep slopes slowed the attack. Nevertheless, the battalion captured the crest by the end of the day. Within another day it cleared all Caballo except for a group of approximately 200 Japanese who had retired to prewar mortar pits and tunnels near the base of Hill 2's eastern slopes.

The Japanese in the pits and tunnels created an almost insoluble problem for the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry. The Japanese had so emplaced their weapons, which included machine guns and mortars, that they controlled all approaches to the mortar pits but could not be reached by American artillery or mortar fire. When the 151st Infantry concentrated its mortar fire against the pits' entrances, the Japanese simply withdrew into the tunnels. When the American fire ceased—at the last possible moment before an infantry assault—the Japanese rushed out of the tunnels to man their weapons. Tanks were of no help to the American troops. From positions near the rim of the pits the tanks were unable to depress their guns sufficiently to do much damage to the Japanese. If the tanks tried to approach from above, they started sliding down Hill 2's slopes into the pits. No combination of tank, artillery, and infantry action proved of any avail, and the 151st Infantry had to give up its attempts to take the Japanese positions by assault.

On 31 March engineers tried to pour diesel oil into one of the tunnels connecting the mortar pits, employing for this purpose a single ventilator shaft that was accessible to the 151st Infantry. Nothing came of the effort since it was impossible to get enough oil up the steep slopes of the hill to create a conflagration of significant proportions within the tunnels. Nevertheless, burning the Japanese out seemed to promise the only method of attack that would not risk the unduly heavy casualties of a direct infantry assault. No one, of course, wanted to throw away the lives of experienced troops on such an insignificant objective.

Finally, the commander of the 113th Engineers, 38th Division, suggested pumping oil up the hill from the beach through a pipeline from a ship or landing craft anchored at the shore line. The Allied Naval Forces happily fell in with this idea and supplied the 151st Infantry with two oil-filled ponton cubes; the Allied Air Forces provided a 110-horsepower pump and necessary lengths of pipeline and flexible hosing; and the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore

[5] Additional information on the Japanese on Caballo is from Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, pp. 16–18.



CABALLO ISLAND

Regiment came through with an LCM to carry the pump and the ponton cubes.[6]

On 5 April over 2,500 gallons of diesel fuel were pumped into the pits and tunnels through the ventilator and were then ignited by white phosphorus mortar shells. "Results," the 38th Division reported, "were most gratifying."[7] A huge flash fire ensued, followed by a general conflagration and several explosions. The engineers repeated the process on 6 and 7 April, and on the latter day carefully lowered two large demolition charges through the ventilator shaft and placed another at an accessible tunnel entrance. Set off simultaneously, the three charges caused an enormous volume of flames and several terrific explosions.

For the next few days the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry, tried to persuade a few Japanese who had lived through the holocausts to surrender and also executed a few infantry probing attacks. On 13 April a patrol entered the pits and tunnels, killed the lone surviving Japanese, and reported the positions cleared and secured.

[6] In addition to sources cited previously, the description of the oil operations at Caballo is derived from Brig. Gen. William F. Heavey, *Down Ramp! The Story of the Army Amphibian Engineers*, (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1947), pp. 155–56.

[7] 38th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 52.

El Fraile

The next small island target was El Fraile, about five miles south of Caballo and a little over two miles off Ternate. Basically a reef, El Fraile had been turned into a formidable fortress long before World War II by U.S. Army engineers, who had constructed atop the reef a concrete, battleship-shaped citadel known as Fort Drum. The fortress walls were 25 to 36 feet thick, the top was 20 feet thick; the battleship was about 350 feet long and 145 feet wide, and it rose 40 feet above mean low water. The fort's four 14-inch guns and four 6-inch guns had been knocked out by Japanese fire or American demolitions in 1942 and had never been repaired by the Japanese.[8]



FORT DRUM

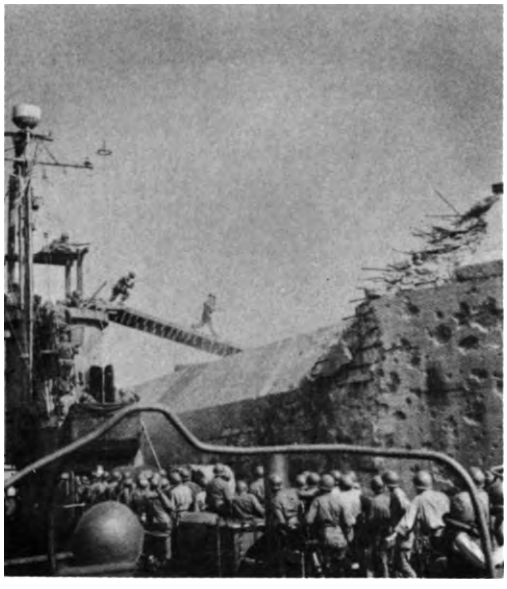
Manifestly, some special method of attack had to be devised for Fort Drum, especially since Japanese machine guns covered the only feasible entrance, a sally port at the east end. The existence of a Japanese garrison had been discovered in late February when the crew of an Allied Naval Forces PT boat, having decided that the fortress was abandoned, made an unscheduled reconnaissance. The Japanese garrison of seventy naval troops permitted seven of the Americans to make their way into a sally port and about a third of the way through Fort Drum's corridors. Suddenly, a Japanese machine gun opened up, killing one American naval officer and wounding another. The landing party made a hurried withdrawal, and it was the second week of April before an attempt to clear the fortress was undertaken.[9]

The 38th Division, responsible for the capture of Fort Drum, developed a plan of attack that followed naturally from the one employed successfully at Caballo Island — get troops atop Fort Drum and then feed oil and demolitions down ventilator shafts.[10] Since the fortress walls were unscalable, the 113th Engineers, 38th Division, rigged a drawbridgelike ramp to the conning tower of an Allied Naval Forces LSM, and Company F, 151st Infantry, on the morning of 13 April, dashed across the

[8] Rpt of the Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bays, p. 4 (an. VIII to Rpt of USAFFE and USFIP, 1941–42, otherwise known as Wainwright's Rpt), OCMH files; Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 478ff.

[9] Teletype Msg, G–2, XI Corps to G–2 Sixth Army, 1430 5 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 3–5 Mar 45.

[10] The story of the reduction of Fort Drum is based on: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 55–60; 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Fort Drum Account; Heavey, *Down Ramp!*, pp. 156–57; USS *LSM 51*, Action Rpt Fort Drum, *passim*; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, p. 18.



BOARDING FORT DRUM FROM LSM

bridge to the top of Fort Drum. While the infantry covered all openings, engineers followed across the ramp with an oil line and 600 pounds of TNT. The LCM employed at Caballo Island then began pumping oil into an open vent and engineers lowered TNT into another opening. After the engineers lit a 30-minute fuze, all hands withdrew and the LCM kept pumping. Suddenly, rough seas broke the oil line. Maj. Paul R. Lemasters, commanding the 2d Battalion, 151st Infantry, together with a few enlisted men, dashed back over the ramp to cut the demolition fuze with only minutes to spare. Engineers then repaired the oil line and resumed pumping.

The Japanese inside Fort Drum were strangely quiet throughout all this activity, although a few rifle shots from an old gun port wounded a seaman aboard the LSM. Pumping continued without incident, and shortly after 1020 the LSM, the LCM, and a few LCVP's that had kept the LSM alongside the fort, pulled off to a respectful distance. By that time nearly 3,000 gallons of oil had been pumped into the ventilator.

The initial explosion, occurring about 1035, proved a disappointing, weak, and scarcely noisy failure. But while the commanders concerned were gathering aboard Admiral Barbey's flagship to discuss the failure, burning oil seeped through openings created by the first explosion and reached the fort's magazines, most of them containing ammunition from 1942 that the Japanese had never hauled away. At approximately 1045 there was a deafening roar from the fort. Great clouds of smoke and flame shot skyward; a series of violent explosions threw steel plates and chunks of concrete hundreds of feet into the air and a thousand yards out to sea; smoke and flames poured from every vent, gun port, shell hole, and sally port. The holocaust exceeded all expectations.

Fires and explosions of some magnitude continued until late afternoon, while smoke, heat, and minor explosions made reconnaissance of the fort's interior impossible until 18 April. On that day infantry patrols penetrated Fort Drum's innermost recesses and found 69 Japanese bodies. The entire Japanese garrison of a seemingly impregnable stronghold had been wiped out at the cost to the attackers of one man wounded.

Carabao Island

Troops of the 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry, on 16 April assaulted Carabao Island, which, lying a mile off the Ter-



CARABAO UNDER FIRE

nate shore, was the last objective in Manila Bay.[11] Two days of air and naval bombardment preceded the attack. The 1st Battalion encountered no opposition, and the only living being it found on the island was one very badly shaken pig. The 350 Japanese naval troops who had once garrisoned Carabao had withdrawn to the mainland at Ternate.[12] The disposition of the pig they left behind is not noted in the records, but it would not be unreasonable to assume that some of the men of the 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry, had fresh pork chops for supper on 16 April 1945.

With the seizure of Carabao Island, XI Corps brought to a successful conclusion its campaign to secure the entrance to Manila Bay. The bay had actually been safe for Allied shipping since 16 February, the day of the assault on Corregidor, and Allied vessels began using the great harbor of Manila well before the seizure of Carabao. The capture of Carabao, El Fraile, and Caballo was but a minor side show in the Luzon Campaign, and the operations to take the three islands had diverted only a miniscule portion of XI Corps' energies—its main strength had long since moved against the *Shimbu Group* on the mainland.

[11] The Carabao (Fort Frank) story is based on: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 61–64, 126–27; 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, Carabao Island Account; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, pp. 18–19; TU 74.3.5, Action Rpt Carabao Island, *passim*; Heavey, *Down Ramp!*, p. 157.

[12] For the subsequent history of these Japanese naval troops, see the first section of this chapter and also Chapter XXIII, below.

PART FIVE

THE *SHIMBU GROUP* AND THE VISAYAN PASSAGES

CHAPTER XX

American Plans for Post-Manila Operations

While XI Corps was concluding the operations to secure Manila Bay, Sixth Army had turned its attention to completing plans for the destruction of the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups,* the two largest concentrations of Japanese strength left on Luzon after Sixth Army had brought the *Kembu Group* and the *Manila Naval Defense Force* under attack.[1] Sixth Army's offensives against the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups* were slow to gather momentum, although the necessity for launching such offensives had been obvious from the beginning of the campaign.

By early February Sixth Army's I Corps, poised along the northern edge of the Central Plains, and XIV Corps, smashing its way into Manila, had attained positions from which they could strike against the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups.* If Sixth Army postponed for long the I Corps offensive against the *Shobu Group,* that northern Japanese force would have ample time—too much time—to ready its defenses and gather the supplies of all types from the Cagayan Valley necessary to a protracted stand in the mountains of north Luzon. Each day that passed before attacks against the *Shobu Group* began would render I Corps' ultimate task more costly and time consuming. By the same token, General Krueger knew, Sixth Army would find it difficult if not impossible to completely assure the security of the Manila Bay region until XIV Corps could launch an attack against the *Shimbu Group* concentration in the mountains north and northeast of Manila. Of urgent importance to American development of the Manila area was the dismal fact that the *Shimbu Group* controlled the main sources of Manila's water supply.

From the beginning of the Luzon Campaign, General Krueger had known that he would have insufficient resources to undertake simultaneous, concerted attacks against all the Japanese concentrations on Luzon, no matter how desirable

[1] The general sources employed for this chapter are; Ltr, MacArthur to Krueger, *et al.,* 5 Feb 45, sub: Course of Luzon Campaign, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 113; GHQ SWPA OI 84/8, 7 Feb 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl File, 19 Dec 44; Ltr, Chamberlin (formerly ACofS G–3 GHQ SWPA) to author, 29 Jul 54, copy in OCMH files; Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, CX–10389, 16 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 14–16 Feb 45; Rad, MacArthur to Krueger and Eichelberger, CX–10011, 10 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 114; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 45–47, 56–57, 59–60, 62, 64–65, and 81; Sixth Army FO's 49–58, variously dated between 9 Feb and 23 Mar 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 151–62; personal knowledge of the author, who served in the Historical Division, G–3, GHQ SWPA, during the period under consideration. Background material concerning some of the decisions set forth in this chapter is to be found in chapter II, above.

such a course of action might appear to him. His earliest plans for operations against the *Shobu Group,* for example, called for the employment of at least five, possibly six, divisions in concurrent offensives in northern Luzon.[2] As of early February, however, he could not provide I Corps with such strength without stripping XIV and XI Corps of the forces required to secure the Manila Bay region—a step he obviously could not take. However, Krueger did expect that, with the exception of certain elements of the 24th Division, he could retain on Luzon almost all the troops deployed on the island as of early February. He anticipated that with these units, plus reinforcements scheduled to reach Luzon later in the month, he could proceed fairly rapidly with the destruction of the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups.* For the purpose of mounting attacks against the two Japanese groups he would also redeploy, as they became available, the divisions he had already committed against the *Kembu Group* and the *Manila Naval Defense Force.*

General Krueger was not to realize his expectations. During the first week of February General MacArthur decided that Sixth Army could secure the most important strategic objective of the Luzon Campaign, the Central Plains–Manila Bay region, with considerably less strength than theater planners had originally contemplated. Furthermore, MacArthur felt that base development projects on Luzon—not only for the support of Sixth Army operations but also for the support of subsequent offensives throughout the Pacific—would require Sixth Army to commit much of its strength to operations other than offensives aimed at the quick destruction of the *Shobu* and *Shimbu Groups.* Attacks against these two Japanese forces, the theater commander informed Krueger, should assume secondary importance in plans for operations following immediately upon the clearance of the Manila–Manila Bay area:

> It is possible that the destruction of enemy forces in the mountains of north and east Luzon will be time consuming because the nature of the terrain will probably channelize operations and limit development of full power. Initially, hostile forces should be driven into the mountains, contained and weakened, and our principal effort devoted to areas where greater power may be applied.[3]

MacArthur felt that development of a safe, short shipping route through the central Philippines—that is, through the Visayan Passages—was an urgent requirement for the establishment of large air, naval, and logistic bases on Luzon. Ever since 9 January, Allied shipping had been moving into Philippine waters at Leyte Gulf, sailing thence southwest through Surigao Strait and the Mindanao Sea into the Sulu Sea. Following the route employed by the Lingayen Gulf invasion convoys, the shipping then turned north to pass west of Mindoro Island, into the South China Sea, and finally up the west coast of Luzon. The Southwest Pacific Area could save considerable time and, ultimately, ships if it could shorten this roundabout route to one beginning at San Bernardino Strait, which separates Samar Island, north of Leyte, from the southeastern tip of Luzon. Sailing through San Bernardino Strait, Allied vessels could move

[2] For further details of these plans see below, ch. XXIV.

[3] Ltr, MacArthur to Krueger, *et al.,* 5 Feb 45.

into the Sibuyan Sea, sail northwest through the Verde Island Passage between northern Mindoro and southern Luzon, move on into Manila Bay. This second route saved some 500 nautical miles and was less hazardous for small vessels than the open, often stormy waters of the Sulu and South China Seas.

General MacArthur knew that the Japanese maintained coveys of suicide craft at various hideouts along the southern coast of Luzon and the southern shore of the Bicol Peninsula, southeastern Luzon. He also had reason to believe that the Japanese had emplaced coast artillery on the south coast of Luzon, the Bicol Peninsula, some of the small islands of the Visayan Passages, and northern Samar. His forces would obviously have to clear all these areas before he could make use of the water passages through the central Philippines. Accordingly, MacArthur directed Sixth Army to clear southern Luzon and the Bicol Peninsula, and simultaneously ordered Eighth Army to capture the smaller islands and the northern portion of Samar.

Another objective of post-Manila operations, MacArthur informed Krueger, was the early opening of Batangas Bay, on the south-central coast of Luzon, to Allied shipping. GHQ SWPA had drawn up plans for extensive base and port development at Batangas Bay. The theater intended to locate a large staging base for the invasion of Japan along the bay's shores; it planned to set up in the same region, which lay comfortably distant from the crowded Manila metropolitan area, a major hospital center to take care of casualties expected during the invasion of Japan; and, among other things, theater engineers planned to establish a landing craft assembly plant at Batangas Bay. GHQ SWPA also planned base development of lesser magnitude for Balayan Bay, west and northwest of Batangas Bay.

Finally, General MacArthur pointed out to Krueger, development of greater cargo discharge capacity at all existing and potential bases on Luzon was a continuing requirement. This requirement, MacArthur realized, could be largely met by planned logistical development at Manila and Batangas Bays, but he believed it necessary to establish additional port facilities along the northwestern coast of Luzon. The theater had to undertake such development—the first of it to be located at San Fernando, La Union, at the northeast corner of Lingayen Gulf—not only to ease the existing burden upon the overtaxed facilities at Lingayen Gulf but also to support subsequent operations of Sixth Army in northern Luzon and to provide ports of entry for matériel to be employed in the construction and use of airfields that GHQ SWPA intended to establish along Luzon's northwestern coast.[4]

Thus, in early February, General MacArthur limited Krueger's freedom of action by directing him to execute operations that would make it impossible for Sixth Army to deploy effectively its principal strength against the main bodies of the *Shimbu* and *Shobu Groups*. About the same time, the theater commander put additional restraints upon

[4] Further details on early plans for the capture of San Fernando are to be found in ch. XXIV, below. See also: Rad, Luzon Base Sec USASOS to Sixth Army, 1069, and Rad, Sixth Army LUBSEC, WG–587, both dated 11 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 9–11 Mar 45; Rad, GHQ SWPA to Sixth Army, USASOS, and ANF SWPA, CX–12542, 19 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–19 Mar 45.

Krueger by detaching troops from Sixth Army. With Leyte, southern Samar, and Mindoro already cleared, and with the Luzon Campaign well along, MacArthur, anxious to reassert American hegemony throughout the rest of the Philippines, decided to speed the destruction of major centers of Japanese resistance in the bypassed central and southern islands of the Philippine archipelago. Theater combat strength was by no means inexhaustible, and the initiation of the campaign in the southern Philippines, MacArthur knew, would require some reorientation of effort from Luzon. The theater commander realized that this redirection of effort would slow the conquest of Luzon, but that was a penalty he was willing to accept.

Having made the decision, MacArthur proceeded to implement it by reducing the strength he had originally allocated to Sixth Army for the prosecution of the Luzon Campaign. First, on 7 February, the theater commander informed Krueger that the 41st Infantry Division, already loaded for shipment to Luzon, would be given to Eighth Army for operations in the southern Philippines. Then, in rapid succession, Krueger received in early February the unwelcome news that the 24th Infantry Division's 34th RCT, which had been operating with XI Corps, would soon have to go back to Mindoro to make ready for participation in Eighth Army operations in the southern Philippines; that the two battalions of the 24th Division's 19th Infantry and other 24th Division units that had been attached to the 11th Airborne Division south of Manila would have to be sent back to Mindoro immediately; that the 503d Parachute RCT would soon have to be redeployed from Corregidor to the southern islands; and that the entire 40th Infantry Division would be withdrawn from Luzon to take part in the Eighth Army's campaign in the southern Philippines. Supporting combat and service units would also depart for the south, and Sixth Army would not receive other combat and service units it had expected to employ on Luzon. Next, MacArthur informed Krueger that the 37th Infantry Division, once it had completed operations in Manila, would be tied down for perhaps two months as a garrison force for the metropolitan area.

Instead of the eleven divisions and four separate RCT's Krueger had expected to employ on Luzon, he would have only nine divisions (one of which would have to remain in the Manila area for some time) and two separate RCT's. In all, taking into account artillery, armored, and service units that were also redeployed from Luzon to the southern Philippines or were stricken from the Luzon reinforcement list, Krueger lost the equivalent of three divisions permanently and a fourth, the 37th, temporarily.[5]

The combined impact of MacArthur's operational and redeployment directives forced General Krueger to undertake a

[5] As of early February the allocation of regular ground combat units to Luzon had encompassed the equivalent of twelve infantry divisions plus tank strength greater than that of an armored division. The redeployments to the southern Philippines, together with the cancellation of planned movements to Luzon, reduced the total to roughly nine and one-half divisions with an attached tank strength of less than of an armored division. It appears that of all the combat units either on or scheduled to be sent to Luzon, Krueger had expected to lose only the elements of the 19th Infantry, 24th Division, that had operated in southern Luzon with the 11th Airborne Division.

wholesale reshuffling of units already committed on Luzon, to make careful plans for the future employment of forces left on the island, and to make sweeping changes in tentative plans for operations all over Luzon. Krueger's first problem was to find a replacement for the 40th Infantry Division, which was fighting against the *Kembu Group* west of Clark Field.[6] Sixth Army had one easy solution to this problem—to replace the 40th with the 33d Infantry Division, which reached Luzon from New Guinea and Morotai on 10 February.[7] However, Krueger knew that the tired 43d Division and the 158th RCT needed some rest and rehabilitation after their hard fighting in the Damortis-Rosario region. Having learned from GHQ SWPA that the 40th Division would not have to leave Luzon until early March, Krueger decided to use the 33d Division to relieve the 43d Division and the 158th RCT. Then, after two weeks' rest, the 43d would move south to replace the 40th Division in the *Kembu* area. The 158th RCT, after its rest, would be employed in southern Luzon.[8]

Simultaneously, Krueger decided that he would use the 11th Airborne Division —which was still fighting in the area immediately south of Manila in early February—in southern Luzon for operations designed to clear the northern shores of the Visayan Passages and to open Batangas and Balayan Bays. He estimated that the 11th Airborne Division and the 158th RCT would be ready to move against southern Luzon by the first week of March. Together, the two units would not attain the strength of a standard infantry division, but Krueger was unwilling to assign any more forces to the campaign in southern Luzon immediately, since he believed it necessary to initiate at least a limited offensive against the main body of the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east and northeast of Manila before the end of February. Unless he mounted some sort of an attack against the *Shimbu Group,* Krueger felt he would be unable to assure the security of the vital Manila Bay region, because he estimated that the *Shimbu Group* possessed a strong offensive capability that it might exercise at any time.

With all the other operations Sixth Army already had planned or under way, Krueger found it difficult to assemble sufficient strength to launch even a limited offensive against the *Shimbu Group.* By mid-February the only units he had not already committed to specific courses of action that demanded continuous attacks against Japanese defensive positions were the 2d Cavalry Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, just finishing the task of clearing Manila's northeastern suburbs, and the small 112th Cavalry RCT, which was protecting XIV Corps' long line of communications down the eastern side of the Central Plains. These two units were patently of insufficient strength to undertake an attack against the *Shimbu Group,* which Krueger's

[6] See above, ch. XI.

[7] For previous operations of the 33d Division, see: Smith, *Approach to the Philippines,* pp. 276–79; The 33d Division Historical Committee, *The Golden Cross, a History of the 33d Infantry Division in World War II* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), pp. 51–87.

[8] For additional details on the relief of the 43d Division and the 158th RCT, see below, Chapter XXIV. The operations of the 43d Division against the *Kembu Group* are covered in Chapter XI, above, while the activities of the 158th RCT in southern Luzon are treated in Chapter XXIII, below.

G–2 Section, in a gross underestimation, reckoned had nearly 20,000 troops in the hills immediately east and northeast of Manila.[9] Therefore, the Sixth Army commander reluctantly decided to redeploy the 6th Infantry Division (less the 1st RCT, which was already operating on Bataan under XI Corps) south from the I Corps sector to provide XIV Corps with adequate strength to move against the *Shimbu Group*. Thus depriving I Corps of strength required for an early, concerted attack against the *Shobu Group* in northern Luzon, Krueger realized that I Corps would have to strike out against that northern Japanese force with three divisions rather than the minimum of five that he had originally planned the corps would use. The Sixth Army commander knew that he was delaying the ultimate destruction of the *Shobu Group*, but General MacArthur's directives had left Krueger no alternative. He had to carry out MacArthur's orders with the means the theater commander had left him.[10]

At the same time that Krueger started the bulk of the 6th Infantry Division southward from the I Corps area, he directed XI Corps to relieve the division's 1st RCT on Bataan and dispatch it eastward to rejoin the rest of the division for the XIV Corps drive against the *Shimbu Group*. Finally, better to enable XIV Corps to concentrate its efforts against the *Shimbu Group* and Japanese forces in southern Luzon, Krueger eased the corps' administrative and tactical burdens by transferring responsibility for the further conduct of operations against the *Kembu Group* to XI Corps.[11]

Thus, as of late February, when Krueger could foresee the successful completion of operations to secure the Manila–Manila Bay area, XIV Corps could make preparations to send the 6th Infantry Division and the 2d Cavalry Brigade against the *Shimbu Group*'s principal concentrations. XIV Corps was also in a position to direct the 11th Airborne Division and the 158th RCT to move into southern Luzon, but until early March the corps would have to employ the 37th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Brigade to reduce the last Japanese resistance in Manila, while the 112th Cavalry RCT would continue to operate along the corps' line of communications. To begin its attacks against the *Shobu Group* in northern Luzon, I Corps had left the 25th, 32d, and 33d Infantry Divisions. XI Corps had under its control the 38th Infantry Division, the 40th Infantry Division (which it was soon to lose), and the 43d Infantry Division. The 503d Parachute RCT and the 24th Division's 34th RCT would remain under XI Corps command until early March, but would then have to leave for the southern Philippines. General Griswold, commanding XIV Corps, was not, of course, worried about the strength of other corps on Luzon—his worry was to find the strength necessary to execute all the tasks Sixth Army had assigned him.

[9] Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpts 75 and 76, 12 and 21 Feb 45, G–2 DA Files. See below, Chapter XXI, for further discussion of *Shimbu Group* strength and Sixth Army estimates.

[10] For further information on the effect of the redeployment of the 6th and 43d Divisions on Sixth Army plans and I Corps operations, see below, Chapter XXIV.

[11] See also above, ch. XI.

CHAPTER XXI

The Reduction of the *Shimbu Group* Phase I: Turning the *Shimbu* Left

Plans

XIV Corps Plan of Attack

Although XIV Corps launched its attack against the *Shimbu Group* primarily to assure the security of the Manila Bay area, the corps knew that the attainment of its goal was but a means to an end—the rehabilitation and development of the bay region.[1] Of major significance in all plans of development was the fact that the *Shimbu Group* controlled extremely important installations of the metropolitan water supply system. On the Angat River nearly twenty-five miles northeast of Manila, the Japanese held Ipo Dam, which provided the city with a third of its water. (*See Map V.*) They also possessed a good part of an aqueduct through which the waters of the Angat flowed from Ipo Dam to Novaliches Reservoir, ten miles northeast of Manila. Without Ipo Dam's water supply, Novaliches Reservoir was capable of meeting only half the city's water requirements. The headquarters of Sixth Army and XIV Corps also believed that the smaller Wawa Dam, on the Marikina River fifteen miles northeast of Manila, formed an integral part of the metropolitan water system. Actually, Wawa Dam had been abandoned as a source of water for Manila upon the completion of the Ipo and Novaliches installations in 1938, and since then the smaller diversion dam had principally served irrigation projects in the Marikina Valley. However, the old pipeline connection to the city water system still existed and presumably could be used if certain repair materials were available. Even reconnected, the Wawa Dam source could provide only 15 percent of Manila's water requirements.

Basing his plans partially upon the erroneous information concerning the Manila water sources and partially upon equally erroneous information on the strength and deployment of the *Shimbu Group,* Krueger directed XIV Corps to seize first Wawa Dam and its pipeline connections and then secure Ipo Dam and associated installations. General Griswold, commanding the XIV Corps, ordered the 2d Cavalry Brigade and the 6th Infantry Division to launch offensives to these ends by 20 February. He directed the two units to strike eastward from the Marikina River to a 28-mile-

[1] This subsection is based mainly upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 39; Sixth Army FO's 47, 51, and 53, dated 2, 15, and 19 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 149, 152, 155; Rad, Sixth Army to XIV Corps, 5 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 4–6 Feb 45; XIV Corps FO 7, 17 Feb 45; XIV Corps Opns Memo 21, 18 Feb 45.

long objective line. The first north-south part of the line, 10 miles long, connected the two dams; another 10 miles extended the line south from Wawa Dam to Antipolo in the southwestern foothills of the Sierra Madre; the last section of the line bent southwest to Tagig, at the northwestern corner of Laguna de Bay and 7 miles southeast of Manila. The 6th Division was responsible for the seizure of the two dams; the 2d Cavalry Brigade was to secure the Antipolo-Tagig area. The boundary between the two units lay roughly four miles south of Wawa Dam.

In accordance with this concept General Patrick, commanding the 6th Division, directed the 20th Infantry, on his right, to strike directly east toward Wawa Dam. The 112th Cavalry RCT, now attached to the 6th Division, would continue to protect the XIV Corps line of communications south along Route 5 and from its positions on the left of the 6th Division would patrol toward Ipo Dam. The division's 63d Infantry, going into the line between the 112th Cavalry and the 20th Infantry, would patrol toward Ipo Dam with its left, meanwhile mounting an attack toward Wawa Dam with its right in concert with the 20th Infantry.[2] On the Antipolo-Tagig front, the 2d Cavalry Brigade would send its 7th Cavalry against Antipolo while the 8th Cavalry, on the right, would secure the Antipolo-Tagig section of the corps' objective line.[3] Both the 6th Division and the 2d Cavalry Brigade would jump off from a line of departure along the west bank of the Marikina River, flowing generally south through a wide valley from Montalban, three miles west of Wawa Dam, to a junction with the Pasig River near Tagig.

[2] 6th Inf Div FO 19, 18 Feb 45, 6th Div FO File.

[3] 1st Cav Div FO's 26 and 27, 17 and 19 Feb 45, 1st Cav Div FO File; 2d Cav Brig FO 16, 20 Feb 45, 2d Cav Brig Jnl File, 20 Feb 45.

Shimbu Group Plans and Dispositions

The Sixth Army's estimate that the *Shimbu Group* had about 20,000 troops in the high ground east and northeast of Manila was low.[4] With a total of some 50,000 troops, *Shimbu Group* had deployed about 30,000 men in the area of immediate interest to XIV Corps.[5] The 30,000 were firmly entrenched in excellent defensive terrain and well-prepared positions into which General Yokoyama, *Shimbu Group* commander, had directed his men to withdraw after the collapse of the mid-February counterattack toward Manila.[6]

[4] This subsection is based on: Interrog of Col Shujiro Kobayashi (Staff, *Shimbu Gp*), Interrog, I, 420–22, 441–43; Col Kobayashi Narrative, Interrog, and atchd maps, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon; Statement of Maj Gen Susumu Noguchi (CG *81st Inf Brig, 105th Div*, and Comdr *Noguchi Force, Shimbu Gp*), States, II, 709–10; Statement of Col Kazuo Okita (CO *186th Ind Inf Bn, 105th Div*, and Comdr *Okita Detachment, Noguchi Force*), States, III, 148; Kayashima Statement, States, II, 162–63; Statement of Lt Col Nobutaka Kogure (Comdr *1st Surface Raiding Base Force* and Comdr *Kogure Detachment, Shimbu Gp*), States, II, 260; SWPA Hist Series, II, 455, 464–65, and Plate 120; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; Japanese studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 6, 13, 31–33, and Map 1.

[5] The computation of 50,000 total for the *Shimbu Group* concerns only the forces in the mountains north and northeast of Manila. It leaves out of consideration the *Fuji Force* in southern Luzon, the troops still in Manila and on the bay islands as of 20 February, and the units stationed on the Bicol Peninsula of southeastern Luzon. All nominally under the *Shimbu Group*, these other forces were operating quite independently by late February.

[6] See above, ch. XV.

Anchored on high, rugged terrain 2 miles north of Ipo Dam, the northern section of the *Shimbu Group*'s westernmost defenses extended south-southeast some 9 miles to Mt. Oro, 4 miles north of Wawa Dam. The line then turned south (and slightly west) to Mt. Pacawagan, lying on the south bank of the Marikina and dominating an east-west stretch of that river between Wawa Dam and Montalban. The defenses continued south across the steep, grassy, western slopes of the Sierra Madre foothills to a point about a mile and a half west of Antipolo. At Antipolo the line swung southeast over broken, open ground to the valley of the Morong River, flowing into Laguna de Bay seven miles southeast of Antipolo. From Mt. Oro south, the defenses provided the Japanese with perfect observation of the open, heavily cultivated Marikina Valley. The defenses on the Ipo Dam front, also located on rising, broken ground, controlled the approaches to the dam. All defenses were organized in considerable depth, west to east, but lacked good north-south lines of supply and reinforcement.

The forces deployed along the *Shimbu Group*'s defensive line were a heterogeneous mass of recently formed provisional organizations, many of them built around a nucleus of *8th* and *105th Division* units.[7] On the Ipo Dam front was the 9,000-man *Kawashima Force*. The principal combat strength of this force was organized into two provisional infantry regiments, while three provisional infantry battalions and about two battalions of artillery operated directly under force headquarters. The only "regular" infantry unit was the *358th Independent Infantry Battalion* of the *105th Division*, itself formed in 1944 from miscellaneous garrison units.

South of the *Kawashima Force*, the 12,000-man *Kobayashi Force* extended the defenses to a point about midway between Wawa Dam and Antipolo. The *Kobayashi Force* included 3 provisional infantry regiments, 3 provisional infantry battalions under force headquarters control, 1 artillery battalion, 2 heavy (150-mm.) mortar battalions, a rocket battalion, and other miscellaneous combat and service units. The only "regular" organizations were 5 infantry companies assembled from 3 different divisions.

The next unit to the south was the *Noguchi Force*, with some 9,000 men.[8] This force included two provisional infantry regiments, four infantry battalions under force headquarters control, and various artillery and mortar units. The "regulars" were four understrength independent infantry battalions of the *105th Division*. The force's line extended from its boundary with the *Kobayashi Force*, north of Antipolo, southeast to Pililla, on the north-central shore of Laguna de Bay about twelve miles from Antipolo.

At Pililla the *Noguchi Force* maintained contact with the *Kogure Detachment*, a provisional infantry regiment of some 2,250 men built around the suicide boat squadrons and base battalions of the *1st Surface Raiding Base Force*. The detachment's mission was to protect the *Shimbu Group* rear against attack from Laguna de Bay, the Bicol

[7] See app. E, p. 674.

[8] This *Noguchi Force* is not to be confused with the *Noguchi Detachment*, or *Northern Force*, of the *Manila Naval Defense Force*. See above, ch. XII.



NORTHERN SECTION OF MARIKINA VALLEY

Peninsula, or Lamon Bay on Luzon's east coast. The detachment had a few pieces of artillery under its control along the shore of Lamon Bay. Co-operating with the detachment for the defense of Lamon Bay were about 3,000 naval troops, most of whom had escaped from Manila. Some 7,000 other naval personnel, mainly noncombat troops and civilian employees and their families, were holed up along the valley of the Bosoboso River, southeast of Wawa Dam.

Shimbu Group Reserve, numbering 5,000 troops, included the *31st Infantry* of the *8th Division,* less its *3d Battalion* but otherwise reinforced; the reinforced *3d Battalion* of the *17th Infantry, 8th Division*; the *2d Battalion,* reinforced, of the *26th Independent Mixed Regiment*; the *8th Reconnaissance Regiment*

of the *8th Division*; and two provisional infantry battalions—all in all, the cream of General Yokoyama's ground combat strength. Another 2,750 men—three artillery battalions and elements of the various *8th Division* service units—also operated under the direct control of *Shimbu Group* headquarters. Yokoyama concentrated most of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* in the Bosoboso Valley behind the *Kobayashi* and *Noguchi Forces*. All the reserve units could move rapidly to threatened sections of the lines held by these two forces, but would need three or four days to reach the *Kawashima Force* front. From the deployment of his reserve, it appears that Yokoyama correctly guessed that XIV Corps' initial attacks would be directed against his left and center.

Most of the *Shimbu Group* supplies were concentrated in the Ipo and Wawa Dam areas, although some supplies, including those belonging to naval forces, were stored along the Bosoboso Valley. Anticipating that he would soon lose control of the road net west of the Marikina, Yokoyama had directed the construction of a north-south main supply route behind his front. The southern section was a truck road, built over an old horse trail, running generally northeast six miles from Antipolo to barrio New Bosoboso, on the Bosoboso River eight miles southeast of Wawa Dam. Existing trails along the Bosoboso to a point near the dam were also improved for truck traffic, but from this point on a narrow trail, negotiable only by hand-carrying parties, led through the trackless terrain separating Ipo and Wawa Dams. Cutting some trails north and south through the rough country lying between the Bosoboso and Marikina Rivers, the *Shimbu Group* made a minimum provision for front-line supply and reinforcement movements between the *Noguchi* and *Kobayashi Forces*. However, the lack of an adequate north-south line of communication in the region remained a weakness of *Shimbu Group* defenses.

As of late February the *Kawashima* and *Kobayashi Forces* had plenty of supplies, but the *Noguchi Force* supply problem was acute from the first, much of that unit having recently and hurriedly withdrawn from the Bicol Peninsula. The *Shimbu Group* expected to supplement its food supplies from rich agricultural areas along the northern shores of Laguna de Bay, the Lamon Bay region, and the Bosoboso Valley. Yokoyama knew he would have to hold these areas for a protracted period in order to obtain much food from them, for intensive farming in all the localities had ceased early in 1942.

The XIV Corps Offensive

The First Attacks

From Montalban south to the Pasig River, a distance of thirteen miles, a ridge 150 feet high forms the west bank of the Marikina River. *(Map VIII)* The 2d Cavalry Brigade and the 6th Infantry Division could assemble along the western slopes of the ridge and be reasonably well concealed from Japanese eyes across the Marikina Valley in the Sierra Madre. From the crest of the ridge the infantry and cavalry could look across the hot, dry, rice paddies of the Marikina Valley, over four miles wide on the south and two miles wide at Montalban, to the Sierra Madre, rising

steadily eastward in serried tier upon tier. From Montalban south to Laguna de Bay the western slopes of the Sierra Madre are steep, open, and grassy. Further east, the higher mountains appeared forested, but once on these higher slopes the infantry and cavalry would find actual forest rather spotty and interspersed with dense jungle undergrowth. Whatever the state of vegetation, the mountains east of the Marikina looked ominous—you knew the Japanese were in them, but you couldn't see them: you knew on the other hand that they'd be able to see you all too well as you started across the valley. The prospects were thoroughly unpleasant. The first test of how unpleasant things might become was whether the Japanese would knock the hell out of you as you crossed the broad Marikina Valley.

During the afternoon of 20 February the 7th Cavalry, 2d Cavalry Brigade, popped over the crest of the ridge along the western bank of the Marikina, marched rapidly down the eastern slopes, and forded the river near the Marikina-Pasig confluence.[9] There was no opposition. The next day the regiment, still unopposed, followed Route 21 to Taytay, four miles east of the ford. Occupying Taytay against negligible resistance, the 7th Cavalry began probing into the Sierra Madre foothills on 22 February. Meanwhile, the 8th Cavalry crossed the Marikina and, securing Tagig against no opposition, marched east behind the 7th. The Japanese, incredibly, had permitted the entire 2d Cavalry Brigade to move across the open Marikina Valley virtually unmolested. What were they waiting for?

Two roads led from Taytay to Antipolo, the 2d Brigade's objective. Route 60–A, the best, covered four miles of rising, rough ground between the two towns; looping through still rougher ground to the north was a private road of the Luzon Bus Company, twisting six miles on its way to Antipolo. The terrain between Taytay and Antipolo rises to over 600 feet. It provided the cavalry with some cover but little concealment, for cogon grass and patches of bamboo thicket were the main vegetation. The ground was rocky limestone pockmarked by innumerable natural caves of every size. Basing its defenses on the caves, many of which it had improved, the *Noguchi Force* had honeycombed the foothills with subterranean strongholds, one monstrous example of which boasted thirty-two separate entrances. Sandbag or log bunkers protected most cave entrances, natural camouflage covered most installations.[10] Machine guns guarded all avenues of approach to individual positions, many of which were mutually supporting. *Noguchi Force* artillery was also usually cave-emplaced and showed itself only long enough to fire a few rounds before withdrawing into caves for protection. Even with this self-im-

[9] Information on 2d Cavalry Brigade operations in this subsection is from: 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, Narrative, pp. 14–18; *ibid.*, G–2 Summary, pp. 15–18; 1st Cav Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 20 Feb–4 Mar 45; 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, Antipolo Phase, pp. 1–2; 7th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 20 Feb–4 Mar 45; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Taytay-Antipolo Phase, pp. 1–7; 8th Cav Opns Rpts, 20 Feb–4 Mar 45.

[10] Which indicates that many of the defenses had been prepared well before the *Noguchi Force* arrived on the scene. Many units of the *105th Division* had been in the area for some time, and General Noguchi, upon his arrival from the Bicol Peninsula, had taken over command of *105th Division* units already in place near Antipolo.

posed limitation, the *Noguchi Force* could make excellent use of its artillery to harass and delay the 2d Cavalry Brigade, and could supplement its artillery fire with rocket and mortar barrages.

It did not take the 2d Brigade very long to find out what the Japanese were waiting for. On 23 February the 7th Cavalry started toward Antipolo along both the bus road and Route 60–A, while the 8th Cavalry struck eastward through the open, broken ground south of the highway. From then until 4 March, when new attack plans were promulgated, the 2d Brigade measured its daily progress in feet. Supporting aircraft and artillery did their best to knock out Japanese installations, but only direct hits at cave entrances had appreciable effect upon the defenses. Since the percentage of such hits was small, the 2d Brigade had to fall back upon time-consuming, laborious, and costly small unit tactics. Covering each other closely, squads reduced the Japanese positions one by one, employing demolitions and flame throwers at every bunker and cave. All units spent considerable time patrolling to pinpoint Japanese defenses so that air and artillery could provide the most accurate support possible.

The *Noguchi Force* conducted a generally passive defense, but mounted small-scale infiltration attacks nightly. The attacks were not designed to regain lost ground, but to harass the 2d Brigade so as to delay, rather than halt, the cavalry's progress. The Japanese plan attained considerable success, for by evening on 4 March the 2d Brigade was still a mile and a half short of Antipolo. The gains, quite disappointing to XIV Corps, had proved costly. The brigade had lost nearly 60 men killed and 315 wounded and had killed less than 500 Japanese in ground action. Among the Americans wounded was the 1st Cavalry Division's commander, General Mudge, whose place was taken by Brig. Gen. H. T. Hoffman, formerly 2d Brigade commander.[11]

To the north, the 6th Division had started across the Marikina on 22 February.[12] On that day the 20th Infantry forded at Marikina town, eight miles south of Montalban, while the 63d Infantry sent its right across the river at Montalban and San Mateo, three miles to the south. By evening on the 23d troops of the 20th Infantry were a mile into steep, grassy hills northeast of Marikina; the 63d's men were probing into high ground east of San Mateo. As in the 2d Cavalry Brigade's sector, the Japanese had made no significant effort to stop the 6th Division's advance across the open Marikina Valley. The *Shimbu Group* had lost the best opportunity it would ever have to chop an American force to bits.

Facing the 6th Division between Montalban and San Mateo were the grassy, open, and steep slopes of Mt. Pacawagan, around 1,500 feet high, and Mt. Mataba, some 1,300 feet high. The barrier formed by these two heights, split by the deep, steep-sided gorge of the tiny Mango River, was oriented north to south and stretched for a distance of almost seven miles from the northern

[11] Col. William J. Bradley, the 8th Cavalry's commander, replaced Hoffman at brigade, while Col. Charles E. Brady replaced Bradley at regiment.

[12] Information on 6th Division action in this subsection is from: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 40–49; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 38–41; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–35; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–22; S–3 Per Rpts of the 1st, 20th, and 63d Inf Regts, 19 Feb–5 Mar 45.



MTS. PACAWAGAN AND MATABA

slopes of Mt. Pacawagan to a shallow indentation made by the Nanca River. The barrier formed the northwestern and western extensions of a generally open and bare-sloped ridge and hill complex dominated by Mt. Baytangan, rising to a height of over 1,500 feet on the west bank of the Bosoboso River six miles southeast of Montalban. The *Kobayashi Force* had strong defenses on both Mt. Pacawagan and Mt. Mataba, and its positions extended south to an east-west line across Mt. Baytangan. Caves were not as numerous here as in the *Noguchi Force*'s zone, but the *Kobayashi Force* was prepared to employ skillfully the many defensive advantages afforded by the open, rough, and sharply rising terrain it held.

The 6th Division directed its initial attacks against both Mt. Pacawagan and Mt. Mataba, the 20th Infantry making the main effort. On 23 and 24 February the regiment gained little ground, and when the 1st Infantry arrived from Bataan on the 25th General Patrick, the division commander, decided to redeploy his forces. He ordered the new arrivals to clear the northern two-thirds of Mt. Mataba and the southern third of Mt. Pacawagan and then strike toward Wawa Dam in concert with the 63d Infantry, which was to seize the northern two-thirds of Mt. Pacawagan. The 20th Infantry, on the right, would secure the southern third of Mt. Mataba; extend its right to an indentation made by the upper reaches of the little Ampid River, some two miles south of Mt. Mataba's crest; and then strike east toward Mt. Baytangan and the corps objective line. Patrick hoped his three-regiment attack would achieve a decisive penetration of the *Shimbu Group*'s cen-

ter—the *Kobayashi Force*'s zone. If the center collapsed, Patrick reasoned, XIV Corps could probably roll up the flanks —the *Kawashima* and *Noguchi Forces* —rapidly.

Hopes were one thing, realization another. By 4 March right flank elements of the 63d Infantry had gained a precarious foothold on the northern crest of Mt. Pacawagan, but the 1st Infantry, on the right, had not been able to clear its portion of that mountain and had also been unsuccessful in its attacks against Mt. Mataba. Right flank elements of the 20th Infantry made the only significant gains across the 6th Division's front to 4 March. Unable to overrun Japanese defenses on its third of Mt. Mataba, the 20th concentrated its efforts along the Ampid River and broke almost two miles into Japanese positions on the southwestern and southern approaches to the mountain. At dusk on 4 March the regiment was ready to send troops northward along the crest of a 1,000-foot-high ridge leading to Mt. Mataba, or to strike eastward along another bare-crested, 1,000-foot-high ridge rising toward Mt. Baytangan. As in the 2d Cavalry Brigade's sector, the 6th Division's gains had been disappointing. Moreover, since 22 February the division had lost approximately 85 men killed and 255 wounded in the equivalent of the two infantry regiments it had committed.[13] The division and its supporting air and artillery had killed perhaps 1,100 Japanese.[14]

[13] The 6th Division had committed all the 20th Infantry, one battalion of the 1st Infantry, and two battalions of the 63d Infantry.

[14] Patrolling on the 6th Division's left, the attached 112th Cavalry RCT had lost 5 men killed and 5 wounded and had killed about 50 Japanese.

New Plans and Objectives

By 4 March General Griswold had decided that his corps was going to have more trouble cracking the *Shimbu Group* defenses than he had originally anticipated, and he had also determined that the success of his attack demanded concentration of forces across a narrower front.[15] So far, employing two cavalry regiments (each less than two-thirds the strength of an infantry regiment) and the equivalent of two regiments of infantry, XIV Corps had been attacking across a front almost fifteen miles wide, north to south. Lacking the mass to succeed, the attack was doomed from the beginning in the face of the concentrated defenses of the *Noguchi* and *Kobayashi Forces.* Griswold had to commit additional strength on a narrower front, and he had to commit decisive strength in the area that in his opinion would provide the key to a breakthrough.

Griswold decided to concentrate against the *Noguchi Force* and the left of the *Kobayashi Force.* He thought his troops might be able to outflank the *Noguchi Force* on the south, an area now known to be weakly held, and to debouch into the Bosoboso Valley in order to surround and destroy the main body of the *Noguchi Force.* Meanwhile, if the attacks against the *Kobayashi* left succeeded, Griswold could subject the remainder of the *Kobayashi Force* to flanking attack from the south or strike it from the rear — from the Bosoboso Valley.

[15] Planning material in this subsection is from: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 41, 61; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 142–45; XIV Corps FO 8, 4 Mar 55; XIV Corps Opns Memos 32 and 35, 1 and 6 Mar 45; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 49–50.

Griswold selected a limited area as the objective of the new XIV Corps effort, an oval-shaped piece of terrain lying about a mile and a quarter on each side of a line drawn due north for six and a half miles from Antipolo. The objective area had no particular terrain pattern. On the extreme north of the oval was the upper (eastern) end of the shallow Ampid River valley, just to the south of which lay the 1,000-foot-high, mile-wide, ridge leading east to Mt. Baytangan. The southern slopes of this ridge fell steeply off to the Nanca River valley, now to mark the boundary between the 1st Cavalry Division and the 6th Infantry Division. South of the Nanca River the terrain, quite open and extremely broken, was lower than that to the north, at only one or two places reaching a height of 1,000 feet. In general, the objective region contained the *Noguchi Force*'s strongest defenses as well as the positions of the *Left Sector Unit*, one of the *Kobayashi Force*'s three provisional infantry regiments. The *Noguchi–Kobayashi Force* boundary followed the ridge line rising east toward Mt. Baytangan.

In planning his new attack, Griswold entertained two misconceptions about the situation on the *Shimbu Group*'s western front. First, XIV Corps believed that the group's tactical supply trails west of the Bosoboso River constituted the Japanese main north-south supply route. As yet having no information on the Antipolo – New Bosoboso – Wawa Dam road, XIV Corps believed that if it seized the new objective area it would sever the *Shimbu Group*'s main supply route. Second, the XIV Corps G–2 Section erroneously estimated that General Yokoyama had no reserves with which he could either reinforce his western front or stage a counterattack.

With this information at hand, Griswold planned to attack with virtually his entire force, hoping for quick success. He kept out only one battalion as an infantry reserve and directed the rest of his available forces, each component of which was understrength, to strike eastward.[16] The 6th Division, for example, now had 2,630 fewer men than it had brought to Luzon. The entire 1st Cavalry Division was available, but its four regiments totaled only 5,100 effectives as against an authorized strength of over 7,625. The 112th Cavalry RCT, still attached to the 6th Division, had an authorized strength of roughly 2,625, but could muster less than 2,000 effectives as of the first week in March. None of the units had received any replacements, other than returned casualties, since arriving on Luzon.[17] The only reserve for the 6th Division was the infantry battalion that also served as XIV Corps Reserve. Initially, the 1st Cavalry Division had only one cavalry squadron as a reserve, but the 103d Infantry, 43d Division, reached Taytay on 7 March to become 1st Cavalry Division Reserve.

The arrival of the 103d Infantry presaged the imminent relief of the 1st Cavalry Division in preparation for redeployment to southern Luzon, a process that again required considerable reshuffling of Sixth Army units. In deciding

[16] XIV Corps FO 8, 4 Mar 45. Other reserves included a tank battalion less 2 companies; a tank destroyer battalion less a company; an amphibious tractor battalion; and 2 4.2-inch mortar battalions, less 6 of their 8 firing companies.

[17] 6th Div G–1 Per Rpt 26, 8 Mar 45; 6th Div G–1 Rpt Luzon, p. 1; Effective Regtl Strengths, 1st Cav Div, 27 Feb 45, Entry 70, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 2 Mar 45; XIV Corps Strength Rpt, 7 Mar 45, Entry 39, XIV Corps G–3 Jnl File, 8 Mar 45.

to employ the 43d Division to relieve the 1st Cavalry Division, General Krueger selected a unit that, having been in action ten days against the *Kembu Group* after replacing the 40th Division west of Clark Field, would have virtually no rest before moving to the attack against the *Shimbu Group*. Krueger chose to use the 43d Division instead of the relatively fresh 38th Division, which had seen little action since reducing Bataan's ZigZag Pass on 15 February, because he had greater confidence in the 43d, a more experienced division.[18]

The arrival of the 43d Division's 103d Infantry on the *Shimbu* front, together with the fact that the rest of the division was on its way from the *Kembu* area, may well have influenced Griswold to launch his attack with virtually his entire force. Whatever the reasons for the decision, XIV Corps was to undertake a new drive on a bit of a shoestring, even though it had now concentrated its forces on a narrower front. If the *Shimbu Group* proved stronger than anticipated, or if that Japanese force could mount an effective counterattack, XIV Corps might be in for trouble.

Attack and Counterattack, 8–15 March

General Griswold directed the 1st Cavalry Division and the 6th Infantry Division to strike on 8 March. By evening on the 7th the 1st Cavalry Brigade, coming in from Manila, had moved up to a line of departure a mile and a half into the Sierra Madre foothills to the north and west of the 2d Cavalry Brigade.[19] The 2d Brigade attacked from positions astride Route 60–A, its lines extending from the highway a mile and a half west of Antipolo southeast to Benchmark 11 Hill, a mile south of the town. As operations developed, the 1st Cavalry Division found that *Noguchi Force* defenses took the form of an elongated Z. The Japanese lines slanted northwest from Benchmark 11, crossing Route 60–A a mile west of Antipolo; switched back northeast to Benchmark 9 Hill, a mile north of Antipolo; then led northwest again to the Nanca River at Hill 740. The *Noguchi Force* also had a strong outpost on Hill 520, three-quarters of a mile west of Hill 740.

For the 2d Cavalry Brigade, operations after 8 March continued in the same style to which the unit had become all too thoroughly accustomed. By 11 March, when elements of the 43d Division came into the line, the 2d Brigade's left was across Route 60–A a quarter of a mile short of Antipolo; right flank units had overrun cave defenses on Benchmark 11. Patrols had entered Antipolo, finding the town shattered and empty, but still covered by Japanese artillery and mortars emplaced in the hills to the north and northeast. Generally, the 2d Brigade held positions just into the southwestern edge of XIV Corps' oval-shaped objective area.

[18] Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56; XIV Corps FO 8, 4 Mar 45; 1st Cav Div FO 29, 4 Mar 45; 1st Cav Div Opns Memo 4, 7 Mar 45; XIV Corps Opns Memo 35, 6 Mar 45; 6th Div FO 22, 5 Mar 45; Sixth Army FO 56, 6 Mar 45, in Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 157.

[19] Information on 1st Cavalry Division operations in this subsection is from: 1st Cav Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 5–14 Mar 45; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Rpts, 5–13 Mar 45; 2d Cav Brig Opns Rpts, 5–13 Mar 45; 5th Cav S–3 Rpts, 5–13 Mar 45; 12th Cav Unit Rpts, 5–13 Mar 45; 7th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 5–11 Mar 45; 8th Cav Opns Rpts, 5–11 Mar 45; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–36.

The 1st Brigade's attack had been somewhat more successful. By 11 March its right flank, having fought every inch of the way, had cleared the bus road to within a quarter of a mile of Antipolo. The brigade had also secured Benchmark 9 and had pushed a mile northeast of Benchmark 9 and seized an unnamed hill, 800 feet high, lying at the very center of that portion of the XIV Corps' objective area within the 1st Cavalry Division's zone. In addition, the brigade had cleared Hills 520 and 740, but the units on its left had barely reached the line marking the western limits of the corps' objective oval.

Results of the 6th Division's offensive were more promising. Deciding that he needed two regiments on his right to assure success, General Patrick had pulled the 1st Infantry from the approaches to Mt. Mataba and sent it south to the 20th Infantry's right. Directed to drive east across a two-mile-wide front with its right on the Nanca River, the 1st Infantry was to secure almost all of that portion of the XIV Corps' objective area lying within the 6th Division's zone, simultaneously clearing much of the mile-wide ridge rising to Mt. Baytangan. The 20th Infantry, in support, would be ready either to reinforce the 1st Infantry or, assuming the success of the 1st Infantry's attack, drive north toward Wawa Dam along the trails believed to constitute the *Shimbu Group*'s main north-south supply route.

The redeployment of the 1st Infantry left a gap in the 6th Division lines that the 63d Infantry might have filled, but Patrick did not feel that that regiment was strong enough to maintain all the tenuous holds the division had secured on the rising ground east of the Marikina River from San Mateo north to Montalban. He therefore gave up that area, including the toe hold on Mt. Pacawagan, and directed the 63d Infantry to establish a defensive line west of the Marikina from San Mateo north to hills about two miles northwest of Montalban. The 20th Infantry withdrew from some of the ground it had secured further south to concentrate its forces, abandoning positions on the southern and southwestern slopes of Mt. Mataba. Patrick directed the 112th Cavalry RCT to continue to protect the 6th Division's flank north and northwest of the 63d Infantry.[20]

During the first two days of the attack the 1st Infantry, encountering unexpectedly light opposition, secured positions along the western end of the 1,000-foot ridge leading east to Mt. Baytangan. On the 10th the regiment committed more strength to keep pace with the 1st Cavalry Brigade, to the south, and to take Benchmark 8 Hill. Lying two and a half miles north of Benchmark 9 in the 1st Brigade's zone, Benchmark 8 dominated the terrain between Benchmark 9 and the ridge line approach to Mt. Baytangan. The seizure of Benchmark 8 would secure for the 6th Division some of the advantages of observation so far reserved to the Japanese.

The 1st Infantry drove a mile and a half into the northern section of the XIV Corps' objective area by evening on 11 March, penetrating deeply between the *Kobayashi* left and the *Noguchi* right. The regiment seized Benchmark 8 against stubborn resistance and cleared

[20] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 145; 6th Div FO 22, 5 Mar 45; 63d Inf FO 3, 5 Mar 45, and supplement thereto, 6 Mar 45; 63d Inf S–3 Rpts, 5–7 Mar 45; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpt, 7 Mar 45.

a third of the northern half of the corps objective. The 1st Infantry also cut two north-south trails of the presumed *Shimbu* main supply route.[21] Feeling that the 1st Infantry's success demanded exploitation, General Patrick directed the 20th Infantry to institute an immediate drive northward toward Wawa Dam along the trails the 1st Infantry had cut. The latter regiment would continue its attack eastward.[22]

There were additional changes in plans for operations farther south. The 103d Infantry relieved the 2d Cavalry Brigade on 11 March and began preparations to outflank *Noguchi Force* defenses southeast of Antipolo beginning on 12 March. The 172d Infantry of the 43d Division was on its way forward to take over from the 1st Cavalry Brigade, and General Wing, the 43d's commander, had plans to undertake a concerted attack of his own on 14 March, when he was to assume responsibility for the further conduct of operations on the XIV Corps right.[23]

At this juncture General Yokoyama, the *Shimbu Group* commander, decided to take a more decisive hand in the proceedings.[24] Greatly concerned over the 6th Division's penetration along the *Kobayashi-Noguchi* boundary, Yokoyama recognized all the threats contained in or implied by the division's advance. He was also perturbed by the 1st Cavalry Division's progress on the *Noguchi Force* left and about 10 March decided that the *Noguchi Force*'s forward positions were no longer tenable. Accordingly, Yokoyama directed the *Noguchi Force* to pull back to second-line defenses, which had been under construction for over a month. The new line was anchored on the north about a mile and a half west-southwest of Mt. Baytangan on the ridge line along which the 1st Infantry, 6th Division, was advancing. The line then ran south nearly three miles from the ridge to Sugarloaf Hill and swung thence southeast across the Morong River valley for some five miles to Benchmark 23 Hill, which, lying six miles east of Antipolo, controlled the open, rocky, southern approaches to the Bosoboso Valley.

Yokoyama might also have pulled back the *Kobayashi Force*—its left having already been pushed eastward—but for a variety of reasons decided not to do so. For one thing, the *Kobayashi* left was now almost as far east as the right of the new *Noguchi Force* line. Moreover, on the *Kobayashi* center and right there was neither the good defensive terrain nor the necessary maneuver room between the existing front and the Bosoboso Valley requisite to the establishment of a new line. Therefore, any withdrawal of the *Kobayashi* center and right might have to be carried all the way across the Bosoboso River. Such a course of action would mean abandoning the excellent defensive positions on Mts. Pacawagan and Mataba and giving up Wawa Dam without a fight. Yokoyama

[21] 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 50–55; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 43–46; 1st Inf S–3 Jnl, 8–15 Mar 45; S–3 Per Rpts of the 1st, 20th, and 63d Inf Regts, 8–15 Mar 45; 6th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 9–15 Mar 45; 112th Cav RCT S–3 Opns Rpts, 8–15 Mar 45. (This footnote also covers operations of the 6th Division described later in this subsection.)

[22] 6th Div FO 23, 10 Mar 45.

[23] 103d RCT S–3 Rpts, 11–12 Mar 45; 103d RCT Opns Memo 2, 12 Mar 45; 43d Div FO 8, 12 Mar 45.

[24] Japanese material in this subsection is mainly from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 466, and Plate 120; Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 14–15, and Map 3; Interrog of Maj Gen Takashi Kobayashi, Interrogs, I, 455–56; Gen Kobayashi Statement, States, II, 252–53.

was by no means ready to take such steps, and it appeared to him, accordingly, that if the *Kobayashi Force* could not withdraw, and if it could not hold on its left, he would have to counterattack to eliminate the 6th Division's salient.

The *Shimbu Group* commander settled upon a counterattack plan typifying a major weakness of Japanese tactical operations throughout World War II. He scheduled a series of complicated maneuvers that required meticulous coordination in terrain where such coordination was virtually unattainable and that demanded a control of communications that the *Shimbu Group* did not possess. His artillery was neither strong enough nor suitably deployed to provide proper support for the counterattack; he had to employ a large proportion of provisional units and second-class troops who had little or no unit training. Under the circumstances, even the best-trained units would have found execution of Yokoyama's plan a most challenging task.

The *Shimbu Group* counterattack was to begin on 12 March with a three-pronged assault by seven infantry battalions. The main effort would be launched by three battalions of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* — two of the *31st Infantry* and a provisional battalion —plus an independent infantry battalion of the *105th Division* that Yokoyama detached from the *Noguchi Force*. These four, assembling near Wawa Dam, would march west past the dam and then south to a line of departure at Mt. Mataba, whence they would strike south and southeast against the 6th Division salient. Another *Noguchi Force* independent infantry battalion, turned over to *Kobayashi Force* control, was to attack from the east to recapture Benchmark 8 Hill and hit the right flank of the 6th Division salient. Finally, the *Kawashima Force* was to send its lone independent infantry battalion, together with a provisional battalion, south from the Ipo Dam area to attack 6th Division rear installations west of the Marikina River.

Just how Yokoyama expected his counterattack to succeed is not clear. In mid-February he had launched an unsuccessful attack with a stronger force against a much weaker concentration of XIV Corps troops.[25] It might therefore be presumed that Yokoyama now had his tongue in his cheek—that he really did not hope for success and that he was actually staging a delaying action. In any event, he did not know that his counterattack was to start on the very day that the 6th Division was to launch a new offensive. Even if all went well, the four Japanese battalions attacking south from Mt. Mataba would, on 12 March, come face to face with the 20th Infantry instituting its drive north toward Wawa Dam. The Japanese battalion striking toward Benchmark 8 would, by the same token, clash with right flank elements of the 1st Infantry as that regiment renewed its thrust toward Mt. Baytangan.

Operations did not go at all well for the *Shimbu Group*.[26] First, air and

[25] See above, ch. XV.

[26] Additional information on the *Shimbu* counterattack is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 152; 6th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 37–39; 6th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 12–15 Mar 45; 6th Div Arty S–3 Rpts, 10–12 Mar 45; Msgs, 6th Div to XIV Corps, 11 and 12 Mar 45, sub: Air Summary, 6th Div G–3 Jnl File, 11–15 Mar 45.

artillery strikes paving the way for the 6th Division attack of 12 March knocked out or forced into cave hideaways many of the artillery pieces upon which the Japanese had depended for support of their counteroffensive. Then, the American artillery interdicted or rendered temporarily impassable many trails that the five southernmost *Shimbu Group* battalions were to employ as routes of approach, disrupted the group's already inadequate communications, struck and put out of action many command posts, and made untenable the four-battalion assembly area at Mt. Mataba. American air and artillery bombardments also inhibited movement of the *Kawashima Force's* counterattack units. As a result, the *Shimbu Group* counterattack was broken up virtually before it got under way. Demoralized units dispersed all through the hills, commanders lost control of their men, contact between units ceased. What followed bore no resemblance to Yokoyama's plans, and the counterattack turned into an abysmal failure. To illustrate how striking that failure was, it is only necessary to record that the 6th Division had no idea it was being attacked. Instead, the division merely reported particularly persistent but otherwise not unusual night infiltration operations by small groups of Japanese during the period 11 through 15 March.

Disgusted, Yokoyama called off the effort on 15 March. The failure vividly demonstrated to him that the *Shimbu Group* was incapable of effective offensive action, and the counterattack had resulted in losses Yokoyama knew he could ill afford. The *Noguchi Force* had been irretrievably weakened by the near annihilation of the two battalions Yokoyama had taken from it for the counterattack; participating units of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* had also suffered heavily. To Yokoyama, the ultimate fate of the *Shimbu Group* was even more obviously a foregone conclusion than it had been when XIV Corps began its attack on 20 February. All he could do now was to trade lives for terrain and time.

Final XIV Corps Operations, 12–14 March

While the so-called counterattack was under way, the *Noguchi Force* had been executing its withdrawal, hurried along by pressure from elements of the 43d Division.[27] On 12 March the 103d Infantry (under 1st Cavalry Division control) occupied Antipolo and on the next day sent troops cross-country toward Benchmark 7 Hill, two and a half miles to the southeast. Controlling the Morong Valley for two miles north and south of Route 60–A, Benchmark 7, the 103d Infantry believed, was the southern anchor of *Noguchi Force* defenses. The regiment was not surprised, therefore, to find considerable Japanese strength on the hill, but it was astonished when reconnaissance elements found undefended the junction of Routes 60–A and 21, four miles southeast of Benchmark 7. It appeared that except for the isolated groupment at Benchmark 7 the *Noguchi Force* left flank was wide open.

[27] Information on 43d Division operations in this subsection is from: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–32; 43d Div G–3 Rpts, 11–15 Mar 45; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 48–51; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, Phase III, Antipolo, pp. 1–2; S–3 Per Rpts of the 103d RCT and 172d Inf, 11–15 Mar 45; 172d Inf Unit Jnl, 12–14 Mar 45.

The 43d Division planned to exploit this weakness with an attack beginning on 14 March, when it had completed relief of the 1st Cavalry Division. First clearing the remainder of XIV Corps' oval-shaped objective area within its zone, the 43d Division intended to drive on east and northeast to rough, open, high ground along the west side of the Bosoboso Valley. General Wing hoped his troops could gain the top of a bare-crested, north-south ridge line dominated by Mt. Yabang, a mile and a half southeast of Mt. Baytangan in the 6th Division's zone. Steep-sloped Mt. Caymayuman, three-quarters of a mile south of Mt. Yabang and on the same ridge line, was another 43d Division objective. The 172d Infantry, striking north up the Morong Valley, was to seize Mts. Yabang and Caymayuman. The 103d Infantry would first clear Benchmark 7 and secure Route 60–A from Antipolo to the junction with Route 21, and would then strike north along the east side of the Morong Valley to Mt. Tanauan, a bare-sloped, rough height two miles south-southeast of Mt. Caymayuman. Forming part of the ridge complex that included Mts. Yabang and Caymayuman, Mt. Tanauan controlled the northern end of the Morong Valley as well as the extreme southeastern reaches of the Bosoboso Valley. If the 43d Division's attack against Mts. Yabang, Caymayuman, and Tanauan proved successful, the division would have overrun the *Noguchi Force*'s principal second-line defenses, would have turned the *Shimbu Group*'s left, and would have opened a route into the Bosoboso Valley.

On 14 March, against scattered, light resistance, the 172d Infantry cleared the southern third of the XIV Corps' oval objective area, while the 103d Infantry secured most of Route 60–A. *Noguchi Force* units at Benchmark 7 conducted a stubborn defense, but elements of the 103d Infantry probing north along the eastern side of the Morong Valley encountered only a few stragglers. Not knowing that the *Noguchi Force* was withdrawing to new defenses, the 43d Division faced the prospect of continuing the attack on 15 March with considerable enthusiasm. And why not? Having gained up to a mile and a half on its center and left, the division had made as much progress in one day as had the 1st Cavalry Division during the previous ten.

Meanwhile, the attack the 6th Division had launched on 12 March had also gained some measure of success.[28] From 12 through 14 March the 20th Infantry drove over a mile northward on the 1st Infantry's left, cleaned out the extreme northern portion of the XIV Corps' objective area, and secured a foothold on a grassy, open ridge less than a mile southeast of Mt. Mataba's peak, opening a new axis of advance toward the mountain. The 1st Infantry did not begin its part of the attack until the 14th, finding it necessary to spend the 12th and 13th mopping up and waiting for the improvement and extension of regimental supply roads. Once under way, the regiment encountered steadily increasing resistance. About midmorning on the 14th, a burst of Japanese machine gun fire from a hidden position caught a group of officers who

[28] Material on 6th Division operations is from: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–54; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 36–37; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 46–47; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 12–15 Mar 45; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 12–15 Mar 45; 20th Inf Unit Jnl, 12–14 Mar 45.



BENCHMARK 7

were incautiously bunched in the open at the regiment's forward command post. General Patrick was mortally wounded and Col. James E. Rees, the 1st Infantry's commander, was killed outright. Brig. Gen. Charles E. Hurdis, division artillery commander, replaced General Patrick; Lt. Col. Francis J. Corbin, previously commander of the 1st Battalion, 1st Infantry, took over the regimental reins.

By midafternoon on the 14th strong Japanese opposition had brought the 1st Infantry to a halt, yet the regiment's left had driven all the way across XIV Corps' oval objective area and was on a bare peak some 1,250 feet high only a mile and a quarter southwest of Mt. Baytangan. The right flank had pushed about halfway across the corps' objective oval and had kept pace with the 43d Division's left along the Nanca River.

By evening on 14 March XIV Corps had made substantial contributions toward the destruction of *Shimbu Group*. Progress had often been painfully slow and costly, but it had been steady. The corps had driven a wedge deep between the *Noguchi* and *Kobayashi Forces*, it had compelled General Yokoyama to pull the *Noguchi Force* back to second-line defenses, it had prompted Yokoyama to launch a costly and unsuccessful counterattack, and it had gone far toward

turning the *Shimbu Group* left. These achievements XIV Corps had made against a well-armed Japanese force that had held strong positions in excellent defensive terrain and that had—for the Japanese Army — made uncommonly fine use of its artillery. Finally, XIV Corps estimated (conservatively) that it had killed some 3,350 troops of the *Shimbu Group* from 20 February through 14 March.

On the debit side of the ledger were XIV Corps' own battle casualties: [29]

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
1st Cavalry Division	130	585	715
6th Infantry Division	150	420	570
43d Infantry Division	10	25	35
112th Cavalry RCT	5	10	15
Total	295	1,040	1,335

Nonbattle casualties also took a heavy toll of effective front-line strength. For example, over 1,600 troops of the 6th Division had to leave the front because of sickness or combat fatigue.[30]

The second debit factor was that XIV Corps had launched no offensive toward Ipo Dam. On the other hand, the 6th Division was farther from Wawa Dam than it had been ten days earlier, when the 63d Infantry had given up its hold on Mt. Pacawagan. Moreover, XIV Corps had launched no offensive toward Ipo Dam. On the other hand, the 6th and 43d Divisions had an uncontestable hold on the ground gained through 14 March, and they had secured good positions from which to continue their drives east and north.

[29] The figures are based upon division, brigade, and regimental sources cited previously, and are irreconcilable with those of XIV Corps records.

[30] No usable nonbattle casualty figures can be found for the other units committed during the period 20 February–14 March.

The Collapse of the Shimbu Left

Late on 14 March General Hall, commanding XI Corps, took over responsibility for the conduct of operations against the *Shimbu Group*. It was up to him to determine how best to employ the 6th and 43d Divisions so as to exploit the gains made by XIV Corps and to speed the capture of Wawa and Ipo Dams.

XI Corps and Shimbu Group Plans

General Hall decided to continue the drive against the *Shimbu Group*'s left, the only real difference between his plan and that followed by General Griswold being that Hall intended to concentrate initially against the *Noguchi Force* instead of operating against both that unit and the left of the *Kobayashi Force* as had XIV Corps.[31] XI Corps based its plan on an overoptimistic intelligence estimate that the *Kobayashi* and *Noguchi Forces* were no longer in contact and that the *Kobayashi Force* had few if any troops south of the Mango River, which separates Mts. Pacawagan and Mataba. Once the *Noguchi Force* was destroyed, Hall reasoned, he would swing XI Corps north against the *Kobayashi Force* and, finally, concentrate all his units to destroy the *Kawashima Force*.

Whatever Hall's intentions, he actually continued the attack against the *Kobayashi Force* left, for he ordered the 6th Division to resume the drive eastward it had initiated under XIV Corps control. Hall left unchanged the exist-

[31] Information on XI Corps plans in this subsection is mainly from: XI Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 21; XI Corps FO 9, 14 Mar 45; XI Corps G–2 Wkly Rpt 2, 12 Mar 45; 6th Div FO 24, 15 Mar 45; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 55; 43d Div FO 8, 12 Mar 45.

ing boundary between the 6th and 43d Divisions; at first set up no specific objectives for either unit; drew no definite objective lines. For the 43d Division, the XI Corps orders required no change in plans. The 6th Division, on the other hand, had to forego its plan to swing the 20th Infantry northward, and had to concentrate for a drive eastward abreast of the 43d Division. Directed to secure the ridge line overlooking the Bosoboso Valley from the northern slopes of Mt. Yabang north as far as Mt. Baytangan, the 6th Division instructed the 20th Infantry to strike eastward in concert with the 1st Infantry. The new boundary between the two regiments, drawn along the 1,000-foot-high ridge line rising eastward to Mt. Baytangan, coincided closely to that between the *Noguchi* and *Kobayashi Forces.*

The *Noguchi Force* had completed its withdrawal on 15 March, as scheduled, but had not taken up the exact lines General Yokoyama had expected.[32] The force's center and right had occupied good defenses extending from Sugarloaf Hill north almost two miles across the Nanca River, holding Sugarloaf Hill with about a battalion of infantry and the area to the north with another infantry battalion. But the *Noguchi Force* had been unable to assemble sufficient strength to hold the Sugarloaf–Benchmark 23 section of its intended second defensive line and had therefore concentrated its left flank strength, a reinforced independent infantry battalion of the *105th Division*, at Mt. Tanauan in partially completed defenses originally intended as part of a third defensive line. A provisional infantry battalion held Mts. Yabang and Caymayuman to back up the Sugarloaf–Mt. Tanauan line. Elements of the *Kogure Detachment*, which had just sent about half its effectives north to reinforce the *Noguchi Force*, were also in the Mts. Yabang–Caymayuman–Tanauan area.

As of 15 March the *Kobayashi Force*'s *Left Sector Unit* was desperately trying to stabilize its lines. On or about the same day at least one battalion of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* moved up to reinforce the *Left Sector Unit*, which also absorbed remnants of some organizations chopped up during the *Shimbu Group* counterattack. The unit's front lay a mile to a mile and a half west of Mt. Baytangan and extended north to south from some two and a half miles across the ridge leading to the mountain.

General Yokoyama still viewed the *Kobayashi Force* left as the critical area along the *Shimbu* front, for he knew that his entire left flank would collapse if the 6th Division penetrated any further toward Mt. Baytangan. Having failed to eliminate the 6th Division's salient, he now intended to contain it, and he accordingly directed the *Kobayashi Force* to maintain its left at all costs.

XI Corps' First Week

On the morning of 15 March the 103d Infantry, 43d Division, set grimly about the task of reducing the Japanese defenses on Benchmark 7 Hill and clearing a two-mile stretch of Route 60–A

[32] *Shimbu Group* information in this subsection is from: Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, p. 15, and Maps 1 and 3; Gen Kobayshi Interrog, Interrogs, I, 445–46; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, pp. 6–10; XI Corps G–2 Wkly Rpts 3 and 4, 19 and 26 Mar 45; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 53, 55–58; 6th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 15–26 Mar 45; SWPA Hist Series, II, 465–68.

that the Japanese still controlled.[33] Both tasks had to be completed in order to secure Route 60–A as a line of communication for the support of the planned regimental attack north up the Morong Valley. The 103d Infantry finally overran the defenses on Benchmark 7 on 18 March, killing about 250 Japanese in the process.[34] The Japanese battalion there had delayed the 103d's attack toward Mt. Tanauan until the morning of 18 March, but by evening of that day the regiment's troops had begun swarming up the bare, rocky, southern and southwestern slopes of the mountain. For the next three days the 103d Infantry literally inched its way upward through a maze of cave and bunker defenses, spending much of its time pinned down by Japanese machine gun and artillery fire. Fighting on behind the close support of air, artillery, and mortar fire, the 103d reached the crest of Mt. Tanauan late on 21 March as the remnants of the *Noguchi Force*'s defending battalion, leaving some 300 dead behind, fled northeast across the Bosoboso River.

Meanwhile, other troops of the 103d Infantry had taken Benchmark 23 Hill, three miles southeast of Mt. Tanauan, and had patrolled northward into the southeastern reaches of the Bosoboso Valley. On 22 March a combat patrol reached Mt. Balidbiran, on the east bank of the Bosoboso a mile and a half east of Mt. Tanauan. The 103d Infantry had outflanked the *Noguchi Force* left and had driven that unit's leftmost elements across the Bosoboso.

To the north, the 172d Infantry had at first struck to seize grassy-sloped Sugarloaf Hill, two and a quarter miles west of Mt. Tanauan. The Japanese fanatically defended all the rough approaches to the hill and by evening on the 19th had stopped the 172d Infantry in its tracks. Accordingly, the regiment contained Sugarloaf on the west and, bypassing it to the north and east, began new attacks toward Mts. Yabang and Caymayuman. The 1st Battalion, moving across the northern end of the Morong Valley along the *Shimbu Group*'s real main north-south supply route, encountered only a few delaying positions and by evening on 22 March had reached a point about three-quarters of a mile southeast of Mt. Caymayuman's crest. The 2d Battalion, bypassing Sugarloaf Hill on the north, had not done as well, and at the end of XI Corps' first week of attack was still a mile and a half west of Mt. Yabang.

The 6th Division's initial attack under XI Corps control did not begin until 17 March.[35] That day the 1st Infantry jumped off with its 1st Battalion along the ridge rising toward Mt. Baytangan

[33] 43d Division operations in this subsection are reconstructed from: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 32–34; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 15–23 Mar 45; XI Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–23; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 51–56; 103d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 15–23 Mar 45; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, Phase III, Antipolo, pp. 2–4; 172d Inf S–3 Rpts, 15–22 Mar 45.

[34] During the night of 16–17 March about 300 Japanese escaped from the hill and holed up on Benchmark 27 Hill, two miles to the south. These Japanese were unmolested until the first week of April when, having become bothersome, they were wiped out by elements of the 172d Infantry.

[35] Information on 6th Division operations is from: 6th Div Opns Rpt Luzon, pp. 55–59; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 47–49; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 15–23 Mar 45; 1st Inf S–3 Jnl, 15–22 Mar 45; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 37–39; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 15–23 Mar 45.

and the 3d Battalion striking east from the vicinity of Benchmark 8 Hill. Until late afternoon the attack went well, and at 1700 the 1st Battalion began digging in along the ridge a little over a mile west-southwest of Baytangan's crest while the 3d Battalion dug in about three-quarters of a mile southwest of the 1st.

An hour later the roof fell in on the 1st Battalion. First, at least sixty rounds of 150-mm. mortar fire struck the two forward companies. Then, lighter mortars began bombarding the battalion's lines as Japanese infantry started maneuvering against the unit's exposed northern and southern flanks. Its positions rapidly becoming untenable, the battalion withdrew over a mile westward, back beyond its morning line of departure, with losses numbering 12 men killed and 35 wounded. The unit left behind an artillery liaison radio, a jeep, two 37-mm. antitank guns, two 60-mm. mortars with ammunition, and some .30-caliber rifle ammunition.

After this reverse, the 1st Infantry adopted new tactics. Spending one day advancing generally eastward, mainly in a series of patrol actions, the regiment would spend the next day consolidating its gains and mopping up. The Japanese continued to put up determined but somewhat disorganized resistance and nightly launched infiltration attacks all across the 1st Infantry's front. Japanese artillery and mortar fire also harassed the regiment continuously and delayed the construction of supply roads, already a difficult enough task in the very rough and broken ground through which the 1st Infantry was fighting. By dusk on 22 March the regiment was little closer to Mt. Baytangan's crest than it had been on the 17th.

The 20th Infantry had also met stubborn resistance in its sector on the 1st Infantry's left. Although the opposition to the 20th Infantry was not well organized, it was so widespread that the regiment found it difficult to concentrate forces at any one point to achieve decisive penetrations and, like the 1st Infantry, had to advance in a series of patrol actions. By evening on 22 March the 20th was generally a mile and a half west of Mt. Baytangan, but one company, working around to the north, had gained a foothold on a wooded ridge overlooking the Bosoboso Valley less than a mile west-northwest of Baytangan's crest.

By this time General Hall, the XI Corps commander, had begun to feel that the 6th Division was bogged down in interminable small unit actions. In the 43d Division's area the 172d Infantry's gains were scarcely more satisfying. Only in the 103d Infantry's sector had progress been such that Hall could still feel that his plans were basically sound. Meanwhile, steady attrition from both battle and nonbattle casualties had reduced the effective strength of the four regiments committed. Together, they had lost approximately 120 men killed and 325 wounded during the period from 15 through 22 March. The rifle companies of the 172d Infantry had few more than 50 effectives apiece; the 1st and 20th Infantry Regiments were 900 and 850 effectives, respectively, under authorized strength. Each of the four regiments in the line was losing 55–60 men a day killed, wounded, injured, or evacuated for sickness or combat fatigue. Such attrition would soon destroy the regiments as effective combat units, and it began to appear that XI Corps would

have to halt until the regiments could either be replaced or brought back up to strength. Certainly, a stalemate, jeopardizing the success of the corps' plans, threatened.

The Shimbu Group Withdraws Its Left

Shimbu Group solved XI Corps' immediate problems in a most unexpected fashion. By 20 March, since the *Kobayashi Force* had slowed but not halted the 6th Division, General Yokoyama had decided that the situation of his left was hopeless. Accordingly, he directed the *Kobayashi Force Left Sector Unit* and the entire *Noguchi Force* to fall back to new positions east of the Bosoboso River. He issued these orders on 20 March, but such was the state of the *Shimbu Group*'s communications that most of the forward units did not get the word until late on the 22d. The Japanese units concerned began retreating eastward during the night of 22–23 March, and when the 6th and 43d Divisions resumed their attacks on the morning of the 23d the withdrawal was in full swing.[36]

The 6th and 43d Divisions encountered only scattered, disorganized opposition from 23 through 26 March.[37] On the far left, or north, the 20th Infantry met little resistance as it cleared more ground along the western and northern slopes of Mt. Baytangan and sent patrols across the mountain's northern shoulder as far as the Bosoboso River. By evening on the 26th that regiment and the 1st Infantry had secured positions for over a mile north and south of Mt. Baytangan along the ridge line overlooking the Bosoboso Valley; the 1st Infantry took the crest of the mountain the next day against no opposition. On 26 March the 1st Infantry made contact with the 172d Infantry, 43d Division, at a point about a mile northwest of Mt. Yabang.

The 172d had seized Mt. Yabang against scattered resistance on the morning of 24 March and had also cleared most of Mt. Caymayuman the same day. The regiment overran the last organized opposition in its sector, that at Sugarloaf Hill, on the morning of the 27th.

In the meantime, the 103d Infantry had been making easy gains along both sides of the Bosoboso River. The regiment occupied barrio New Bosoboso on the 24th, capturing great quantities of supplies of all types in the area. Mt. Balidbiran, on the east bank, fell the same day, as did Benchmark 21 Hill, a mile and a half further east. Signs of recent and hurried Japanese withdrawal abounded throughout the regiment's sector, and the only indications of organized Japanese activity were foot and motor movements along a rough road leading northeast from New Bosoboso into the fastnesses of the Sierra Madre. The *Shimbu Group*'s left had disappeared.

Conclusions

With the collapse of the *Shimbu Group* left, XI Corps could turn its at-

[36] Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, p. 15; SWPA Hist Series, II, 468; Gen Kobayashi Interrog, Interrogs, I, 446–47.

[37] The remainder of this subsection is based mainly on: 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 39; 20th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 23–26 Mar 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 49–51; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 23–27 Mar 45; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 34–35; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, Phase III, Antipolo, p. 3; 172d Inf S–3 Rpts, 23–27 Mar 45; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 56–59; 103d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 23–27 Mar 45.

tention to the capture of Wawa Dam and the destruction of the *Kobayashi Force* elements remaining west of the Bosoboso River. The gains of 15 through 26 March that put XI Corps in position to make plans for an attack toward Wawa Dam had been achieved at some cost:[38]

	U.S. Casualties			*Japanese*
Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*	*Killed*
1st Infantry	35	105	140	635
20th Infantry	35	90	125	1,515
103d Infantry	40	90	130	625
172d Infantry	30	110	140	450
Total	140	395	535	3,225

The total cost of XI and XIV Corps operations against the *Shimbu Group* from 20 February through 26 March was approximately 435 men killed and 1,425 wounded; the Japanese had lost nearly 7,000 killed during the same period.[39]

As far as General Yokoyama was concerned, the decisive operation since the beginning of XIV Corps' attack on 20 February had been the 6th Division's penetration between the *Kobayashi* and *Noguchi Forces.* This penetration had rendered the *Shimbu Group*'s left flank defenses untenable and, threatening encirclement of the *Noguchi Force,* had prompted Yokoyama to withdraw his left well before he had anticipated doing so. Of only slightly lesser importance had been the 43d Division's penetration into the Bosoboso River valley from the south, a penetration that would ultimately have forced Yokoyama to withdraw his left even if the 6th Division had not driven its wedge deep between the *Kobayashi* and *Noguchi Forces.* From the XI and XIV Corps points of view, the two American drives—the one conducted by the 6th Division and the other executed first by the 1st Cavalry Division and then taken up by the 43d Division—must be considered as complementary. Manifestly, the simultaneous drives had hastened the collapse of the *Shimbu* left.

Had the two corps had more strength, they could have achieved the same results more quickly. The 6th Division had been able to commit only two regiments to the attack, finding it necessary to hold the 63d Infantry out to safeguard its left rear. Only two regiments of the 43d Infantry had been available, and neither brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division had been much stronger than an infantry regiment. Throughout the attack XIV and XI Corps had been operating on shoestrings holding out scant reserves and expecting normal results from generally understrength units.

The *Shimbu Group*'s operations to 26 March reflected many of the group's weaknesses, such as the heterogeneous nature of its forces, the preponderance of second-class, ill-trained troops, the inadequate strength of the *Noguchi Force* for the mission assigned it, poor communications, and the gradual deterioration of control all across the group's southern front. On the other hand, that the *Shimbu Group* was able to maintain its left for over a month indicates that Yokoyama's defenses were generally well conceived and long in preparation.

[38] The figures are based upon divisional and regimental sources cited previously.

[39] The Japanese losses are those the American regiments engaged reported to have killed in ground action. Many other Japanese were found dead in the area—for example, the 172d Infantry discovered at least 200 unburied dead Japanese who had been killed by American artillery or air bombardment in the Mts. Yabang–Caymayuman sector.

Throughout the period, moreover, the Japanese had all the advantages of terrain and observation. General Yokoyama had another important, if unmeasurable, factor working for him—the willingness of the Japanese soldier to fight and die in place no matter how hopeless his situation.

CHAPTER XXII

The Reduction of the *Shimbu Group* Phase II: The Seizure of Wawa and Ipo Dams

Having turned the *Shimbu Group*'s left and having virtually destroyed the *Noguchi Force,* XI Corps reoriented its attack. General Hall now planned to strike generally north toward Wawa Dam, destroying the *Kobayashi Force* on the way and simultaneously clearing sufficient terrain to assure the security of the area west of the Bosoboso River. Hall designated an objective line stretching from Mt. Oro, three and a half miles north of Wawa Dam, south-southeast for fifteen miles along the first dominating high ground east of the Bosoboso. About 90 percent of the terrain to this new line lay within the 6th Division's zone. That division would have to drive north from Mt. Baytangan to Mt. Oro; advance across the Bosoboso River to clear Mt. Purro, lying just southeast of and controlling the confluence of the Bosoboso, Marikina, and Montalban Rivers; reduce known *Kobayashi Force* strongpoints at Mts. Mataba and Pacawagan; and, last but not least, seize Wawa Dam. The 43d Division, for the time being, would do little more than mop up on the *Shimbu Group*'s left in order to protect the 6th Division's right rear.[1]

Protecting the Right Rear

During the period from 24 through 31 March the 103d Infantry, 43d Division, provided considerable protection to the 6th Division's right rear with the seizure of Hill 1200, on the east bank of the Bosoboso River a little over a mile east of barrio New Bosoboso.[2] The regiment set up a combined roadblock and patrol base just north of Hill 1200 on a road that *Shimbu Group* forces employed as their main route of withdrawal into the Sierra Madre. An improved horse trail, this road ended at

[1] XI Corps FO 11, 26 Mar 45; 43d Div Opns Memo 7, 28 Mar 45; 6th Div FO 26, 25 Mar 45; XI Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 24, 26.

[2] This section is based on: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 36–37, 40–43; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 27 Mar–3 May 45; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 59–60, 73–74; 103d RCT S–3 Per Rpts, 27 Mar–1 Apr and 21 Apr–2 May 45; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, Phase III, Antipolo, pp. 4–6; 172d Inf S–3 Rpts, 27 Mar–1 May 45; 112th Cav RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–32; 112th Cav RCT S–3 Opns Rpts, 2–31 May 45.

Santa Iñez, on the Lenatin River eight rough, mountainous miles northeast of New Bosoboso. The road marked the boundary between the 6th and 43d Divisions in the region east of the Bosoboso River. Elements of the 43d Division continued patrolling in the area south of the Santa Iñez road until 2 May, when the entire division redeployed to the Ipo Dam front. Its operations from 27 March through 2 May cost the 43d Division about 30 men killed and 120 wounded; the division killed approximately 830 Japanese during the same period.

Ultimately, the 112th Cavalry RCT took over in the region south of Hill 1200, while elements of the 38th Infantry Division moved into the area between Hill 1200 and the Santa Iñez road. Continuing to patrol eastward, the 112th Cavalry found no traces of organized Japanese resistance. By the end of May the regiment had killed about 170 Japanese stragglers in the area it covered, itself losing 2 men killed and 12 wounded.

The operations in the region south of the Santa Iñez road were not spectacular, but they served the purpose for which they were designed. Without the security the patrolling actions on the right rear provided, the 6th Division and other XI Corps units would have been unable to bring to bear their full strength against the *Kobayashi Force* and the Wawa Dam defenses.

Breakthrough in the Center

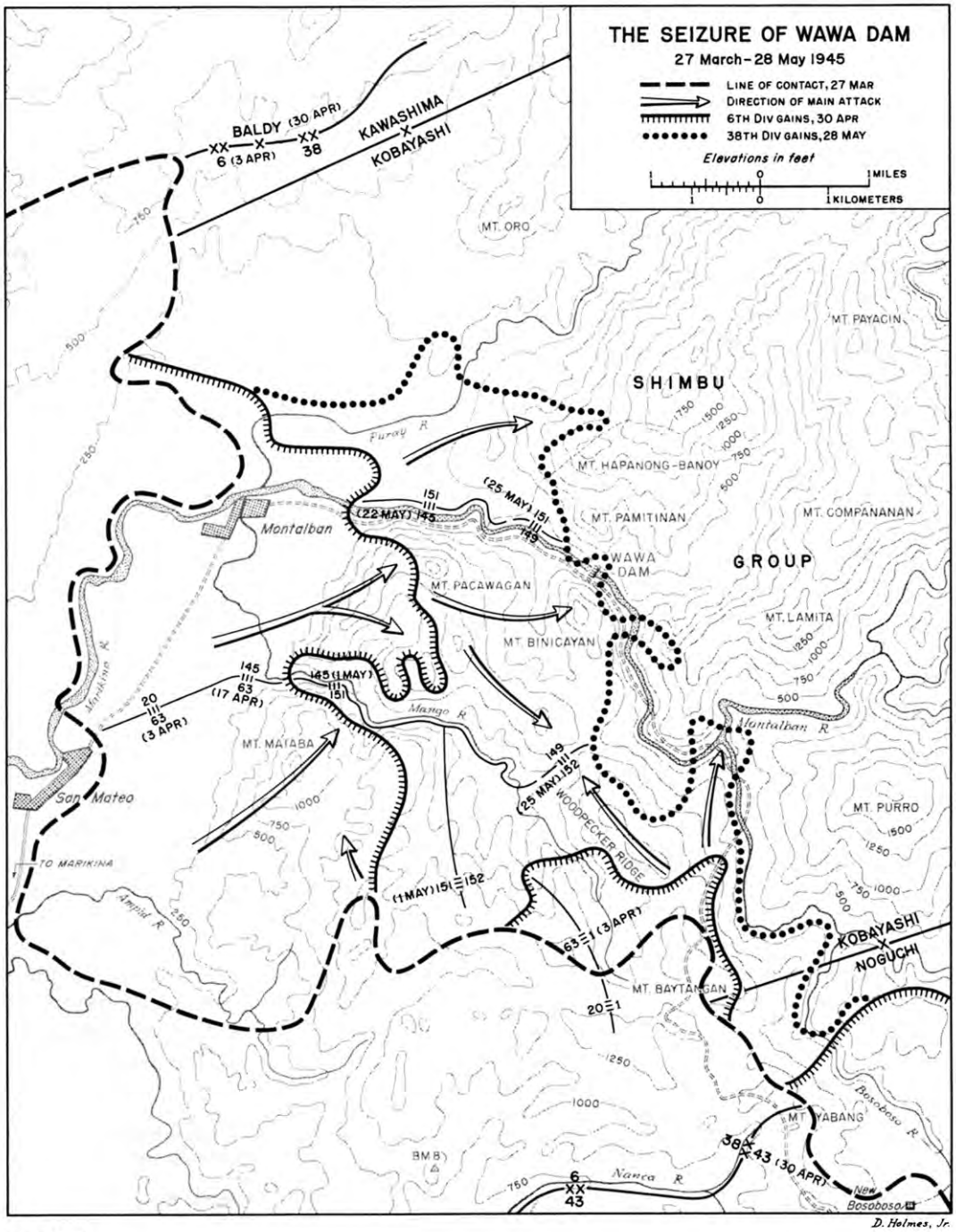
The 6th Division Strikes North

The 6th Division's first plans for the capture of Wawa Dam called for the 1st and 20th Infantry Regiments to drive northward abreast, the 1st Infantry on the east.[3] With its right on the Bosoboso River, the 1st Infantry was to strike north across a front a mile and a half wide. (*Map 16*) The terrain in the regiment's zone was dominated by a partially wooded, steep-sided ridge line running north-northwest from Mt. Baytangan, the regiment's line of departure. The first section of the ridge north of Mt. Baytangan the 1st Infantry soon dubbed Woodpecker Ridge after the large number and constant chatter of Japanese machine guns that characterized the defenses. The regiment hoped it could quickly clear Woodpecker Ridge as far as dominating ground just southwest of the Bosoboso-Marikina confluence, ground that also controlled the upper reaches of the Mango River in the 20th Infantry's zone.

The 20th Infantry's first major objective was Mt. Mataba. Part of the regiment was to strike toward this objective along a 1,000-foot-high bare ridge leading west-northwest from Mt. Baytangan. The ridge gave way to an open-sloped north-south ridge line, the northern end of which lay a mile east of Mt. Mataba's crest and joined that crest across a saddle over 750 feet high. As of 28 March, when the 6th Division's new attack was to start, the 20th Infantry already had one infantry company on the north-south ridge at a knob a mile and a half southeast of Mataba's peak.

The 63d Infantry would support the 20th Infantry by executing diversionary attacks along the western slopes of Mt. Mataba. General Hurdis, the 6th Divi-

[3] Planning information here is from: 6th Div FO 26, 25 Mar 45; XI Corps FO 11, 26 Mar 45.



D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP 16

sion commander, hoped that the attacks would force the *Kobayashi Force* to disclose the location of machine gun, mortar, and artillery emplacements, thereby permitting the division's supporting aircraft and artillery to deliver timely and accurate fire for the 20th Infantry. The 6th Reconnaissance Troop, for similar purposes, would probe east across the Bosoboso River toward Mt. Purro, which overlooked all the 1st Infantry's zone.

Intense small arms, machine gun, and mortar fire, occasionally augmented by accurate harassing artillery bombardments, characterized the resistance the 1st and 20th Infantry Regiments encountered during the week beginning 28 March.[4] Operations seesawed back and forth as the American units gave ground that proved untenable, but then attacked to regain the same ground. At the end of the week Japanese resistance seemed stronger than when the attack began. The 20th Infantry had moved less than half a mile toward Mt. Mataba, and the 1st Infantry had secured hardly 250 yards of ground in a northerly direction. Both regiments were becoming bogged down.

General Hurdis had hoped his attack, directed against the *Kobayashi Force* southern flank, would be far more successful, but the *Kobayashi Force*, rapidly and efficiently, had reoriented its defenses, which it had laid out primarily to face an attack from the west.[5] The force's two remaining provisional infantry regiments, the *Central* and *Right Sector Units*, were still relatively intact, and the *Central Sector Unit*, bearing the brunt of the 6th Division's offensive, had recently been reinforced by remnants of the *Left Sector Unit* and elements of the *Shimbu Group Reserve*.

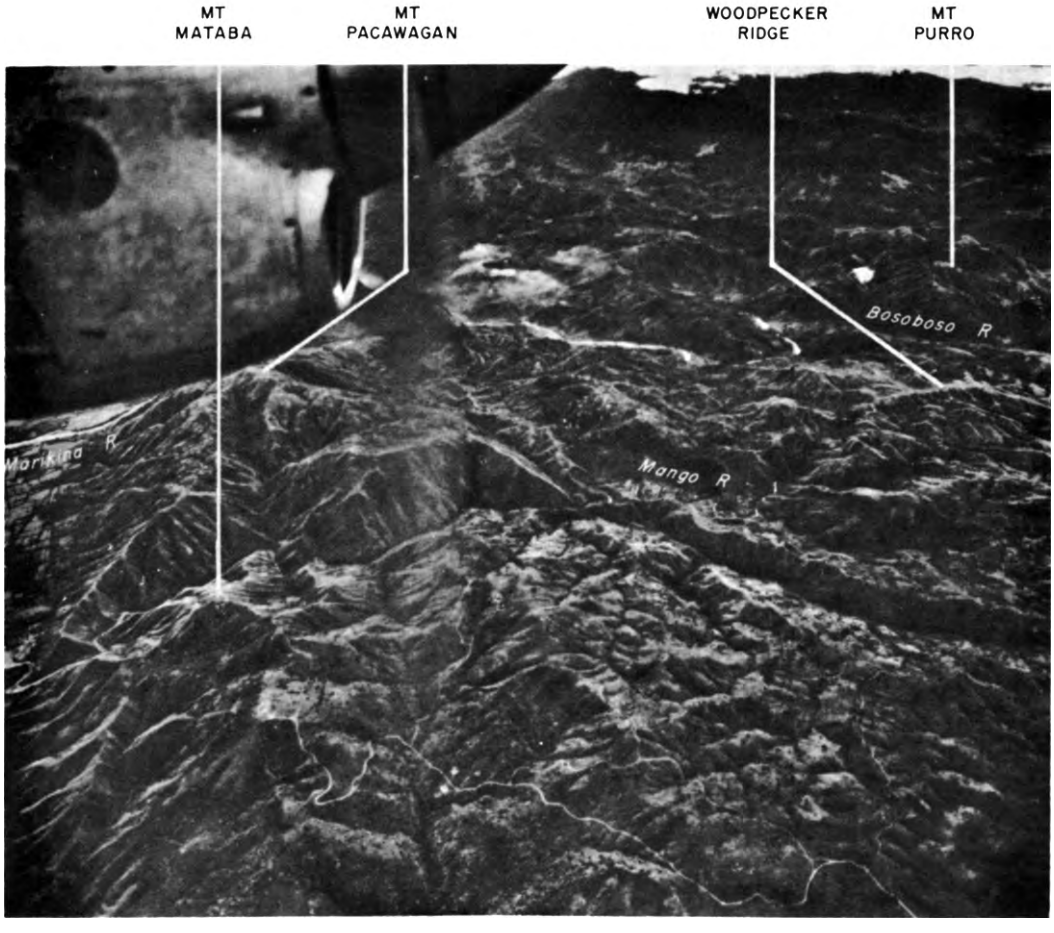
Other factors bearing on the 6th Division's slow progress were the declining strength and deteriorating combat efficiency of its infantry regiments. The 20th Infantry could muster only 2,085 effectives on 3 April; some of its rifle companies were reduced to the combat strength of platoons. The situation within the 1st Infantry, with an effective strength of 2,150, was little better. As of 3 April the commanders of both regiments rated their units' combat efficiency only as "fair," the lowest ranking of three terms each had employed since the Lingayen Gulf assault.[6]

The XI Corps and the 6th Division would have to make some changes if the division were to continue the offensive, and during the period 3–5 April, Generals Hall and Hurdis effected some of the most necessary ones. First, General Hall reduced the 6th Division's front, organizing a provisional brigade composed of the 112th Cavalry RCT and the 169th RCT, 43d Division, to take over the area north of an east-west line across Mt. Oro, a line that corresponded closely to the boundary between the

[4] The principal sources for U.S. operations described in this subsection are: 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 64–75; 6th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, pp. 43–54; 6th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 27 Mar–30 Apr 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 50–55; 1st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 27 Mar–24 Apr 45; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 40–44; 20th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 27 Mar–18 Apr 45; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–30; 63d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 27 Mar–29 Apr 45.

[5] Japanese information in this subsection is from: 6th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 27 Mar–30 Apr 45; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 62, 67, 71.

[6] 6th Div G–1 Daily Strength Rpt, 4 Apr 45, 6th Div G–3 Jnl File, 1–15 Apr 45; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 42; 20th Inf S–3 Opns Rpt 85, 3 Apr 45; 1st Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 53; 1st Inf S–3 Rpt 85, 3 Apr 45.



TERRAIN DEFENDED BY KOBAYASHI FORCE

Kobayashi and *Kawashima Forces.* Hall placed the brigade under the command of Brig. Gen. Julian W. Cunningham and designated the provisional unit Baldy Force.[7] Cunningham's commands were almost always "cursed" with this name, for the general, like Friar Tuck, had just a fringe of hair around his pate.

The change of boundaries on the north released the bulk of the 63d Infantry for General Hurdis' use in a new attack against the *Kobayashi Force.* The 63d Infantry had about 2,425 relatively fresh combat effectives as of 3 April and was ready for a good scrap. Hurdis directed the unit to relieve the 20th Infantry and continue the attack north toward Mt. Mataba. For the time being the 1st Infantry would hold the little ground it had gained along Woodpecker Ridge and confine its activities to patrolling.[8]

From 6 through 9 April the 63d Infantry made only limited advances and on the 10th switched the emphasis of its attack to a drive up the western slopes of Mt. Mataba. Over a month earlier the 1st Infantry had failed in an attempt to take Mt. Mataba from the west, but now the 63d Infantry, moving forward behind a heavy artillery preparation, found the mountain's bare western slopes weakly defended. On 10 April the regiment secured the southwestern quarter of the mountain, but then discovered that the *Kobayashi Force* still retained a remarkable degree of maneuverability. Having pulled many troops out of its western defenses to meet the attack from the south, the *Kobayashi Force* quickly transferred strength back to Mt. Mataba from the north-south ridge. The Japanese did not have sufficient strength to hold both terrain features for long, but they were able to keep the 63d Infantry off Mt. Mataba's crest until 17 April.

The 63d Infantry's success at Mt. Mataba on the 17th was accompanied by a renewed 1st Infantry effort to drive north along Woodpecker Ridge. The effort failed, and by the end of the day it became evident that until supporting artillery and aircraft could reduce many more defenses in the 1st Infantry's zone the regiment could gain ground along Woodpecker Ridge only at the risk of prohibitive casualties. For the second time in two weeks General Hurdis ordered the 1st Infantry to halt.

Hurdis hoped to move immediately against Mt. Pacawagan and Wawa Dam, but he again faced personnel problems. As of 17 April the 1st Infantry's effective strength was 2,190; the 63d Infantry had less than 2,335 effectives; and the 20th Infantry, built back up to a strength of 2,485 effectives, still needed rest. The rifle companies of the 1st Infantry averaged only 105 effectives apiece, the 20th Infantry's were at 125, and the 63d's companies could muster less than 120 effectives each.[9]

The problem was solved in somewhat the same fashion that it had been on 3 April. The 145th Infantry of the 37th Division came out of Manila, and the 20th Infantry of the 6th Division went into the city to take up garrison duties. Out of combat for over a month, the

[7] XI Corps FO 13, 3 Apr 45.
[8] 6th Div FO 27, 3 Apr 45.
[9] 6th Div G–1 Daily Strength Rpt, 17 Apr 45, and 6th Div G–1 Battle Casualty Rpt, 17 Apr 45, both in 6th Div G–3 Jnl File, 15–19 Apr 45.

145th Infantry had an effective strength of 3,000 troops and, rested, was ready to strike into the mountains against the *Shimbu Group*. General Hurdis directed the regiment to move on Mt. Pacawagan from the west; he ordered the 63d Infantry to provide the new arrivals with fire support from Mt. Mataba; and he instructed the 1st Infantry to hold and patrol pending the outcome of the 145th Infantry's attack. The latter was to have the following support:[10]

Division and Corps Artillery

3 105-mm. howitzer battalions
2 155-mm. howitzer battalions
1 155-mm. gun battery
1 240-mm. howitzer battery
1 8-inch howitzer battery
2 90-mm. AAA gun batteries

From the 63d RCT on Mt. Mataba

5 M7 105-mm. SPM howitzers of Cannon Company
8 81-mm. mortars
8 4.2-inch mortars
2 57-mm. AT guns
11 .50-caliber machine guns
12 .30-caliber heavy machine guns

The support fires almost pulverized Japanese defenses on the western and southern slopes of Mt. Pacawagan, yet the 145th Infantry, starting its attack on 21 April, could not secure a hold on much of the mountain until the 30th. Even then, the *Kobayashi Force* maintained positions on the extreme northeastern peak and on a spur hill about three-quarters of a mile south-southeast of the northeastern crest. The gains through 30 April had cost the 145th Infantry 55 men killed and 220 wounded —in nine days the regiment had incurred more casualties than had any regiment of the 6th Division for the entire month of April.

During the 145th Infantry's attack the 1st and 63d Infantry Regiments had continued to hold the ground they already occupied until relieved late in the month by the 151st and 152d Infantry Regiments of the 38th Division. On 30 April responsibility for further offensives against the *Kobayashi Force* and toward Wawa Dam passed from the 6th to the 38th Division.[11]

Having virtually destroyed the *Kobayashi Force*'s *Left Sector Unit* by the end of March, the 6th Division and its attachments had made significant strides during April toward the elimination of the *Central* and *Right Sector Units*. In fact, the Japanese unit designations had apparently lost meaning by the end of April and *Headquarters, Kobayashi Force,* had taken over direct control of defensive operations in front of Wawa Dam. That Japanese force had lost about 3,000 men killed from 28 March through 30 April, and had given up important defensive terrain. The casualties of American units engaged against the *Kobayashi Force* from 28 March through 30 April were:[12]

[10] 6th Div Opns Memo 2, 16 Apr 45, 6th Div FO File; 6th Div FO 28, 18 Apr 45; 6th Div Arty Rpt Luzon, p. 51; Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 23 Apr 45, sub: Rpt of Visit to 6th Div 21 Apr, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 22–24 Apr 45.

[11] 6th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 25–30 Apr 45; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 36–37; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts 18–30 Apr 45; 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 3 Mar–30 Jun 45, pp. 3–4; *ibid.*, Intel Summaries, 25–31 [*sic*] Apr 45; 152d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 25–30 Apr 45.

[12] The figures are based primarily on regimental records cited previously in this subsection. No figures available for the 151st.

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
1st Infantry	40	115	155
20th Infantry	40	130	170
63d Infantry	35	140	175
145th Infantry	55	220	275
151st Infantry	..	...	...
152d Infantry	5	10	15
Total	175	615	790

When relieved by the 38th Division, the 6th Division was in poor shape. Morale was down, men and officers alike were tired and worn, and all units were sadly understrength, especially in combat effectives. Since 22 February the 6th Division had suffered approximately 1,335 combat casualties—335 killed and 1,000 wounded—and over three times that number of men had been evacuated from the front lines either permanently or temporarily for noncombat injuries, sickness, and psychoneurotic causes. The Sixth Army's twin millstones of the Luzon Campaign—lack of combat replacements and lack of strength to effect timely rotation of units in contact—had weighed heavily upon the division.

The 38th Division Attacks, 1–18 May

During the period 1–3 May the 38th Division executed probing attacks in preparation for a concerted drive toward Wawa Dam beginning on the 4th.[18] XI Corps, anticipating quick success in this new attack, estimated that the bulk of the *Kobayashi Force* had either already withdrawn or was in the process of retreating east across the Bosoboso River. The corps also estimated that the Japanese unit maintained only small delaying attachments west and south of Wawa Dam.

The XI Corps' estimates were quite inaccurate. Far from abandoning the ground in front of Wawa Dam, General Yokoyama was preparing a limited counteroffensive in the form of a series of harassing, delaying actions. Yokoyama felt that the *Kobayashi Force* was strong enough for at least one more good fight. Since 20 February the force, together with its attachments from the *Noguchi Force* and the *Shimbu Group Reserve*, had lost over 7,000 men killed but, having been reinforced from time to time, still had a strength of at least 6,500 men as of 3 May. These troops formed a cohesive unit, not, as XI Corps had estimated, a group of isolated delaying detachments. Finally, the remaining elements of the *Shimbu Group Reserve*, some 3,000 men located at or near Mt. Purro, backed up the *Kobayashi Force*.

One of the reasons that prompted General Yokoyama to undertake another counteroffensive despite the miserable failure of his previous two attempts would undoubtedly have embarrassed XI Corps had that corps learned of it. Yokoyama had not been impressed by the corps' progress during April. On the contrary, he had become perturbed at what he termed a lull in operations on his western front. So marked had this lull seemed to Yokoyama that by the end

[18] Information on American and Japanese plans in this subsection is from: XI Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 28, 31; XI Corps FO's 15, 16, and 17, dated 20 and 28 Apr and 1 May 45; 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 95, 134–36; 38th Div FO 24, 30 Apr 45, 6th Div G–3 Jnl File, 28–30 Apr 45; 38th Div FO 25, 1 May 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 30 Apr–2 May 45; 38th Div FO 26, 3 May 45, 38th Div G–3 Jnl, 16 Apr–27 May 45; 38th Div, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation as Pertains to the Mt. Oro . . . Mt. Purro Area, 20 Apr 45, atchd to 152d Inf FO 15, 22 Apr 45, 152d Inf FO File; SWPA Hist Series, II, 482–85; Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 16–17.

of April he had decided that XI Corps must be moving the bulk of its troops to northern Luzon, if not off Luzon altogether. If so, Yokoyama had failed to execute his primary mission—to pin down a sizable number of U.S. forces for a protracted period. The only way Yokoyama could find to avert this failure was to stage limited counterattacks to forestall further XI Corps redeployment and to force the return to the *Shimbu* area of American units that might already have moved north.

The *Shimbu Group* commander planned no attempt to retake and hold lost ground. Rather, he hoped that with a series of strong infiltration attacks he could create so much chaos and confusion within the XI Corps area that his ends would be realized. He directed his troops to execute their operations during the hours of darkness and to hide out during the day. The infiltration attacks were to begin on 10 May, and all participating units were to be reassembled in their original positions by the 25th.

On 10 May two battalions of *Kawashima Force* were to begin harassing the 38th Division's left rear north of Montalban to cover preparations for the *Shimbu Group*'s main effort, which was to start on the 12th. The principal striking force of the main body would be the understrength *31st Infantry* of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* and three or four battalions—averaging less than 300 men apiece—of *Kobayashi Force*. These units were apparently to converge upon the town of Marikina. What was left of the *Noguchi Force* would provide additional support for the main effort by launching raids along XI Corps' southern flank.

As had been the case with Yokoyama's mid-March counterattack,[14] everything went wrong with his early May effort. Again, he did not have the slightest inkling of XI Corps intentions. He did not know, for example, that the corps was redeploying the 43d Division to the Ipo Dam front to begin an offensive there before the end of the first week of May; he had no idea that the 38th Division was to start an all-out drive toward Wawa Dam on 4 May; he had wrongly guessed that XI Corps was transferring troops away from the Wawa Dam front. Indeed, the whole course of Yokoyama's planning at this juncture seems to indicate that the *Shimbu Group* was no longer capable of acquiring even the most rudimentary elements of tactical intelligence.

During the XI Corps' probing attacks of 1–3 May the 145th Infantry, 37th Division, secured all those portions of Mt. Pacawagan having the greatest military value to both the *Kobayashi Force* and the 38th Division, to which the 145th was now attached. At the same time the 152d Infantry, 38th Division, had made gains of half a mile on Woodpecker Ridge.[15] The 145th Infantry was now to strike directly east to seize Wawa Dam, and the 152d Infantry was to continue north along Woodpecker Ridge in a supporting attack. Two battalions of the 151st Infantry guarded the flanks of the 38th Division; the third held at Mt. Mataba.

On 4 May the 145th Infantry gained up to 1,000 yards along the northern and

[14] See above, ch. XXI.

[15] The 152d Infantry was now "well commanded" by Colonel Ives, who had earlier been relieved of the command of the 20th Infantry, 6th Division (see above, ch. XI). Comments, on 3 December 1956, of Maj. Gen. William C. Chase, Commanding General, 38th Division, at the time of this action on Luzon.

northeastern slopes of Mt. Pacawagan, but could secure little new ground in an easterly direction.[16] The 152d Infantry advanced about 500 yards northward along Woodpecker Ridge. These gains, unspectacular as they were, had a profound effect upon the *Shimbu Group*'s plans. Suddenly, Yokoyama realized that XI Corps had mounted a serious, immediate threat to his center. Since the threat had been developing for over a month, it is difficult to ascertain just what caused Yokoyama to change his mind about XI Corps dispositions and intentions. Probable contributing factors were the intensity of the artillery preparations for the 38th Division's attack of 4 May, the scale of the artillery and mortar support provided the 145th and 152d Infantry Regiments throughout the 4th, and the gains made by the 38th Division after 1 May. Whatever the reasons, Yokoyama on 4 May directed his forces to initiate their infiltration attacks immediately instead of waiting until 10 May.

While the Japanese were hurriedly trying to move into position for their attacks, the 145th Infantry struck eastward to seize the rocky pinnacle of Mt. Binicayan, rising sharply to a height of 1,250 feet on the south bank of the Marikina River at Wawa Dam. With its equally rocky twin, Mt. Pamitinan north of the Marikina, Mt. Binicayan dominated the Marikina Valley from the northeastern slopes of Mt. Pacawagan to the Marikina-Bosoboso junction. Accordingly, the 145th Infantry's seizure of Binicayan's crest on 9 May was a substantial achievement, and the loss was one the *Kobayashi Force* could ill afford. Indeed, that Japanese unit had expended most of its efforts during the period 5–9 May in a vain and costly attempt—400 men killed—to keep the 145th Infantry off Mt. Binicayan. The fact that the *Kobayashi Force* had failed to defend Binicayan in greater strength was a tactical mistake of considerable magnitude. Rising sheer from the gorge of the Marikina at Wawa Dam, the cave-pocked, rocky peak, adequately defended, would have proved virtually impregnable. Moreover, adequate defenses on Mt. Pamitinan, across the river, could have rendered much of Mt. Binicayan untenable for the 145th Infantry.

Probably one reason the *Kobayashi Force* had not been able to hold Mt. Binicayan was that much of its strength had been redeploying to take part in Yokoyama's scheduled counterattack. But the *Kobayashi Force*'s share in the counterattack effort never got off the ground. That unit shot its bolt defending Mt. Binicayan and Woodpecker Ridge, and the 145th Infantry never knew it was being counterattacked. In the 152d Infantry's sector action followed different lines. Operating against Japanese defenses on the ridge—and now undertaking wide envelopments instead of costly frontal assaults—the 152d ran headlong into troops of the *Shimbu Group Reserve* who were moving west across the Bosoboso River to take part in the counterattack. The new arrivals

[16] The remainder of this subsection is based on: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 96–101, 137; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 45–59; 145th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 1–18 May 45; 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 3 May–30 Jun 45, pp. 3–5; 152d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 1–19 May 45; 152d Inf Intel Summaries, 1–18 May 45; 151st Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 1–18 May 45; Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 17–18; SWPA Hist Series, II, 484–85; Statement of Maj Noriaki Akutsu (Staff *Kawashima Force*), in States, I, 22–26; Narrative of Col Kobayashi, in 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon.



6TH DIVISION APPROACH TO WAWA DAM

slowed the 152d Infantry, while at the same time the Japanese found it necessary to fight hard even to hold the ground from which their infiltration attacks were to be launched. In the end, counterattack action in the 152d Infantry's sector was limited to a series of dawn and dusk raids beginning on 14 May and lasting about a week.

Elsewhere across the XI Corps front, the *Shimbu Group*'s effort had no effect. By the time the *Kawashima Force*'s two battalions were ready to move south, the 43d Division had struck toward Ipo Dam, pinning the Japanese units to that front. On the far south, the *Noguchi Force* remnants were unable to make any significant contributions. Recognizing that the whole affair had proved futile, Yokoyama on 15 May ordered all units involved to withdraw immediately, orders that apparently did not reach the *Shimbu Group Reserve* units operating in the Woodpecker Ridge area for almost a week. Nevertheless, Yokoyama had achieved some degree of success. By delaying the progress of the 152d Infantry along Woodpecker Ridge, the Japanese had also delayed the capture of Wawa Dam, for Maj. Gen. William C. Chase, commanding the 38th Division, believed it too risky to push the 145th Infantry to the dam until the 152d had cleared Woodpecker Ridge. The period of the counterattack—roughly 4 through 18 May—cost the 145th, 151st, and 152d Infantry Regiments approximately 85 men killed and 305 wounded; the *Kob-*

ayashi Force lost almost 1,300 men killed during the same period.

Wawa Dam and Beyond, 19–31 May

The 38th Division faced some perplexing tactical problems at evening on 18 May. The 145th Infantry held a dangerously exposed salient at Mt. Binicayan, and almost a mile of rough terrain separated the regiment from the 152d's forward elements on Woodpecker Ridge.[17] The Japanese could still move forces in between the 145th and 152d from the east side of the Bosoboso River. At the same time, General Chase felt it necessary to either overrun or neutralize Japanese positions on the high ground north of Wawa Dam before launching a final attack toward the dam. The only good supply route over which he could support the final attack to seize the dam was a narrow gravel road running along the south bank of the Marikina from Montalban to the dam. The Japanese controlled the road by artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire from the heights north of the dam.

So far, General Chase had been unable to stage any offensive north of the Marikina. The lay of the ground there, together with the location of Japanese defenses in the area, required that any advance be made across a front extending north from Mt. Pamitinan four miles to Mt. Oro. To 18 May, the 38th Division had been unable to place more than one battalion of the 151st Infantry in the region, a force patently too small to attack across so broad a front.

Shortages of artillery and 81-mm. mortar ammunition had also played a major part in General Chase's decision not to launch an offensive north of the Marikina. He had had trouble providing adequate ammunition to support the operations of the 145th and 152d Infantry Regiments during the period 4–18 May, and the shortages had helped prompt him to keep his 149th Infantry in reserve during that period. The shortages were, perhaps, not as critical as the 38th Division commander believed. One of the reasons the Japanese gave for the failure of their May counterattack was that American artillery had broken up the effort before it was well under way.

General Chase finally decided that once the 152d Infantry's attack to clear Woodpecker Ridge had gained momentum, the 151st Infantry, less one battalion, would launch a drive in the area north of the Marikina to clear Mt. Pamitinan and Mt. Hapanong-Banoy, three quarters of a mile to the north. The 149th Infantry would relieve the 145th in place and, after the attacks of the 151st and 152d showed promise of certain success, the 149th would descend on Wawa Dam, its flanks secured and its supply route safe.

On 19 and 20 May the 152d Infantry continued enveloping maneuvers at Woodpecker Ridge while 38th Division engineers bulldozed roads to the front lines to permit medium tanks, flame thrower tanks, and half-tracks mounting multiple .50-caliber machine guns to make their way forward. With this close fire support (the flame thrower tanks

[17] Information in this subsection is based primarily on: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 101–09, 140; 38th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 19–31 May 45; 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, 3 Mar–30 Jun 45, 5–6; 152d Inf Intel Summaries, 19–31 May 45; S–3 Per Rpts of the 149th, 151st, and 152 Inf Regts, 19–31 May 45; SWPA Hist Series, II, 484–85; Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 20–21.

proved especially effective), the 152d Infantry resumed frontal attacks along the ridge on 21 May. Japanese resistance began to collapse. The next day the collapse turned into rout, and by 25 May the regiment controlled the junction of the Marikina and Bosoboso Rivers. From the 25th until the end of the month the regiment outposted the west bank of the Bosoboso from this confluence south to Mt. Baytangan and sent patrols across the Bosoboso to feel out Japanese strength at Mt. Purro.

The 151st Infantry had initiated its drive north of the Marikina on 21 May. By the 26th its troops were on the western slopes of Mts. Pamitinan and Hapanong-Banoy, and Japanese resistance began to melt away. The 149th Infantry struck toward Wawa Dam on the 27th and, encountering no opposition, secured it intact at midmorning on the 28th. The last remnants of the *Kobayashi Force* had withdrawn.

General Yokoyama had had little choice but to order a retreat after the failure of the *Kobayashi Force* to achieve lasting results with the mid-May counterattack. The force's front had, indeed, virtually collapsed by 22 May. At the same time the *Kawashima Force*, on the Ipo Dam front, was proving incapable of holding back the 43d Division. With his right and center breaking apart just as his left had folded at the end of March, General Yokoyama, on 27 May, ordered a general withdrawal. Organized remnants of the *Kobayashi Force* in the Wawa Dam area acted on these orders during the following night, pursued on subsequent days by patrols of the 38th Division. By 31 May General Chase had ample evidence to conclude that the *Kobayashi Force* had withdrawn. Wawa Dam, he knew, was secure beyond the shadow of a doubt; in the future the 38th Division would mop up and pursue rather than make concerted attacks against organized Japanese lines.

The May operations to secure Wawa Dam had cost the 38th Division, including the attached 145th Infantry of the 37th Division, some 750 combat casualties—160 killed and 590 wounded. During the month the *Kobayashi Force* had lost another 3,000 men killed in ground action alone, while countless others had died of starvation, disease, or as the result of American air and artillery bombardment. At the end of May the *Kobayashi Force* had followed the *Noguchi Force* into oblivion as an effective combat unit; as of 31 May *Headquarters, Kobayashi Force,* had under its control an organized group of less than 3,000 troops. The *Shimbu Group Reserve* had also suffered heavily during the month and probably could not muster over 1,500 effectives. Meanwhile, the *Kawashima Force* had suffered heavily at the hands of the 43d Division.

The Seizure of Ipo Dam

The 43d Division's redeployment to the Ipo Dam front in early May had been a departure from General Hall's plan for the destruction of the *Shimbu Group* and from General Krueger's schedule of operations for the seizure of the components of the Manila water supply system. Both plans had called for the seriatim destruction of the *Shimbu Group*'s three western front forces by steady attack from south to north. Thus, from XI Corps' point of view, the 43d Division's displacement had been premature, and the decision to move the di-

vision northward had been forced upon General Hall by higher headquarters.

Offensive and Defensive Plans

The necessity for initiating a drive on Ipo Dam before completing operations to seize Wawa Dam stemmed from Manila's water supply problems. By mid-April an acute water shortage had developed within the city. Informing General Krueger of this problem, General MacArthur told the Sixth Army commander that south of the Pasig Manila was without water except that supplied by Army tank trucks and shallow, usually contaminated wells. Sewage disposal throughout the city was becoming increasingly difficult because water pressure from the overtaxed Novaliches Reservoir—the only dependable source—was insufficient to carry off refuse. Flush toilets were clogged; many citizens had to employ gutters and *esteros* for defecation. Restaurants and night clubs, happily and heavily patronized by off-duty American troops, were finding it impossible to maintain minimum sanitary standards. The problems increased with a steady, continued influx of military units and civilians to the metropolitan area. There was very real danger that severe epidemics might break out within the city at any moment.[18]

On 19 April General MacArthur suggested to Krueger that the Sixth Army could solve Manila's water supply problems by seizing "the reservoir in the Montalban area," and went on to ask Krueger how soon that installation would be captured.[19] The query puzzled Krueger, who now knew that the only true reservoirs tied into the Manila water system lay west of the Marikina River and had been in American hands since February. Krueger had also learned that the water supply installation nearest Montalban—Wawa Dam—was no longer connected to the metropolitan system. He therefore asked General MacArthur if by the phrase "reservoir in the Montalban area" the theater commander meant Ipo Dam, the only major water installation still in Japanese hands.[20] Krueger's question apparently prompted further study of Manila's water system at GHQ SWPA, and on 22 April MacArthur radioed Krueger that Ipo Dam was the preferred objective. The capture of the Ipo installation, MacArthur went on, would solve Manila's water supply problems.[21]

Upon receiving MacArthur's message, Krueger directed XI Corps to launch a drive on Ipo Dam as soon as possible.[22] General Hall, in turn, ordered the 43d Division (less the 169th RCT, already on the Ipo front) to redeploy northward from the corps' right flank. He simultaneously disbanded the provisional Baldy Force and instructed General Cunningham's 112th Cavalry RCT to take over the positions on the south vacated by the 43d Division.

[18] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, C–14734, 10 Apr 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 18–20 Apr 45.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Rad, Krueger to MacArthur, WG–1303, 21 Apr 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 115.

[21] Rad, MacArthur to Krueger, C–14552, 22 Apr 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 20–22 Apr 45.

[22] Subsequent material on American plans in this subsection is from: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 74; XI Corps FO's 16 and 17, 28 Apr and 1 May 45; XI Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 31; 43d Div FO 12, 30 Apr 45; 43d Div Opns Memo 9, 5 May 45; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 44–46.

Another factor urged an early attack toward Ipo Dam—the rainy season would be under way by the end of May. The generally open terrain in the Ipo Dam area, full of rocky outcroppings and cut by the gullies of innumerable, intermittent, wet-weather streams, was every bit as rough as that on the approaches to Wawa Dam and, although not as high, gave promise of being even more difficult in bad weather. The 43d Division knew of the need for speed, but the time the division required for its preparations made it impossible for General Hall to schedule the beginning of the attack any earlier than 7 May.

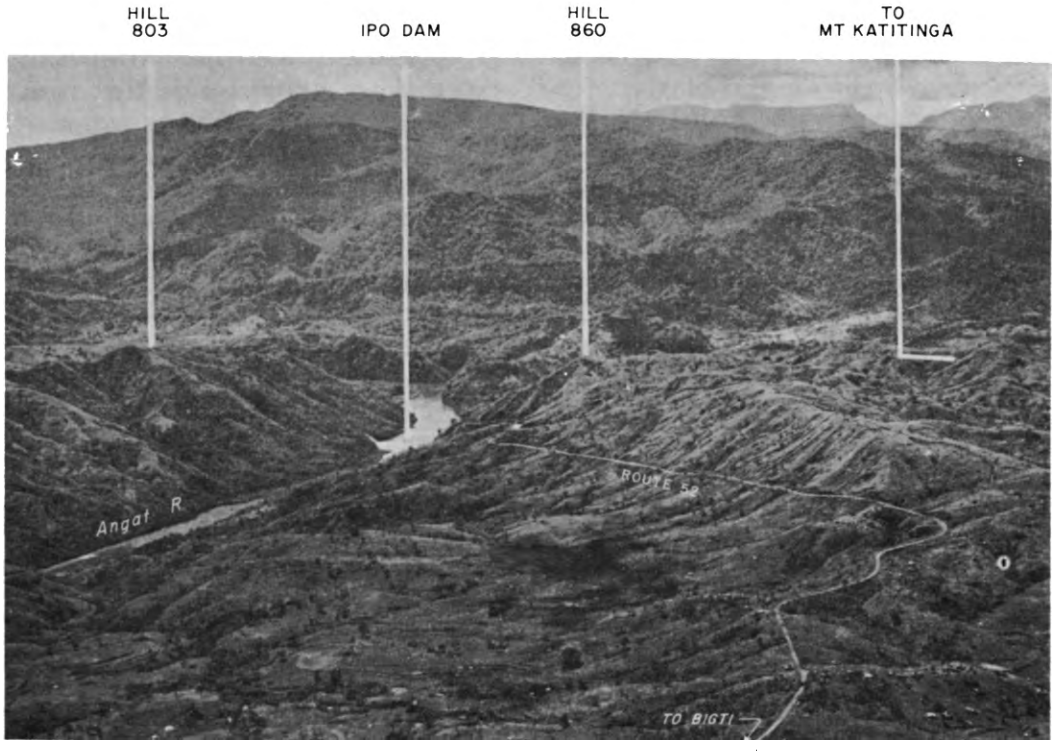
The most logical avenue of approach to Ipo Dam was Route 52, a two-lane graveled road running generally northeast from Manila through Novaliches and on to the dam. About six miles northwest of Montalban, Route 64, coming in from the west, joined Route 52 at a junction long known as Hot Corner because *Kawashima Force* artillery had had the junction zeroed in even when the 1st Cavalry Division had passed by on its way to Manila in the early days of February. Route 52 ran north from Hot Corner about five miles to Bigti, whence it swung northeast and east to the dam, four and a half miles distant. Route 65–B led northwest four miles from Bigti to Norzagaray on the Angat River, the waters of which Ipo Dam diverted into an aqueduct about seven miles east of Norzagaray.

Before the 43d Division moved north, Baldy Force had held outposts along the line Norzagaray–Bigti–Hot Corner, and during the period 7–12 April had undertaken a reconnaissance-in-force from this line toward Ipo Dam. Then Baldy Force had discovered that the *Kawashima Force* had thoroughly fortified the Route 52 approach to the dam and obviously expected an attack astride that road.[23]

The 43d Division's subsequent search for another route of advance was a discouraging task. The vegetation throughout the area was tropically lush, although spotty. Even on the brightest days the entire region, sparsely inhabited and unsuited to agriculture, bore an oppressive, weird aspect. Wildly tossed rock outcroppings were the pervading feature. Some stretching horizontally across the land, some pyramiding dizzily to sudden, jumbled heights, these dark grayish outcroppings and sharp pinnacles looked like the product of a fantastic nightmare induced by studying a Dali portraiture of the moon's surface. Formed of both sharp-edged rock slabs and rounded boulders of all imaginable sizes and shapes, and sometimes so brokenly piled as to provide much of their own bulk with shadow, the outcroppings often supported a sufficient verdure of brush and trees to give Japanese defenders concealment from the prying eyes of American ground and air observers. By the very nature of their structure the formations, even the most bare, also supplied the Japanese with many a cave hideaway. Depressing—although not without a touch of wild, desolate beauty—the terrain looked downright unhealthy. To realize that a strong, well-armed Japanese force defended the region only lent an additional foreboding tone to the whole.

The generally rising ground and a high range of partially wooded hills that ringed Ipo Dam on the north, east, and south controlled all the approaches to

[23] 112th Cav RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 18–21; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 73–74.



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the dam from Norzagaray south to Hot Corner. From this ground the *Kawashima Force*'s artillery, mortars, and machine guns could deliver devastating, observed fire against the 43d Division. An attack between the Bigti–Ipo Dam stretch of Route 52 and the Angat River, to the north, would have to be channeled through a two-mile-wide corridor in rocky, partly open ground dropping off to the steep-sided, boulder-strewn gorge of the Angat. North of the stream the terrain, more wooded, was so rough and broken that it seemed to preclude the employment of large units. South of the Bigti–Ipo Dam stretch of Route 52 the ground was quite open, trackless, and rough. Here, engineers would have to bulldoze supply roads over and around rocky outcroppings, working up rising terrain where Japanese could observe every movement.

Nevertheless, General Wing, the 43d Division's commander, decided to make his main effort south of Route 52. He reached his decision primarily because the April reconnaissance-in-force had disclosed that *Kawashima Force* defenses south of the road were considerably weaker than those in the vicinity of the highway. Furthermore, he hoped that a drive from the south might achieve tactical surprise, for the Japanese might not expect attack through the inhospitable, forbidding ground south of Route 52.

The 103d Infantry, on the division's right, would make the main effort. Striking from a line of departure about two miles east of Hot Corner, the 103d would drive east four miles to Mt. Katitinga, at the southern end of a broken, rocky ridge line stretching four miles northward to the Angat Gorge at Ipo Dam. Once at Mt. Katitinga, the regiment would use the ridge line as its principal route of attack toward the dam. The 172d Infantry, in support, was to strike toward the dam across a two-mile-wide front on the 103d Infantry's left, advancing first east-northeast and then swinging north to cut Route 52 about midway between Bigti and the dam in order to isolate strong Japanese defenses in the vicinity of Bigti. The 169th Infantry, on the 172d's left, would demonstrate along Route 52 to help pin down the Japanese in the Bigti region.

General Wing had another force at his disposal, a guerrilla regiment that had been active with the 43d Division on XI Corps' southern flank. Aided by the 43d Division in the matters of arms and training, the regiment, commanded by Col. Marcus V. Augustin, was known as Marking's Fil-American Yay Regiment —short title Marking Regiment.[24] Wing planned to employ the regiment in an operation that he originally intended as a feint. Crossing the Angat River near Norzagaray, the Marking Regiment would drive eastward north of the river toward Mt. Kabuyao, three and a half miles north of Ipo Dam, and would be prepared to exploit whatever success it might achieve. Elements of the Marking Regiment would also probe eastward along the south bank of the Angat. The guerrillas' operations would be conducted under the direction of Brig. Gen. Alexander N. Stark, the assistant commander of the 43d Division.

To enhance the chances for tactical surprise, the 43d Division, less the 169th RCT, moved northward in small increments between 2 and 5 May, assembling behind a line of outposts the 169th Infantry maintained. The division kept reconnaissance to a bare minimum, and units deployed along their lines of departure under cover of darkness in preparation for jumping off during the night of 6–7 May. A night attack in terrain not thoroughly reconnoitered was known to be risky, but the desire to achieve surprise overrode other considerations. Artillery would mark initial objectives of the night attack with white phosphorus and thus offset the lack of reconnaissance to some extent. In the actual event, this worked better than the 43d Division had hoped, but the artillery's markings were admittedly no substitute for complete reconnaissance.

Speed was as important as surprise to General Wing, for he did not want to give the Japanese time to redeploy defensive forces. Finally, Wing was willing to employ mass against the *Kawashima Force*'s prepared defenses. He realized he might be inviting heavy casualties, but he had to accept the risk in the light of the urgent need for the early capture of Ipo Dam.

Before 6 May the *Kawashima Force* had no idea that a full American divi-

[24] Marking was Augustin's *nom de guerre*. The unit was also known as the 1st Yay Regiment, Marking's Guerrillas. The Yay in the regimental title derived from Yay Panililio, Augustin's common-law wife who was a well-known newspaperwoman in prewar Manila. Before the war Augustin had been a bus driver on the Manila-Antipolo route. For additional information, see Colonel Yay, *The Crucible* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1950).

sion was assembling on the Ipo Dam front.[25] On that day, the Japanese unit had some 7,000 effectives left—the 43d Division estimated 5,250 maximum—of the 9,000 troops assigned to it on 20 February, and most of the 7,000 were south of the Angat River. The northern anchor of the defenses was a group of small hills on the Angat's south bank three miles north of Bigti. Elements of the *Kasama Battalion* (the reinforced *358th Independent Infantry Battalion, 105th Division*), which contained the *Kawashima Force*'s only "regular" infantry, held this anchor. South of the hills the *Hanabusa Detachment*, one of the *Kawashima Force*'s two provisional infantry regiments, maintained defenses across Route 52. The other provisional regiment, the *Tomono Detachment*, extended the defenses for about two miles south and southeast of the Bigti area. The main strength of the *Kasama Battalion* held the ground southeast of the *Tomono Detachment* to the ridge along which the 103d Infantry was to advance. The southern end of this ridge—the Mt. Katitinga area — was defended at first by the *Narukami Battalion* of the *Hanabusa Detachment*. The region north of the Angat was the responsibility of the *Muroya Battalion*, which operated under the direct control of *Kawashima Force* headquarters. The bulk of the *Muroya Battalion* was stationed on high ground on the north bank of the Angat to close the open, northern end of a horseshoe-shaped bend around which the river flowed on its way across Ipo Dam.

In accordance with General Yokoyama's counterattack plan of 4 May, the *Kawashima Force* had ordered the *Narukami Battalion* south toward Montalban. The three days of heavy air attack that preceded the 43d Division's assault made it impossible for the Japanese unit to assemble for its move south, and on the evening of 6 May the battalion's march was barely under way. Guessing then that a major attack was about to hit him, Maj. Gen. Osamu Kawashima, the *Kawashima Force* commander, called off further attempts to send troops southward to participate in the *Kobayashi Force*'s efforts to delay the progress of the 38th Division toward Wawa Dam.[26] It was on this note that the *Kawashima Force* belatedly began to prepare to meet the 43d Division's attack, which began at 2200, 6 May.

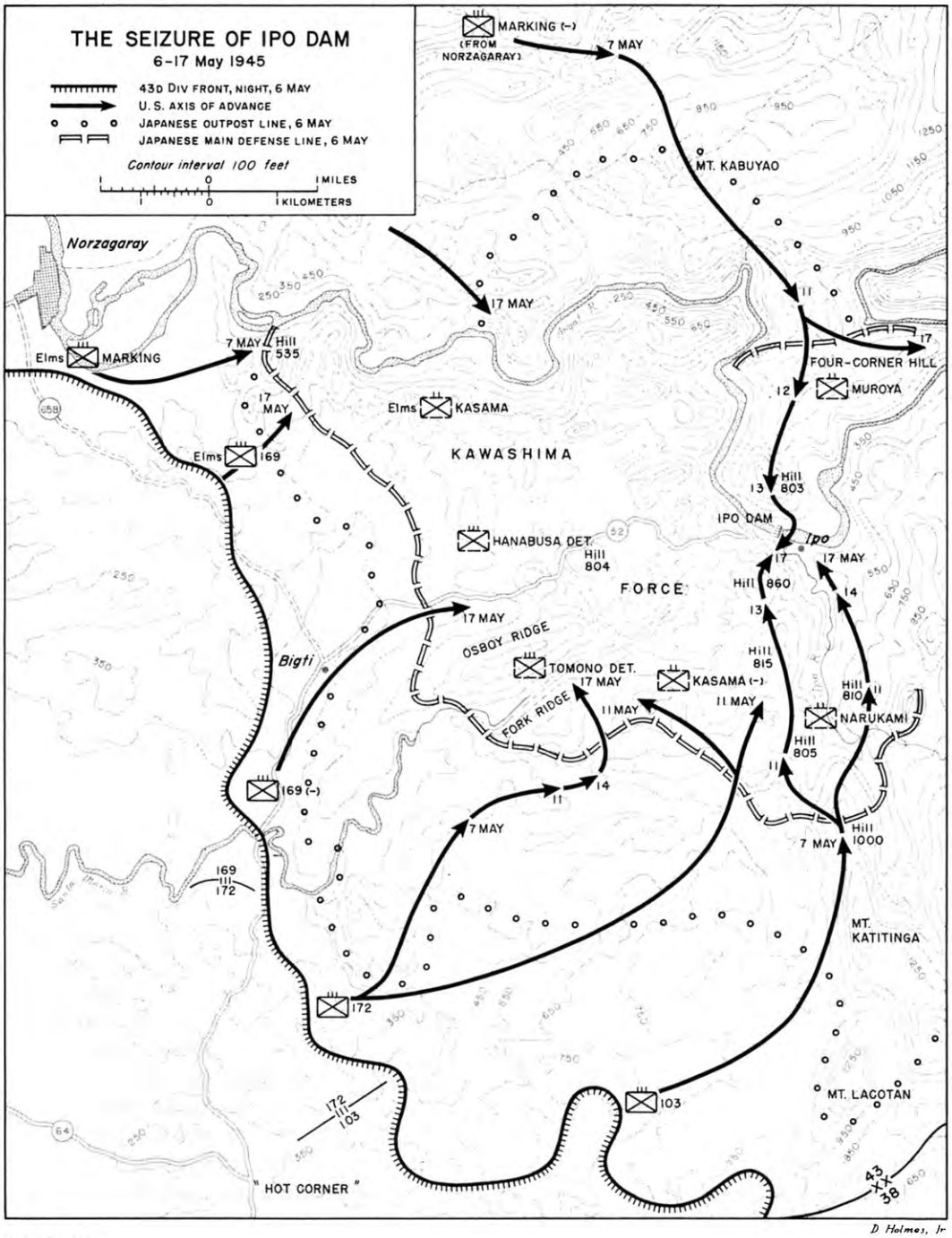
The First Phase, 6–14 May

Exploiting the element of surprise the night attack achieved, the 103d and 172d Infantry Regiments made excellent progress during the first day of the offensive.[27] (*Map 17*) The 103d Infantry encountered only scattered opposi-

[25] Japanese information in this subsection is from: Akutsu Statement, States, I, 23–25; Narrative of Col Kobayashi, and atchd Maps Nos. 2, 3, and 5, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon; SWPA Hist Series, II, 483–85; an. I, Intel, to XI Corps FO 17, 1 May 45; an. II, Intel, to 43d Div FO 12, 30 Apr 45; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts 68, 69, and 85, dated 9, 10, and 26 Apr 45; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, pp. 12–13.

[26] Kawashima had previously commanded the *82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division*, the brigade to which the *358th IIB* had belonged. Kawashima apparently took his action without consulting General Yokoyama, the *Shimbu Group* commander.

[27] This subsection is based mainly on: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 46–50; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 6–14 May 45; 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 6–14 May 45; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 76–78; 172d Inf Rpt Luzon, Phase IV, Ipo Dam, pp. 2–3; S–3 Per Rpts of the 103d, 169th, and 172d Inf Regts, 6–15 May 45; 43d Div G–2 Per Rpts, 7–19 May 45; Akutsu Statement, States, I, 25–26; SWPA Hist Series, II, 484.



D Holmes, Jr

MAP 17

tion, gained the western slopes of Mt. Katitinga and, bypassing the rest of that mountain, sped up the ridge line to rocky, wooded Hill 1000, less than three miles south of Ipo Dam. The 172d Infantry at dusk on 7 May was nearing the foot of a rocky ridge two miles southeast of Bigti. North of the Angat, the Marking Regiment met no resistance as it marched over seven miles eastward, halting for the night only a mile and a half northwest of Mt. Kabuyao, its initial objective. The only significant resistance the 43d Division's units had encountered during the day had been at Hill 535 where, on the south bank of the Angat three miles north of Bigti, part of the *Kasama Battalion* had repulsed a company of the Marking Regiment.

Japanese opposition had proved so unexpectedly weak that the 43d Division pressed its attack through the night of 7–8 May, and continued its advance without letup through the 11th. Then rough terrain, unseasonably early and heavy rains, and increasingly stubborn resistance combined to slow the 103d Infantry. By evening on the 11th the regiment's left was up the north-south ridge line to Hill 805, two miles south of Ipo Dam; the right had moved east across the tiny Ipo River and had reached Hill 810, two miles south-southeast of the dam. Meanwhile, right flank elements of the 172d Infantry had advanced to the southwestern slopes of rocky Hill 815, half a mile north of Hill 805. Left flank units had begun probing into Japanese defenses on Fork Ridge, two miles east of Bigti and falling away on the north to a boulder-strewn stream bed. North across this stream lay Osboy Ridge, overlooking Route 52 from the south. Patrols of the 169th Infantry had already discovered that the *Kawashima Force*'s principal defenses ran across the western slopes of Osboy Ridge — the ridge would have to be cleared before the 172d Infantry could safely push its left any further northward.

The Marking Regiment, north of the Angat, had met with unexpected success. Overrunning a Japanese outpost on Mt. Kabuyao, the guerrilla unit on 11 May reached the *Muroya Battalion*'s main defenses at Four-Corner Hill, less than two miles north of Ipo Dam. During the day the guerrillas mounted three assaults at Four-Corner Hill, but at dusk, having lost 25 men killed and 55 wounded, they withdrew.

By evening on the 11th General Wing knew that all elements of the 43d Division were in firm contact with the *Kawashima Force*'s main line of resistance. The thrust from the south had gone well so far, but opposition there was stiffening—the *Kawashima Force*, at first caught off balance, had begun to transfer troops eastward from the Bigti–Osboy Ridge area to meet the threat posed by the 103d Infantry. Hoping to halt these Japanese movements, Wing directed the 169th Infantry to increase the strength of its demonstrations and to mount a limited attack at Osboy Ridge. At the same time he took another look at the role of the Marking Regiment. What had started out as a feint from which no significant results were necessarily expected, now bid fair to become as much a part of the main effort as the 103d Infantry's drive north. The attack toward Ipo Dam, originally conceived as one depending for success upon the 103d Infantry's progress, had developed into a full-fledged double envelopment.

Indeed, a race for the dam was on between the Marking Regiment and the 103d Infantry.

On 12 May the guerrilla unit, for the first time amply supported by 43d Division artillery, broke through the Four-Corner Hill defenses, losing another 15 men killed and 75 wounded and killing about 80 Japanese. The remnants of the *Muroya Battalion* — probably not 400 strong to start with and now reduced to about 100 effectives —fled southward to Hill 803, half a mile north of Ipo Dam. Elsewhere on the 43d Division front, gains on 12 May were relatively unimportant.

For the *Kawashima Force*, all was not necessarily lost when the Marking Regiment had seized Four-Corner Hill. General Kawashima probably had sufficient strength to hold the guerrillas at Hill 803 for some time; he could have begun sending reinforcements to that hill on the 12th. But from the content of orders he received from *Shimbu Group* headquarters, the 12th of May must have seemed ruinous to Kawashima.

Because of communications or intelligence failures, General Yokoyama had not yet learned that a reinforced U.S. division was attacking the *Kawashima Force*. Furthermore, the *Shimbu Group* commander still felt that the *Kobayashi Force* front was of more vital importance than that of the *Kawashima Force*. Since the situation in the *Kobayashi Force* zone was critical, and since his scheduled counterattack against the 38th Division had virtually collapsed by 12 May, General Yokoyama directed the *Kawashima Force* to launch a new counterattack against the left and left rear of the 38th Division on 14 May. With his own defenses crumbling, General Kawashima unsuccessfully tried to argue Yokoyama into canceling the order. Upon the failure of his pleadings, Kawashima reluctantly directed the *Kasama Battalion* to undertake the attack against the 38th Division.

The main body of the *Kasama Battalion* moved out of its lines west of the Ipo River during the night of 12–13 May, forded the Ipo near the dam, and assembled on high ground behind the *Narukami Battalion*. The move was covered by night attacks against the 103d and 172d Infantry Regiments; elements of the *Hanabusa Detachment* spread thinly eastward in an attempt to take over the *Kasama Battalion*'s positions.

The effect of the redeployment was about what General Kawashima had expected. On 13 May the 103d Infantry swept across Hill 805 to Hill 860, digging in for the night hardly three-quarters of a mile south of Ipo Dam. Simultaneously, the 172d Infantry's right flank cleared most of Hill 815. Elsewhere south of the Angat American troops made only minor gains, but north of the stream the Marking Regiment captured the crest of Hill 803.

General Kawashima had seen enough and, without asking Yokoyama's permission, directed the *Kasama Battalion* to return to the lines southwest of Ipo Dam. Maj. Tetsuyuki Kasama, a commander of some initiative, had anticipated these orders by ten or twelve hours. From a vantage point southeast of the dam he had been watching the American attack develop on the morning of the 13th when he learned that the last *Narukami Battalion* positions on Mt. Katitinga, controlling his route of march southward, had fallen. Kasama



IPO DAM

had therefore halted his battalion and at dusk on the 13th started back west across the Ipo River.

The *Kasama Battalion* was dismayed to find many of its old defenses in the Hills 815–860 area occupied by 43d Division troops, but attacked in a futile effort to regain the lost ground. When dawn broke on the 14th the *Kasama Battalion*, having lost over 100 men during the night, could muster no more than 250 effectives. These survivors dug in along the slopes of Hill 860 and, fighting fanatically, held the 103d and 172d Infantry Regiments to minor gains on 14 May.

Meanwhile the Marking Regiment, on a technicality, had already won the race to Ipo Dam. Taking advantage of Japanese preoccupation south of the dam during the night of 13–14 May, a guerrilla patrol crept down the southern slope of Hill 803 and made its way across the Angat via the dam. The patrol found the dam intact and the powerhouse on the south bank largely undamaged. Too weak to hold the installations, the patrol returned before dawn to the crest of Hill 803, where the rest of the regiment had its hands full mopping up.[28]

Securing Ipo Dam, 14–31 May

Late on 14 May the 43d Division paused to make new attack plans.[29] So far the division had made little progress toward Route 52, and it now seemed necessary and timely to commit the 169th Infantry to an attack to clear the road to the dam. First, the division urgently needed the road as a route of supply and evacuation. Ever since its attack had begun, rains had intermittently halted ground and aerial supply, evacuation, and air support operations. Hampered by the weather and the rough terrain, division engineers had been unable to construct and maintain supply roads at a pace commensurate with the infantry's advances. Airdrops and hand-carry had kept the combat units' supplies at the minimum required level, but evacuation of sick and wounded remained a major problem. Finally, on 14 May, the entire division area was weathered in, and for the first time since 6 May the Fifth Air Force was unable to fly a single air support or air supply mission.

[28] Information on this Marking Regiment patrol is from: 43d Div G–2 Rpt 73, 14 May 45; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpt 126, 14 May 45; Entry 44, 2025 13 May, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 13–14 May 45; Entry 12, 0807 14 May, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 14–15 May 45.

[29] Planning information here is from: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 49–51; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 14–17 May 45; 43d Div Opns Memo 10, 14 May 45.

Second, the 43d Division knew that sizable groups of the *Tomono* and *Hanabusa Detachments* had shifted from their Route 52 defenses to meet the 103d and 172d Infantry Regiments' attacks from the south. General Wing therefore felt that the 169th Infantry, striking directly along Route 52, would have a far easier and less costly task than it would have faced a week earlier. In addition, an attack by the 169th could forestall further Japanese redeployments eastward, speed the capture of Ipo Dam, and draw off Japanese troops from Fork Ridge, where the 172d Infantry's left was bogged down.

General Wing directed the 103d Infantry to secure the Route 52 terminus at Ipo Dam, take the dam, and then clear the high ground north of the road and west of the dam. He ordered the 172d Infantry to seize Hill 804, whose northern slopes Route 52 crossed at a point two miles west of the dam. The 169th Infantry was to clear the last Japanese defenders out of the Bigti area and then drive eastward along Route 52 to gain contact with the 172d. Wing evidently expected that the 103d Infantry could accomplish its missions on 15 May; the attacks of the 169th and 172d Infantry Regiments were to start on the 16th, but poor weather conditions, which forced cancellation of air strikes on the 15th, prompted Wing to postpone those two regiments' jump-off until the 17th. Lack of air support, together with supply problems, also made it impossible for the 103d Infantry to get under way before the 17th.

More concentrated air support than previously provided during any attack against *Shimbu Group* positions preceded the 43d Division's offensive of 17 May.[30] On the 16th, for example, about 185 fighter-bombers of the Fifth Air Force dropped some 50,000 gallons of napalm on Japanese defenses in the Bigti–Osboy Ridge area. Later the same day other planes bombed and strafed Japanese artillery emplacements in the vicinity of Hill 804, employing three tons of fragmentation bombs. Starting at 1030 on the 17th about 240 fighter-bombers dropped over 62,500 gallons of napalm along and near Route 52 in the Hill 804 area and on Japanese positions northwest of Hill 804. During the afternoon ten light bombers hit Japanese defenses a mile north of Bigti and then returned to strafe. Although sodden ground and vegetation in the target areas somewhat inhibited the spread and fury of napalm fires, the 43d Division thought the napalm strikes to be remarkably effective.

Meanwhile, XI Corps and 43d Division Artillery had stepped up the pace of their support fires, and during the period 15 through 17 May expended ammunition about as follows:[31]

Weapon	*Rounds*
90-mm. antiaircraft guns	740
105-mm. howitzers	5,865
155-mm. howitzers	2,000
155-mm. guns	955
155-mm GPF gun	15
8-inch howitzers	145

[30] Air support information here is from: Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, p. 436; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 50–51; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 15–17 May 45; XI Corps Arty Daily Rpts, 15–17 May 45.

[31] The 155-mm. GPF gun was an American weapon captured by the Japanese in 1942 and recaptured by the 43d Division, which trained a crew of Filipino guerrillas to man the piece. By the end of May the 43d Division had organized a guerrilla artillery battery composed of the 155-mm. GPF gun, two more recaptured pieces of the same type and history, and a captured Japanese 75-mm. weapon.

On 17 May the principal success of the 43d Division's attack came at Ipo Dam, a success that created a minor controversy between the 103d Infantry and the Marking Regiment. At mid-morning on the 17th the 103d, having cleared the last Japanese from Hill 860, sent a small patrol down the hill's steep, grassy northern slopes to the south end of the dam. Out of contact with the rest of the regiment and unable to find any signs of friendly forces in the dam area, the patrol returned to the top of Hill 860 almost immediately. Then, shortly after noon, a second patrol of the Marking Regiment came down the slopes of Hill 803 on the opposite side of the Angat, waded across the river at the dam and, about 1330, raised the American flag over the powerhouse on the south bank. The 103d Infantry noted this activity and sent a large combat patrol back down Hill 860 to establish contact with the guerrillas. When this patrol reached the powerhouse at 1530, nearly 250 men of the Marking Regiment were on the ground at both sides of Ipo Dam.[32]

Out of loyalty to his troops Col. Joseph P. Cleland, the 103d Infantry's commander, sought a major share of the credit for the capture of Ipo Dam, radioing to General Wing:

> We're not conceding anything to guerrillas. We had patrols at [the] dam this morning and saw no guerrillas. When we returned this evening they were there.[33]

Whatever Cleland's opinion, the Marking Regiment has to be given the lion's share of the credit for the capture of Ipo Dam. The regiment was the first to have troops at the dam—the night patrol of 13–14 May—and was the first to permanently occupy the ground at the dam. On the other hand, it is certain that the Japanese would still have been holding the dam at dark on 17 May had not the Marking Regiment and the 103d Infantry attacked in concert toward that objective.

With the capture of Ipo Dam intact, the 43d Division had accomplished its major mission. The Japanese had prepared demolitions at both the dam and powerhouse but had failed to set them off. The 43d Division had taken an important step toward solving Manila's water supply problems, but before the division could assure the security of the dam and the aqueduct to Novaliches Reservoir, it would have to clear *Kawashima Force* remnants from the region west of the dam. Moreover, the 43d Division had not yet secured Route 52, and supply and evacuation problems were becoming daily more vexing.

The task facing the 43d Division proved easier than anticipated. The *Kawashima Force* was split by the line of the ridge running south from Ipo Dam to Mt. Katitinga; its units west of the line had been disorganized and demoralized by the air and artillery bombardments, especially the napalm strikes, of 16–17 May. Finally, General Kawashima had decided that further efforts to hold Ipo Dam would be futile. Either late on the 16th or early on the 17th he had ordered what was left of his command to withdraw to an assembly point on the western slopes of Mt. Maranat, three miles east of the dam.[34]

[32] The foregoing story is based upon numerous entries in the 43d Division's G–3 Journal for 17 May, the 103d Infantry's S–3 Journal for the same day, and the 43d Division's G–2 Periodic Report for 17 May.

[33] Rad, Cleland to Wing, 1830 17 May, Entry 77, 43d Div G–3 Jnl, 17 May 45.

[34] Akutsu Statement, States, I, 26.

Events moved rapidly during the next four days as isolated elements of the *Kawashima Force* began infiltrating eastward through the 43d Division lines while the division set about the messy job of mopping up. The division opened Route 52 from Bigti to Ipo Dam on the 19th and by the 21st had cleared the last organized resistance from the area west of the dam and south of the Angat. North of the river the Marking Regiment had little trouble mopping up. Many Japanese ostensibly trapped as of 17 May certainly escaped eastward, but the 43d Division killed or found dead 850 *Kawashima Force* troops in the area west of Ipo Dam from 18 through 21 May. Since 6 May, when the 43d Division had begun its attack, the *Kawashima Force* had lost over 2,000 men killed and approximately 40 captured. The 43d Division's casualties for the period from 6 through 21 May were:

Regiment	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
103d Infantry	25	105	130
169th Infantry	15	80	95
172d Infantry	30	150	180
Marking	40	145	175
Total	110	480	590

The 43d Division continued its mopping-up operations through 31 May, patrolling eastward across the Ipo River, northeast up the Angat from the dam, and throughout the area over which the worst fighting had taken place. The *Kawashima Force*, having no offensive intent, confined its activities to reassembling east of Ipo Dam in preparation for further retreat deep into the Sierra Madre. During the last ten days of May the 43d Division killed or found dead approximately 725 Japanese and captured 75 others; the division's own losses were roughly 10 killed and 35 wounded.[35]

The Destruction of the Kogure Detachment

By the end of May XI Corps had destroyed as effective combat organizations the *Shimbu Group*'s four strongest subdivisions — the *Kawashima, Kobayashi,* and *Noguchi Forces* and the *Shimbu Group Reserve.* While XI Corps had been devoting its main energies to the defeat of these western front *Shimbu* forces, part of the corps, and later elements of XIV Corps, had undertaken to destroy the *Shimbu Group*'s fifth major component, the *Kogure Detachment.* Originally deployed to protect *Shimbu Group*'s left rear against attack from the Bicol Peninsula, the east coast of Luzon, and the eastern shore of Laguna de Bay, the *Kogure Detachment,* in late March, had lost half its best troops by transfer to the *Noguchi Force,* then in desperate need of reinforcement.[36] Filipino guerrillas, 43d Division patrols, Allied aircraft, and an increasingly high rate of sickness had further depleted the *Kogure Detachment* until, by 1 April, the unit had scarcely 800 effectives left of its original strength of 2,250.

Operations against the *Kogure Detachment* entered into the campaign against the *Shimbu Group* in a rather

[35] 43d Div G–2 and G–3 Per Rpts, 22–31 May 45; S–3 Per Rpts of the 103d, 169th, and 172d Inf Regts, 22–31 May 45.

[36] Japanese information in this section is from: Kogure Statement, States, II, 260; Statement of Maj Hisaishi Suguwara (Comdr, *10th Surface Raiding Base Bn*), States, III, 312–14; 43d Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, Sec. II, Enemy O/B, Rpt of O/B Team No. 11, pp. 10–11; 1st Cav Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, pp. 24–26.

indirect fashion. About 10 March elements of XIV Corps had initiated an offensive against *Shimbu Group*'s semi-detached *Fuji Force* in southern Luzon.[37] By the end of the month the XIV Corps units had driven well east across Luzon in the region south of Laguna de Bay. Retreating before XIV Corps' pressure, some 2,000 men of the *Fuji Force* had employed Route 21, running north along the eastern side of Laguna de Bay, and the Santa Maria Valley, centering on the northeastern shore of Laguna de Bay, as avenues of escape from southern Luzon.

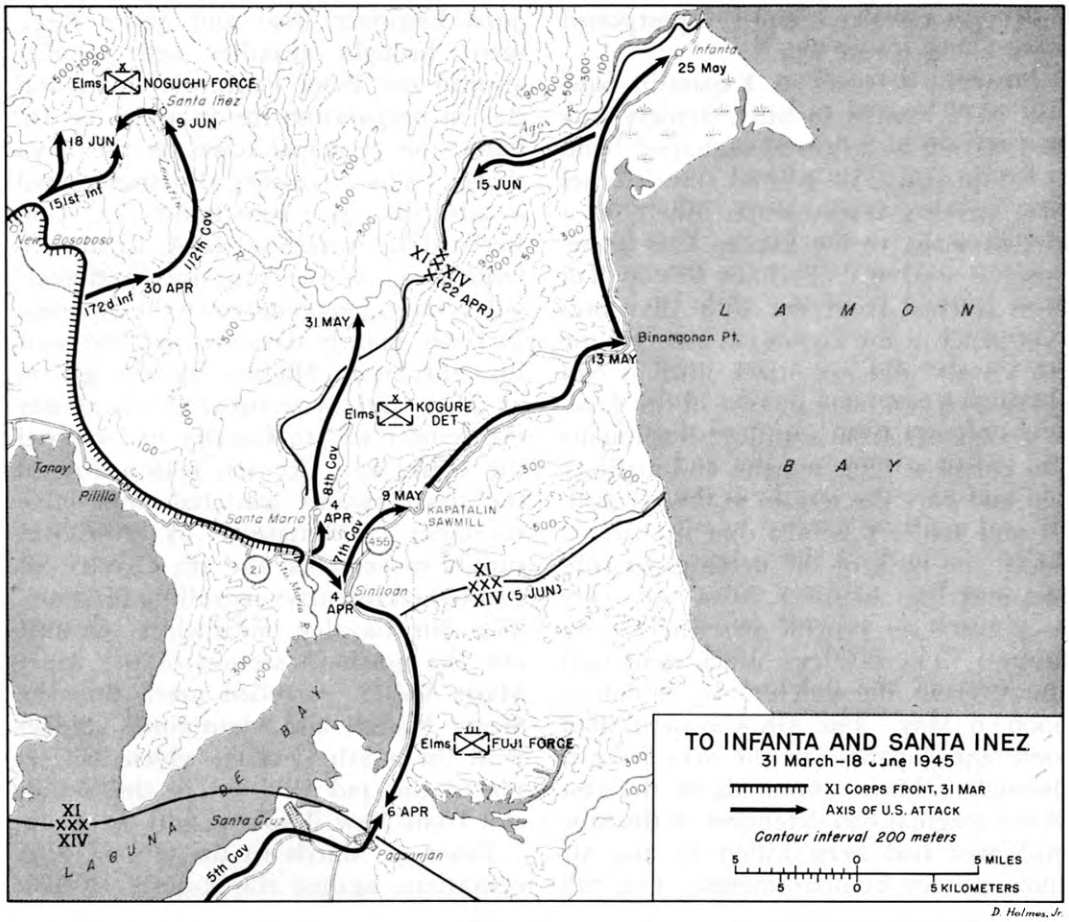
General Krueger believed that these *Fuji Force* troops had joined the main body of the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east of Manila, that more men of the *Fuji Force* would try to join the group, and that Japanese forces on the Bicol Peninsula might also make their way northwestward to the *Shimbu Group*'s lines. Krueger's G–2 Section estimated that as many as 10,000 Japanese could reach the *Shimbu Group* western front from southern and southeastern Luzon. Even if poorly armed and equipped, these Japanese could hardly provide XI Corps with any aid and comfort as that unit continued its offensive against the *Shimbu Group*'s main body. Accordingly, Krueger laid plans to stop the possible flow of Japanese reinforcements around the eastern and northern shores of Laguna de Bay. He directed XI Corps to clear the northern shore of the lake, block the Santa Maria Valley, and close Route 21 by making firm contact with XIV Corps along the lake's eastern shore. General Hall, commanding XI Corps, assigned the tasks to the 43d Division, which in turn made the 103d RCT responsible for the execution of the missions.[38]

Having completed its share in the operations to destroy the *Noguchi Force*, the 103d Infantry turned to its new job on 30 March.[39] Taking elaborate precautions to avoid alerting the *Kogure Detachment*, the regiment displaced eastward along the northern shore of Laguna de Bay in small increments. At 0400 on 4 April the regiment began moving into the Santa Maria Valley, catching the Japanese there completely by surprise. (*Map 18*) By midmorning the 103d was in Siniloan, at the northeast corner of Laguna de Bay. Two days later, after two or three sharp skirmishes with *Fuji Force* troops coming north from southern Luzon, the 103d made contact with XIV Corps units near Pagsanjan, at Laguna de Bay's southeastern corner. From 6 through 21 April, when elements of XIV Corps relieved it, the 103d Infantry patrolled throughout the Santa Maria Valley and probed northeastward from Siniloan along Route 455, leading to the east coast of Luzon at Lamon Bay. Its share in the operations to block Japanese movements around Laguna de Bay cost the 103d Infantry about 10 men killed and 20 wounded; the regiment killed some 240 Japanese in scattered contacts.

[37] See below, ch. XXIII.

[38] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 62–64, 67–69; Sixth Army FO 58, 23 Mar 45, in *ibid.*, I, 162; XI Corps FO 12, 30 Mar 45; 43d Div FO 9, 30 Mar 45; 43d Div Opns Memo 8, 30 Mar 45.

[39] Information on 103d RCT operations in this section is from: 43d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 37–41; 103d RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 60–73; 103d RCT S–3 Per Rpts, 31 Mar–21 Apr 45.



MAP 18

The most surprising development during the 103d Infantry's operations was the discovery that the *Kogure Detachment* would make no real effort to defend the Santa Maria Valley and environs, an area from which the *Shimbu Group* had hoped to replenish its rapidly dwindling food stocks. Instead, the detachment had withdrawn to good defensive positions at Kapatalin Sawmill, four miles up Route 455 from Siniloan, to block that road to Lamon Bay. In the light of the effective strength left to it, the detachment's decision to evacuate the open Santa Maria Valley region seems quite sound.

XIV Corps, as it moved troops to the Santa Maria Valley on 21 April, hoped to mount an immediate drive toward Lamon Bay, but until 6 May could spare only the 7th Cavalry Regiment, less one squadron, from its commitments in southern Luzon. On the 6th the 8th Cavalry took over in the valley, and the

entire 7th Cavalry began the postponed drive along Route 455.[40]

Japanese defenses at Kapatalin Sawmill were located in hilly, densely jungled terrain at a horseshoe-shaped bend of Route 455. The ground and defenses bore striking resemblance, albeit on a smaller scale, to the ZigZag Pass horseshoe on Bataan.[41] Perhaps lessons had been learned from the 38th Division's experience at the ZigZag; at any rate the 7th Cavalry did not attack until it had obtained a complete picture of the Japanese defenses from captured documents and patrol actions, napalm and artillery had laid bare the terrain at the sawmill, air and artillery bombardments had reduced the bulk of the defenses to rubble, and four artillery battalions were in position to provide extremely close support. The cavalry's attack went well and overran the defenses by midafternoon, 9 May. The 7th Cavalry killed some 350 Japanese in the area from 7 through 9 May; almost all of the rest of the original 650 defenders of the sawmill area had been killed by the air and artillery bombardments. The 7th Cavalry lost 4 men killed and 17 wounded, and attached guerrillas lost 2 killed and 4 wounded.

Pausing only briefly to reorganize, the 7th Cavalry marched on up Route 455 and, leaving its vehicles behind, reached Lamon Bay on 13 May. LCM's of the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment brought supplies and vehicles around the Bicol Peninsula to Lamon Bay in preparation for an attack on Infanta, the principal town on the bay's shores. The engineers also transported a guerrilla battalion under Lt. Col. Bernard L. Anderson, USA, to the Infanta area. As the cavalrymen and guerrillas converged on the town the Japanese garrison, mainly naval troops, fled west into the Sierra Madre. Infanta fell on 25 May, and by evening the next day the reinforced 7th Cavalry had cleared the entire flat, rice-rich region around the town against scattered, ineffective resistance. Maintained by overwater supply movements, the 7th Cavalry instituted an intensive patrolling program. The 8th Cavalry, meanwhile, cleaned out the northern section of the Santa Maria Valley, patrolled north into the Sierra Madre, and maintained contact with the 112th Cavalry, which had replaced the 43d Division in the region east from New Bosoboso and Antipolo.

From 31 March to the end of May operations against the *Kogure Detachment* and the Japanese naval forces in the Lamon Bay region cost the 103d RCT, the 2d Cavalry Brigade, and attached guerrillas — mainly Anderson's Battalion—approximately 65 men killed and 180 wounded. The Japanese lost at least 1,250 men killed in ground action, while American air and artillery bombardments, as a conservative estimate, accounted for another 500 Japanese.

The End of the Shimbu Group

By the end of May the *Shimbu Group* was no longer an effective fighting force,

[40] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 69; Sixth Army FO 61, 18 Apr 45, in *ibid.*, I, 163–64; XIV Corps FO 13, 19 Apr 45; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 201.

[41] The remainder of this section is based on: 2d Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–11; 2d Cav Brig Opns Rpts, 6 May–1 Jun 45; 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–30; 7th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 6 May–1 Jun 45; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Siniloan-Tanay Phase, pp. 1–5; 8th Cav Opns Rpts, 7–31 May 45.



7TH CAVALRY AT KAPATALAN SAWMILL

a fact that General Yokoyama had recognized when, on the 27th, he had ordered a general withdrawal all across his western front.[42] The group still had a strength of nearly 26,000 men — over half its total as of 20 February—but the survivors were the dregs, for XI and XIV Corps had decimated the best-trained and best-equipped units. About 13,000 of the survivors were left in organized units, the combat effectiveness of which is worthy of mention only in passing. Of the other 13,000, around 5,000 were undergoing whatever medical treatment the *Shimbu Group* was capable of providing. The final 8,000 were neither controlled nor controllable, having broken up into small groups to forage for food or to try to make their way to northern Luzon.

The *Shimbu Group*'s supply picture at the end of May was even gloomier than its personnel picture. The group had been unable to transport into the Sierra Madre any significant part of the huge stockpiles of supplies it had brought out of Manila, and the only supplies it still had plenty of were ammunition for small arms and machine

[42] Japanese information in this section is from: Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 18–23, 25, 27; SWPA Hist Series, II, 485, and map after II, 482; Kobayashi Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon.

guns and medical matériel employed in the treatment of combat wounds. Lack of food was the principal problem. The early loss—before the harvest—of the Bosoboso Valley, the shores of Laguna de Bay, the Santa Maria Valley, and the Infanta region had deprived the group of expected food stocks, while almost all the food brought out of Manila had already been consumed. The organized remnant of the *Noguchi Force*, for example, could issue only two ounces of rice per day to each man, and even that meager amount would be gone by mid-June. The *Kobayashi Force* was little better off; the *Kawashima Force* was still able to issue 6–8 ounces of rice per day. Most troops were reduced to eating roots, bark, grass, and food scrounged from long-abandoned Filipino gardens. Needless to say there was not a Filipino pig, carabao, or dog left alive within the sight of the *Shimbu Group* remnants before many days of June had passed.

Recognizing that mere existence was the major problem, Yokoyama hoped to move his organized units into areas where they might have some chance to raise food, scattering them through the Sierra Madre. XI Corps, however, was not going to give Yokoyama much rest. General Hall directed the 38th Division to mount limited attacks eastward from the Wawa Dam area and attached to the division for this purpose the 2d Provisional Regiment, East Central Luzon Guerrilla Area. Recently reorganized and re-equipped by XI Corps, the guerrillas were commanded by Maj. Edwin P. Ramsey, AUS, who had not surrendered back in 1942. The 43d Division, the 112th Cavalry RCT, the 2d Cavalry Brigade, and the Anderson Battalion would continue to patrol in the areas they already held.[43]

As operations evolved after 1 June, the 38th Division's objective became Santa Iñez, at the end of the *Shimbu Group* supply road into the Sierra Madre northeast of New Bosoboso.[44] The 112th Cavalry RCT, employing mountain and river valley trails, mounted a converging attack toward Santa Iñez from the south, taking the town against light opposition on 9 June. The Japanese defended more stubbornly against the 151st Infantry, 38th Division, which drove toward Santa Iñez along the road from New Bosoboso, and the 151st was unable to make contact with the 112th Cavalry until 18 June. Meanwhile, other troops of the 38th Division, and the 169th Infantry of the 43d Division as well, slowly pressed east into the mountains from the Wawa Dam area. By the end of June the only evidence of organized Japanese resistance in an area five miles north and ten miles east of Wawa Dam was confined to the Lenatin River valley about three miles north of Santa Iñez, the region into which *Shimbu*

[43] XI Corps FO's 18 and 19, 2 and 4 Jun 45; 38th Div FO's 27 and 28, 30 May and 4 Jun 45; 43d Div FO 13, 1 Jun 45.

[44] Operational information in the remainder of this section is from: 38th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 108–14; 38th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45; 149th Inf Rpt Luzon, 5 May–26 Jun 45, pp. 6–14; 151st Inf Rpt Luzon, ch. III, pp. 2–4; 152d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–7; 152d Inf Intel Summaries, 4–17 Jun 45; S–3 Per or Opns Rpts of the 149th, 151st, and 152d Inf Regts, 1–30 Jun 45; 43d Div Rpt Luzon, p. 53; 43d Div G–2 and G–3 Per Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45; S–3 Per Rpts of the 103d, 169th, and 172d Inf Regts, 1–30 Jun 45; 2d Cav Brig S–2 Per Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45; 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–33; 7th Cav S–3 Per Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Siniloan-Tanay Phase, pp. 5–13; 8th Cav Opns Rpts and S–2 Per Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45; 112th Cav RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 33–40; 112th Cav RCT (and/or Baldy Force) S–3 Opns Rpts, 1–30 Jun 45.

Group headquarters had withdrawn. North and east of Ipo Dam, 43d Division patrols found no signs of organized resistance. The 2d Cavalry Brigade in the Santa Maria Valley–Infanta area, dispersed the last organized remnants of the *Kogure Detachment* and the Japanese naval units at Lamon Bay.

There was no dramatic conclusion to XI Corps' mopping-up operations during June. Instead, the corps pulled its regular units out of the mountains to wet-weather camps for rest and rehabilitation in preparation for the invasion of Japan, while guerrilla units, reorganized and re-equipped, took over the task of hunting down Japanese stragglers. During June XI Corps had projected its strength into the Santa Iñez area—the very center of a region that General Yokoyama had expected to hold more or less indefinitely— forcing the *Shimbu Group* remnants into trackless, partially unexplored wilderness. Its June operations had cost XI Corps roughly 110 men killed and 370 wounded, including approximately 35 killed and 75 wounded among attached guerrilla units. Japanese losses during the month were 7,540 killed or found dead and 1,105 captured.

Certain tactical innovations of the June mop-up period merit special attention. First, the 38th Division made extensive use of antiaircraft searchlights to illuminate its front lines at night. Begun during the last stages of the division's drive to Wawa Dam in May, night illumination was brought nearly to the status of an exact science during June. Another innovation, subsequently to see far-reaching development, was the employment of helicopters. In the 112th Cavalry RCT and the 38th Division sectors helicopters evacuated sick and wounded from inaccessible mountain positions, obviating the need for dangerous and tiring hand-carry evacuations that often consumed as much as twenty-four hours. Finally, in late May and throughout June troops of the 38th and 43d Division combat-tested 57-mm. and 75-mm. recoilless rifles and 4.2-inch recoilless mortars. The troops, who wanted many of the weapons immediately, enthusiastically praised the new 57-mm. and 75-mm. weapons, later to see much development, but supplies of the rifles were so limited that no distribution could be made. The recoilless mortar, on the other hand, proved unsatisfactory. It was inaccurate, of limited mobility, and very difficult to emplace because it required such a large clearance zone to its rear.

At the end of June the *Shimbu Group* remnants were in sorry shape, and almost all of its elements had broken up into small parties concerned primarily with a hunt for food.[45] During June the group had lost three men dead of starvation or disease to every one man killed in combat, and before July was over the ratio had mounted to nearly ten to one. U.S. Army estimates of *Shimbu Group* strength as of 30 June varied from 3,300 to 6,500,[46] but General Yokoyama actually had nearly 15,000 troops under his nominal command.

The 149th and 151st Infantry Regiments, 38th Division, aided by almost 10,000 guerrillas, continued to operate

[45] Additional material for the period after 30 June is from; Eighth Army Rpt, Luzon Mop-up Opn, pp. 31–33; Kobayashi Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon; Luzon Area Command, Eighth Army, G–2 Per Rpts, 16 Sep–14 Nov 45.

[46] 38th Div, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation, 27 Jun 45, XI Corps G–3 Jnl File, 28–29 June 45; Eighth Army Rpt, Luzon Mop-up, p. 7.

in the *Shimbu* area until the end of the war. Each regiment rotated battalions into the mountains, but the battalions largely confined their activities to support and control of guerrilla units. By mid-August 1945 the Fil-American forces had killed, found dead, or captured another 5,000 Japanese in the *Shimbu Group*'s mountain retreat. After the end of the war approximately 6,300 *Shimbu* survivors surrendered. With 2,000 prisoners captured before September 1945, these were all that remained alive of Yokoyama's original 50,000 troops.[47]

[47] A strict accounting from all available figures on Japanese casualties, both killed and captured, leaves about 5,500 troops of the *Shimbu Group* unaccounted for. Many of these men probably made their way northward through the mountains to be killed, captured, or found dead in areas outside the *Shimbu Group*'s original sector; the bodies of the rest were simply never found.

CHAPTER XXIII

Securing the Visayan Passages

Sixth Army had not waited for the destruction of the *Shimbu Group*, nor even for the capture of Wawa and Ipo Dams, to launch operations to clear southern Luzon, to secure the northern side of the Visayan Passages, and to gain control over the shores of Batangas and Balayan Bays in order to develop logistical bases there. General Krueger's plans for Sixth Army's share in the program to clear the Visayan Passages called for XIV Corps to strike into southern Luzon during the first week of March, by which time that corps' attack against the main body of the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east of Manila would be less than two weeks old. First, XIV Corps would secure those sections of the northern shores of the Visayan Passages lying west of the Bicol Peninsula of southeastern Luzon, simultaneously clearing the Batangas–Balayan Bays area. Once XIV Corps operations in southern Luzon were well under way, Sixth Army would stage an amphibious attack against the southeastern section of the Bicol Peninsula to secure the northern side of the eastern entrance to the Visayan Passages. Forces undertaking the Bicol operation would ultimately drive northwestward up the peninsula to establish contact with XIV Corps units advancing eastward across southern Luzon, thereby completing the task of clearing the northern littoral of the passages. Meanwhile, Eighth Army would be chasing the Japanese from northern Samar, at the south side of the eastern entrance to the Visayan Passages, and then, in a series of minor amphibious operations, would seize the smaller islands lying athwart the shipping routes through the inner sections of the passages.[1]

Southern Luzon

Fitting the Plan to the Terrain

For descriptive purposes in this narrative, southern Luzon is considered to be that part of the island lying west of the Bicol Peninsula and south of Laguna de Bay. Two narrow corridors on either side of Laguna de Bay provide access to southern Luzon from Manila, while the nine-mile-wide Bondoc Isthmus, separating Lamon Bay on the north from Tayabas Bay on the south, connects southern Luzon to the Bicol Peninsula. Balayan, Batangas, and Tayabas Bays, reading west to east, scallop the south coast of southern Luzon. The region contains some rough, mountainous country, but much of it, immensely productive agriculturally, is flat or gently

[1] The background of the plans to clear the Visayan Passages, southern Luzon, and the shores of Batangas and Balayan Bays is set forth in Chapter XX, above.

rolling terrain well suited to the development of major air and logistical bases. (*Map IX*)

Three terrain complexes dominate southern Luzon: the Lake Taal Upland on the west, the Mt. Banahao District to the east, and the Batangas Mountains on the south-central coast. The great *caldera*, or volcanic depression of Lake Taal, centering forty miles south of Manila, is fourteen miles long north to south and about eight miles wide. Nearly surrounded by a steep rim, Lake Taal drains into the northeastern corner of Balayan Bay. Rocky, alternating ridges and gullies, radiating like the spokes of a wheel from the encircling escarpment, inhibit movement around the *caldera*.

Mt. Banahao, like the Lake Taal *caldera*, is another volcanic formation, but one that rises sharply from surrounding flat ground. Dominating the eastern section of southern Luzon, 7,150-foot-high Mt. Banahao drops off to Laguna de Bay on the north and to Tayabas Bay on the south. Its eastern slopes fall away to a saddle leading to the southern ridges of the Sierra Madre, in turn descending steeply to Lamon Bay or giving way to the rough hills of the Bondoc Isthmus. Banahao's western slopes descend to flat ground off the eastern side of Mt. Malepunyo, which lies between Mt. Banahao and the eastern ridges of the Lake Taal *caldera*.

The Batangas Mountains, forming a 30-mile-wide peninsula between Batangas and Tayabas Bays, lie southwest of Mt. Banahao, south of Mt. Malepunyo, and southeast of Lake Taal. The mountains drop sharply away on the south to a steep, broken coast line overlooking the Verde Island Passage, the name given that section of the Visayan Passages lying between southern Luzon and northern Mindoro. The northern reaches of the Batangas Mountains slope more gently to a generally flat farming region.

Served by a good highway and railroad network (there are no navigable streams), southern Luzon is compartmentalized by corridors that, separating the principal terrain complexes, channel military traffic. The easiest axis of advance from Manila into southern Luzon is a narrow flat along the western and southwestern shores of Laguna de Bay. From the west side of the Hagonoy Isthmus, separating Laguna de Bay and Manila Bay, two good roads, Routes 25 and 17, follow rising ground from the vicinity of Cavite to the Lake Taal escarpment at Tagaytay Ridge, where the 511th Parachute Infantry had dropped during the 11th Airborne Division's drive from Nasugbu to Manila in February. The ground west of Lake Taal largely confines military maneuver to Route 17 from Tagaytay Ridge to the Nasugbu area. Near Nasugbu the highway turns southeast across rough ground leading to the northwest corner of Balayan Bay. A narrow, flat corridor extends along the northern shore of Balayan Bay and, passing south of Lake Taal, provides access from the west to the northern shores of Batangas Bay. A five-mile-wide corridor separating the Batangas Mountains and the Mt. Malepunyo complex connects the flats at Batangas Bay to coastal plains at Tayabas Bay. Another narrow, east-west corridor, controlled by Mt. Maquiling and associated high ground, follows the southern shore of Laguna de Bay. A third east-west corridor is a mile-wide, sharp defile between the southern section of the Mt. Maquiling complex and the northern slopes of Mt. Malepunyo.

Centering about ten miles east of Lake Taal, Mt. Malepunyo gives way on the west to the most important north-south corridor of southern Luzon—the Lipa Corridor. Connecting the southwestern shores of Laguna de Bay to the Batangas Bay plains, the Lipa Corridor is bounded on the west by the Lake Taal *caldera* and on the east by Mts. Malepunyo and Maquiling. At the center of the Lipa Corridor (which provides access to all the east-west corridors) lies the commercial center of Lipa, near which the Japanese had partially completed an ambitious airfield complex.

Another north-south corridor, between Mts. Maquiling and Malepunyo, on the west, and Mt. Banahao, on the east, connects the southern shore of Laguna de Bay to the northwestern corner of the Tayabas Bay plains. A third north-south corridor, less well-defined than the other two, follows the saddle between Mt. Banahao and the Sierra Madre to join the southeastern corner of Laguna de Bay to the northeastern section of the Tayabas Bay flats.

American planners clearly understood that control of the Lipa Corridor was requisite to the successful prosecution of operations in southern Luzon.[2] XIV Corps, accordingly, planned to drive rapidly south and east through the western and central portions of southern Luzon, securing all the ground east to include the Lipa Corridor. In the course of this drive the corps would clear the northern side of the Visayan Passages east as far as Batangas Bay, at the same time securing the shores of Batangas and Balayan Bays. Then the corps would prepare to strike eastward through the three east-west corridors exiting from the Lipa Corridor, clear the remainder of southern Luzon, and secure the north side of the Visayan Passages east to the Bondoc Isthmus.

To execute this plan XIV Corps had available only the 11th Airborne Division and the separate 158th Regimental Combat Team.[3] These two units were to execute a pincers movement into the Lipa Corridor. One arm—the 11th Airborne Division's 511th Parachute Infantry and 187th Glider Infantry—would strike toward Lipa from the north and northwest, securing the northern end of the Lipa Corridor, the western entrance to the Laguna de Bay east-west corridor, and the western entrance to the east-west corridor between Mts. Malepunyo and Maquiling. The other arm—the 158th RCT—would assemble near Nasugbu and attack southeast along Route 17 to Balayan Bay. Then, swinging eastward, the 158th would clear the shores of Balayan and Batangas Bays, gain control over the southern end of the Lipa Corridor, and close the western entrance to the east-west corridor between Mt. Malepunyo and the Batangas Mountains. Having executed these tasks, the 158th RCT would drive north to seize Lipa and establish contact with the 11th Airborne Division.

The operation would be launched on a bit of a shoestring, especially in the light of intelligence estimates that placed anywhere from 10,000 to 17,000 Japa-

[2] American planning material in this subsection is mainly from: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 60, 62; Sixth Army FO 55, 28 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 156; XIV Corps FO 8, 4 Mar 45; 11th A/B Div FO 20, 5 Mar 45.

[3] For the reasons prompting the assignment of these units to the southern Luzon operation and for the reasons that XIV Corps had no other forces immediately available, see above, Chapter XX.

nese in southern Luzon.[4] The 11th Airborne Division would strike into southern Luzon with only 7,000 effectives, all of whom had had scant rest after the division had completed its operations at Manila.[5] The 158th RCT, also understrength, had had about two weeks rest after its arduous campaign in the Rosario-Damortis area at Lingayen Gulf. Combined, the two units had an effective strength of little more than two-thirds that of a standard infantry division, and not all this strength would be immediately available for the new offensive. Because its reinforcing units from the 24th Infantry Division had to leave Luzon for operations in the Southern Philippines, the 11th Airborne Division would have to employ its 188th Glider Infantry to protect its line of communications.

Japanese Defensive Preparations

General Yokoyama, commanding the *Shimbu Group*, had vested responsibility for the defense of southern Luzon in the *Fuji Force*, composed of the *17th Infantry* (less the *3d Battalion*) of the *8th Division*; the *3d Battalion*, reinforced, of the same division's *31st Infantry*; a provisional infantry battalion of unknown strength; a battalion and a half of mixed artillery; and elements of various *8th Division* service units.[6] Colonel Fujishige, commanding the *Fuji Force* (and the *17th Infantry* as well), also had control for ground operational purposes of the suicide boat squadrons and base battalions of the *2d Surface Raiding Base Force*, and of Japanese naval troops who had escaped from the Manila Bay islands. Another group under Fujishige's command were the troops organic to or attached to the *86th Airfield Battalion*, a *4th Air Army* ground unit stationed at Lipa.

Fujishige's total strength numbered approximately 13,000 men, of whom no more than 3,000 were trained infantry combat effectives. Some 2,500 of his 13,000, including about 750 infantrymen, were cut off west of Lake Taal. Southwest of Tagaytay Ridge were the remnants of the *West Sector Unit* (built around the *3d Battalion, 31st Infantry*), while in the rough hills south of Ternate was the decimated *111th Surface Raiding Base Battalion* of the *2d Surface Raiding Base Force*, holed up along with most of the naval troops who remained alive.

It was not Fujishige's mission to hold the northern shore of the Visayan Passages. Rather, General Yokoyama had directed him to prevent American forces from rounding the eastern shore of Laguna de Bay to outflank the *Shimbu Group*'s main defenses. General Yokoyama, from the first, left Colonel Fujishige plenty of leeway in arranging his defenses—in fact, after 1 March Yokoyama had little other choice. By that time communications had broken down

[4] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 62; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 167; XIV Corps, G–2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation . . . Batangas Bay, 3 Mar 45, atchd to XIV Corps FO 8, 4 Mar 45.

[5] 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, p. 57.

[6] This subsection is based on: Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 1–2, 9, 25–26, 32–33, and Map 1; Tsutsumi Statement, States, IV, 426–28; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 13, 17–19, 32–35; Kuriya Statement, States, II, 371–73; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns in the Batangas Area, *passim*; see also above, chs. XII and XIX.

between the *Fuji Force* and *Shimbu Group* headquarters, and Fujishige was on his own.

The disposition of his forces indicates that Fujishige had analyzed the military topography of southern Luzon in much the same manner as had American planners. For example, he deployed a considerable portion of his strength along a line extending from Los Baños, on the south-central shore of Laguna de Bay, southwest across Mt. Maquiling to Santo Tomas, where Routes 1 and 19 joined twelve miles north of Lipa. From this line he controlled not only the northern section of the Lipa Corridor but also the western entrance to the east-west corridor between Mts. Maquiling and Malepunyo. Fujishige also stationed troops at Tanauan, two miles south of Santo Tomas, to block a third-class road that came into the Lipa Corridor from the northeastern corner of Lake Taal, connecting that corner to Tagaytay Ridge by other poor roads that could only support light military traffic.

Fujishige's defense of the southern entrance to the Lipa Corridor was based upon positions extending from Mt. Macolod, at the southeastern corner of Lake Taal, southeast across Route 417, the best road leading north from Batangas Bay. To protect his rear or eastern flank against surprise attack, he stationed small detachments at various road junctions in the Tayabas Bay plains. He split his best trained units—the two battalions of the *17th Infantry*—into small increments. Having only these two battalions of regular infantry, he divided them among many defensive positions, apparently in the hope that he could thus bolster the effectiveness of the many third-class and provisional units that made up the bulk of his strength. He held out no central reserve.

The *Fuji Force* had plenty of scores to settle with both the Americans and Filipinos in southern Luzon, and from the many atrocities that occurred in the region after the 11th Airborne Division had landed at Nasugbu, it appears that the *Fuji Force* did not care how it went about settling those scores. First, Fujishige had lost some of his best troops—those of the *West Sector Unit*—to the 11th Airborne Division during February. Second, the 11th Airborne had trapped approximately another 1,350 men in the Ternate region. Third, by 1 March Allied Air Forces planes and Allied Naval Forces PT boats had sought out and destroyed almost all the suicide boats of the *2d Surface Raiding Base Force.* Fourth, southern Luzon had become a veritable hornets' nest of guerrilla activity, creating a situation with which Colonel Fujishige was scarcely able to cope. Fifth, and probably the most embarrassing and vexing, Fil-American forces had snatched over 2,000 American and Allied civilian internees almost from under Fujishige's eyes.

On the morning of 24 February a task force composed of the 1st Battalion, 188th Glider Infantry, elements of the 511th Parachute Infantry, attached guerrillas, and supporting artillery, tank destroyers, and amphibious tractors made a daring, carefully timed rescue of 2,147 internees from an interment camp near Los Baños on Laguna de Bay. Guerrillas and elements of the 188th Glider Infantry invested the camp by land, coming in from the west; other troops of the 188th Infantry came across Laguna de Bay by amphibious tractors, and troopers of the 511th Infantry dropped onto the camp

proper. Annihilating the Japanese garrison of nearly 250, the task force escaped through enemy-controlled territory before Fujishige was able to organize a counterstroke.[7]

The March Offensive in Southern Luzon

The northern arm of the pincers in southern Luzon began to move on 7 March, when the 187th Glider Infantry descended the steep southern slopes of Tagaytay Ridge to the northern shore of Lake Taal.[8] Turning east, the regiment met no opposition until, on the afternoon of the 8th, it came upon *Fuji Force* defenses at a hill two miles west of Tanauan. With the aid of close air and artillery support the regiment overran these defenses on 11 March, but then halted pending the outcome of the 511th Infantry's attack south through the Lipa Corridor toward Santo Tomas.

The 511th had assembled at barrio Real, seven miles north of Santo Tomas. Here Route 1, which runs from Manila to Tanauan and then east through the corridor between Mts. Maquiling and Malepunyo, joins Route 21, leading eastward, through Los Baños, along the south shore of Laguna de Bay. The 511th Infantry's first task was to reduce *Fuji Force* defenses on Mt. Bijiang, a rough peak located at the northwestern corner of the Mt. Maquiling hill mass and controlling Routes 1 and 21 for about five miles south and southeast of Real. The 511th Infantry launched unsuccessful frontal attacks against Mt. Bijiang from 10 through 13 March. Thereafter, supporting air and artillery reduced the defenses, which guerrillas finally overran on the 19th. Without waiting for this inevitable outcome, elements of the 511th had pushed down Route 1 to within a mile of Santo Tomas. Meanwhile, other troops of the regiment had moved east along Route 21 to a point about three miles short of Los Baños, where the Japanese had reorganized their defenses.

Neither the 511th Infantry nor the 187th Infantry, nor even both operating in concert, had the strength required to overrun the strong Japanese positions in the Santo Tomas–Tanauan region. Therefore, until 23 March, the two regiments mopped up in the areas they already held, warded off numerous small-scale Japanese counterattacks, patrolled to locate Japanese defenses, and directed air and artillery bombardments on Japanese positions. Elements of the 1st Cavalry relieved both units on 23 March.

To the southwest and south, meanwhile, the 158th RCT had made somewhat greater progress.[9] Striking from the vicinity of Nasugbu on 4 March, the 158th Infantry secured the town of Balayan, at the northwestern corner of Balayan Bay, the same day. The regiment then drove eastward against negligible opposition, cleared the northern

[7] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 41.

[8] Information on 11th Airborne Division operations in this subsection is from: XIV Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 5–24 Mar 45; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 8, 18–20, 32; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 102–05; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 2–24 Mar 45; 187th Gli Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–9; 187th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 1–24 Mar 45; 511th Prcht Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–24; 511th Inf S–2/S–3 Jnl, 4–24 Mar 45.

[9] Additional sources of information for 158th RCT operations are: 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 17–23; 158th Inf S–3 Rpt Luzon, Balayan-Batangas Opn, pp. 1–3; 158th RCT S–3 Per Rpt, 4–24 Mar 45.

shores of Balayan and Batangas Bays, and on 11 March reached the town of Batangas, on the northeastern shore of Batangas Bay. On its way east the regiment had bypassed strong elements of the *2d Surface Raiding Base Force* on the Calumpan Peninsula, which separates Balayan and Batangas Bays. The regiment had to clear the peninsula to assure the security of the northern side of the Verde Island Passage and to make the shores of Balayan and Batangas Bays safe for base development; it gave the job to a reinforced battalion. In an operation marked by minor shore-to-shore operations by both Japanese and American units, the American force cleared the peninsula by 16 March. Most of the Japanese garrison escaped to islands in the Verde Island Passage or to the Lubang Islands, which control the western entrance to the Visayan Passages.

Meanwhile, other elements of the 158th Infantry had made contact with strong Japanese defenses blocking Route 417—the Batangas-Lipa road—at Mt. Macolod. Numbering some 1,250 men in all, the Japanese had the support of a 300-mm. howitzer, two 70-mm. guns, ten or more 81-mm. mortars, a few lighter mortars, and a wealth of machine guns and machine cannon, including many removed from disabled Japanese aircraft at the Lipa airstrips. The 158th Infantry, launching an attack at Mt. Macolod on 19 March, had the support of two 105-mm. and two 155-mm. howitzer battalions.

From 19 through 23 March the 158th Infantry overran outer defenses east of Route 417 and southeast of Mt. Macolod, which lay west of the road. But the regiment made little progress at Mt. Macolod proper and by 23 March, when it had to disengage to prepare for operations on the Bicol Peninsula, the Japanese still had a firm hold on the mountain.

Thus, by 23 March the 11th Airborne Division and the 158th RCT had closed with the *Fuji Force* main line of resistance at the northern and southern entrances to the Lipa Corridor, had cleared the shores of Balayan and Batangas Bays, and had secured the northern side of the Verde Island Passage. Simultaneously, elements of the 11th Airborne Division had considerably reduced the threat to its line of communications posed by the *Fuji Force* units isolated west of Lake Taal, although it was 1 April before the 188th Infantry overcame the last organized resistance in the rough hills south of Ternate. Casualties for the period from 4 through 23 March were:[10]

	U.S. Casualties			*Japanese*
Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*	*Killed*
187th Infantry	5	15	20	205
188th Infantry	20	30	50	250
511th Infantry	15	85	100	350
158th Infantry	35	125	160	685
Attached guerrillas	15	45	60	(unknown)
Total	90	300	390	1,490

Securing the Lipa Corridor

Sixth Army plans to speed the clearing of the rest of the northern side of the Visayan Passages by striking into the Bicol Peninsula caused Krueger to re-

[10] Most of the guerrillas operated with the 188th Infantry in the region west of Lake Taal, but each of the other units has some guerrillas attached. No breakdown for Japanese killed by guerrillas is available; such figures are included in the regimental totals.

lieve the 158th RCT at Mt. Macolod.[11] Initially, Krueger had intended to relieve the 158th RCT on 17 March, simultaneously pulling the 511th Infantry (less 3d Battalion) out of the lines in southern Luzon to act as Sixth Army Reserve for the Bicol Peninsula operation. Upon reexamination of his plan, Krueger began to fear that with the strength left to it the 11th Airborne Division might find it impossible to hold the gains made in southern Luzon by mid-March. Also, he learned that the Allied Air Forces and the Allied Naval Forces could not make ready for the Bicol attack as soon as they had anticipated. Accordingly, Krueger postponed the Bicol invasion a week, giving himself time to move the 1st Cavalry Division into southern Luzon before the 158th RCT had to leave.

Desperately in need of rest and rehabilitation after its fighting in Manila and against the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east of the city, the 1st Cavalry Division got only a ten-day breather before moving into southern Luzon. The 43d Division took over from the cavalry unit on the *Shimbu* front on 12 March, and on the 23d the 1st Cavalry Division relieved all elements of the 11th Airborne Division in the Santo Tomas–Tanauan area at the northern end of the Lipa Corridor. On the same day, in a rapid truck movement around the west side of Lake Taal, the 11th Airborne Division relieved the 158th RCT in the Mt. Macolod sector.

XIV Corps now divided southern Luzon so as to place Lipa, Mt. Macolod, and Mt. Malepunyo in the 11th Airborne Division's sector in the south; the 1st Cavalry Division had the region to the north. General Griswold, the corps commander, directed the 11th Airborne to complete the reduction of Japanese defenses at Mt. Macolod, seize Lipa, and clear Route 19, the main road through the Lipa Corridor, for five miles north of Lipa. The 1st Cavalry Division would seize Santo Tomas and Tanauan and advance south along Route 19 to gain contact with the 11th Airborne Division.

The 11th Airborne Division again faced the problem of assembling sufficient strength to execute its missions. The division controlled only one battalion of the 511th Infantry, and one of the 188th Infantry's two battalions was still engaged south of Ternate. General Swing organized his remaining units into two regimental task forces. The 187th Infantry, reinforced by tanks, guerrillas, and artillery, was to seize Mt. Macolod; the 188th Infantry, less its 1st Battalion but with the 511th Infantry's 3d Battalion attached, would strike toward Lipa up roads lying east of Mt. Macolod. Tank destroyers and guerrillas reinforced the 188th Infantry's groupment. The 1st Cavalry Division assigned responsibility for its drive south through the Lipa Corridor to the 2d Cavalry Brigade. The 1st Cavalry Brigade would secure the division's rear area, mop up at Mt. Maquiling, and advance east along the south shore of Laguna de Bay as far as Los Baños.

Except at Mt. Macolod, the task of clearing the Lipa Corridor proved unex-

[11] Planning material in this subsection is from: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 60, 63–64; Sixth Army FO's 53, 19 Feb, 55, 28 Feb, 56, 6 Mar, 57, 11 Mar 45, and Amendment No. 1, 13 Mar 45, to FO 57, all in *ibid.*, I, 155–58; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 171–72; XIV Corps Opns Memos 40 and 41, 19 and 22 Mar 45; 11th A/B Div FO 22, 24 Mar 45; 1st Cav Div Opns Memos 13, 14, and 15, dated 19, 23, and 24 Mar 45.



LIPA AFTER BOMBARDMENT

pectedly easy. Leaving the town of Batangas on 24 March, the 188th Infantry task force encountered no serious resistance until, on the evening of the 26th, it reached hill defenses two and a half miles southeast of Lipa held by the *Fuji Force's 86th Airfield Battalion.*[12] The next day the task force overran the Japanese positions, and during the following night most of the Japanese remaining in the Lipa area withdrew eastward to Mt. Malepunyo, after allegedly setting fire to the town. Actually, American air and artillery bombardments had already battered Lipa beyond recognition. The fire, no matter how started, could have done little additional damage.

The 2d Cavalry Brigade had moved equally fast.[13] The 8th Cavalry took

[12] Information on 11th Airborne Division operations in this subsection is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 175–78, 193–95; XIV Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 23 Mar–22 Apr 45; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–8, 20–22, 34; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 107–13; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 24 Mar–22 Apr 45; 188th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 14–16.

[13] Information on 1st Cavalry Division operations in this subsection is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 175–78, 180; XIV Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 24–30 Mar 45; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–22; 2d Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, p. 9; 7th Cav Rpt Luzon, Los Baños–Malvar Phase, *passim*; 8th Cav Rpt Luzon, Santo Tomas–Lipa Phase, *passim*; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 42–46; 1st Cav Div G–3 Rpts, 23–30 Mar 45; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Rpts, 25–30 Mar 45; 12th Cav Unit Rpts, 25–30 Mar 45.

Santo Tomas on 24 March after a sharp fight; Tanauan fell on the 26th as Japanese resistance throughout the 2d Brigade's sector began to collapse. On the 27th, XIV Corps reassigned responsibility for the capture of Lipa to the 1st Cavalry Division,[14] and behind close air support that completed the destruction of the town, the 8th Cavalry secured Lipa against little opposition on 29 March. That evening the regiment made contact with patrols of the 188th Infantry task force south of Lipa.

Meanwhile, troops of the 7th Cavalry had advanced about five miles east into the corridor between Mts. Maquiling and Malepunyo. The 1st Cavalry Brigade had been making good progress along the Route 21 corridor on the south shore of Laguna de Bay—it took Los Baños on the 25th, and by the 29th had troops four miles beyond that town. Reconnaissance elements moved across Laguna de Bay in small craft and landed near the southeastern corner of the lake, finding few signs of Japanese. The 1st Cavalry Division and the 188th Infantry task force had completed their shares in the operations to secure the Lipa Corridor and both were ready to swing eastward in strength through the east-west corridors. At Mt. Macolod, however, the 187th Infantry task force was facing a far different situation.

The 187th began its attack at Mt. Macolod on 24 March, but it was not until 1 April that the task force, having encircled the landward sides of the terrain feature, was able to concentrate its entire strength against the main Japanese defenses. Then, down to an effective strength of less than 1,250 men, the task force launched an unsuccessful assault against the Japanese defenders—300 men holding well-prepared positions in excellent defensive terrain.

There was a hiatus in operations at Mt. Macolod from 3 through 17 April, when the bulk of the 187th Infantry concentrated near Lipa. The regiment renewed the attack on the 18th with reinforcements including a company each of medium tanks, tank destroyers, and 4.2-inch mortars, and over 500 guerrillas. By 21 April the reinforced regiment had overcome the last resistance, completing the job that the 158th RCT had started on 19 March.

Sweeping Eastward

While the 187th Infantry had been reducing the defenses at Mt. Macolod, the rest of XIV Corps had been driving east beyond the Lipa Corridor. Two factors prompted General Griswold to strike east before Mt. Macolod fell. First, General Krueger was putting pressure on the corps to clear the Tayabas Bay section of the northern side of the Visayan Passages quickly. Second, in late March, the Sixth Army commander had directed XI and XIV Corps to gain contact along the eastern shore of Laguna de Bay in order to prevent troops of the *Fuji Force* from escaping from southern Luzon in order to join the main body of the *Shimbu Group*.[15]

Griswold planned to place the emphasis on his drive eastward on his left, the 1st Cavalry Division's sector, not only because of Krueger's orders to make contact with XI Corps east of Laguna de Bay but also because the 11th Airborne

[14] XIV Corps Opns Memo 42, 27 Mar 45.

[15] See also above, ch. XXII.

Division was, in late March, too scattered and too weak to undertake a concerted attack. As of 30 March the 187th Infantry still had its hands full at Mt Macolod; the 511th Infantry, less 3d Battalion, was still in Sixth Army Reserve for the Bicol Peninsula operation; and one battalion of the 188th Infantry was still occupied west of Lake Taal. Griswold therefore expected little more from the 11th Airborne Division, at least for the time being, than reconnaissance eastward toward Tayabas Bay from the southern part of Lipa Corridor.[16]

The new XIV Corps drive started on 30 March as the 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Brigade, struck eastward from the vicinity of Los Baños.[17] The regiment moved first to Calauan, seven miles beyond Los Baños, and then marched southward along a secondary road toward San Pablo, at the eastern exit to the east-west corridor between Mts. Maquiling and Malepunyo. Strong Japanese forces held defenses in rocky, bare-sloped hills between Calauan and San Pablo, but in an attack lasting from 1 through 5 April the 12th Cavalry overran those positions, losing 20 men killed and 65 wounded while killing about 140 Japanese. On the last day of this fight the 12th Cavalry made contact with 5th Cavalry patrols coming north from San Pablo, seven miles south of Calauan. The 5th and 7th Cavalry Regiments had fought their way through the Mt. Maquiling–Mt. Malepunyo corridor against stiff but rather disorganized Japanese opposition and had reached San Pablo on 2 April.

On 5 April the 1st Cavalry Brigade and elements of the 8th Cavalry from the 2d Brigade began patrolling northeast, east, and southeast from San Pablo and Calauan, rounding the southeast corner of Laguna de Bay and probing into the north-south corridor between Mts. Malepunyo and Banahao. Resistance melted away and the cavalrymen encountered only small, disorganized groups of Japanese in the area patrolled. On 6 April the 5th Cavalry made contact with XI Corps troops at the southeastern corner of Laguna de Bay, thus completing one of the XIV Corps tasks.[18]

Twenty-odd miles to the south, meanwhile, the 11th Airborne Division had accomplished far more than General Griswold had expected of it.[19] Interpreting its reconnaissance role in the broadest fashion, the 11th Airborne Division on 1 April had started pushing elements of the 188th Infantry east through the corridor between Mt. Malepunyo and the Batangas Mountains. The leading troops emerged at Tiaong, in the north-south corridor between Mts. Malepunyo and Banahao, on 3 April, and the next day established contact with 5th Cavalry patrols from San Pablo, eight miles to the north. The 188th Infantry next dispatched patrols into the Tayabas Plains region south of

[16] Sixth Army FO 58, 24 Mar 45; XIV Corps FO 10, 30 Mar 45; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 189–90.

[17] Information on 1st Cavalry Division operations in this subsection is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 183–86, 192; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–27; 1st Cav Div G–3 Rpts, 30 Mar–12 Apr 45; 2d Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, p. 9; 2d Cav Brig Opns Rpt, 31 Mar–11 Apr 45; 1st Cav Brig Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–6; 1st Cav Brig S–3 Rpts, 31 Mar–11 Apr 45.

[18] See also above, ch. XXII.

[19] Information on 11th Airborne Division operations in this subsection is from: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 189–92; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–8, 20–21; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 30 Mar–12 Apr 45; XIV Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 30 Mar–12 Mar 45; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 110–11; 188th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 15–16.

Mt. Banahao, finding the plains free of Japanese and under the control of Filipino guerrillas. When on 6 April troops of the 188th Infantry reached Lucena, the largest town on Tayabas Bay, XIV Corps had finished the job of securing the northern side of the Visayan Passages in its zone.

Mop-up in Southern Luzon

From Lucena, Route 1 ran eastward across the Bondoc Isthmus to Atimonan on Lamon Bay; Route 23 went north from Lucena through the corridor between Mt. Banahao and the Sierra Madre to a junction with Route 21 at Pagsanjan, point of contact between the XI and XIV Corps. On 7 April patrols of the 11th Airborne Division started north from Lucena and 1st Cavalry Division patrols left Pagsanjan on their way south. Making contact on 10 April, the patrols from the two divisions secured the Mt. Banahao–Sierra Madre corridor against negligible resistance.

General Krueger had already directed XIV Corps to continue eastward from the Banahao–Sierra Madre corridor to the shores of Lamon Bay in order to seal off the Bicol Peninsula and make ready to launch a drive southeast through the peninsula to gain contact with the 158th RCT, coming northwest.[20] Accordingly, on 11 April a company of the 188th Infantry, meeting little opposition, followed Route 1 across the Bondoc Isthmus to Atimonan. The previous day troops of the 5th Cavalry had reached Lamon Bay at Mauban, eighteen miles northwest of Atimonan. Strategically, the campaign in southern Luzon had ended—the only task still facing XIV Corps was to track down and destroy organized remnants of the *Fuji Force*.

Before the beginning of April XIV Corps had learned that the *Fuji Force* was withdrawing into the Mt. Malepunyo hill complex. Indeed, from the inception of operations in southern Luzon, Colonel Fujishige had included such a withdrawal in his plans and had long since begun preparations for a last-ditch stand at Mt. Malepunyo. But Fujishige had expected his Lipa Corridor defenses to hold out longer than they did, and he had not anticipated that his units west of Lake Taal would be cut off. As a result, he had gathered only 4,000 troops at Mt. Malepunyo by early April; of these no more than 1,800 were combat effectives, and he was unable to man many of his prepared defenses. Over 2,000 more troops of the *Fuji Force* were alive on southern Luzon in early April, but they had little hope of reaching Mt. Malepunyo.[21]

The forces available to XIV Corps for an attack against Mt. Malepunyo included only the 8th Cavalry, one squadron of the 7th Cavalry, and the 511th Parachute Infantry, released from Sixth Army Reserve on 12 April. The 1st Cavalry Brigade was committed to the thrust into the Bicol Peninsula; the 7th

[20] Sixth Army FO 59, 7 Apr 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 163; XIV Corps FO 11, 9 Apr, 45.

[21] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 195; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–23, 36; Flanagan, *The Angels*, p. 126 (Interrog of Fujishige); 1st Cav Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–23, and Map 6. Actually, some 8,500 *Fuji Force* troops were probably alive at the end of March, the 6,000 accounted for above and possibly as many as 2,500 who had escaped around the eastern shore of Laguna de Bay. Using these figures, it appears that Fujishige had lost around 5,000 men killed since the 11th Airborne Division had landed at Nasugbu on 31 January.

Cavalry, less one squadron, had moved north of Laguna de Bay to relieve XI Corps units in the Santa Maria Valley; the 187th and 188th Infantry Regiments were needed for mopping up and security missions throughout the rest of southern Luzon.[22]

During the period 6–12 April patrols had discovered that the principal *Fuji Force* defenses were located in the northwestern quadrant of the Malepunyo complex, and by the 16th preliminary attacks had compressed resistance into an area around Mt. Mataasna-Bundoc, a peak 2,375 feet high at the northwestern shoulder of the hill mass.[23] Further attacks from 17 through 21 April, productive of limited results, served mainly to illustrate the fact that more strength was needed. Accordingly, XIV Corps added the 188th Infantry to the attacking force, simultaneously unifying the command (previously divided between the 511th Infantry and the 2d Cavalry Brigade) under Headquarters, 11th Airborne Division.

On 27 April, following two days' bombardment by seven battalions of artillery, the 511th Infantry, the 188th Infantry, the 8th Cavalry, one squadron of the 7th Cavalry, and almost 1,000 attached guerrillas launched a final attack. By coincidence, Colonel Fujishige had started to withdraw his remaining troops eastward to Mt. Banahao that very day, and so found his defensive and withdrawal plans completely upset. By dark on the 30th the combined forces under 11th Airborne Division control had overcome organized resistance at Mt. Malepunyo. Since 6 April Colonel Fujishige had lost almost 2,500 men killed in the futile defense of the Malepunyo hill mass.

Colonel Fujishige ultimately gathered over 2,000 troops along the upper slopes of Mt. Banahao, including a few men who infiltrated through XIV Corps lines from the region west of Lake Taal. The *Fuji Force* commander and his remnants were quite content to remain in hiding for the rest of the war, and somehow 1st Cavalry Division and guerrilla patrols failed to discover them. At the end of the war the colonel came down off Mt. Banahao to surrender with nearly 2,000 men.[24]

Clearing the Smaller Islands

Even before XIV Corps had started into southern Luzon to secure the northern shores of the Visayan Passages, the Eighth Army had instituted its campaign to clear the southern side of San Bernardino Strait—the eastern entrance to the water passes—and to seize the small islands controlling their inner passages. As a matter of fact, operations leading to the clearing of Eighth Army's portion of the Visayan Passages had begun early in January as part of the deception activities that preceded Sixth

[22] XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, p. 199; Sixth Army FO 60, 12 Apr 45. Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 163; XIV Corps FO 12, 11 Apr 45; 11th A/B FO 25, 12 Apr 45.

[23] Sources for the Mt. Malepunyo story are: XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 192, 195–203; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 8, 21–22; Flanagan, *The Angels*, pp. 112–18; 11th A/B Div G–3 Per Rpts, 6 Apr–3 May 45; 511th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–30; 188th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 18–19; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 23–32; 1st Cav Div G–2 Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–23; 1st Cav Div G–3 Rpts, 6–22 Apr 45.

[24] Fujishige was executed after the war as a war criminal, being held responsible for crimes allegedly committed by his troops in southern Luzon.

Army's assault at Lingayen Gulf. At the time, elements of the Western Visayan Task Force from southwestern Mindoro had secured the northern and eastern coasts of Mindoro and had seized Marinduque Island, thirty miles east of Mindoro.[25] Troops of the 19th and 21st Infantry Regiments, 24th Division, had executed these early attacks. The first operations Eighth Army undertook in accordance with plans drawn specifically for clearing the Visayan Passages were carried out between mid-February and early March by the Americal Division from bases on Samar Island, north of Leyte.

The Eastern Side of the Inner Passes

Eighth Army's plan called for the Americal Division, beginning on 19 February, to seize northwestern Samar and adjacent islets for the purpose of securing the southern side of San Bernardino Strait, between Samar and the Bicol Peninsula.[26] A small task force built around the 1st Battalion of the division's 182d Infantry executed the attack. Landing craft of the 542d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, 2d Engineer Special Brigade, transported the battalion northward from a base in west-central Samar, and also carried forward a battery of 105-mm. howitzers of the 246th Field Artillery Battalion, Americal Division. The 1st Battalion, 182d Infantry, landed first on Capul Island, ten miles off Samar's northwestern coast, during the afternoon of 19 February. (*Map X*) By the 25th the battalion had secured Capul at the cost of 5 men killed and 10 wounded; the Japanese lost 75 men killed. That the Japanese might have had some thought of employing Capul as a base from which to try to deny San Bernardino Strait to Allied shipping is indicated by the fact that the 1st Battalion, 182d Infantry, captured three 75-mm. artillery pieces on the island.

On 20 February elements of the 1st Battalion, 182d, attacked Biri Island and associated islets ten miles off Samar's northern coast. One infantry company, carried aboard four engineer LCM's, made the assault on Biri, supported by four PT boats and by a single P–38 plane, which strafed the beach before the landing. About 150 yards from shore the LCM's struck a reef, simultaneously encountering intense machine gun and mortar fire from the Japanese on the island. This fire killed or wounded many of the engineer crewmen, but fortunately some of the infantrymen, experienced in amphibious operations, had had sufficient instruction in the operation of LCM's to back the craft off and reassemble at a safe distance.

Meanwhile, a 105-mm. howitzer battery of Americal Division artillery had landed on an islet south of Biri and had set up to bombard the island in support of another assault. Marine Corps SBD's from a field in southern Samar provided additional support. Striking for a different beach, the 182d Infantry's

[25] See above, ch. III.

[26] This subsection is based mainly on: Eighth Army Rpt Leyte–Samar–Visayan Passages, pp. 21–23; Eighth Army FO 19, 15 Feb 45; X Corps, Plan for Clearing the Southern Exits to San Bernardino Strait and Verde Island Passages, 16 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages; Capt. Francis D. Cronin, *Under the Southern Cross, The Saga of the Americal Division* (Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1951), pp. 246–64; Americal Div Opns Rpt Leyte, an. I, p. 1.

company made a successful landing during the afternoon. By 23 February, when the Americal Division declared Biri secure, troops of the 182d Infantry had killed some 70 Japanese on the island. Losses of the American engineers and infantrymen involved totaled approximately 5 killed and 50 wounded.

Following the action at Biri, troops of the 1st Battalion, 182d Infantry, found other islets off Samar void of Japanese and, against no resistance, established a base on Samar's northwestern tip. Patrols operating from this base found no Japanese on the north coast, but located a scattered group southward along the west coast. Reinforced by elements of the 1st Filipino Infantry, U.S. Army,[27] the 182d's battalion overran organized resistance on northwestern Samar by 1 March, and on the 4th of the month relinquished responsibility for patrolling in the region to the 1st Filipino Infantry and attached guerrillas. The southern side of San Bernardino Strait was secure.

The Americal Division next moved to other islands in the eastern section of the Visayan Passages. On 3 March troops of the reinforced 1st Battalion, 132d Infantry, went ashore at Ticao Island, twenty-five miles northwest of Capul Island and only twelve miles from the nearest point of the Bicol Peninsula. Other troops of the 132d landed the same day at Burias Island, twenty miles northwest of Ticao. The battalion found no Japanese on Ticao but killed 60 of a 100-man garrison on Burias. Guerrillas took over at both islands on 11 March, bringing to an end the Americal Division's share in the operations to clear the Visayan Passages.

The Western and Central Islands

While the Americal Division was operating at the eastern entrance to the Visayan Passages, units of the 24th Division launched attacks from Mindoro to secure the western exits of the passages. The 24th Division's first objective was Verde Island, controlling the Verde Island Passage between Mindoro and Luzon and believed to be garrisoned by a Japanese force manning four or five 75-mm. guns.[28] A reinforced company of the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, landed on Verde Island on 23 February, killed about 20 Japanese, captured three 75-mm. pieces, and returned to Mindoro on the 26th, leaving guerrillas to garrison the island. The guerrillas were unable to overcome the remaining Japanese resistance and during the period 27 February–1 March the 19th Infantry and the 21st Infantry sent troops back to Verde, troops that broke the last opposition on 3 March. Japanese casualties on Verde Island totaled about 80 men killed; the American units lost 6 wounded.

The next objective was the Lubang Islands, fifty-five miles west of Verde and blocking the western entrance to the

[27] Composed mainly of Filipino residents of the United States.

[28] Information on the Verde Island operation is from: Ltr, Maj Gen Roscoe B. Woodruff (CG 24th Div) to CG Eighth Army, 20 Feb 45, sub: Plan to Clear Verde Island, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages; Eighth Army G–3 Opns Rpts, 24 Feb–3 Mar 45; 24th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 24 Feb–3 Mar 45; Eighth Army Rpt Leyte–Samar–Visayan Passages, pp. 24–26; I.CI (I.) Gp 72, Rpt on Clearing . . . Verde Is, 28 Feb 45, *passim;* Rads, 24th Div to Eighth Army, CA–924 and CA–939, 25 Feb 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages.

Verde Island Passage.[29] On 28 February the reinforced 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, preceded the previous night by a small reconnaissance force, made an unopposed landing on Lubang, the main island of the group, and the Japanese fled into the hilly, jungled interior. On 9 March Company E, 19th Infantry, relieved the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, and at the end of the month responsibility for mopping up passed to local guerrillas. For the American forces involved the cost of securing Lubang—the other islands of the group proved void of Japanese—was about 10 men killed and 20 wounded. The Japanese lost 230 killed, among them some who had fled to Lubang as the 158th Infantry, in southern Luzon, had cleared the Calumpan Peninsula between Balayan and Batangas Bays.

The Eighth Army now turned its attention to the central islands of the Visayan Passages—the islands of the Sibuyan Sea, east of Mindoro. Here the first objectives were Romblon, fifty miles east of Mindoro, and Simara, twenty-five miles northwest of Romblon.[30] In order to achieve surprise, reinforced companies of the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, attempted landings on each island during the night of 11–12 March despite rough seas, pitch dark, and frequent rain squalls. The night landing at Romblon went off successfully, but at Simara poor visibility and the failure of prearranged signals from guerrillas forced postponement until dawn.

Between 12 and 21 March 19th Infantry troops on Simara killed almost 120 Japanese, losing 10 men killed and 20 wounded before leaving the island to guerrillas and moving on to Romblon. The 19th Infantry's elements overcame the last resistance at Romblon on 3 April, having lost 15 men killed and 35 wounded and having killed 140 Japanese. Guerrillas had already secured the larger islands of Tablas and Sibuyan, respectively west and southeast of Romblon.

The seizure of Romblon and Simara left only Masbate, fifty miles west of Samar, among the major islands of the Visayan Passages still partially under Japanese control.[31] The Japanese garrison on Masbate, numbering about 400 troops, was composed mainly of disorganized and ill-equipped survivors of ships sunk during the Japanese attempts to reinforce Leyte in the fall of 1944. Filipino guerrillas, by late March 1945, already controlled much of Masbate, and on the 29th of the month guerrilla reinforcements from Leyte landed on the island behind a short bombardment executed by LCI(G)'s of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. The 2d Battalion of the 108th Infantry, 40th Division, reached Masbate from Leyte in two echelons on 3 and 7 April. Pursuing scattered Japa-

[29] Information on the Lubang Islands operation is from: Rpt, Eighth Army G–3 Liaison Off with 24th Div to ACofS G–3 Eighth Army, 2 Mar 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages; Eighth Army G–3 Opns Rpts, 1–9 Mar 45; 24th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 28 Feb–7 Mar 45; TU 78.9.7, Rpt on Lubang Is Opn, 9 Mar 45, *passim*; Eighth Army Rpt Leyte–Samar–Visayan Passages, p. 26.

[30] Information on Romblon and Simara is from: Eighth Army FO 22, 5 Mar 45, and 24th Div FO 3, 7 Mar 45, both in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages; Eighth Army Rpt Leyte–Samar–Visayan Passages, pp. 28–29; Eighth Army G–3 Opns Rpts, 11 Mar–4 Apr 45; 24th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 10 Mar–3 Apr 45; TU 78.9.7, Rpt on Simara–Romblon Opn, 17 Mar 45, *passim*.

[31] Information on the Masbate operation is from: Eighth Army G–3 Opns Rpts, 2–3 Apr 45; Eighth Army Rpt Leyte–Samar–Visayan Passages, p. 29.

nese remnants through Masbate's hills and jungles, the combined Fil-American forces killed about 120 Japanese and captured 15 by 4 May, when the 108th Infantry's battalion returned to Leyte. U.S. Army losses on Masbate were approximately 5 men killed and 10 wounded.

The Japanese on Masbate had never posed a real threat to American control of the Visayan Passages, a fact that General Eichelberger, the Eighth Army commander, had recognized as early as 29 March when the guerrilla force from Leyte dispersed the first group of Japanese encountered on the island. Accordingly, on 5 April, Eichelberger reported to General MacArthur that the Eighth Army's share in the operations to secure the Visayan Passages had been brought to a successful conclusion.[32] The next day, in southern Luzon, the 188th Infantry of the 11th Airborne Division made contact with guerrillas along the shores of Tayabas Bay, thus completing operations to secure the northern side of the Visayan Passages east to the Bicol Peninsula. All that remained was for the 158th RCT to clear the Bicol Peninsula, a task the regimental combat team had been about since 1 April.

The Bicol Peninsula Operation

The Preliminaries

Very irregularly shaped and characterized by rough, mountainous terrain of volcanic origin, the Bicol Peninsula stretches southeast from Atimonan on the Lamon Bay shore of the Bondoc Isthmus nearly 170 miles to the tip of the subsidiary Sorsogon Peninsula, Luzon's most southerly extension.[33] The best route of communication in prewar days was a branch of the Manila Railroad that wound its way through the peninsula to Legaspi, forty miles northwest of the Sorsogon Peninsula's tip. The railroad, however, had been unusable at least since December 1944, when Allied Air Forces planes from Leyte had begun to knock out bridges and destroy rolling stock. Guerrillas had lent a hand to the work of destruction, and had also conducted sabotage operations along Route 1, likewise leading southeast into the Bicol Peninsula from Atimonan. Paved only through a few towns before the war, Route 1 was a two-lane, gravel road over most of its distance. In some of the more rugged parts of the peninsula the highway, which the Japanese had not maintained any too well, narrowed to one lane of gravel or dirt and was subject to washouts and landslides.

The southern shores of the Sorsogon Peninsula form the northern side of San Bernardino Strait. Therefore, Sixth Army and Allied Naval Forces planners gave consideration to proposals to land

[32] Rad, Eichelberger to MacArthur, FB-294, 5 Apr 45, Eighth Army G-3 Jnl File Clearance of Visayan Passages.

[33] Principal sources for this subsection are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 64–65; Sixth Army FO 57, 11 Mar 45, and amendments thereto, in *ibid.*, I, 157–62; Memo, Comdr VII Amphib Force to CG Sixth Army, 12 Mar 45, Sixth Army G-3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–13 Mar 45; Memo, Asst ACofS G-3 Sixth Army for ACofS G-3 Sixth Army, 20 Mar 45, sub: Notes on Conf Aboard *Blue Ridge* [the AGC that was headquarters ship for the VII Amphib Force] on Legaspi Opn, Sixth Army G-3 Jnl File Luzon, 19–21 Mar 45; TG 78.4 Rpt on Bicol Opn, *passim*; TG 78.4 Opn Plan No. 3-45, Sixth Army G-3 Jnl File Luzon, 23–24 Mar 45; 158th RCT FO 3, 24 Mar 45; 158th RCT, Summary of Enemy Info Albay Province, 22 Mar 45, and supplement thereto, 27 Mar 45, 158th RCT S-3 Jnl File, 16–25 Mar 45.

the 158th RCT directly on that peninsula, but soon found that the region had few good landing sites, lacked protected anchorages, and had poor overland communications. On the other hand Legaspi Port, on the shores of Albay Gulf two miles east of Legaspi, had good landing beaches, the best port facilities in the Bicol area, and offered access to overland routes to both the Sorsogon Peninsula and the rest of the Bicol Peninsula. Moreover, Albay Gulf provided a large protected anchorage area. Finally, quick seizure of the Legaspi–Legaspi Port area would give the 158th RCT an excellent chance to cut off Japanese forces on the Sorsogon Peninsula and prevent other Japanese from withdrawing into that peninsula in an attempt to maintain control over San Bernardino Strait.

A landing at Legaspi Port, however, would pose certain problems. Sixth Army's G–2 Section estimated that 1,500 to 2,000 Japanese held strong beach defenses, including heavy artillery, in the Legaspi area or were so deployed as to be within easy striking distance of the shores of Albay Gulf. Intelligence officers also believed that the Japanese maintained mine fields in Albay Gulf and San Bernardino Strait and that other Japanese manned coast defense guns on the Sorsogon Peninsula in order to control the strait, the shortest water route to Albay Gulf from the 158th RCT's staging area in southern Luzon.

The necessity for mine sweeping Albay Gulf and San Bernardino Strait, as well as that for intensive preassault aerial bombardment along the Albay Gulf beaches, had as much influence on General Krueger's decision to postpone the landing at Legaspi Port as had the necessity for moving the 1st Cavalry Division into southern Luzon before taking the 158th RCT out. Moreover, the bulk of the naval resources in the Pacific was committed to the Central Pacific Area's invasion of the Ryukyu Islands, beginning in late March; to the support of Eighth Army operations in the southern Philippines, now picking up momentum; and to the supply and reinforcement runs to Luzon. Scant naval means were left over to stage the Bicol Peninsula operation—the Allied Naval Forces had no heavy bombardment ships, nor could the Allied Naval Forces redeploy the necessary mine sweepers from the southern Philippines in time to meet Krueger's initial target date for the Legaspi assault, 25 March. The task of reducing the Albay Gulf beach defenses devolved upon the Fifth Air Force, but with its other commitments, the Fifth Air Force could not begin large-scale bombardment at Albay Gulf until 23 March.

Allied Naval Forces planners pointed out that a two-day aerial bombardment would be inadequate to assure destruction of known and suspected beach defenses. Unable to face with aplomb the prospect of staging an amphibious assault against defended beaches in the mined and restricted waters of Albay Gulf, the Allied Naval Forces insisted that the Fifth Air Force be given time to obliterate the defenses. Having little choice in the face of all these problems, General Krueger finally set the date for the Legaspi assault at 1 April.

The 158th RCT would stage at Balayan Bay—some cargo and a few attached units would load at Subic Bay—and sail eastward aboard the vessels of Task Group 78.4, Capt. Homer F. McGee,

USN, commanding. The first wave would go ashore in LCVP's, but so few of these craft were available that the 158th RCT would be able to land only two companies abreast in the initial assault. Planners did not think it too risky to send such a small force shoreward, for they expected that the preliminary air and naval bombardment of the beaches would have driven most of the Japanese three to four miles inland. The Japanese, even if so inclined, would probably be unable to organize a counterattack before the rest of the 158th RCT had landed by LCI, LSM, and LST.

Upon assembling ashore, the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry, would secure the beachhead area, clear the town of Legaspi, and capture a small airstrip a mile north of the town. The 2d Battalion would make ready to swing south and southeast into the Sorsogon Peninsula; the 3d Battalion would be in reserve. After securing the beachhead and the Sorsogon Peninsula, the 158th RCT, upon orders from Sixth Army, would strike northwestward up the Bicol Peninsula to gain contact with XIV Corps, which would be moving southeast into the peninsula from southern Luzon. The Sixth Army's task of clearing the northern side of the Visayan Passages would then be completed.

Sixth Army's estimate that the Japanese had over 1,500 troops in the Legaspi area was quite accurate.[34] The Japanese garrison there included about 1,000 naval troops of the *35th Naval Guard Unit*, among whom some 500 men could be counted as trained combat effectives, and 600–700 Japanese Army troops, comprising a reinforced company of the *26th Independent Mixed Regiment* and elements of various *4th Air Army* ground service units. Around 500 more Japanese, including about 175 Formosan labor troops and some stragglers from Samar, were on the Sorsogon Peninsula. The remaining 1,400 Japanese on the Bicol Peninsula, distributed among three concentrations far northwest of Legaspi, were almost all from the *4th Air Army*. Japanese command on the peninsula was divided. The *35th Naval Guard Unit* reported to *Headquarters, 33d Naval Special Base Force,* on Cebu Island; the Army troops were ostensibly under the direct control of *Shimbu Group* headquarters, but by 1 April were out of contact with that headquarters.

The Japanese on the Bicol Peninsula were not interested in the defense of the northern shores of the Visayan Passages, and the *4th Air Army* troops on the Sorsogon Peninsula had no intention of denying San Bernardino Strait to Allied shipping. The earlier task of the air force units had been to maintain an airstrip that the Allied Air Forces had long since put out of action. Now the principal mission of all Japanese on the Bicol Peninsula was to deny Sixth Army the use of that peninsula as a route of advance against the rear of *Shimbu Group*'s main body of troops.

[34] Information on the Japanese in the rest of this section and its subsections is from: Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpt 80, 21 Mar 45, in G–2 DA Files; 158th RCT S–2 Per Rpt 10, 10 Apr 45, in 158th RCT Jnl File, 7–14 Apr 45; 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, p. 32; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 9, Luzon Opns of the *Shimbu Gp*, pp. 2, 26, 33; No. 125, Philippine Area Naval Opns, pt. IV, pp. 26–27; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List, p. 20; Statement of Col Kobayashi, States, II, 247; Statement of Comdr Tadao Kusumi (Staff *Southwest Area Fleet*), States, II, 381, 388; Statement of Lt Gen Yoshitake Tsuda (CG *105th Div*), States, IV, 407.



LANDING AT PORT LEGASPI

The Japanese had established two defensive lines in the Legaspi area. They anchored the first (easterly) line on the south at Mt. Bariway, 2 miles southwest of Legaspi, extending the line north 4 miles along a low ridge to barrio Busay, 3 miles northwest of Legaspi. Busay lay on Route 164, the connecting link between Legaspi Port and Route 1 at Camalig, 6 miles northwest of Legaspi. The *35th Naval Guard Unit* defended the second line, which lay in rough, densely jungled ground along the Cituinan Hills south and southeast of Camalig. These hills controlled the approaches to Camalig via Route 164, from the east, and via Route 1 from the south and west.

The Beachhead and the Sorsogon Peninsula

Task Group 78.4 moved through San Bernardino Strait and into Albay Gulf on 1 April without incident. The only opposition to the 158th Infantry's landing at Legaspi Port was a few rounds of artillery fire from a weapon that a destroyer quickly put out of action.[35] Hitting the beach about 1000, the 158th Infantry secured Legaspi Port, Legaspi, and the airstrip north of Legaspi by 1300, finding no Japanese. In the late afternoon troops moved on to Daraga, a mile and a half northwest of Legaspi, and then advanced southward along a secondary road leading to Route 1. About 800 yards south of Daraga Japanese machine gun fire from the Mt. Bariway–Busay Ridge pinned down the 158th's leading company, and during the following night Japanese infantry surrounded the unit. The next morn-

[35] This subsection is based mainly on: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 65–67; 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–28, 40; 158th RCT S–2 and S–3 Per Rpts, 1–19 Apr 45; 158th Inf S–3 Rpt Luzon, Legaspi Opn, pp. 1–2; 158th Inf S–3 Jnl, 1–18 Apr 45; Unit Jnls of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Bns, 158th Inf, 1–18 Apr 45.

ing, with the aid of a diversionary attack staged by other elements of the 158th Infantry, the beleaguered company fell back east of Daraga. Meanwhile, patrols had uncovered more Japanese defenses on the ridge line northwest of Daraga. The 158th Infantry had gained firm contact with the Japanese first line of defense.

The 158th RCT was now in a bit of a dilemma. Under orders to clear the Sorsogon Peninsula as quickly as possible, the RCT had found the only overland means of access to that objective, Route 1, blocked by the Japanese defenses south and southwest of Daraga. The RCT would either have to drive off the Japanese there, or it would have to move troops to the Sorsogon Peninsula in a shore-to-shore operation. Brig. Gen. Hanford MacNider, commanding the 158th RCT, could not choose the latter course at this time. First, so few landing craft were available to him that to divert any from general unloading to move even a battalion to the Sorsogon Peninsula might very well create insoluble logistical problems at the Legaspi beachhead. Second, Task Group 78.4 had found no signs of Japanese along the southern shores of the Sorsogon Peninsula as the task group had transited San Bernardino Strait. Third, Eighth Army had already cleared the southern shores of the strait. MacNider therefore felt that he could safely postpone his advance into the Sorsogon Peninsula until such time as the 158th Infantry could use the overland route. Finally, lacking precise information on the strength and extent of the Japanese defenses in the Daraga area, MacNider was loath to divert much strength to the Sorsogon Peninsula. The 158th Infantry, having only 2,000 combat effectives, was some 900 men under authorized strength.

From 2 through 10 April the 158th Infantry fought hard in rough, jungled terrain to overcome the resistance in the Daraga region, the regiment losing 45 men killed and 200 wounded, the Japanese over 500 killed. The battle took considerably longer than General MacNider had anticipated and threatened to cause an undue delay in the occupation of the Sorsogon Peninsula. Therefore, on 6 April, deciding he could wait no longer, he had loaded the Antitank Company, 158th Infantry, on five LCM's of the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment and had dispatched it to Bacon, on the north shore of the peninsula. Landing against no opposition, the Antitank Company quickly secured Bacon and the Philippine terminus of the transpacific cable, and then moved on southwest five miles to occupy the town of Sorsogon against no resistance.

By 9 April patrols had discovered that most of the Japanese on the Sorsogon Peninsula had concentrated in low hills north of Bulan, on the peninsula's southwestern coast. Of insufficient strength to attack this Japanese concentration, the Antitank Company continued patrolling until the 2d Battalion, 158th Infantry, after an unopposed motor march along Route 1 from Daraga, reached Bulan on 12 April. Supported by a 105-mm. howitzer battery of the 147th Field Artillery and by Fifth Air Force planes, the reinforced 2d Battalion broke up the Japanese concentration near Bulan by 16 April at the cost of only 6 men wounded. The battalion, which returned to Daraga on the 18th, had killed or found dead over 150 Japa-

nese in the Bulan region, and had accepted the willing surrender of 155 Formosan labor troops. Guerrillas took over the task of mopping up.

Clearing the Bicol Peninsula

The 158th RCT, acting upon new instructions from Sixth Army, turned its energies to clearing the rest of the Bicol Peninsula and to gaining contact with XIV Corps, which Sixth Army had directed to start driving into the peninsula from southern Luzon.[36] Without waiting for the 2d Battalion to return from the Sorsogon Peninsula, the remainder of the 158th RCT, on 11 April had struck toward Camalig from Daraga, employing Routes 1 and 164 as axes of advance.[37] Troops along Route 164 bypassed the Japanese defenses at the Cituinan Hills to the north and entered Camalig unopposed on the afternoon of the 11th.

Since the Japanese in the Cituinan Hills posed a threat to the 158th RCT's line of communication back to Legaspi, General MacNider felt that an advance in strength beyond Camalig before reducing the Cituinan defenses would overreach the bounds of a calculated risk. Accordingly, on 12 April, the 1st and 3d Battalions, 158th Infantry, attacked into the hills. Slowed by thick jungle and rough terrain almost as much as by the Japanese, and constantly harassed by night attacks, the two battalions had not overrun the defenses when, on 19 April, the 2d Battalion returned from the Sorsogon Peninsula to join the fight. Progress continued to be painfully slow, and it was not until 28 April that organized Japanese resistance finally collapsed. The task of clearing the Cituinan Hills cost the 158th Infantry approximately 40 men killed and 235 wounded; the Japanese lost almost 700 men killed in the region.

Although the 158th RCT did not know it, the reduction of the Cituinan Hills marked the end of large-scale organized resistance on the Bicol Peninsula, where no more than 1,400 Japanese remained alive as of the end of April. On the 29th the main body of the 158th began moving northwestward from Camalig, following a reinforced company that had reached Iraga, twenty-five miles distant, on 14 April. Rapidly, the regiment overran potentially strong enemy positions in excellent defensive terrain as the remaining Japanese, demoralized, offered only token resistance before melting away into hills on either side of Route 1. On 2 May patrols of the 158th Infantry established contact with the 5th Cavalry at barrio San Agustin, on Route 1 fifteen miles northwest of Iraga.

Troops of the 1st Cavalry Division had begun moving onto the Bicol Peninsula on 12 April, when they relieved units of the 11th Airborne Division at Atimonan.[38] The next day the 5th Cavalry struck east from Atimonan and on the 14th reached Calauag, thirty miles

[36] Sixth Army FO 60, 12 Apr 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 163.

[37] Subsequent information on 158th RCT operations is from: 158th RCT Rpt Luzon, pp. 29–37, 39; 158th RCT S–3 Per Rpts, 10 Apr–16 May 45; 158th Inf Rpt Luzon, Legaspi Opn, p. 2; 158th Inf S–3 Jnl, 11 Apr–2 May 45; Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 68–70

[38] Information on 1st Cavalry Division operations in this subsection is from: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, pt. I, 69–70; XIV Corps Rpt Luzon, pt. I, pp. 192–93, 203–08; 1st Cav Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 28–36; 5th Cav Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–86.

away. All the way from Atimonan to Calauag, Route 1 was in poor condition and beyond Calauag supply movements were almost impossible. The speed of advance now hinged on the speed of engineer road and bridge repairs. Accordingly, the 5th Cavalry secured the eastern shore of Tayabas Bay and set up a supply point at the bay's northeastern corner so that LCM's could bring forward ammunition, food, and equipment from Batangas. Beginning on 27 April the main body of the regiment began moving by LCM across Ragay Gulf, the first indentation on the south coast of the Bicol Peninsula beyond Tayabas Bay. On the 28th the regiment, encountering no resistance, moved from the shores of Ragay Gulf to Naga, eight miles northwest of barrio San Agustin, and had no trouble marching south to meet the 158th Infantry.

Guerrillas had informed XIV Corps, which acquired control of the 158th RCT on 22 April, that a Japanese force of some 2,500 men was dug in along the slopes of Mt. Isarog, an extinct volcano centering eight miles northeast of San Agustin. This report the 5th Cavalry and 158th Infantry proved false in a series of patrol actions between 2 and 15 May. The next day, the 16th, General MacNider radioed to General Griswold that the Bicol Peninsula was secure and that no signs of organized Japanese resistance remained.

The two regiments continued patrolling for some weeks until, on 6 June, the 5th Cavalry returned to southern Luzon. The 158th RCT busied itself with the problem of reorganizing and equipping guerrilla forces and in mid-June turned over responsibility for further mopping up to the Filipinos. To that time the operations to clear the Bicol Peninsula had cost the U.S. Army units involved approximately 95 men killed and 475 wounded. The Japanese had lost over 2,800 killed and 565 captured, including 350 Formosan labor troops whom the Japanese Army had left to fend for themselves.

The strategic goal of the Bicol Peninsula operation—to finish clearing the Visayan Passages—had been realized on 2 May with the contact between the 158th Infantry and the 5th Cavalry at San Agustin. The final patrolling and mopping up the two regiments undertook had provided the necessary capstones to the combined Sixth Army–Eighth Army campaign to assure the safety of the Visayan Passages for Allied shipping.

Undertaken against generally ill-equipped, poorly fed, second-class and third-class Japanese forces, the campaign had yet proved costly. U.S. Army units involved had lost roughly 300 men killed and 1,130 wounded; the Japanese, to mid-June, had lost at least 8,125 killed and nearly 750 captured. The campaign had proved logistically more important than it had strategically or tactically. Sixth Army, Eighth Army, and Allied Naval Forces had not found the Japanese coast artillery and mine fields they had expected to discover emplaced so as to endanger Allied shipping in the passages. Nevertheless, General MacArthur would ultimately have had to direct his subordinate echelons to eliminate the Japanese from southern Luzon, the Bicol Peninsula, northern Samar, and the islands of the inner passages if for no other reason than to liberate from the Japanese yoke the many thousands of Filipino inhabitants of those regions and to restore to the Filipinos their lawful government.

PART SIX

THE CONQUEST OF NORTHERN LUZON

CHAPTER XXIV

Northern Luzon: The Situation and the Plans

Almost from the hour of the assault at Lingayen Gulf, Sixth Army's task on Luzon was complicated by the fact that the army was compelled to fight many battles simultaneously on widely separated fronts. In late February General Krueger's forces were in action at Manila, on Bataan and Corregidor, against the *Kembu Group* west of Clark Field, and against the *Shimbu Group* in the mountains east of Manila. Krueger had already ordered XIV Corps to project some of its strength into southern Luzon. I Corps, having captured San Jose and seized control over the junction of Routes 3 and 11 near Rosario, had but recently completed operations to secure the Sixth Army's base area and flanks and to provide protection to XIV Corps' rear. Now General Krueger was preparing to launch still another offensive, and had alerted I Corps to make ready to strike into northern Luzon against the *Shobu Group*.

The Terrain and the Defenses in Northern Luzon

The General Situation

By the beginning of February I Corps had attained excellent positions from which to strike north against the *Shobu Group*, the strongest concentration of Japanese strength on Luzon, but General Krueger had had to postpone a concerted offensive in northern Luzon. General MacArthur's redeployment and operational directives of early February had restricted the Sixth Army's freedom of maneuver, concomitantly reducing its strength. General Krueger had therefore found it impossible to concentrate adequate forces for an immediate, major thrust against the *Shobu Group*. At least until XI and XIV Corps could assure the successful outcome of operations to secure the Manila Bay area, Krueger decided, he could not start I Corps northward in a determined drive against the *Shobu Group*. The strength left to the corps—three divisions instead of the five or more Krueger had expected to be able to employ in northern Luzon—was not enough.[1]

Krueger realized only too well that any delay in starting an attack north against the *Shobu Group* would inevitably redound to the advantage of the Japanese. By mid-February, at least, the Sixth Army commander had sufficient information at his disposal to conclude that the *Shobu Group* was beginning to realign its forces for a protracted stand

[1] For details of the redeployment and reduction directives of early February, see Chapter XX, above.

in the mountains of north Luzon, and he hoped the Japanese would not have too much time to dig in. What Krueger did not know was that General Yamashita had long had plans to move the *Shobu Group* into the triangular redoubt in northern Luzon, that Yamashita's troops had been readying defenses in the mountains since late December, and that Yamashita had initiated a general withdrawal into the mountains before the end of January.[2]

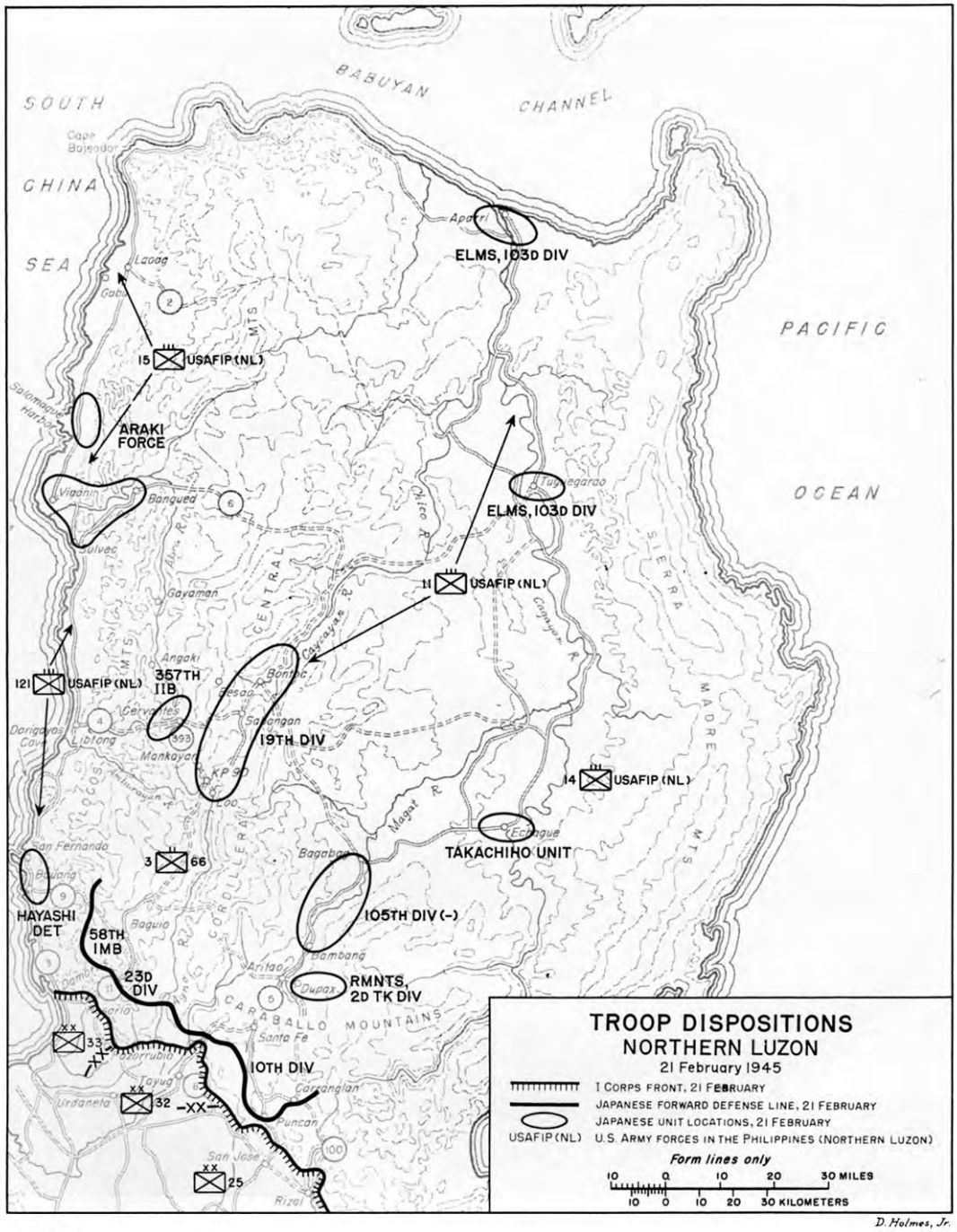
Among Yamashita's major concerns through February were the reorganization and rehabilitation of units Sixth Army had battered during January, and the problem of deploying these units, as well as others not yet committed, in the most effective positions for the defense of the triangular redoubt. The *Shobu Group* also had to move to centrally located depots the supplies shipped north from Manila and Central Plains dumps during December and January. The Japanese would likewise have to gather food from the rich Cagayan Valley and distribute it to troops throughout northern Luzon's mountains. Time was of the essence in all the *Shobu Group* preparations. No relationship of time to defensive plans was more important than that involved in retaining control over the resources of the Cagayan Valley, for the group had been cut off from all outside sources of supply.

Heartland and rice bowl of northern Luzon, the Cagayan Valley averages 40 miles in width and extends from Aparri on Luzon's northern coast south nearly 200 miles to Bambang on the Magat River.[3] On the east the rugged and partially unexplored northern portion of the Sierra Madre, a 35-mile-wide barrier, separates the Cagayan Valley from the Pacific Ocean. West of the valley lies the equally rough Cordillera Central, which with the coastal Ilocos Mountains—also known as the Malaya Range—forms a 70-mile-wide barrier between the Cagayan Valley and the South China Sea. The complex Caraballo Mountains, forming a link between the southern reaches of the Cordillera Central and the Sierra Madre, block access to the Cagayan Valley from the Central Plains. (*Map 19*)

Except across the Aparri beaches, the entrances to the Cagayan Valley follow winding, ill-paved roads and trails through tortuous mountain passes. Coming north from San Jose, gravel-paved Route 5, scarcely two lanes wide, twists over the Caraballo Mountains into the Magat Valley via Balete Pass. Route 11, the other main road from the south, leads northeast from Baguio fifty miles to Bontoc, the northern apex of the *Shobu Group*'s defensive triangle. Traversing spectacularly beautiful but rough mountain country, Route 11 in 1945 was gravel and rock paved and varied between one and two lanes in width. From Bontoc Route 11, hardly more than a horse trail, follows the rugged, deep gorge of the Chico River northeast to the northern section of the Cagayan Valley.

[2] For the background of Yamashita's triangular defense concept, see above, Chapter V. Information on the initiation of the *Shobu Group*'s withdrawal is set forth in Chapter IX and XI.

[3] Actually, there is no broad valley connection between the Magat and Cagayan River valleys, for the Magat, the Cagayan's major tributary, runs through a canyon before it joins the Cagayan. On the other hand, Filipino usage usually applies the name Cagayan Valley to that portion of the Magat Valley south of the canyon.


SOUTH CHINA SEA
BABUYAN CHANNEL
PACIFIC OCEAN
SIERRA MADRE MTS
CENTRAL CORDILLERA MTS
CARABALLO MOUNTAINS
Cape Bojeador
Laoag
Aparri
ELMS, 103D DIV
15 USAFIP (NL)
ARAKI FORCE
Vigan
Bangued
Tuguegarao
ELMS, 103D DIV
11 USAFIP (NL)
Gayaman
Cayayan R.
Angaki
Bontoc
121 USAFIP (NL)
357TH IIB
Cervantes
Lidlidda
Sabangan
19TH DIV
Mankayan
KP 90
Loo
14 USAFIP (NL)
Magat R.
Echague
TAKACHIHO UNIT
San Fernando
3 66
Bagabag
HAYASHI DET
58TH IMB
Baguio
105TH DIV (-)
23D DIV
Dambang
Aritao
Dupax
RMNTS, 2D TK DIV
Santa Fe
10TH DIV
Carranglan
Puncan
San Jose
Rizal
XX 33
XX 32 XX
XX 25
TROOP DISPOSITIONS
NORTHERN LUZON
21 February 1945
I CORPS FRONT, 21 FEBRUARY
JAPANESE FORWARD DEFENSE LINE, 21 FEBRUARY
JAPANESE UNIT LOCATIONS, 21 FEBRUARY
USAFIP (NL) U.S. ARMY FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES (NORTHERN LUZON)
Form lines only
10 0 10 20 30 MILES
10 0 10 20 30 KILOMETERS
D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP 19



Bontoc, The Northern Apex

Baguio is reached by coming up the Bued River gorge from the Routes 3–11 junction near Rosario, following an asphalt-paved, two-lane section of Route 11. Route 9, another paved road, leads to Baguio from the South China Sea coast at Bauang, 20-odd miles north of Damortis. From Libtong, 55 miles north of Damortis, narrow, gravel-paved Route 4 leads through unbelievably precipitous terrain to a junction with Route 11 at Sabangan, a few miles southwest of Bontoc. Joining Route 11 as far as Bontoc, Route 4 then turns southeast to the Magat River and a junction with Route 5 at Bagabag, 30 miles northeast of Bambang.

The easiest entrance to the Cagayan Valley is at Aparri. The next best, since it provides direct access to the southern portion of the Cagayan Valley, is Route 5 via Balete Pass. Route 11 northeast from Baguio is a poor third choice, and, like all other entrances except Route 5 and Aparri, is so tortuous as to preclude its employment for major military operations.

Japanese Defense Plans

The military problems presented by the topography of northern Luzon impose upon attacker and defender alike a peculiar combination of concentration and dispersion of forces.[4] Yamashita's problem was further complicated by his plan to establish a triangular redoubt and simultaneously retain control of the Cagayan Valley for as long as possible. He would have to concentrate strength at the three apexes (Baguio, Bontoc, and Bambang) of his defensive triangle, but he would also have to deploy forces to defend all possible approaches to the Cagayan Valley.

Yamashita based his defensive deployment upon the assumption that Sixth Army would make its main efforts on the Baguio and Bambang fronts. He did not, however, ignore the other approaches to his triangular redoubt and the Cagayan Valley, and he took into consideration the possibility that Sixth Army might stage an airborne assault into the valley. He held at Aparri about two regiments of infantry and two battalions of artillery, all under the control of *Headquarters, 103d Division.* On Luzon's northwest coast—in the Vigan-Laoag area — he stationed the *Araki Force,* the equivalent of a regimental combat team and formed from various *103d Division* and provisional units. Initially, an understrength independent infantry battalion of the *103d Division* held Route 4 inland from Libtong.

The *19th Division* was originally responsible for holding the coast south from Libtong and for blocking Route 9 from Bauang to Baguio. During January Filipino guerrillas became so active along Route 4 and on Route 11 between Bontoc and Baguio that Yamashita began to fear an amphibious assault in the vicinity of Libtong and a subsequent American drive inland to Bontoc. Accordingly, he decided to move the bulk of the *19th Division* north to hold Bontoc, clear Route 4 west to Libtong, and

[4] Principal sources used for this subsection are: *14th Area Army* Opns Orders Nos. A–468, 29 Jan 45, A–487, 3 Feb 45, A–516, 13 Feb 45, and A–517, 13 Feb 45, Trans, III, item 3; SWPA Hist Series, II, 468–71, 477–80; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 89–91, 99–102, 104, 109; Sato Statement, States, III, 255–56; Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpts 77–80, 28 Feb–21 Mar 45, G–2 DA files.

drive the guerrillas off the Baguio-Bontoc section of Route 11. The movement started late in February.

The transfer of the *19th Division* necessitated realignment of forces on the Baguio front, and Yamashita had begun reshuffling troops there before the end of February. The *58th IMB* started pulling north to defend Route 9 and to block some mountain trails leading toward Baguio between Route 9 and the section of Route 11 south of Baguio. The *Hayashi Detachment*, a regiment-sized provisional unit that held the region from Bauang to San Fernando, passed to the control of the *58th IMB*. Simultaneously, the *23d Division* began establishing a new main line of resistance across Route 11 at Camp 3, between Rosario and Baguio. The division's right was to extend northwest to connect with the *58th IMB* left; the division's left would stretch southeast almost fifteen miles across the Arodogat River valley to the upper reaches of the Agno River. The Arodogat provided an axis along which American troops might outflank Route 11 defenses on the east, while the gorge of the upper Agno led to roads running into Baguio from the southeast. The Agno's canyon also provided a route to the Baguio-Aritao supply road that Yamashita was constructing as a link between his Baguio and Bambang apexes.

The net effect of these realignments on the west was to strengthen the defenses in front of Baguio. The Japanese forces regrouped along a narrower front, permitting them to employ their dwindling strength to the best advantage; they provided for protection along all flanking routes; and they moved into terrain even more favorable for defense than that the *23d Division* and *58th IMB* had held during the fight for the Routes 3–11 junction.

To guard the northern Cagayan Valley against airborne assault, the *103d Division* stationed a reinforced infantry battalion at Tuguegarao. Here, 50 miles south of Aparri, were located airfields that the Japanese Naval Air Service had employed since the early months of the war in the Pacific. For the same purpose the *Takachiho Unit*, a provisional infantry regiment formed from *4th Air Army* ground troops, some antiaircraft units, and a few paratroopers, held various *4th Air Army* fields at Echague, 65 miles south of Tuguegarao and 30 miles northeast of Bagabag.

As of early February 5,000 to 7,000 men of the *105th Division*—the rest of the division was with the *Shimbu Group* east of Manila—held Bagabag and Bambang. This force included a regiment, less one battalion, of the *10th Division*. Initially stationed in the Bambang area to stamp out guerrilla activity, the *10th Division* regiment redeployed southward late in the month.

The defense of the approaches to Bambang from San Jose was anchored on an MLR crossing the Caraballo Mountains and Route 5 about midway between the two towns.[5] The key area along the San Jose–Bambang stretch of Route 5 was the Balete Pass–Sante Fe region, nearly twenty-five miles into the

[5] Additional information on the defenses south of Bambang comes from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 446, 477–78; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, p. 51; *14th Area Army* Orders Nos. A–447, 23 Jan 45, and A–526, 16 Feb 45, Trans, III, item 3; Statements of Konuma (Vice CofS *14th Area Army* and Comdr *Bambang Branch 14th Area Army*), States, II, 300–306, 339; Statement of Maj Gen Sakae Tsuchiya (CofS *10th Div*), States, III, 402–03; Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpt 83, 11 Apr 45, G–2 DA files.



BAGUIO

Caraballo Mountains from San Jose. Lying three miles north of the pass, Santa Fe is the terminus of the Villa Verde Trail, which winds northeast from the Central Plains over a spur of the Caraballo range west of Route 5. Balete Pass is located at the northern exits of the most tortuous terrain Route 5 traverses on its way north.

Responsibility for the defense of the Route 5 approach to Bambang was vested in the *10th Division.* Although the Japanese estimated that the main effort of any Sixth Army attack toward Bambang would come up Route 5, the *10th Division* was instructed to guard all flanking approaches carefully. The Villa Verde Trail provided a route for outflanking the Route 5 defenses at least as far north as Santa Fe, and near its eastern end provided access to the river valleys by means of which a flanking force could move north, west of Route 5, almost to Bambang, cutting the supply road to Baguio on the way. East of Route 5 lay Route 100, a third-class road that, beginning in the foothills ten miles southeast of San Jose, swung to the northwest through Carranglan and came into Route 5 at Digdig, midway between San Jose and Balete Pass. From Carranglan a rough trace known as the Old Spanish Trail—of which there were dozens in the Philippines—ran north through the Sierra Madre to Route 5 at Aritao, eastern terminus of the new supply road to Baguio and over halfway from Balete Pass to Bambang. Finally, lying between the Villa Verde Trail and the Agno Valley is the valley of the Ambayabang River. By trail connection to the Agno,

the Ambayabang Valley offered a possible route of access to Baguio from the southeast and along its own length, as well as by the Agno connection, provided other routes by which Sixth Army troops might push north to cut the Baguio-Aritao supply road. The front assigned to the *10th Division* stretched from the upper Ambayabang southeast over twenty-five miles to Carranglan. It is presumed that some tie-in with the *23d Division* on the Baguio front was to be made along either the Agno or the Ambayabang Rivers.

In providing for defense of the various flanking routes, the Japanese expected that the Old Spanish Trail–Route 100 approach might well be the location of a secondary attack. The Japanese considered the terrain on that approach less formidable than that along the Villa Verde Trail, which, the Japanese thought, Sixth Army might use only for a very minor diversionary attack. Thus, of the three understrength RCT's or equivalent available to the *10th Division* as of early February—troops that included organic units, attached regularly organized regiments and battalions, and provisional units of all sorts—one RCT was posted to hold the Route 100–Old Spanish Trail junction at Carranglan and that section of Route 100 lying between Carranglan and Route 5. A force roughly equivalent to an infantry battalion held the southwestern section of the Villa Verde Trail and another battalion, plus a battery of artillery, was stationed on the central section of the trail. One provisional infantry battalion was scheduled to move into the Ambayabang Valley.

Originally, the rest of the *10th Division* was to hold an MLR across Route 5 near barrio Minuli, roughly five miles south of Balete Pass. However, by early February, when the fall of San Jose to the U.S. I Corps presaged an immediate attack north along Route 5, defenses in the Minuli area were by no means in shape to withstand a sudden onslaught. Therefore, seeking to gain time for defense construction along the MLR, the *10th Division* deployed an RCT-sized delaying force across Route 5 at Puncan, a barrio lying about ten miles north of San Jose and the same distance south of Minuli. The remainder of the division worked feverishly on the defenses of the MLR.

One other unit was available on the Bambang front—the shattered *2d Tank Division*, which had been destroyed as an armored force in the defense of the approaches to San Jose during January. Less a 250-man group operating on the Villa Verde Trail and in the Ambayabang River valley, the *2d Tank Division* reassembled at Dupax, just off Route 5 near Aritao. There, early in February, the division started reorganizing, reequipping, and retraining as an understrength infantry division, weaving into its depleted ranks casuals, replacements, and provisional units of all sorts.

A description of Yamashita's special command arrangements completes the outline of Japanese defensive preparations in northern Luzon. As held true throughout the course of the Luzon Campaign, Yamashita was plagued by inadequate communications in northern Luzon, posing for him major problems of command and control. For the Bambang area he therefore set up what amounted to a corps headquarters under Maj. Gen. Haruo Konuma, a vice chief of staff of the *14th Area Army*. As com-

mander of the *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army,* General Konuma was to control the operations of the *10th* and *105th Divisions* and the *2d Tank Division,* as well as independent units in the area, within the framework of broad directives issued by Yamashita. Yamashita himself kept his headquarters at Baguio, retaining direct control over operations on the Baguio and Bontoc fronts.

The Sixth Army's Plan

Sixth Army's plans for operations against the *Shobu Group* did not spring full grown into being with I Corps' arrival on the Damortis–San Jose–Baler Bay line.[6] Indeed such plans as existed at the beginning of February had to be discarded for the most part as the original allocations of divisions to Sixth Army were cut back and more information was accumulated concerning Japanese strength, dispositions, and intentions in northern Luzon. There was no "set piece" plan of operations such as that of the *Shobu Group.* Instead, Sixth Army's plan was evolutionary in character.

Early Plans

It was General Krueger's first intention to concentrate his forces first on the Baguio front and Luzon's west coast from Damortis north to San Fernando. The early capture of Baguio would produce certain obvious tactical advantages and would also have propaganda value since the city was the site of Yamashita's combined *14th Area Army–Shobu Group* headquarters. The development of the port at San Fernando would ease the burden upon overtaxed Lingayen Gulf facilities and would provide an additional base area from which operations in northern Luzon could be supported.[7]

Krueger originally planned to use two divisions in the Baguio–San Fernando area—the 43d, already on the ground, and the 33d, which reached Luzon on 10 February. While these two were making the main effort, the 25th and 32d Divisions would operate on the Bambang front in what at first was expected to be a holding attack.[8] Lack of resources made it impossible for Sixth Army to plan an airborne invasion of the Cagayan Valley, but General Krueger, through February and March, did hope to mount attacks in northern Luzon in addition to those contemplated for the Baguio and Bambang fronts. He planned that one division (the 37th) would undertake a series of shore-to-shore operations along the west coast north from Damortis, presumably as far

[6] The general sources used in the preparation of this section are: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 35, 45–47, 56–57, 80–85, 89–90; Sixth Army Fo's 49, 51, 53, 55, 56, and 58, variously dated between 9 Feb and 23 Mar 45, all in *ibid.,* I, 151–62; I Corps FO's 7–13, variously dated between 28 Jan and 25 Mar 45, and Amendments 1–4, dated 2–13 Mar 45, to FO 12, 21 Feb 45, all in I Corps FO file; Ltrs of Instr, I Corps to 33d Div, 15, 20, and 22 Feb 45, and 3, 12, and 16 Mar 45, all in I Corps File, Ltrs to and from 33d Div; USAFIP (NL) Opns Rpt, pp. 3–8, 10–17.

[7] Additional information on plans for the early seizure of San Fernando can be found, *inter alia,* in: Rad, LUBSEC to Sixth Army, 1069, and Rad, Sixth Army to LUBSEC, WG–587, both 11 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 9–11 Mar 45; Rad, GHQ SWPA to Sixth Army, USASOS, ANF SWPA, CX–12542, 19 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–19 Mar 45.

[8] Memo, ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for CofS Sixth Army, 17 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 16–18 Feb 45.

as Libtong and Vigan, the operations to begin in late March or early April. Krueger also considered the possibility of mounting an amphibious operation against Aparri by late May.[9]

Thus, Krueger's early plans for operations in northern Luzon called for the employment of four divisions on the Baguio and Bambang fronts in simultaneous attacks that would start after mid-February. He would commit a fifth division along the west coast by April and would possibly employ a sixth at Aparri during May. The plans never came to fruition.

Factors Affecting the Plan

General MacArthur's redeployment and operational directives of early February not only made it impossible for Krueger to concentrate forces for a major offensive against the *Shobu Group* but also forced Krueger to make sweeping changes in all existing or tentative plans for operations in northern Luzon. The most immediate effect of MacArthur's directives was the relief of the 43d Division and the 158th RCT in the Damortis-Rosario area and the replacement of those units with the 33d Division. The next move was the redeployment of the 6th Division south to Bataan and the *Shimbu* front. In a week, I Corps lost one and one-third divisions.

Even though the redeployment of the 43d Division and the 158th RCT left only one division available for the Baguio front, Krueger still wanted to make his main effort on that front. The 32d Division, which had moved into a sector between the 25th and 43d Divisions in late January, could be made to substitute for the 43d Division. The 32d could swing northwest up the Ambayabang, Agno, and Arodogat River valleys from the south and southeast, while the 33d Division could drive north toward Baguio via Route 11.[10] Under this concept, any effort by the 25th Division, left alone on the Bambang front by the redeployment of the 6th Division, would certainly be relegated to the status of a holding attack.

Before Sixth Army could work out the details of such a plan, the results of I Corps operations during February prompted new changes. The corps' primary missions after the advance to San Jose were to protect Sixth Army's left rear and block any attempts by the Japanese to move south out of the mountains. Krueger also directed the corps to reconnoiter northward and gave it permission to stage local attacks to improve positions and feel out Japanese strength in anticipation of a later all-out offensive on either the Baguio or the Bambang front.[11]

[9] Sixth Army, Plan for Employment of Corps and Divisions in Luzon Campaign, 20 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 6–7 Feb 45 (the document appears to be misdated, although the plan seems to have been still under consideration as of 20 February); Rad, Sixth Army to GHQ SWPA (G–3 Sixth Army for Asst G–3 Sixth Army, then at a GHQ conference), WG–635, 27 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 25–27 Feb 45; Rad, Engr Sixth Army to Engr GHQ SWPA, WG 456, 9 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 9–11 Mar 45; Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 3 Mar 45, sub: Resume of Conf at GHQ, 28 Feb–2 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–3 Mar 45.

[10] For evidence of such a plan, see, *inter alia*, Sixth Army, Plan for Employment of Corps and Divisions in Luzon Campaign, 20 Feb 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 6–7 Feb 45.

[11] Sixth Army FO's 46–53, dated between 30 Jan 45 and 19 Feb 45.

In accordance with these concepts, I Corps ordered the 43d Division—which was not relieved until 15 February—to secure the terrain gained by the end of January, locate and develop Japanese positions north of the Damortis-Rosario section of Route 3, and maintain pressure against Japanese units holding out along the Hill 600–Hill 1500 ridge line east of the Rosario-Pozorrubio section of Route 3. The division, to which the 158th RCT remained attached, was also instructed to avoid involvement in a battle of such proportions that it might have to commit the bulk of its strength.

Following these instructions, the 158th RCT found unmistakable signs of a general Japanese withdrawal in the area north of the Damortis-Rosario road and discovered that the coast line was clear of Japanese for at least fifteen miles north of Damortis.[12] The 43d Division, on the other hand, found the Japanese determined to hold Route 11 northeast from Rosario, and every attempt to penetrate Japanese defenses along the Hills 600–1500 ridge line brought about an immediate Japanese counterattack. Moreover, 43d Division patrols, including many the attached guerrillas conducted, were unable to move up the Arodogat River valley in the face of a strong Japanese counterreconnaissance screen.

When the 33d Division took over from the 43d Division and the 158th RCT on 15 February, the 33d had orders to concentrate for a drive up the coast to San Fernando—Sixth Army was still contemplating the idea of swinging the 32d Division back northwest toward Baguio. Accordingly, I Corps directed the 33d Division to clear the Hills 600–1500 ridge line in order to secure the division's right (east) flank before moving to the coast. The division would also continue reconnaissance northward to develop Japanese positions and seek avenues of approach toward Baguio other than Route 11.[13]

The 33d Division's left (west) flank units, probing north after 15 February, learned that the *58th IMB* withdrawal was well under way.[14] In the center, division units patrolling northward along both sides of Route 11 found, as had the 43d Division, that Japanese delaying positions and counterreconnaissance operations blocked the road. Finally, I Corps' instructions to clear the Hills 600–1500 ridge line involved the 33d Division in a battle of larger scale than had been anticipated. From 19 through 22 February troops of the 130th and 136th Infantry Regiments, at the cost of approximately 35 men killed and 75 wounded, fought successfully to clear the last Japanese from the north-central section of the ridge line. Some 400 Japanese, most of them from the *1st Battalion* of the *71st Infantry, 23d Division*, were killed in the area. The few Japanese who did not hold out to the death

[12] Information on 43d Division and 158th RCT operations in this subsection is from: 43d Div G–2 Per Rpts, 1–15 Feb 45; 43d Div G–3 Per Rpts, 1–15 Feb 45; I Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 1–15 Feb 45.

[13] Ltr of Instr, I Corps to 33d Div, 15 Feb 45, I Corps File, Ltrs to and from 33d Div.

[14] Information on 33d Division operations is from: I Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 15–22 Feb 45; 33d Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, p. 1; 33d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 13–22 Feb 45; 123d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 1, 4–5; 130th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. III, an. A, Battle of Benchmark–Question Mark Hills; 136th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 3, 16–18.

withdrew southward to join compatriots on the Hill 600 complex.

As of the beginning of the last week of February, the Japanese had rebuffed all 33d Division efforts to secure Hill 600 and to push into the Arodogat Valley to the east. It appeared that the division would have to spend so much time and effort securing the valley and the Hills 600–1500 ridge line that the proposed concentration on the coast for a move on San Fernando would be delayed unduly. The effort that could be expended on patrolling northward would also be circumscribed. Moreover, the 33d Division's patrolling had disclosed to Sixth Army the very significant fact that the Japanese withdrawals on the Baguio front had resulted in considerable strengthening of the defenses in front of that city. Manifestly, the 33d Division was not strong enough to hold a defensive line, clear the Hills 600–1500 ridge line, secure the Arodogat Valley, advance toward San Fernando, patrol northward throughout its area of responsibility, and still mount an attack against the strengthened Japanese defenses around Baguio.

From the first Sixth Army had known that two divisions would be needed to achieve decisive results on the Baguio front, and the operations of the 33d Division confirmed that opinion. But even as Sixth Army was obtaining this confirmation, Krueger had to reassess the idea that the 32d Division might be swung northwest against Baguio while the 33d moved on San Fernando.

The southern boundary of the sector that the 32d Division began taking over on 27 January ran from Urdaneta, on Route 3, across a spur of the Caraballo Mountains to Route 5 at barrio Digdig, extending thence along Route 100 to Carranglan.[15] On the northwest, the 32d–43d (and later 33d) Division boundary ran east from Pozorrubio to the Arboredo River valley and then northeast to Malatorre, on the Agno some eight miles north of San Manuel. From Malatorre the boundary swung north to Sapit, near the headwaters of the Arboredo and about four miles southeast of Camp 3, the Route 11 strongpoint on the *23d Division's* new MLR.

In the southern part of the 32d Division's sector the terrain rose slowly to the east. The most important town in the sector was Tayug, on the east side of the Agno and at the junction of roads from Urdaneta, San Manuel, and San Quintin. From Tayug, Route 277 runs northwest five miles to the Cabalisiaan River at Santa Maria, where the Villa Verde Trail begins its steep ascent into the Caraballo Mountains. Another road runs east-northeast five miles from Tayug to Batchelor, when a rough trace swings northeast to Valdes, six miles into the Caraballo spur. Valdes was a trail center from which foot patrols could strike north through the spur toward the Villa Verde Trail, northeast toward Santa Fe, and east to Route 5.

For the first five miles or so of its length north from Santa Maria, the Villa Verda Trail twists up the east side of a rough, bare, mile-wide ridge bounded on the east by the Cabalisiaan River and on the west by the Ambayabang. This portion of the trail was negotiable

[15] Material on 32d Division operations is based principally upon: I Corps FO's 7–12, variously dated between 29 Jan and 21 Feb 45; 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 1–11; 127th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–10; 127th Inf Daily Unit Rpts, 4–24 Feb 45; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–8; 32d Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 2–4.

for jeeps in 1945, but beyond that there was a fifteen-mile stretch—counting the various twists and turns—over which even foot troops would have trouble making their way and over which supply movements would be extremely difficult. At the northeast end of the trail there was a five-mile stretch, between Imugan and Santa Fe, that light trucks could negotiate.

The 32d Division's first mission was to move in strength north, northeast, east, and southeast roughly five miles beyond Tayug, simultaneously patrolling up the river valleys and east across the Caraballo spur. The division reached its new line by 1 February without opposition and during the next two days pushed its center on to Santa Maria, at the same time starting on its reconnaissance missions. Division patrols operating west of the Villa Verde Trail soon ran into counterreconnaissance screens in the Arboredo and Agno River valleys. The Japanese strengthened the Ambayabang Valley, undefended in early February, after the middle of the month, and the 32d Division quickly learned that the Japanese were preparing to defend all three valleys.

From the beginning the chief value of the valleys had been the possibility that movements along them would achieve tactical surprise. When it was learned that chances to gain surprise had passed, the logistical problems involved in supporting any attack through the valleys began to outweigh whatever tactical advantages might redound from operations along those routes of approach. The idea that the 32d Division might be able to swing northwest toward Baguio through the valleys began to look less attractive.

To the east, meanwhile, the 32d Division had sent a battalion up the Villa Verde Trail in a reconnaissance-in-force. By the evening of 7 February, having been opposed every step of the way from Santa Maria, the battalion had broken through a series of minor outpost positions and, about two and a half miles north-northeast of Santa Maria, had reached the principal Japanese OPLR defenses on the Villa Verde Trail. Since a major effort would be required to dislodge these Japanese, the 32d Division held what it had, having been instructed to avoid a large-scale battle. As it was, by discovering that about a battalion of Japanese defended the southern section of the Villa Verde Trail, the division had successfully accomplished its initial reconnaissance mission in that sector.

Small groups from the 32d Division had been patrolling across the Caraballo spur while the division was moving units up the Villa Verde Trail and the river valleys, and the reports brought back by patrols operating in the mountains were of considerable importance to future Sixth Army plans. First, the patrols discovered that most of the trails through the spur seemed to have been used before February 1945 by wild pigs rather than human beings. The ground proved to be so rough that the logistical support of any large force attempting to use the trails as a means of outflanking Japanese defenses on either Route 5 or the Villa Verde Trail would be virtually impossible.

Next, the few patrols that had managed to reach the northeast section of the Villa Verde Trail in the vicinity of Imugan reported that the Japanese were sending reinforcements west along the trail. This route of approach to



VILLA VERDE TRAIL NEAR SAN NICOLAS

Bambang, it appeared, was going to be more strongly defended than anticipated. If so, the 32d Division was going to be hard put to divert any effort at all toward Baguio. Furthermore, 32d Division patrols penetrating as far as Route 5 learned that the stretch of highway north of Digdig was obviously going to be the scene of a major Japanese defensive effort. As events turned out, the results of this patrolling would prove of more importance to the 25th Division than to the 32d, but the possibility that the 25th rather than the 32d might become responsible for securing Route 5 north of Digdig was not, apparently, even a dream when, in early February, the 25th Division started patrolling north from San Jose.

Like the 32d, the 25th Division had both reconnaissance and holding missions until late February.[16] The line that the division was required to hold lay east and west of Rosaldo, a tiny

[16] Additional information on 25th Division operations is from: 25th Div FO's 9–12, dated between 7 and 19 Feb 45; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 35–39; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–17; 27th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 10–21 Feb 45; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–21; 35th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 8–21 Feb 45; 161st Inf, Battle for Japanese Puncan–West Sector, pp. 1–10; 25th Rcn Tr Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–6.

barrio on Route 5 about five miles northeast of San Jose. West of Route 5 the "secure line" lay about a mile into the Caraballo spur and paralleled Route 8, running northwest from San Jose to Umingan. East of Rosaldo the line extended three miles to Mt. Bolokbok, whence it swung generally south along the Pampanga River to Rizal, at the southern end of Route 100 and ten miles southeast of San Jose. The division would reconnoiter north of this line to the 25th–32d Division boundary, crossing Route 5 at Digdig.

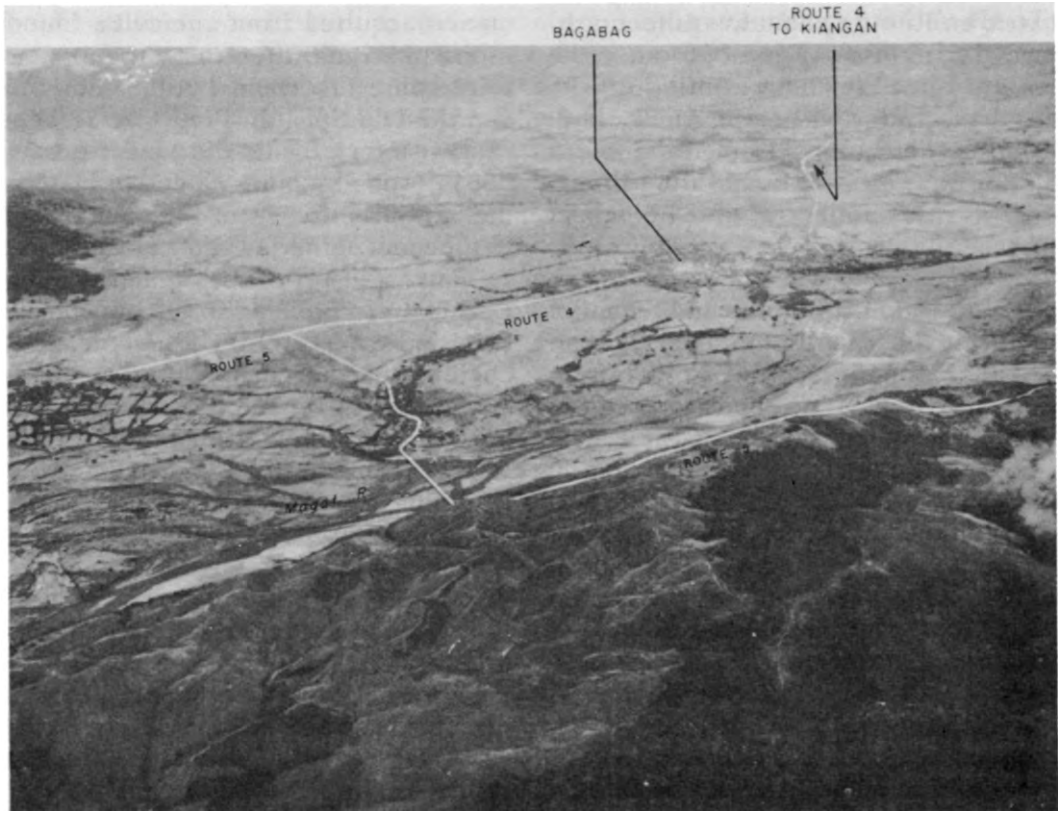
Patrols of the 25th Division operating in the southern section of the Caraballo spur found the terrain even worse than that in the Valdes region to the north. More important, division units that managed to traverse the spur discovered that the Puncan area was strongly defended, providing Sixth Army with the first indication of the *10th Division*'s intention of stationing a delaying force of one RCT across Route 5 at that point.

In the center, along Route 5, the 25th Division sent a battalion-sized reconnaissance-in-force up the highway just as the 32d Division had pushed a battalion up the Villa Verde Trail. The results were nearly identical. The 25th Division's battalion reached Rosaldo on 14 February and a week later, having probed cautiously northward, was in contact with an organized Japanese delaying position another five miles up the highway. Any further effort would obviously involve major operations. Therefore, its reconnaissance mission accomplished, the 25th Division halted its battalion just as the 32d Division had stopped its unit on the Villa Verde Trail.

To the east other 25th Division patrols, their reports augmented by information acquired from guerrillas, found substantial indications that the Japanese were going to defend both Route 100 and the Old Spanish Trail. By 21 February it was clear that the Japanese were not missing any more defensive bets on the 25th Division front than they were in the zones of the 32d and 33d Divisions.

Thus, I Corps operations on the Baguio and Bambang fronts during the first three weeks of February made it obvious that the Japanese were going to defend every avenue of approach to the north, with the possible exception of Route 3 on the west coast. There, 33d Division reconnaissance had not carried sufficiently far northward to draw any conclusions about Japanese defenses. The Japanese withdrawal in front of Baguio, Sixth Army had learned, did not indicate weakness but actually foreshadowed a tightening and strengthening of defensive lines. Sixth Army had expected to find strong defenses on Route 5, but it now appeared that the Japanese were willing and able to devote greater effort to the defense of the river valleys, the Villa Verde Trail, Route 100, and the Old Spanish Trail than Sixth Army's G–2 Section had at first estimated.

From the beginning of planning, General Krueger had realized that I Corps would need at least two divisions to achieve decisive results on the Baguio front. Now it was also obvious that the corps would require two divisions on the Bambang front in order to mount even a limited-objective holding attack. But I Corps had only three divisions available. It was time to reassess plans with a view toward deciding along which front the more decisive results could be achieved.



BAGABAG

Guerrillas and Additional Intelligence

While I Corps was busy gathering important informaion through ground reconnaissance, other intelligence poured into Sixth Army headquarters from aerial reconnaissance, guerrilla reports, captured documents, and, presumably, radio intercepts. Through a combination of these sources Sixth Army, during the first weeks of February, learned of the *Shobu Group*'s plan for the triangular defensive redoubt. Of perhaps greater importance for future planning was the discovery of the Baguio-Aritao supply road. Sixth Army had previously considered the Baguio and Bambang defensive sectors to be more or less isolated from one another, but the existence of the supply road made it apparent that the Japanese could rapidly move troops from one front to the other. If that link in the Japanese defensive system could be severed, Sixth Army would achieve a significant tactical success. A decision had to be made selecting the front on which to put the effort necessary to close one end of the supply road.

The distance from the 33d Division's front lines on Route 11 to the Baguio end of the supply road was shorter than

that from the 25th Division's advanced position on Route 5 to Aritao. But on the Baguio side the approach ran all the way through easily defensible terrain, whereas north of Santa Fe the terrain to Aritao was fairly open. Other factors favored the Route 5 approach. Having learned of Yamashita's triangular defense concept, Krueger foresaw that a I Corps advance up Route 5 would not only threaten the Aritao terminus of the supply road but would also pose a direct threat to the Bambang anchor of the triangle. Moreover, not too far beyond Bambang lay the junction of Routes 4 and 5 at Bagabag. If I Corps seized that junction, it would cut the triangular redoubt off from supplies in the Cagayan Valley except for what the Japanese could move over Route 11 from Tuguegarao, a stretch of miserable road that guerrillas constantly blocked. The capture of both the Routes 4–5 junction and the Aritao entrance to the supply road would not only open two additional routes over which Sixth Army troops could advance into the *Shobu Group* redoubt but would also open the way into the Cagayan Valley, an eventuality that promised to cut off strong Japanese forces from the rest of the *Shobu Group*. All in all, it appeared that if the Sixth Army could push to and beyond Aritao the *Shobu Group* would face disaster. Such decisive results could not be achieved on the Baguio front, for from Baguio the *Shobu Group* forces could make a fighting withdrawal along easily defensible Route 11, retiring even further into the mountains while continuing to receive supplies from the Cagayan Valley. Finally, by the third week in February, Krueger had decided it would be unsound to reorient the 32d Division from the firm contact the unit had established along the Villa Verde Trail, such an obvious route to outflank the *Shobu Group*'s Route 5 defenses. Krueger's decision would have to favor the Bambang front.

Before the end of February, then, Krueger had had to reorient Sixth Army's plans completely. The 25th and 32d Divisions would make the major effort against the *Shobu Group*, striking north on the Bambang front. The Baguio front Krueger relegated to a holding status. There, until the 37th Division could move north from Manila, the 33d Division would have a supporting, secondary role.

While making these decisions, Krueger still had to worry about the Japanese *19th Division*, which, he knew by mid-February, had withdrawn from the Baguio region. He learned that the division was moving north toward the hitherto undefended Bontoc area, northern apex of Yamashita's triangular redoubt. For obvious reasons, Krueger wanted to contain the *19th Division* in the Bontoc area, but with all available American divisions committed to definite courses of action on the Baguio or Bambang fronts, he could spare no troops for the job of pinning the *19th Division* in place. There was, however, a force upon which he could depend for help—the United States Army Forces in the Philippines, Northern Luzon.

Usually known as the USAFIP(NL), this organized guerrilla force was led by Col. Russell W. Volckmann, a U.S. Army regular who, at the risk of sudden death at the hands of the Japanese (if not ultimate court-martial by the U.S. Army for disobeying surrender orders) had taken to the hills upon the fall of the Philip-

pines in 1942.[17] When Sixth Army reached Luzon on 9 January Colonel Volckmann's force had numbered about 8,000 men, of whom only 2,000 were well armed. After the invasion Sixth Army started running supplies to the USAFIP(NL), first by small craft that put into various guerrilla-held beaches on the west coast and later by C–47 aircraft that flew to guerrilla-held dropping grounds and airstrips. Within two months after the landing at Lingayen Gulf, Filipino enthusiasm had brought Volckmann's strength up to 18,000 men, while the supply of arms increased not only because of Sixth Army's efforts but also because their own new strength enabled the guerrillas to capture equipment from isolated Japanese outposts and patrols.

Volckmann divided his organization into command, combat, and service echelons, respectively numbering 1,400, 15,000, and 2,700 troops. The combat echelon was in turn broken down into five infantry regiments—the 11th, 14th, 15th, 66th, and 121st—each with an "authorized" strength of 2,900 officers and men, and each subdivided into three rifle battalions of four rifle companies apiece. The combat echelon was soon strengthened by the addition of a battalion of mixed field artillery, equipped with captured Japanese ordnance.

At the beginning of February Volckmann's headquarters was at Darigayos Cove, on the coast about fifteen miles north of San Fernando. His missions as assigned by Sixth Army, which assumed control of USAFIP(NL) on 13 January, were to gather intelligence, ambush Japanese patrols, seize or destroy Japanese supplies, disrupt Japanese lines of communication, and block Japanese routes of withdrawal into and exit from the Cagayan Valley.[18] It was not, apparently, initially intended that Volckmann's force would engage in sustained efforts against major Japanese units, and there seems to have been little hope that Volckmann's, or any other guerrilla unit, would ever become effective combat organizations. The most help GHQ SWPA and Sixth Army probably expected was in the form of harassing raids, sabotage, and intelligence.

But Volckmann—and other guerrilla leaders on Luzon as well—interpreted his missions as broadly as his strength and armament permitted. By the end of February USAFIP (NL) had cleared much of the west coast of Luzon north of San Fernando and also controlled the north coast west of Aparri. Volckmann had rendered Route 11 between Baguio and Tuguegarao and Route 4 from Libtong to Bagabag virtually impassable to the Japanese. Indeed, as has been shown, one of the main reasons that Yamashita moved the *19th Division* north had been to regain control over the two vital highways so that supplies could continue moving into the final redoubt. While USAFIP(NL) did not possess sufficient strength to attack major Japanese concentrations or to hold out against large-scale punitive expeditions, it had diverted and pinned down Japanese forces that could undoubtedly have been used to better advantage elsewhere. It would appear that by mid-February

[17] Additional information on the USAFIP (NL) is derived from USAFIP (NL) Operations Report, pages 3–6, 8, 10–17. Volckmann held the rank of major in 1942. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in October 1944 and to colonel in February 1945.

[18] Ltr of Instr, Sixth Army to Volckmann, *et al.*, 2 Feb 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 149.

USAFIP(NL) had accomplished far more than GHQ SWPA or Sixth Army had either expected or hoped.

While Sixth Army had probably not planned to use guerrillas extensively, it seems that the loss of the 40th and 41st Divisions, coupled with the other difficulties involved in securing sufficient regular troops for operations in northern Luzon, prompted General Krueger to reassess the role guerrillas could and would play.[19] During February more and more guerrilla units were outfitted with weapons and clothes, some of them relieving regular forces in guard duties and mopping-up actions while others were sent to the front for direct attachment to and reinforcement of combat units. In the case of USAFIP(NL), supply efforts were redoubled, a broad program of air support was set up and air support parties were sent to Volckmann, and, as time passed, Volckmann's missions were enlarged. Indeed, Volckmann's forces came to substitute for a full division, taking the place of the regular division that Krueger had planned to send up the west coast in a series of shore-to-shore operations, an undertaking that, by mid-February, USAFIP(NL) successes had rendered unnecessary.

The Plan in Late February

Thus, as of late February General Krueger had available for operations in northern Luzon the 25th, 32d, and 33d Divisions and the USAFIP(NL) as a substitute for a fourth division. He expected the 37th Division to become available, one RCT at a time, beginning in late March.

With these forces, Sixth Army's plan called for the first main effort in northern Luzon to be made on the Bambang front by the 25th and 32d Divisions. Meanwhile, the 33d Division would mount holding attacks on the Baguio front, which would explode into decisive action once the 37th Division, released from its garrison duties at Manila, moved north. Initially, USAFIP(NL) would continue its harassing missions and provide such help in the San Fernando and Baguio areas as was feasible. (Two of its battalions had been fighting under 43d and then 33d Division control since late January and other units were already moving toward San Fernando.) When the 37th Division began moving into position on the Baguio front, USAFIP(NL) would undertake a drive inland along Route 4 toward the junction of Routes 4 and 11 at Bontoc.

These plans had not emerged all of a piece from the G–3 Section of Sixth Army headquarters. The concept of making the main effort along the Bambang approaches developed during the first three weeks of February; the final plans for the employment of the 37th Division and USAFIP(NL) did not develop much before mid-March; the idea that the 33d Division would have a holding mission until the 37th Division reached the Baguio front was clear well before the end of February.

[19] The fact that Krueger established machinery for controlling guerrillas in a Special Intelligence Section under his G–2 seems indicative of the limited use to which Sixth Army, at least initially, intended to put guerrillas.

CHAPTER XXV

The Collapse of the Baguio Front

The 33d Division's Holding Mission

The Situation in Late February

The decision to relegate the 33d Division to a holding mission on the Baguio front did not affect the tasks the division had already assumed.[1] First, the unit had to clear the remaining Japanese from the bare-sloped, sharp-crested Hills 600–1500 ridge line dominating Route 3 from Pozorrubio north to the junction of Routes 3 and 11 near Rosario. Simultaneously, the division was to secure the terrain east of the ridge to include the Arodogat River valley. It would also reconnoiter up the coast to Agoo, six miles north of Damortis; from Rosario northward seven miles to Pugo; and from the Routes 3–11 junction northeastward along Route 11 six miles to Camp 2. The reconnaissance line ran eastward from Camp 2 almost five miles across the rugged southern reaches of the Cordillera Central to the 32d–33d Division boundary at Sapit.

Route 11, the 33d Division would soon learn, was the most strongly defended and most easily defensible approach to Baguio. Running northeast and then north into Baguio from its junction with Route 3 near Rosario, Route 11 lies deep in the gorge of the Bued River, the headwaters of which rise within the Baguio city limits. Noses of steep-sided ridges rise sharply from the gorge in every direction, tower to a height of 3,500 to 4,000 feet within half a mile of the highway, and then ascend to mountain crests of 6,000 feet. So sharp is the gorge of the Bued that much of Route 11 can lie in deep shadow cast by the dominating ridges, while one or two thousand feet up the slopes the sun brightly illuminates the terrain.

A few sharp, short ravines leading into the mountains from the Bued Gorge have a rich verdure of dense jungle undergrowth, and some of the ridge slopes towering above the gorge have respectable, although rather thin, stands of timber. For the most part, however, the steep ridges' sides are covered by short grasses interspersed with scattered trees; rock outcroppings are not uncommon. Asphalt-paved Route 11, the best road in northern Luzon, is easily blocked and broken. Between the Routes 3–11 junction and Baguio, Route 11 crosses the Bued River five times and bridges the deep ravines of tributary

[1] This subsection is based on: 33d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 20–22 Feb 45; I Corps FO's 10–12, dated 12, 17, and 21 Feb 45; I Corps Ltrs of Instr to 33d Div, 15, 20, and 22 Feb 45; 33d Div FO 11, 13 Feb 45; 33d Div Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Intel, Sec. 2, Enemy O/B pp. 3–8; SWPA Hist Series, II, 471–72; *ibid.*, Map 122; *14th Area Army* Opns Orders Nos. A–487 and A–516, 3 and 13 Feb 45, Trans, III, Item 3, pp. 29–33; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 89–94, 99–106.



ROUTE 11 WINDING SOUTH FROM BAGUIO

streams at another fourteen points. At most of the nineteen crossing sites along the twenty miles between the junction and Baguio the bridges are 50 to 100 feet above the rocky bed of the Bued or the various steep-sided ravine bottoms. Without the bridges, it is virtually impossible to move heavy equipment up the highway. As of late February 1945 the Allied Air Forces and guerrillas had already destroyed several of the spans; those remaining intact troops of the Japanese *23d Division* would knock out as they retreated northward under pressure from the 33d Division. A rapid advance up Route 11, the 33d Division quickly realized, would present as many engineering as tactical problems.

Tactically, the terrain along Route 11 gave every advantage to the defenders, who were well entrenched on dominating ground from which they had excellent observation. The 33d Division would clear one side of a ridge nose, round the nose, and find the Japanese just as strong on the opposite side. Attack along the highway promised only an arduous, time-consuming, and costly process of clearing the adjacent terrain inch by inch. With a relatively small force, the Japanese could hold up the entire 33d Division almost indefinitely.

A second approach to Baguio in which the 33d Division became interested began at Pugo, seven miles north of Rosario along a fairly good gravel road that traverses easy terrain. From Pugo, a narrow, rocky trace known at the Tuba Trail winds its way tortuously north and northeast through sometimes forested and sometimes semibarren mountains to barrio Tuba, two and a half miles southwest of Baguio. A fairly good gravel road led from Tuba to Route 11 at the southern edge of Baguio.[2] Along the Tuba trail the terrain would again give the defenders all the advantages.

A third approach to Baguio began at Caba, on the coast eight miles north of Agoo. A good, one-lane gravel road ran east three miles from Caba and then connected with an abandoned railroad bed. With some breaks, the railroad grade continued eastward another five miles over rough mountains to Galiano, about nine miles west of Baguio and site of a small hydroelectric plant that served the city of Baguio. At Galiano another all-weather gravel road, following the

[2] In April 1957 the road from Route 11 was paved for perhaps four miles south of the junction. At a point about a mile and a half south of the junction a good gravel road led off westward to Tuba, a mile distant. Beyond Tuba the Tuba Trail had not been kept in repair and not even a jeep could negotiate it.



GALIANO VALLEY APPROACH TO BAGUIO

old railroad bed, ran uphill through Asin—site of another small hydroelectric plant and a hot salt bath resort—to Route 9 at the western edge of Baguio.[3] Between the end of the gravel road from Caba and the beginning of the gravel road at Galiano this approach runs through fairly low but rugged, broken hill country. The road from Galiano to Asin, a distance of almost four miles, is easy enough, but Asin sits in a deep bowl surrounded by partially wooded mountains that rise sharply to a height of over 2,000 feet. Just east of Asin the road passes through two short, narrow tunnels, from which it is a steady uphill climb through fairly open country to the junction with Route 9. Asin is the key area along this approach, for further progress toward Baguio demands a breakthrough across the dominating terrain at the bowl and the two tunnels.

The fourth approach to Baguio in the 33d Division's zone was Route 9, originating at Bauang, on the coast seven miles north of Caba. From Bauang

[3] In April 1957 the road to Asin and Galiano was paved for perhaps two miles out of Baguio and was maintained as a good gravel, one-lane road thence to Asin and Galiano. Beyond Galiano the trail was virtually impassable to a point about five miles from Caba. The railroad bed was originally constructed in 1914–17 for a rack and pinion branch of the Manila Railroad. The venture was abandoned before the bed was completed and before any bridges had been constructed.



ROUTE 9 NEAR BURGOS, LOOKING EASTWARD

this two-lane, macadam highway runs generally southeast twenty miles—straight-line distance—into Baguio. Much of the terrain along Route 9 is less forbidding than that along the other three approaches, and the highway usually runs over and along ridges rather than through gorges and valleys. Altogether the easiest approach to Baguio, Route 9 still passes many points where a determined defending force could dig in and hold back a much superior attacking group.

As of 21 February 1945, when it began patrolling along or toward the approaches to Baguio, the 33d Division had divided its zone into three regimental sectors. One regiment was responsible for the entire area from the coast east almost as far as Route 11; the second was to reconnoiter up Route 11; the third would clear the Hills 600–1500 ridge line and the Arodogat Valley, patrolling as far as Sapit.

The Japanese had divided the ground in much the same manner. One regiment covered the ground east of Route 11, including the Agno Valley; a second regiment was astride Route 11; a third had troops along the Tuba Trail approach. The *58th IMB* defended both Route 9 and the Galiano-Asin approach to Baguio. As of the last week of February, the bulk of the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* was established along an MLR; the *23d Division* still maintained

outposts on the Hills 600–1500 ridge line and in the Arodogat Valley.

The Japanese believed that Sixth Army would make its main effort on the Baguio front along Route 11. They thought Sixth Army might launch secondary attacks up the Agno and Ambayabang River valleys, and they also estimated that some American forces might strike toward Baguio along the Tuba Trail. This early in the battle for Baguio, the Japanese were little worried about American advances over the Galiano-Asin road or along Route 9. However, the Japanese deployment indicates that the *58th IMB* was prepared to defend these two approaches should the necessity arise.

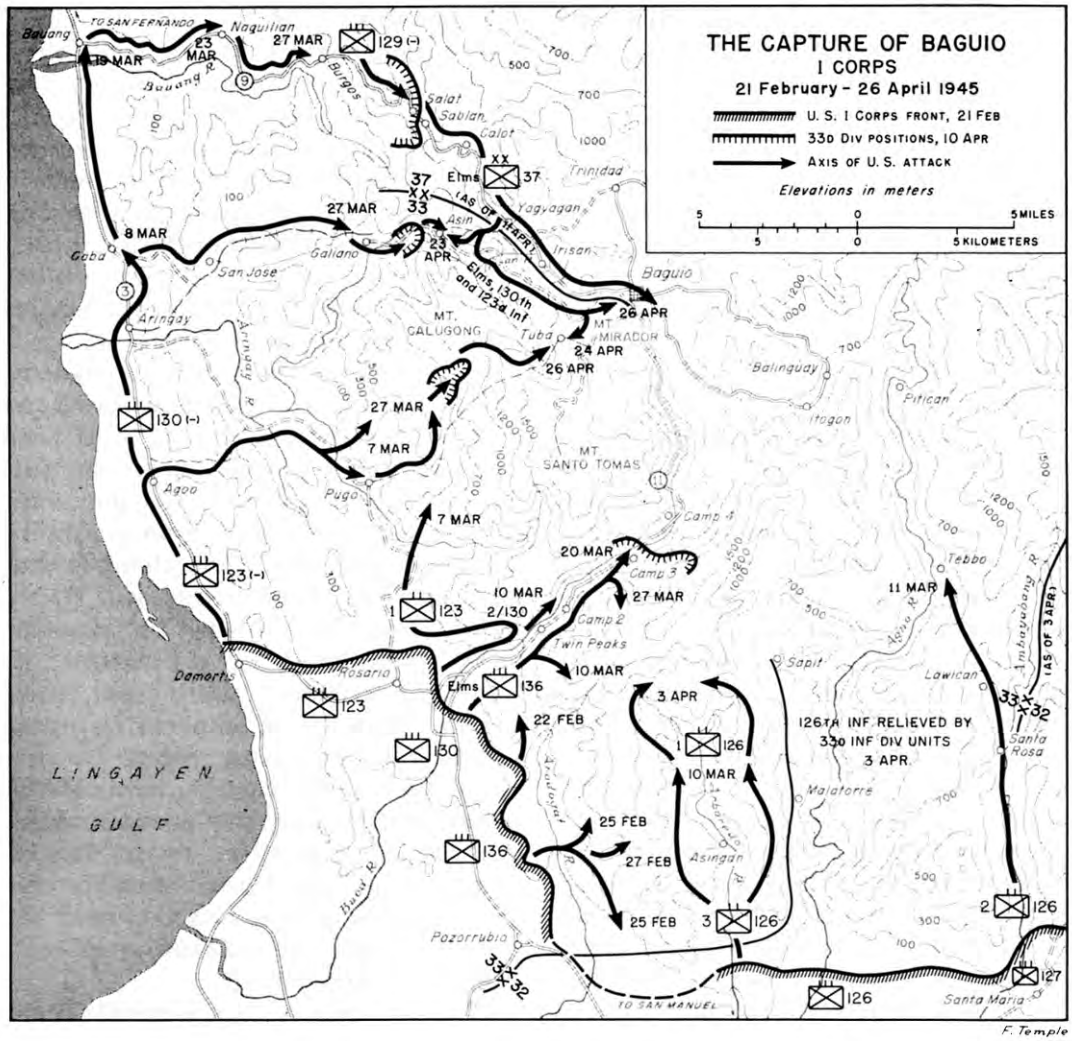
Probing Operations to Mid-March

During the last week of February and the first few days of March the 33d Division met with considerable and, in some areas, unexpected success in accomplishing its missions.[4] On the east, behind precisely adjusted fire of two artillery battalions, 33d Division troops overran the last Japanese positions on the Hills 600–1500 ridge line without suffering a single casualty. Then, after a sharp fight at a hill dominating the entrance, the American troops had no trouble clearing a few Japanese stragglers from the Arodogat Valley. (*Map 20*)

Along Route 11, however, the story was different. Here the *71st Infantry* of the *23d Division* conducted a fighting withdrawal, and by the middle of the first week in March 33d Division patrols were still a mile and a half short of their reconnaissance objective, Camp 2. Meanwhile, units patrolled up the road from Rosario to Pugo against little opposition, but then found the first stretches of the Tuba Trail defended by elements of the *64th Infantry, 23d Division*, holding positions on high ground. Farther north, other patrols reached barrio San Jose, midway between Caba and Galiano, finding no signs of Japanese. The most startling development of the period was the unopposed occupation of Agoo and the concomitant discovery that no Japanese defended Route 3 from Agoo five miles north along the coast to the Aringay River.

As a result of its patrol successes, the 33d Division became ambitious. It had uncovered a general pattern of Japanese withdrawal all along its front, and, although the withdrawal was of a fighting nature along Route 11, the division believed it could push on much faster toward Baguio. Maj. Gen. Percy W. Clarkson, the 33d's commander, had from the start been unhappy at having been assigned a holding mission, and saw in the Japanese withdrawal on his front a welcome chance to drive on toward Baguio immediately. He proposed to General Swift, the I Corps commander, that the 33d Division strike for a new "secure line" extending from Aringay southeast through Pugo to Route 11 at Twin Peaks, a mile short of Camp 2, and then extend its reconnaissance northward accordingly.

[4] The remainder of this section is based principally on: 33d Div Rpt Luzon, pt. III, Battle of Baguio, p. 1; 33d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 21 Feb–8 Apr 45; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 61–71; I Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 21 Feb–9 Apr 45; 130th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. III, Gen Opns, pp. 6–32; 130th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 21 Feb–10 Apr 45; 123d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 4–6; 123d Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 21 Feb–10 Apr 45; 136th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. III, Opns, pp. 16–41; 33d Div Rpt Luzon, an. 12, 33d Recn Tr Opns, pp. 1–3.



MAP 20

Swift approved Clarkson's plan and set a new reconnaissance line that stretched from the coast at Caba east through Galiano to Baguio and thence southeast about seven miles to the 33d–32d Division boundary at Balinguay, ten miles north of the previous reconnaissance limit point of Sapit. The 33d Division's displacement northward, Swift continued, would start on 7 March.[5]

The pattern of operations for the next week or so followed almost precisely that of the previous week and a half. On the west 33d Division patrols secured Arin-

[5] Ltr of Instr, I Corps to 33d Div, 3 Mar 45; I Corps FO 12–2, 7 Mar 45 (Amendment No. 2 to FO 12 of 21 Feb 45).

gay and Caba against no opposition and started east along the trail to Galiano. Other troops cleared the Japanese from hills at the entrance to the Tuba Trail, and before the end of the second week of March patrols were three winding miles northeast along the trail from Pugo. As before, there were no significant gains on the east, where even small patrols found it difficult, in the face of Japanese counterreconnaissance operations, to penetrate along Route 11 as far as Twin Peaks.

The almost complete lack of opposition along the coast as far as Caba was certainly surprising, and still more surprising was the fact that guerrilla and 33d Division patrols reported virtually no Japanese strength at Bauang where, seven miles north of Caba, Route 9 began at its junction with Route 3. And again, as far as patrols had penetrated, Japanese defenses along the Tuba Trail and the trails to Galiano did not seem strong. Moreover, terrain reconnaissance parties reported that no inordinate engineer effort would be required to bulldoze roads that trucks and artillery could use at least in dry weather along the Tuba Trail and the Galiano road. All in all, the situation on the west seemed to General Clarkson to invite immediate exploitation, and, in mid-March, he had a plan of exploitation ready.

Limited Objective Attacks to Late March

Clarkson proposed sending battalion combat teams toward Baguio along Route 11, the Galiano road, and the Tuba Trail. He wanted to concentrate the rest of the division—two RCT's less one battalion held in reserve—along Route 9 for a quick dash into the city. If he could get forces in position for such a co-ordinated effort by 1 April, Clarkson believed, he would have an excellent chance to seize Baguio before 15 May. The plan required that strong guerrilla forces, already operating in the San Fernando area only seven miles north of Bauang, hold in place to secure the division's northern flank.[6]

Like Clarkson, Swift was no man to let opportunity go by without being at least touched, if not seized. Also like Clarkson, the I Corps commander had concluded by mid-March that the western approaches to Baguio promised more decisive results than those along Route 11 or the river valleys to the east. There was no logic in permitting the Japanese to redeploy forces for the defense of Route 9 unmolested, and it made sense to take advantage of apparent Japanese weakness in the Bauang region. On the other hand, Swift thought, it would be advantageous to keep the Japanese thinking that the main effort toward Baguio would come along Route 11 and to promote a belief that no attacks would be launched over the Galiano road and Tuba Trail approaches.

Thus, it appears that General Swift was of a mind to approve Clarkson's proposals, and Clarkson's plan might well have worked. The 33d Division, however, never got the chance to find out. Sixth Army had already drawn up plans to open the third front in northern Luzon, plans that required redeployment of USAFIP(NL) troops from

[6] Ltr, CofS 33d Div to ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 14 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 17–19 Mar 45.

the San Fernando area. In addition, Swift had certain reservations about the 33d Division's proposals. He saw a possibility that a strong, sudden Japanese counterattack might force him to redeploy elements of the 25th or 32d Divisions from the Bambang front in order to pull 33d Division chestnuts out of the fire should Clarkson's somewhat ambitious plans result in overextension. As a result, Swift would not give blanket approval to Clarkson's suggestions. On the other hand, the corps commander was willing to let the 33d Division mount limited objective attacks. First, he instructed Clarkson to push one regiment (less a battalion) up Route 11 as far as Camp 4, about six miles north of Twin Peaks. In mounting the attack the 33d Division was to avoid becoming so involved that it would be forced to commit too much strength on its diversionary front. Second, Swift directed the division to temporarily halt strong attacks along the Tuba Trail and the Galiano road and cease its engineer work along the Tuba Trail, lest the Japanese send strong reinforcements to that approach. Finally, I Corps directed the 33d Division to send a battalion-sized reconnaissance-in-force into Bauang and thence inland four miles along Route 9 to Naguilian. The force was to withdraw quickly if it encountered strong opposition or if the Japanese showed signs of counterattacking.[7]

The I Corps orders, unsatisfying as they were to Clarkson, established the pattern of the 33d Division's operations for the latter half of March. On the east, moving slowly so as to avoid pitched battle, troops on Route 11 took a week to secure the Camp 3 area. Since the *23d Division* MLR lay just north of Camp 3 and since the Japanese blocked all trails on both sides of Route 11, the 33d Division's force on the highway halted. It was evident that any attempt to go on would involve the division in just the sort of fight General Swift had ordered it to avoid. In the center patrols encountered no opposition as they moved to within a mile of Galiano, but other patrols found increasing evidence that the Japanese were prepared to defend the Tuba Trail tenaciously.

Again the key action took place on the division's left. On 19 March troops seized intact the Route 3 bridge across the Bauang River and secured the town of Bauang against negligible resistance. Patrols quickly started east along Route 9 to Naguilian and occupied that town against minor opposition on 23 March. Four days later reconnaissance elements were almost as far as Burgos, four miles east of Naguilian and approximately the same distance short of *58th IMB* MLR defenses on Route 9.

Without definite information about Japanese defenses east of Naguilian, General Clarkson had begun to think that Route 9 might be wide open as far as Baguio. He felt that he needed only a little protection on his left rear before he could launch a major attack down Route 9 to Baguio and, with his division fretting under the restrictions of its holding mission, again proposed to Swift an immediate drive to Baguio. For a few days, at least, Clarkson could also suggest to Swift that the 33d Division's left rear had adequate protection. USAFIP(NL) forces at San Fernando, with whom the 33d Division had made

[7] Ltrs of Instr, I Corps to 33d Div, 12 and 16 Mar 45; 33d Div Opns Memos 24 and 26, 13 and 17 Mar 45; 33d Div FO 15, 16 Mar 45.

contact on 20 March, reported that San Fernando was clear of Japanese, that the coast from Bauang to San Fernando was secure, and that the Japanese forces formerly holding the San Fernando region had withdrawn into Baguio.

The USAFIP(NL) at San Fernando

With one battalion of its 121st Infantry, the USAFIP (NL) had begun operations against San Fernando in early January, just before Sixth Army had started ashore at Lingayen Gulf.[8] That battalion — its mission was to gather intelligence—was reinforced by a second during February, and a concerted attack on San Fernando began late in the month when Marine Corps SBD's from the Mangaldan strip at Lingayen Gulf started providing the USAFIP(NL) close support. The guerrilla regiment was moving against the 3,000-man *Hayashi Detachment* — three infantry battalions and some artillery—which had become responsible for the defense of San Fernando after the *19th Division* left the region.[9]

Recognizing that San Fernando was an indefensible cul-de-sac, the *Hayashi Detachment* placed its main defenses in hills north, east, and southeast of the town and, for lack of strength, withdrew most of the troops it once had at Bauang, leaving the vital Routes 3–9 junction virtually wide open. Since San Fernando was not a road junction town, the only explanation for the decision to defend there rather than at Bauang must have been the hope that supplies and reinforcements might yet be brought into Luzon through the San Fernando port.

During late February and early March the two USAFIP (NL) battalions attacked with only limited success. About mid-March another of the 121st's battalions, released from attachment to the 33d Division, came north to join in the action, while about the same time the *Hayashi Detachment* lost one of its battalions, which the *58th IMB* pulled back to Baguio as a reserve. The *Hayashi Detachment* then abandoned its last outposts within San Fernando, and on 14 March guerrillas entered the town unopposed, simultaneously continuing the attack against the Japanese in the surrounding hills.

When troops of the 33d Division reached Bauang, the *58th IMB* ordered the *Hayashi Detachment* to withdraw, directing it to reinforce the MLR positions at Sablan, about eight miles beyond Naguilian. Most of the Japanese unit then moved southeast over back country trails, guerrillas in pursuit, while one group, some 250 strong, attempted to withdraw south along Route 3 to Bauang

[8] Additional information on USAFIP (NL) operations is from USAFIP (NL) Report, pages 27–36.

[9] Japanese information in this and the next subsection is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 471–74; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 89–94, 106–08; 114–231; Statement of Maj Gen Naokata Utsunomiya (an ACofS *14th Area Army*), States, IV, 452–53; Sato Statement, States, III, 255–56; Interrog of Lt Gen Fukutaro Nishiyama (CG *23d Div*), USAFIP (NL) Rpt, p. 165; Interrog of Maj Gen Teshimitsu Takatsu (CofS *23d Div*), USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 171–72; 33d Div Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Intel, Sec. 2, Enemy O/B, pp. 4–9.

The *Hayashi Detachment* included the *544th IIB* of the *58th IMB*; the *1st Battalion* of the *75th Infantry, 19th Division*; some *58th IMB* artillery; and miscellaneous Japanese Army port and shipping units organized into a provisional infantry battalion. Volckmann estimated that the Japanese at San Fernando totaled 4,500 troops (Volckmann Comments, 10 Jan 57). It would appear that the additional 1,500 Japanese Volckmann accounts for must have been unarmed service troops not forming part of the *Hayashi Detachment*.

and thence east along Route 9. This group obviously did not know that the 33d Division had occupied Bauang, with the result that it lost almost 200 men killed. During the Japanese withdrawal USAFIP(NL) units mopped up at San Fernando and by 23 March had secured the entire area.

Transition on the Baguio Front

On the same day Sixth Army directed USAFIP(NL) to institute a drive inland along Route 4 from Libtong, opening the third front in northern Luzon.[10] All hope that the 33d Division had of guerrilla aid and protection on its left rear was now gone, for on 25 March I Corps ordered Clarkson to relieve USAFIP(NL) units in the San Fernando region.[11] A few days later Clarkson's latest plans for mounting a quick drive into Baguio received the *coup de grâce*.[12] The 32d Division was encountering unexpected difficulty along the Villa Verde Trail and sorely needed the troops it had deployed in the Arboredo, Agno, and Ambayabang River valleys on the 33d Division's right. Therefore, Swift directed the 33d Division to extend its zone east to include the Ambayabang Valley.[13] With its forces now too scattered for a concerted attack toward Baguio, the 33d Division again received orders to hold and limit its activities to patrolling—orders that were beginning to have a morale-shattering effect upon a division that was still itching to move and believed it could capture Baguio in short order.

Even as the 33d Division was reluctantly settling back on its haunches, events were afoot that would speed the pace of operations against Baguio. General Krueger, who had been short of troops for his campaign in northern Luzon ever since late February, in late March prevailed upon GHQ SWPA to release the 129th RCT of the 37th Division from its Manila garrison duties. Krueger planned to move the RCT up to Route 9, permitting the 33d Division to concentrate its strength on the southwestern and southern approaches to Baguio. As soon as the rest of the 37th Division could reach the Baguio front, an event Krueger expected in early April, I Corps could mount a two-division drive on Baguio. In the meanwhile the 129th RCT, attached to the 33d Division, would help reconnoiter toward Baguio in preparation for the all-out attack.

Clarkson now planned to have the 129th RCT send a battalion reconnaissance-in-force east along Route 9. The 123d Infantry, 33d Division, would continue patrolling toward Baguio over the Galiano road and the Tuba Trail, while the 136th Infantry, on Route 11, would strike north toward Camp 4, almost five miles beyond Camp 2. The 130th Infantry would cover the ground on the east flank just acquired from the 32d Division.

The Japanese opposing the reinforced 33d Division were no longer in the shape they had been at the end of February. The *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* had

[10] Sixth Army FO 58, 23 Mar 45.

[11] I Corps FO 12, 25 Mar 45.

[12] The remainder of this subsection is based primarily on: Sixth Army FO 58, 23 Mar 45; I Corps FO's 13 and 13–1, 25 Mar and 3 Apr 45; 33d Div FO's 16 and 17, 26 Mar and 3 Apr 45; Ltrs, CG 33d Div to CG I Corps, 30 Mar and 3 Apr 45; 33d Div Opns Memos 27–30, variously dated between 26 and 31 Mar 45; Comments of Col Frank J. Sackton (G–3 33d Div), 3 Jan 57.

[13] See also below, ch. XXVI.

both suffered heavy losses during March, losses that probably stemmed largely from lack of food and medical supplies rather than from combat action. By mid-March Japanese supply problems on the Baguio front had progressed from bad through worse to impossible. First, supplies had moved westward over the new Baguio-Aritao supply road far more slowly than anticipated, a development attributable in large measure to Allied Air Forces strikes on that road and along Route 5 north and south of Aritao. Second, operations of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), along Route 11 north from Baguio, and the activities of the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), in the Cagayan Valley, had made it virtually impossible for the Japanese to bring any food into the Baguio area from the north. Third, the Japanese tried to do too much with the limited amount of supplies available on the Baguio front. They were attempting to supply *23d Division* and *58th IMB* troops along the MLR; send certain military supplies north up Route 11 for the *19th Division*; feed *14th Area Army* headquarters and a large civilian population in Baguio; and establish supply dumps north and east of the city against the time of eventual withdrawal.[14]

Almost inevitably the principal sufferers were the front-line troops. By mid-March the best-fed Japanese combat troops on the Baguio front were getting less than half a pound of rice per day as opposed to a minimum daily requirement of nearly two and a half pounds. Before the end of the month the troops on the MLR were down to less than a quarter of a pound of rice a day. Starvation and diet-associated diseases filled hospitals and sapped the strength of the combat units. Generally, effective front-line strength was far lower than reported ration strength indicated. Medical supplies were consumed rapidly, and by the end of March, for example, there was virtually no malaria phophylaxis left in Baguio area hospitals.

Looking upon the situation on the Baguio front with frank pessimism, Yamashita in mid-March directed inspection of terrain north, northeast, and east of the city with a view toward preparing a new defense line. His attitude became even plainer when, on or about 30 March, he ordered Japanese civilians and the Filipino puppet government to evacuate Baguio. Indeed, the future on the Baguio front was so bleak by the end of March that almost any other army would have withdrawn to new defenses forthwith, thereby saving troops for future battle. But not so the Japanese. Yamashita decided that the existing MLR would be held until the situation became hopeless.

At the end of March that portion of the MLR held by the *23d Division* was still intact, and the *58th IMB* was busy deploying additional strength along its section of the line. One independent infantry battalion was on high ground north of Route 9 at Sablan; and another held defenses at Sablan. A reinforced company was at Burgos and, less

[14] According to Colonel Volckmann, that the Japanese had any success moving supplies north out of Baguio for the *19th Division* was attributable to the fact that, upon orders from the 33d Division, two battalions of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP (NL), previously operating north and northeast of Baguio, were redeployed to join the attack on the city from the west and south. This, in Volckmann's opinion, was an improper employment of guerrillas, especially in light of the 66th Infantry's equipment and organization at the time. (Volckmann Comments, 10 Jan 57.)

that company, another independent infantry battalion held reserve positions at Calot, a mile and a half southeast of Sablan. One understrength battalion was responsible for defending the rough terrain from Sablan six miles south to Mt. Apni, where a tie-in was made with the right flank of the *23d Division.*

Maj. Gen. Bunzo Sato, commanding the *58th IMB*, expected that the emphasis of any Allied drive in his sector would come along Route 9, but he did not neglect the other approach in his area, the Galiano road. Since the understrength battalion stationed astride the road was not strong enough to withstand a concerted attack, he directed his main reserve force, the *1st Battalion* of the *75th Infantry, 19th Division,* to move west out of Baguio to defenses at Asin. This step left in Baguio a reserve force of roughly three provisional infantry "battalions," which together probably could not muster over 750 effectives.

Patrolling with limited seizures of new territory marked 33d Division operations the last few days of March and the first week or so of April, and there were no significant changes in position in the new area taken over from the 32d Division and on Route 11. On the Tuba Trail patrols advanced another three miles in a northeasterly direction, reporting increasingly heavy Japanese resistance and increasingly rough terrain. The story was much the same on the Galiano road, where one battalion, after reaching a point a mile east of Galiano by 30 March, was slowed by scattered but determined opposition.

As was routine by this time, the key action for the period took place on the far left, or north. Here the 129th RCT occupied Burgos on 28 March after a sharp skirmish, and by 1 April was at Salat, less than a mile short of the Japanese MLR position at Sablan. The *58th IMB* hurriedly reinforced an outpost at Salat, but by 9 April the 129th RCT had broken through this position and had started to maneuver against the Japanese defenses at Sablan. In general, Japanese defenses along Route 9, the Galiano road, and the Tuba Trail still seemed unexpectedly weak and invited immediate exploitation. All that was needed to start a final drive was more strength, and that strength was forthcoming.

The Drive to Baguio

The Plans for Exploitation

By 7 April General Krueger had persuaded GHQ SWPA to release the rest of the 37th Division, less the 145th RCT, from Manila.[15] He directed I Corps to go ahead with a two-division drive on Baguio as soon as the 37th Division could concentrate along Route 9. I Corps, in turn, ordered an all-out attack to begin on 12 April.

The main effort was to be made on Route 9 by the 37th Division. The 33d Division would advance along all three approaches to Baguio in its area, placing emphasis on the Galiano road since an attack there would support the 37th Division's action and the terrain on the Galiano approach, at least east from Asin, appeared the easiest in the 33d

[15] General sources for this subsection include: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 84–85; Sixth Army FO 59, 7 Apr 45, in *ibid.*, I, 163; I Corps FO 14, 8 Apr 45; 33d Div FO 18, 9 Apr 45; Utsunomiya Statement, States, IV, 449–50; Sato Statement, States, III, 256; SWPA Hist Series, II, 474.

Division's zone. The 33d Division made its 136th Infantry, reinforced by the 33d Reconnaissance Troop and the 2d Battalion of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP-(NL), responsible for continuing pressure along Route 11 and up the three river valleys to the east. The 123d Infantry would push northeast over the Tuba Trail. The 130th Infantry would concentrate on the Galiano road. The 129th Infantry was to lead the 37th Division attack down Route 9, with the 148th Infantry initially held in reserve.

Despite the already evident pressure on Route 9, the Japanese, as of the second week in April, still felt that I Corps' main effort would come along Route 11. As a result, they did not redeploy strength to counter the growing threat on their right, but instead seemed content to sit back and wait, nursing a strangely uncharacteristic defeatist attitude. Such an attitude was certainly not helped by redoubled efforts on the part of *14th Area Army* headquarters to move civilians and supplies out of Baguio. What Yamashita thought about the situation was made amply clear by his personal preparations to depart for the Bambang front, an event that took place on 19 April.

As he had done earlier for the Bambang area, Yamashita set up an independent command for the Baguio front, leaving Maj. Gen. Naokata Utsunomiya, one of his assistant chiefs of staff, in charge.[16] Utsunomiya also had nominal command over the *19th Division* north of Baguio, a control that he was unable to exercise because of communications difficulties. The first step Utsunomiya took seems to have been to remove the *58th IMB* from the control of the *23d Division*. Next, directed by Yamashita to hold Baguio as long as possible before withdrawing to a new defense line, Utsunomiya issued a tongue-in-cheek order for all troops along the existing MLR to hold out to the last man.

Getting Under Way

For the period from 12 April through the seizure of Baguio, it is possible to omit detail in tracing the operations of 33d Division units in the Arboredo, Agno, and Ambayabang River valleys, along Route 11, and on the Tuba Trail, since these units played a relatively minor, indirect part in the capture of Baguio.[17] The best the units on the east could do was defend against possible surprise counterattacks and maintain pressure by patrol action, thereby helping to pin down Japanese forces that might have otherwise been used against the main drives. On the Tuba Trail troops spent most of their time bogged down by rain, fog, incredibly bad terrain, and steady, determined Japanese resistance. Thus, neither of the 33d Division's two right flank regiments was able to make a direct contribution to the success of the drive on Baguio; subsequent events proved that the units on Route 11 did not even keep in place the

[16] Utsunomiya's appointment was a strange one in that it placed him, a major general, over two lieutenant generals, the commanders of the *19th* and *23d Divisions*. There are, however, no indications that this had any effect upon the conduct of operations on the Baguio front.

[17] General sources for the rest of this section and its subsections include: 33d Div Rpt Luzon, pt. III, Battle of Baguio, pp. 2–3; 33d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 10–27 Apr 45; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 74–78; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 93–113; 37th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 10–27 Apr 45.

Japanese forces that faced them as of 12 April. Therefore, the description of the drive to Baguio of necessity centers on the operations along Route 9 and the Galiano road.

Although the two-division attack was not to start until 12 April, the 37th Division, in order to maintain momentum and contact, moved on 11 April against the Japanese known to be entrenched at and near Sablan. During the period 11–14 April the 129th Infantry broke through the Japanese defenses at Sablan in a battle marked by extremely close artillery and medium tank fire support.[18] On the 14th the 148th Infantry took over and by the end of the next day had secured Route 9 through Calot. During those two days the regiment also captured many ammunition and other supply dumps that the *19th Division* had left behind when it had redeployed through Baguio to the north. The Japanese had had neither the time nor the means to move these supplies north, and their loss would ultimately prove serious. Equally serious was the fact that from 11 through 15 April the 37th Division's artillery, supporting aircraft, and attached tank units had destroyed nearly all the artillery pieces available to the *58th IMB*.

Thoroughly alarmed at the unexpected speed of the 37th Division's advance, General Sato, on 15 April, began attempts to reinforce defenses along Route 9 southeast of Calot. That day he ordered two infantry companies of his reserve forward to a barrio two miles southeast of Calot, but before the troops could reach their destination, the 148th Infantry had passed this point and moved on through Yagyagan, another mile to the southeast.

The seizure of Yagyagan was to assume considerable importance, for from that barrio a trail led southwest down steep slopes to Asin on the Galiano road. The 130th Infantry, 33d Division, had been stalled by determined Japanese resistance west of Asin.[19] If the 37th Division could secure the Yagyagan trail entrance, part of the 130th Infantry could move around to Route 9 and fall upon the Asin defenses in a neat envelopment.

To secure the trail entrance and to assure its own progress along Route 9, the 37th Division had to break through known Japanese defenses where, just a mile southeast of Yagyagan, the highway dipped across the gorge of the Irisan River. The six-day battle that ensued at the Irisan Gorge proved to be the critical action of the entire drive to Baguio. It was, indeed, one of the few cohesive actions on the Baguio front after the capture of the Routes 3–11 road junction by the 43d Division in late January, and it serves as an example of much of the fighting on the Baguio front from late February on.

The Battle at the Irisan River

The Irisan Gorge was the best natural defensive position along Route 9 be-

[18] Additional information on the 37th Division operations is from: 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, pp. 72–76; 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 9–10; 129th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 11–28 Apr 45; 129th Inf Regtl Jnl, 11–28 Apr 45; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. II, 5 Mar–30 Jun, pp. 1–3; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 14–28 Apr 45; 148th Inf S–3 Jnl, 14–28 Apr 45.

[19] On 13 April, during this "stalled" period, Pfc. Dexter J. Kerstetter of Company A, 130th Infantry, exhibited dauntless leadership and remarkable heroism as he guided an attack against a Japanese hill position. For his action, Private Kerstetter was awarded the Medal of Honor.



IRISAN GORGE

tween Bauang and Baguio, but was only belatedly recognized as such by General Sato. Beginning on 16 April he frantically sent reinforcements to the Irisan, apparently acting under Utsunomiya's orders to make a last desperate stand at the river. Practically every able-bodied soldier in Baguio was sent forward, troops were removed from outposts along the Arboredo, Agno, and Ambayabang Valleys, and about half the strength was taken from defenses along Route 11. All in all, the Japanese may have dispatched more than 1,500 men to the Irisan, although probably no more than one-third of that total was actually present on the battleground at one time.

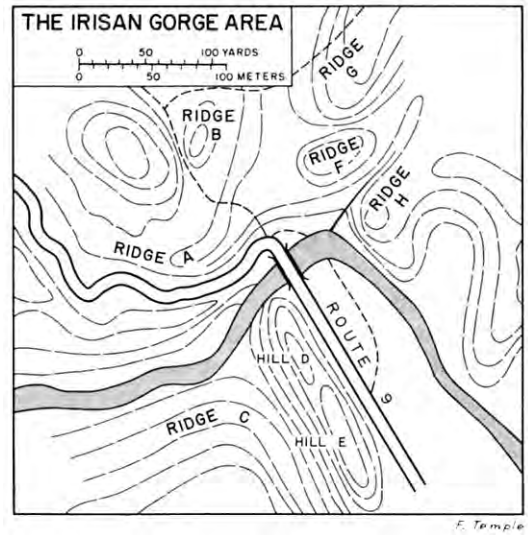
Route 9 ran generally southeast from Yagyagan and took a sharp turn eastward some 200 yards short of a destroyed bridge over the Irisan.[20] Here the highway slithered around the side of the gorge under the southern and eastern slopes of a steep ridge known to the 148th Infantry as Ridge A. At the bridge site the highway took a right-angle turn to the south-southeast, crossed the river, and proceeded toward Baguio under the east side of 200-yard-long Ridge D–E. Immediately east of the bridge site the Irisan took a sharp turn corresponding to that of Route 9, both twists dominated on the northeast by steep, bare-sloped Ridge H. Along the south bank of the river — across the stream from Ridge A — lay wooded Ridge C, which was west of and at right angles to Ridge D–E. (*Map 21*)

Running north and northwest from the Route 9 turn at the destroyed bridge was a trail that, crossing the eastern slopes of Ridge A, passed through a slight draw about 150 yards northwest of the river. The draw was bounded on the east by Ridge B and on the west by an unnamed hill forming a northwestern high point on Ridge A. Another 150 yards east across a broad saddle from Ridge B lay Ridge G, separated from Ridge F, immediately to the south, by a sharp gully. Ridge H lay across another draw southeast of Ridge F. The trail branched just northwest of Ridge B, the west fork leading back to Route 9 a mile or so northwest of the Irisan crossing, the other striking northeast along the north side of Ridge G and ending six miles from the fork at Trinidad, a town on Route 11 about the same distance north of Baguio.

[20] The past tense is used here in the description of Route 9 because the location of Route 9 has been changed immediately west of the bridge.

The Japanese defenses were set up to meet a power drive along Route 9. Positions on Ridge A dominated the east-west stretch of the highway; those on Ridges F and H controlled the right-angle turn in the road at the river, as well as the bridge site; Ridge B positions overlooked the trail forking northwest of the bridge; Ridge G controlled the trail to Trinidad. Few troops were on Ridge C, since the Japanese apparently considered the terrain there too rough and wooded to be used as a route of attack toward Ridge D–E, which was well defended. The D–E position served as a backstop for defenses on other ridges, as a means to help maintain control over the crossing site, and, finally, for securing Route 9 south of the Irisan as an axis of reinforcement or withdrawal. In general, all Japanese positions in the area were of a hasty nature, with the possible exception of some caves in which antitank guns were emplaced to control the east-west stretch of Route 9. But most emplacements, especially those for machine guns, the Japanese had chosen with an excellent eye for terrain, and installations on every ridge were mutually supporting when the terrain permitted.

The 148th Infantry did not play the game according to the rules the Japanese had laid down, at least not after the morning of 17 April. That morning two companies of the 2d Battalion, 148th Infantry, reinforced by medium tanks, 105-mm. self-propelled mounts, and 76-mm. tank destroyers, were bloodily repulsed in an attempt to attack along the east-west section of Route 9 just west of the bridge site. Japanese antitank fire knocked out two American tanks as they came around a nose of



MAP 21

Ridge A at the bridge, while well-directed Japanese machine gun and small arms fire from Ridges F and H and the eastern part of Ridge A turned back the 148th Infantry's troops. During the engagement the Japanese lost two light tanks.

In the afternoon the 148th began a series of enveloping maneuvers. First, one platoon struck directly north up the steep western slope of Ridge A from a point near that where Route 9 turned east. Under cover of this frontal assault the rest of Company F, infiltrating to the rear of Japanese positions, came in from the northwest; elements of the 1st Battalion, also driving southeast, secured the unnamed hill marking the high point of Ridge A. By dusk most of the ridge was in 148th Infantry hands, and the troops held on despite strong Japanese counterattacks during the night.

The day's work cost the 148th Infantry about 10 men killed and 75 wounded; the Japanese lost over 100 killed. In

return for its casualties, the 148th had secured terrain from which it could control most of the east-west section of Route 9 and from which it could strike toward Ridges B, G, and F. Plans for the morrow called for the 2d Battalion, supported by 1st Battalion fire, to seize Ridge B. The 3d Battalion, under cover of the 2d's attack, would mount a wide envelopment, crossing the Irisan about 500 yards west-southwest of the bridge site and then, turning east along wooded Ridge C, ultimately fall upon Ridge D–E from the west.

Stiff resistance greeted the 2d Battalion on 18 April, and by dusk forward elements had barely secured a foothold on the open southern slopes of Ridge B, once again demonstrating the futility of frontal attacks on Japanese positions at the Irisan Gorge. Moreover, the battalion discovered during the day that Japanese weapons on Ridge F could (and did) provide excellent support for the Japanese on Ridge B. Until the Ridge F emplacements could be neutralized, at least, the 2d Battalion would probably get nowhere.

Operations south of the Irisan met with more success. Supported by 105-mm. self-propelled mounts and tank destroyers emplaced along Route 9 north of the river, the 3d Battalion surprised the few Japanese who were in position along Ridge C. While mopping up along that ridge, the battalion made preparations to move on against Ridge D–E the next day.

On the morning of 19 April a heavy air strike and one artillery concentration knocked out most of the Japanese weapons on Ridge F, and another artillery concentration softened up Ridge B for two companies of the 2d Battalion. However, progress was virtually nil until a machine gun squad, infiltrating through heavy woods, suddenly found itself in a position on the east side of Ridge B whence it could take under fire most of the Japanese defenses and defenders. This small-scale envelopment so worried the Japanese and so diverted their attention that a renewed attack from the south was successful, and the 2d Battalion secured Ridge B before dark.

During the same morning the 3d Battalion encountered surprisingly light opposition as it moved against Hill D, at the north end of Ridge D–E. Under cover of fire from Ridge C and Hill D, elements of Company L, moving east from Ridge C, penetrated almost to the middle of Japanese defenses on Hill E before being discovered. Apparently expecting an attack from the north, the Japanese on Hill E were so surprised by the infiltration that most of them fled southeastward along Route 9 with little attempt to hold.

With the seizure of Ridge D–E the 3d Battalion, 148th Infantry, had overrun the Japanese backstop and had gained control of the main Japanese route of withdrawal and reinforcement. To the north the 2d Battalion's capture of Ridge B had equally important results. The battalion now controlled the fork in the trail just northwest of Ridge B, and could, therefore, prevent the Japanese from using the trail from Trinidad to move reinforcements to the Irisan Gorge. By this time the Japanese held only Ridges G, F, and H; Ridge F had been so worked over by air and artillery that it was no longer a strong position.

Company C took Ridge F with ease on the morning of 20 April, but Company A, trying a frontal assault on Ridge

G, was stopped on the steep western slopes. Company C then turned against the south flank of the Japanese on Ridge G, and, with this support, Company A gained the crest before noon. The rest of the day the two companies mopped up and beat off the usual determined but small-scale and un-co-ordinated counterattacks that followed the capture of most Japanese positions at the Irisan Gorge.

At dusk on the 20th most of the remaining Japanese in the gorge region withdrew to Ridge H, which received the full treatment from air and artillery the next morning. After the bombardment, the 1st Battalion swung against Ridge H, coming in on the north flank of the remaining defenses. The battalion cleared the ridge during the afternoon and with this action completed the breakthrough at Irisan Gorge. The surviving Japanese fled east toward Baguio or north toward Trinidad. The battle had cost the 148th Infantry approximately 40 men killed and 160 wounded; the Japanese had lost nearly 500 men killed.

Into Baguio

The final events of the drive to Baguio came rapidly. Under cover of the 148th Infantry's operations at the Irisan, the 130th Infantry, 33d Division, had redeployed two battalions from the Galiano road to the Yagyagan trail junction on Route 9. Attacking on the 22d, the two battalions, co-ordinating their efforts with a battalion left west of Asin, opened the Galiano road by afternoon of 23 April. The *1st Battalion, 75th Infantry,* was virtually annihilated during the action. The Japanese unit had taken position at Asin less than 500 strong, and it lost over 350 men killed in the defense. The 130th Infantry's casualties were approximately 15 killed and 60 wounded.

Back on Route 9, on 22 April, the 129th Infantry relieved the 148th and that day advanced against scattered resistance as far southeast as the junction of the highway and the Galiano road. The speed and ease of this advance gave pause to I Corps and 37th Division. It seemed impossible that Route 9 could be as wide open as it appeared, and, moreover, a threat seemed to be developing on the 37th Division's left (north) flank. The Japanese survivors of the Irisan Gorge were evidently concentrating in the Trinidad area, and from available information it also appeared that the uncommitted *379th Independent Infantry Battalion* was in the same region. With a long and ill-protected line of communications back to Bauang, the 37th Division felt that it needed reinforcements to safeguard its left before it could risk sending strong forces into Baguio.

I Corps could provide no reinforcements and, on the 22d, directed the 37th Division to hold in place. Before moving on, the 37th Division was to clear the high ground for at least a mile north of Route 9 in the area between Sablan and Irisan and set up strong blocks along the trail to Trinidad. The 33d Division, also directed to halt, was to finish mopping up in the Asin area and then, patrolling eastward, ascertain if there were any threat to the 37th Division's right (south) flank. Both divisions were ordered to get troops into position to launch an attack on Mt. Mirador, at the western outskirts of Baguio. Japanese thought to be holding Mt. Mirador

could not be bypassed, for they could dominate the junction of the Galiano road and Route 9 and cover much of Baguio proper with fire.[21]

I Corps' precautions were unnecessary. When on 16 April General Sato had begun reinforcing his Irisan Gorge defenses, General Utsunomiya had decided to move the MLR closer to Baguio, employing the Irisan position as the northern anchor of a new line. From the Irisan the new MLR stretched south-southwest four miles to Mt. Calugong, which, controlling the Tuba Trail, was already being contested by the 123d Infantry, 33d Division, and the *64th Infantry, 23d Division*. The new line ran southeast from Mt. Calugong across Mt. Santo Tomas and on to Route 11 at Camp 4, two miles northeast of the earlier MLR strongpoint at Camp 3. The MLR continued east to the Ambayabang Valley from Camp 4.

Utsunomiya never established his new MLR. By evening on 22 April the Irisan anchor was gone, defenses at Asin were about to fall, and the 123d Infantry was making tactically important gains at Mt. Calugong. It was obvious to Utsunomiya that there was no longer any sense in trying to hold, and the next morning he ordered a general withdrawal north and northeast from Baguio. A delaying force would be left near the city to cover the withdrawal, and another such force would temporarily dig in near Trinidad lest the 37th Division, driving up the Irisan-Trinidad trail, reach Route 11 north of Baguio before the general withdrawal was complete.

[21] 37th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 107; Rad, I Corps to 37th Div, FT–451, 22 Apr 45; 37th Div, unnumbered Opns Memo, 22 Apr 45; Ltr, 37th Div to I Corps, sub: Plan of Opns, 23 Apr 45. Last three documents in 37th Div G–3 Jnl File, 22–25 Apr 45.

Once under way, the Japanese retreat was rapid. A patrol of the 129th Infantry, 37th Division, entered Baguio on 24 April, and two days later the regiment secured most of the city against negligible opposition. The Japanese holding force on Mt. Mirador was virtually wiped out between 24 and 26 April by elements of the 123d and 130th Infantry Regiments, 33d Division. The 123d Infantry reached Tuba on 24 April after an unopposed march southwest from Mt. Mirador; a battalion left in the Mt. Calugong area straggled into Tuba from the west during the next two days. On 27 April patrols of the 33d Division moved into Baguio proper from the south and southwest, making contact with the 129th Infantry and thus marking the end of the drive to Baguio.

Results of the Capture of Baguio

As a campaign to destroy Japanese, the drive to Baguio was only partially successful, because the halt I Corps ordered on 22 April had permitted General Utsunomiya to extricate some 10,000 troops from his defenses in front of Baguio and from the city proper. Given the information available to it, I Corps was undoubtedly justified in its decision to halt, although the 33d Division, again disappointed at being forced to hold, could not but take a dim view of the order. The 33d Division did not know that General Swift was planning to redeploy the 37th Division to the Bambang front and that he therefore could not risk involving General Beightler's command in a major fight.

The I Corps halt order may have stemmed in part from inadequate reconnaissance by the 33d and 37th Divisions.

A case might be made that faster, deeper, and more aggressive patrolling should have disclosed the general pattern of Japanese withdrawal at least by evening on 23 April. As events turned out, it was not until the 26th that corps and division intelligence officers were able to conclude that a Japanese retreat was definitely under way. It is also possible that the redeployment of elements of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), from the area north of Baguio to join in the attack from the south and west contributed to the delay in learning of the Japanese withdrawal. On the other hand, the guerrilla regiment had proved of great aid, especially to the 33d Division, along the approaches to Baguio. The unit could not be every place at once.

South of Baguio the 136th Infantry, 33d Division, did not learn until well after the event that fully half the *23d Division* forces stationed along Route 11 had redeployed to the Irisan Gorge during the period 16–22 April. Nor did the American regiment discover that the remaining *23d Division* troops on Route 11 had withdrawn through Baguio until the withdrawal was practically complete. But again, operating in the deep gorge of the Bued River, the 136th Infantry was hard put at any point in the campaign to make more than an educated guess at the strength of Japanese forces along Route 11, and the terrain was such that it was often as difficult for the regiment to knock out one Japanese machine gun nest as it would have been to destroy an entire Japanese infantry battalion.

It had, indeed, been largely the terrain problems along the routes over which it was advancing toward Baguio that had prevented the 33d Division from making more direct contributions to the capture of Baguio during the period 12–26 April. In that fortnight the 136th Infantry had made virtually no progress. On the Tuba Trail the 123d Infantry, whose terrain difficulties were compounded by fog and torrential tropical cloudbursts, had fought doggedly up and down knife-crested ridges where a markedly inferior Japanese force had all the advantages the terrain could provide.[22] Likewise the terrain advantages enabled the *1st Battalion, 75th Infantry*, to hold up the 130th Infantry in the bare-sided bowl at Asin. Ultimately, the 123d and 130th Regiments had to complete their missions by envelopment over roads secured by the 37th Division.

However, the 33d Division had made significant indirect contributions to the capture of Baguio. On the ground since mid-February, the division, pressing relentlessly forward whenever Sixth Army and I Corps orders permitted it to do so, had seriously weakened the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division*. Moreover between 16 and 22 April the 33d Division had kept pinned down considerable Japanese strength that might otherwise have been redeployed against the 37th Division. Certainly, it is impossible to conceive that the 37th Division's drive could have succeeded when and as it did had not the 33d Division also been striving for Baguio.

[22] In April 1957, going over some of this ground, the author was caught in a fog *cum* cloudburst phenomenon along the road to Tuba that forced the jeep in which he was riding to halt for nearly fifteen minutes. The fog was so thick and the rain, pelting down in huge drops, so heavy that one could not even see the front end of the jeep, let alone the sides of the road.

Since the Japanese had retired in fairly good order to new defenses in front of the Route 11 terminus of the Baguio-Aritao supply road, north of Baguio, the campaign on the Baguio front had not achieved its strategic goal, and many of the advantages accruing to Sixth Army from the seizure of the city were psychological in nature. Nevertheless, there were also important military results. Sixth Army had overrun the first of the three original anchors of the *Shobu Group*'s defensive triangle. Troops of the 33d and 37th Divisions had seized tons of supplies the Japanese could ill afford to lose, had driven the Japanese farther into mountain fastnesses from which there could be no escape, and, finally, had torn holes in the ranks of the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* that the Japanese could not fill.

From late February through 27 April the *23d Division* had lost over 2,000 men killed in combat; nonbattle deaths had been much higher. When the division reassembled in new lines northeast of Baguio, it could muster no more than 7,000 troops, of whom less than half could be considered combat effectives. The first-line infantry strength of the *58th IMB* was reduced to a battalion of no more than 350 troops, while the brigade's total strength probably did not exceed 3,250, including miscellaneous attachments. The *58th IMB* had lost all its artillery; the *23d Division* had only three or four guns left.

The Baguio Front to the End of May

Between 27 April and 5 May the 37th Division secured the Trinidad area, mopped up isolated pockets of Japanese in the high ground north of Route 9, cleared Route 11 from Baguio north to Trinidad, and patrolled northeast three miles on Route 11 from Trinidad to Acop's Place. The division encountered organized resistance only near Trinidad.[23] The 33d Division, until 5 May, mopped up along Tuba Trail and Route 11 north to Baguio, then moved on to occupy the crest of high ground two to three miles east and southeast of the city.[24] The 130th Infantry, advancing by company-sized combat patrols, began marching over secondary roads to Balinguay, 7 miles east-southeast of Baguio; to Itogon, about 2 miles south of Balinguay; and to Pitican, on the Agno River 4 miles southeast of Itogon, seeking to make contact with other 33d Division troops operating in the Agno and Ambayabang River valleys. On 5 May the last elements of the 37th Division left the Baguio area for the Bambang front, the 33d Division taking over the areas west and north of Baguio.

With the departure of the 37th Division, the 33d Division, much to its disappointment, again found itself with a holding mission, this one designed to secure the Baguio–Bauang–San Fernando area. The division was also responsible for establishing firm contact between its forces at Baguio and those in the Ambayabang and Agno Valleys, for patrolling ten miles northeast along Route 11 from Baguio, and for reconnoitering eastward along the Baguio-Aritao supply road from Route 11 at Kilometer

[23] 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 111–16; 37th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 27 Apr–5 May 45.

[24] Information on 33d Division operations in this section is from: I Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 27 Apr–29 May 45; 33d Div Rpt Luzon, pt. III, Battle for Baguio, p. 3; 33d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 27 Apr–29 May 45; 123d Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 7; 130th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 45–48; 136th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 43–59.

Post (KP) 21, the highway and supply road junction.[25]

As of 5 May the Japanese on the Baguio front, despite their losses of men and matériel during the previous two and a half months, were almost better off than they had been when fighting in front of Baguio—or they soon would be if the 33d Division did not mount an immediate pursuit north from Baguio.[26] For the time being, at least, the Japanese combat troops had more supplies than they had had for many weeks, since they could now draw on large supply dumps around KP 21 and on lesser stockpiles north up Route 11 and east along the Baguio-Aritao supply road. Moreover, because there was no immediate pursuit, the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* had some leisure to dig in across Route 11 at KP 21. The Japanese sources make it clear that had there been a pursuit before the end of the first week in May, American forces could have cut the two Japanese units to ribbons, opening wide the roads further into northern Luzon.

The 33d Division was more than willing and, in its own opinion, quite able to go. It appears that General Swift, the I Corps commander, would have been amenable to an immediate pursuit operation, but Sixth Army had other ideas. The 33d Division had a vast area to secure, it still had some mopping up to complete in its zone, some of its units badly needed rest and time for rebuilding, it had an enormous reconnaissance responsibility, and the possibility existed that the division might become involved in a major fight for which it had insufficient strength. Sixth Army planned to employ the 33d Division in the invasion of Japan and therefore wanted to withdraw the unit from active combat as soon as possible. Finally, Sixth Army as yet had little information about the Japanese situation north and northeast from Baguio—the first job on the Baguio front would be to regain the contact lost with the Japanese after 23 April. Whatever the case, Sixth Army made no provision to secure the most important military objective on the Baguio front, the Route 11 terminus of the Baguio-Aritao supply road. This was unfortunate, for although Sixth Army did not know it, Route 11 on 5 May was clear from Baguio to Acop's Place, about four miles short of KP 21, and the Japanese holding at KP 21 were by no means prepared to withstand a sudden, strong attack.

As events turned out, the 33d Division's operations to late May were limited to minor local gains and long-range reconnaissance. The only action of significant proportions occurred along a trail connecting Santa Rosa, in the Ambayabang Valley, to Tebbo, on the Agno five miles south of Pitican. There, the 33d Division directed its energies toward clearing Japanese off high ground between the main trail and the upper reaches of the Ambayabang. A battalion of the 130th Infantry, coming south from Baguio via Pitican, reached Tebbo on 9 May, finding the barrio abandoned. On 5 May the 136th Infantry had begun an advance up the Ambayabang and, three miles south of Tebbo, became involved in a ten-day fight that led only

[25] I Corps FO's 15, 27 Apr, 15–1, 29 Apr, and 16, 2 May 45; 33d Div FO 20, 2 May 45.

[26] Japanese information in this section is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 475; Sato Statement, States, II, 258; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 129–31, 151; Interrog of Nishiyama, USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 165–66; Interrog of Takatsu, in *ibid.*, p. 172.

to the killing of a couple of hundred Japanese who constituted no threat to the 33d Division and whose principal mission was to block the Ambayabang Valley against any American attack toward the Baguio-Aritao supply road from the south.

With the rainy season coming on, I Corps and the 33d Division had long since abandoned plans to employ the valley as a route of advance toward the Japanese supply link, and the 136th Infantry gave up the terrain it had gained along the valley and the trail to Tebbo almost as soon as it had won the ground. On 15 May all 33d Division troops began withdrawing. Extricating the men, supplies, and equipment proved no mean feat, for by the time the withdrawal was well under way rains had turned the Pitican-Tebbo trail and trails in the Ambayabang Valley into quagmires. The final destruction of the Japanese blocking force in the valley had no bearing upon I Corps or *Shobu Group* plans or dispositions, and the Japanese soon replaced their outposts.

For the rest, by the end of May the 33d Division was executing its reconnaissance missions without significant contacts or major advances. Restively holding, the division was forced to await developments on the Bontoc and Bambang fronts before Sixth Army would permit it to launch a new drive deeper into the mountains of northern Luzon.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Bambang Front – I
The Villa Verde Trail

The Situation and the Plans

At the beginning of the last week in February the 25th and 32d Divisions had established contact with Japanese outpost lines of resistance on the Bambang front. The 32d Division had undertaken a battalion-sized reconnaissance-in-force about two miles north from Santa Maria along the Villa Verde Trail, and the 25th Division had discovered Japanese delaying positions nearly seven miles up Route 5 from San Jose. Patrols of the 32d Division were probing up the Ambayabang, Agno, and Arboredo River valleys, west of the Villa Verde Trail, and had found defensive outposts in the first- and last-named valleys. Other reconnaissance units of the 32d had explored across a spur of the Caraballo Mountains between the Villa Verde Trail and Route 5, reporting intense activity on the highway and reinforcing movements along the trail. Units of the 25th Division had established contact with a Japanese outpost on Route 100, running north through the mountains between Route 5 and Luzon's east coast. It was obvious that the Japanese were prepared to defend all approaches to the first vital objective on the Bambang front—the Santa Fe–Balete Pass area—and it appeared that they would place defensive emphasis along Route 5.

Having established firm contact with Japanese forces on the Bambang front, the 25th and 32d Divisions had completed their current assignments. They were ready to initiate a concerted drive northward as soon as General Krueger determined that the success of operations in the Manila Bay area was assured and that there was no longer any possibility troops might have to be withdrawn from northern Luzon to reinforce the divisions in the south. Before the beginning of the last week of February, able to foresee the successful outcome of operations at Manila, Krueger decided that there was no further need to restrain the 25th and 32d Divisions.[1] On the contrary, he had very cogent reasons for starting the two divisions northward before the Japanese on the Bambang front could further develop their defenses. Accordingly, on 19 February, Krueger directed I Corps to begin advancing its right toward Bambang.

I Corps ordered the 32d Division to move up to a secure line running east-

[1] The remainder of this section is based largely upon: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 45–47, 81; Sixth Army FO's 53–55, dated 18, 25, and 28 Feb 45, in *ibid.*, I, 155–56; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 60–62; I Corps FO 12, 21 Feb 45, and 12–1, 2 Mar 45.

ward for 20 miles from the 32d–33d Division boundary at Sapit to the junction of the Villa Verde Trail and Route 5 at Santa Fe. The 32d Division would also clear the Ambayabang Valley—west of the Villa Verde Trail—north about 10 miles to the vicinity of Lawican, thereby opening a possible route of advance toward Baguio.[2] With its right, the 32d Division was to clear Route 5 from Santa Fe south to the 25th–32d Division boundary at Digdig, a Route 5 barrio lying 13 miles north of San Jose, and would also secure the terrain from Route 5 east about 6 miles to the Old Spanish Trail in the region north of a line drawn between Digdig and Carranglan, at the junction of Route 100 and the Old Spanish Trail. I Corps directed the 25th Division to clear Route 5 north to Digdig, Route 100 from Rizal (10 miles southeast of San Jose) north to Carranglan, and the 6-mile stretch of Route 100 between Carranglan and Digdig. Both divisions would patrol northward in their respective zones to a reconnaissance line that lay about 15 miles north of the secure line.

I Corps manifestly expected the 32d Division to make the decisive effort on the Bambang front, anticipating that that division, in a quick drive up the Villa Verde Trail, would seize Santa Fe and then fall upon the rear of strong Japanese defenses that the 25th Division would undoubtedly encounter along Route 5. Whatever General Swift's initial concept of the drive toward Bambang, it was clear that the first division to reach Santa Fe would achieve the decisive breakthrough. It was equally obvious that neither division could achieve success without the help of the other, for if all I Corps' right flank forces concentrated on one axis of advance the Japanese, in turn, would be able to concentrate their full defensive potential. A converging attack toward Sante Fe by two divisions was necessary from the beginning—in the end it would be the Japanese who would decide, in effect, which attack would prove the more decisive.

[2] See above, Chapter XXIV, for the background of the plan to advance the 32d Division's left toward Baguio.

Prologue to Stalemate

The Villa Verde Trail, 21 February–5 March

The 32d Division's plans to execute I Corps' orders called for the 126th Infantry to probe up the river valleys on the division's left and for the 127th Infantry to initiate the drive up the Villa Verde Trail.[3] The 128th Infantry would protect the division's rear and would continue patrolling over the Caraballo spur toward Route 5, completing a reconnaissance program initiated before 21 February.

On 25 February a battalion of the 126th Infantry started up the Ambayabang Valley and, in a series of company-sized envelopments, overran two Japanese delaying positions and reached Lawican on the secure line during the afternoon of 5 March. (*Map XI*) Patrols in the Agno Valley, six miles further west, found no signs of Japanese. Instead, in

[3] Information on 32d Division operations in this subsection is from: 32d Div FO 15, 22 Feb 45; 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–14, 20; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 21 Feb–6 Mar 45; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 3–6; 127th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–12; 127th Inf Daily Unit Rpts, 22 Feb–6 Mar 45, 127th Inf Regtl Jnl Files, 23 Feb–6 Mar 45; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 7–8.

this section of the Agno Valley they found the terrain so inhospitable and the Agno lying in such a deep canyon that even two- or three-man patrols could scarcely push northward. In the Arboredo Valley, another few miles to the west, 32d Division troops encountered strong *23d Division* outposts, which blocked that flanking approach to Baguio, and by 5 March patrols in the Arboredo Valley were still ten miles short of the division's secure line. With additional strength, the 126th Infantry could undoubtedly have accomplished more in the river valleys, but the 32d Division could spare no more troops for these secondary operations. The attack along the Villa Verde Trail was placing increasingly heavy demands upon the division's resources.

On 22 February the 127th Infantry began a concerted attack against the Japanese outpost line of resistance that the regiment had uncovered across the Villa Verde Trail two weeks earlier. Along this southern section of its length, the Villa Verde Trail twists erratically up the eastern slopes of a ridge lying between the Cabalisiaan River, on the east, and the Ambayabang River, to the west. A mile wide at the start of the Villa Verde Trail at Santa Maria, this ridge broadens to roughly three miles where, some five miles north-northeast of Santa Maria, the trail bears east and crosses the Cabalisiaan. The straight-line distance of five miles between Santa Maria and the Cabalisiaan crossing presents a deceiving figure, for the Villa Verde Trail twists along the ridge to such an extent that the actual trail distance is approximately nine miles.

On its way to the Cabalisiaan the Villa Verde Trail climbs rapidly, rising from a point about 400 feet above sea level near Santa Maria to one 3,500 feet high close to the crossing. Dipping to about 2,500 feet at the crossing, the trail then hangs along terrain varying from 3,500 to 4,500 feet in height most of the way to Santa Fe, itself sitting in a river valley almost 2,500 feet up in the mountains. Along the ridge to the Cabalisiaan the terrain is wide open, and the steep slopes of the ridge are grass covered. Across the river the ground over which the trail passes becomes steadily more heavily wooded until, about two miles east-northeast of the crossing the trail begins to run through dense tropical forest. The trail then continues eastward through heavy forest for another six miles—straight-line distance—and breaks out into more open country again some two miles west of Santa Fe.

From many points of vantage along the ridge to the Cabalisiaan crossing, the Villa Verde Trail affords a magnificent view of the Central Plains, opening in broad vista from the foot of the Caraballo Mountains. To the west, there is an occasional glimpse of the narrowing Ambayabang Valley; to the east rise the imposing heights of the Caraballo spur that forms such a rugged barrier between the southern reaches of the Villa Verde Trail and Route 5. And constantly, off to the northeast as one ascends the trail from Santa Maria, loom the forested mountains through which the trail passes after it crosses the Cabalisiaan. On 22 February 1945 it was this view, ominously interesting, that captured the attention of the 127th Infantry. That regiment's troops had no particular liking for the view of the Central Plains they obtained along the Villa Verde

Trail, for they knew all too well that the Japanese, with the same view higher up the trail, could watch every move the regiment made as it struggled up the bare ridge from Santa Maria.

Assaulting the Japanese outpost line, one battalion of the 127th drove straight up the Villa Verde Trail. Elements of another battalion, coming in from the Ambayabang Valley, took the Japanese on the west flank. Still other troops, working up the Cabalisiaan River, bypassed the Japanese and established a block on the trail north of the main Japanese defenses. With these maneuvers, and with the help of artillery emplaced near Santa Maria, the 127th Infantry broke through the Japanese outpost line late on 24 February.

The outpost line had been held by the *10th Division*'s *10th Reconnaissance Regiment*, a unit with an authorized strength less than that of a standard infantry battalion.[4] By evening on 24 February the *10th Reconnaissance*, with a remnant force of no more than 250 effectives, was bypassing the roadblock the 127th Infantry had established on the Villa Verde Trail. The unit intended to make another stand at the Cabalisiaan River crossing but scarcely had time to get into position before, on 1 March, the 127th Infantry was again upon it. As the *10th Reconnaissance* withdrew once more, the 127th Infantry left one battalion to mop up at the crossing area and, pressing on with another battalion, regained contact with the Japanese on 3 March at a strong position about a mile and a half beyond the stream.

General Konuma, commanding the *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army*, had not been greatly perturbed when the *10th Reconnaissance* withdrew as far as the Cabalisiaan, for he had expected the unit to hold for some time in the good defensive terrain at the crossing.[5] But on 2 March, when he learned of the regiment's serious losses to that date and of its retreat beyond the Cabalisiaan, Konuma became thoroughly alarmed. Only three miles northeast of the crossing lay the western edge of the Salacsac Pass area, which provided three miles of the best defensive terrain along the Villa Verde Trail. If the battered *10th Reconnaissance Regiment* could not hold the western entrance to the pass, the 32d Division might slip through to Santa Fe and cut off the *10th Division* on Route 5. Obviously, the *10th Reconnaissance* could not hold—Konuma had to do something and do it quickly.

Konuma's first step was to reinforce the *10th Reconnaissance* with troops already in the Salacsac Pass vicinity. In mid-February he had dispatched to the pass as a reserve force a two-company infantry battalion and an understrength artillery battalion (three 150-mm. howitzers and a medium mortar company). Two other two-company infantry battalions, on their way to the Ambayabang Valley, were also on the Villa Verde Trail. On 3 March, he placed all four units under the *10th Reconnaissance*, bringing that regiment up to a strength of about 550 infantry effectives. On the

[4] Japanese information in this section and its subsections is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 478–80; Konuma Statement, States, II, 309–14; *14 Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 99–110; Kawai Statement, States, II, 148–49; Kawai Interrog, Interrogs, I, 323–25.

[5] Note, as at Baguio, Yamashita had a major general commanding the forces with three lieutenant generals under him, the commanders of the *10th* and *105th Divisions* and the *2d Tank Division*.

same day he directed the *10th Division* to dispatch four rifle companies from Route 5 to Salacsac Pass.

When all these units arrived the *10th Reconnaissance* would have roughly 1,100 troops, hardly sufficient, Konuma knew, to hold the 32d Division if the latter, which had so far been able to deploy less than a regiment on the Villa Verde Trail, could reach terrain where it could commit its full strength. Konuma therefore ordered the *2d Tank Division*, still reorganizing and retraining at Dupax, to move to Salacsac Pass immediately. General Iwanaka, the division commander, was to assume control of all troops on the Villa Verde Trail.

The *2d Tank Division* started out of Dupax on 4 March with a strength of roughly 4,350 men. The major components were four infantry battalions of three companies apiece, each battalion averaging 425 men; an 8-gun artillery battalion; and about 1,000 service troops. The attachment of the recently reinforced *10th Reconnaissance Regiment* brought General Iwanaka's strength to nearly 5,000, and within the next week or two another 1,000 infantrymen, including the four companies dispatched from Route 5 by the *10th Division*, would arrive in the Salacsac area.

While the *2d Tank Division* was moving up, the 127th Infantry was devoting part of its energies to overrunning the outpost position that it had encountered on 3 March. Since the Japanese defenses were mainly on high ground along both sides of the trail, one battalion of the American regiment contained the Japanese while another pushed on along the trail. On 5 March the latter unit stopped at the western entrance to Salacsac Pass in front of troops of the *2d Tank Division*, just arriving from Dupax. The hastily reinforced and reorganized *10th Reconnaissance Regiment*, fighting from hastily prepared positions, had managed to delay the 127th Infantry just long enough for the *2d Tank Division* to come up. By the time the tank division arrived, the *10th Reconnaissance* had about 80 men left of the 750-odd with which it had begun operations on Luzon in January.

For the Japanese, the commitment of the *2d Tank Division* at Salacsac Pass was unfortunately premature, for Konuma had expected that the unit would have at least another month to retrain and flesh out its depleted ranks. Events had moved faster than anticipated. The threat posed by the 32d Division's drive up the Villa Verde Trail, which he had considered an impracticable route of advance toward Santa Fe, left him no choice. The division, however, would justify the faith he placed in it when, on 4 March, he ordered it to hold the Salacsac Pass at all costs.

The Situation and the Terrain, 5 March

Coming into Salacsac Pass from the west, the Villa Verde Trail twists up the wooded western slopes of a steep-sided height known to the 32d Division as Hill 502. (*Map XII*) Another peak, bare crested, forming part of the same hill mass and named Hill 503, centers 250 yards northeast of the crest of Hill 502, while a like distance to the southeast is Hill 504. Winding along the southern slopes of Hills 502 and 504, the trail continues eastward through a low saddle about 500 yards long, climbing again up the forested northwestern side of



SALACSAC PASS NO. 2

Hill 505. After crossing that hill, the trail follows a twisting course 600 yards —as the crow flies—eastward, hugging the densely wooded northern slopes of Hills 506A and 506B. Off the northeast corner of Hill 506B the trail turns south for 1,000 yards—again a straight-line distance—and traverses the east side of the noses of Hill 507, designated from north to south A, B, C, and D. Turning sharply east again near Hill 507D, the trail continues east another 700 yards and then enters a deep, wooded saddle between Hill 508, on the south, and Hill 515, to the north. After passing through this saddle, which is about 250 yards long east to west, the trail goes on eastward, dominated on the north by Hills 516 and 525. Roughly 1,250 yards beyond the saddle the trail twists across the northern slopes of Hill 526, which lying about 500 yards southeast of Hill 525, marks the eastern limits of the Salacsac Pass area. A mile and a quarter of less rugged but still forested and difficult terrain lies between Hill 526 and barrio Imugan, in turn two and a quarter miles west of Santa Fe.

The Japanese and the 32d Division each divided the Salacsac Pass area into two sections. Salacsac Pass No. 2 was the name at first narrowly applied to the saddle between Hills 504 and 505, but in a larger sense it came to mean the entire forested area between Hills 502 and 507D. By the same token the name Salacsac Pass No. 1 was at first given to the saddle between Hills 508 and 515, but was eventually assigned to that stretch of the trail running from the west side of the saddle east to Hill 526.

Although the extremely rough, precipitous mountain country of the Salacsac Pass area, averaging 4,500 feet above sea level, was covered by dense rain forest from Hill 506B to Hill 526, there was sufficient open ground throughout to provide the defender with excellent observation. It was not too difficult for the Japanese to find positions whence they could cover with fire every square foot of the Villa Verde Trail through the pass area. The twisting of the trail also provided defense opportunities, for in a given 1,000 yards of straight-line distance through the pass, the trail might actually cover a ground distance of 3,000 yards.

Whatever its shortcomings in other fields, the Japanese Army always had a feel for terrain, exploiting to the full every advantage the ground offered. Thus, as it moved up, the *2d Tank Division* set to work to establish a system of mutually supporting defensive positions in order to control every twist of the Villa Verde Trail and every fold in the ground throughout the pass area. Every knoll and hillock on or near the trail was the site of at least one machine gun emplacement; every wooded draw providing a route for outflanking a position was zeroed in for artillery or mortars. The cave, natural or man-made, came to characterize the defenses. Artillery was employed in quantity and quality not often encountered in engagements against the Japanese, who, as usual, made excellent use of their light and medium mortars. Finally, the *2d Tank Division* was overstocked in automatic weapons, evidently having available many more than the 32d Division could bring to bear.

Against such defenses the 32d Division's difficult operations in the Salacsac Pass area could hardly avoid taking on a monotonous pattern. First, there would be unsuccessful frontal attacks against hillside strongholds. Failing, the troops would wait for air and artillery support to soften up the opposition and try again. Then there would be company and battalion outflanking maneuvers, some successful, some ending in near disaster, and all, as the result of Japanese defensive dispositions, inevitably winding up as frontal assaults. Every type of action would be repeated day after dreary day, either in heat enervating to the extreme on clear days, or in cloudbursts, fog, and mud. The nights were cold and, as the rainy season approached, increasingly damp and wet.

To reduce Japanese cave positions, the 32d Division would necessarily have to attack at least two mutually supporting caves simultaneously, at the same time endeavoring to keep flanking defensive installations neutralized by machine gun and mortar fire. Advances would depend upon a series of closely co-ordinated platoon actions, with platoons providing fire support for each other while each attacked its own objectives. Each cave, once neutralized,

would have to be sealed; each position of other types would have to be occupied or the job would have to be done over and over again. Day after day units would have to patrol in order to locate routes to outflank known Japanese positions, ascertain Japanese flanks and pinpoint Japanese defenses for air and artillery bombardments.

In brief, the battle for the Villa Verde Trail became a knock-down, drag-out slug fest. The spectacular could hardly happen — there wasn't room enough. Troops would become tired and dispirited; nonbattle casualties would exceed those injured in combat. Supply would be very difficult, the evacuation of the sick and wounded an even greater problem. This was combined mountain and tropical warfare at its worst. The 32d Division had already had plenty of both, from the jungles of New Guinea to the mountains of western Leyte.[6]

The Battle for Salacsac Pass No. 2

The First Attempt

By 7 March the 1st Battalion, 127th Infantry, had secured the crest of Hill 502, but was then unable to make any appreciable progress eastward.[7] Such an eventuality had been anticipated, for the division and regimental staffs had plans to outflank the Salacsac Pass defenses from the south. First, the 3d Battalion, 127th Infantry, struggled north through Valdez, in the Caraballo spur, to hit the Salacsac Pass No. 2 defenses from the southeast. The unit reached positions about 1,000 yards south of Hill 507D and Hill 508 by 9 March but was then unable to make any further progress toward the Villa Verde Trail and could not establish contact with the 1st Battalion, 127th Infantry, at Salacsac Pass No. 2.

On 15 March the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, attached to the 127th Infantry, also started up the trail from Valdez. After it reached a point a mile southwest of Imugan and two miles east of the 3d Battalion, 127th Infantry, the 2d Battalion, 128th, was stopped cold—the Japanese were prepared for just such maneuvers.

Further west, meanwhile, the rest of the 127th Infantry fought its way from Hill 502 to Hill 504 but did not reach the crest of Hill 504 until 23 March, and even then left the northern slopes in Japanese hands. The 3d Battalion managed to get one company to the D nose of Hill 507, and the 2d, simultaneously, pushed a company from Hill 504 to 505.[8] With only three-quarters of a mile separating the forward ele-

[6] See other volumes in this series: Smith, *Approach to the Philippines*; Samuel Milner, *Victory in Papua*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1957); Cannon, *Leyte*; John Miller, jr., *CARTWHEEL: The Reduction of Rabaul*, UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II (Washington, 1959).

[7] This subsection is based primarily upon: 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–27; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 5–25 Mar 45, 32d Div G–3 Jnl Files for the same period; 127th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 10–19; 127th Inf Daily Unit Rpts and Overlays, 4–25 Mar 45; 127th Inf Unit Jnl, 5–25 Mar 45; 128 Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 8–11.

On 10 March, during one of the many attempts by the 1st Battalion, 127th Infantry, to advance beyond the crest of Hill 502, Pfc. Thomas E. Atkins of Company A earned the Medal of Honor when, although severely wounded, he played the major role in repelling a local Japanese counterattack.

[8] On 20 March, during the attack from Hill 502 to Hill 505, S. Sgt. Ysmael R. Villegas of Company F, 126th Infantry, was mortally wounded while leading his squad against a series of Japanese foxholes. For his heroic leadership, Sergeant Villegas was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

ments of the two battalions, there seemed and excellent chance of putting the squeeze on the Japanese at Salacsac No. 2.

However, with its forces spread thin and its strength dwindling, the 127th Infantry was in no state to exploit its apparently advantageous position. The Japanese, on the other hand, could still move reinforcements to the Salacsac Pass No. 2 area at will, and they were well aware of the threat presented by the 3d Battalion's penetration to Hill 507D. During the night of 20–21 March the Japanese concentrated almost all their available artillery and mortar fire against the 3d Battalion's forward elements, forcing them off Hill 507D with a loss of about 10 men killed and 30 wounded. The Japanese also seemed to be preparing a counterattack against the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, and were already threatening that unit's line of communications back through Valdez.

The outflanking efforts began to look less and less promising. Supply for the two battalions operating out of Valdez was becoming increasingly difficult—it took three days for carrying parties to make a trip through the Caraballo spur. Nor did the picture at Salacsac Pass No. 2 look much brighter. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 127th Infantry, had taken over two weeks to get troops from Hill 502 to Hill 505, a distance of 1,000 yards. Any further move eastward would be fraught with danger, for the Japanese maintained strong forces on high ground north of the area between Hills 502 and 505, presenting a constant threat to the 127th Infantry's left. Then, too, Japanese strength in the Salacsac Pass area was proving far greater than anticipated, making it ever more obvious that success demanded a concentration of forces across a relatively narrow front in lieu of the three widely separated battalion-sized attacks that had been going on so far.

Another factor prompting reconsideration of plans was the number of casualties suffered by the 127th Infantry. By 23 March the unit had lost approximately 110 men killed and 225 wounded; an additional 500 men had been evacuated for sickness, a large proportion of them classed in the combat fatigue category. Almost all the battalion and company commanders the regiment had when it reached Luzon had been killed, wounded, or hospitalized for other reasons; many of the rifle platoons were now led by privates. The regiment was almost 1,100 men understrength, and barely 1,500 troops of the approximately 2,150 available to it could still be counted combat effectives.[9] Immediate relief was an obvious necessity.

Preparing Another Effort

Beginning on 23 March the 3d Battalion, 127th Infantry, and the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, withdrew from their dangerous positions south of the Villa Verde Trail. On the same day the 128th Infantry started relieving the 127th at Salacsac Pass No. 2, the change-over being completed by the 25th.[10] Plans now called for the 128th Infantry to mount an attack east with two battalions abreast. The 126th Infantry would

[9] The casualty figures are principally from the 127th Infantry Unit Reports cited previously; see also Rad, G–3 I Corps to G–3 Sixth Army, 22 Mar 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 21–23 Mar 45.

[10] Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–27; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–12.



HILL 504 AFTER JAPANESE COUNTERATTACK, 1 APRIL

continue its probing operations in the river valleys to the west; the 127th Infantry, rehabilitating, would guard the division's rear areas.[11]

Since the 32d Division had moved more slowly than anticipated, and since the 25th Division was making better progress than hoped along Route 5, General Swift decreased the 32d Division's area of responsibility, thereby permitting the unit to better concentrate its forces. He set the division's objective as Santa Fe, and reduced the unit's responsibility along Route 5 to the area halfway from Santa Fe to Balete Pass.[12]

While these changes made it appear that the 32d Division might be able to advance faster over the Villa Verde Trail, Swift, on 25 March, issued additional orders that inhibited the division's build-up along the trail. On that date the I Corps commander directed the 32d Division to prepare to attack up the Ambayabang and Arboredo River valleys toward Baguio in conjunction with a 33d Division advance toward the same city. The idea that the 32d Division might play a major part in the capture of Baguio had not yet been quite laid to rest.[13]

By 25 March the 32d Division's 126th Infantry was little further up the valleys than it had been over two weeks earlier, and had actually lost some ground in the Ambayabang Valley.[14] To the 32d Divi-

[11] *Ibid.*; 32d Div FO 16, 22 Mar 45.

[12] I Corps FO's 3–12 and 4–12, 11 and 13 Mar 45. This was actually the third time since 21 February that Swift had reduced the 32d Division's area of responsibility. See also below, ch. XXVII.

[13] I Corps FO 13, 25 Mar 45.

[14] 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 14–18; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 6–11.

sion, at least, the river valley operations were already proving unprofitable. Worse still, they were becoming more and more of a drain upon the division's resources at the very time the division desperately needed additional strength on the Villa Verde Trail. There, the 128th Infantry was running into as much trouble as had the 127th before it.

From 23 March through 4 April the 128th Infantry drove bloodily eastward. The regiment cleared Hill 503, which the 127th had bypassed; secured most of Hill 504; and expanded the hold on Hill 505, south of the trail. The Japanese soon challenged these gains. During the night of 31 March–1 April they laid down a heavy artillery barrage on Hill 504, following it with a banzai attack launched by over 150 troops. The single company of the 128th Infantry on Hill 504 was soon forced off, and only a dawn counterattack by a full battalion prevented the loss of all ground east of Hill 502. As it was, on 1 April the Japanese again held the northern and northeastern slopes of Hill 504, so laboriously cleaned off during the preceding week.[15]

By 4 April the 128th Infantry bid fair soon to be even more depleted than the 127th Infantry. In the two weeks the 128th had been on the trail it lost about 85 men killed and 250 wounded, approximately the same number the 127th had lost in three weeks. And like the 127th, the 128th Infantry was now more than 1,000 troops understrength.[16] For I Corps, expecting the Japanese to continue their fanatic resistance at Salacsac Pass No. 2, no further proof was needed that the 32d Division had to have more troops on the Villa Verde Trail. The only way the corps could supply the necessary reinforcements was to have the 33d Division relieve the 126th Infantry in the river valleys, an action that forced postponement of the attack on Baguio. Having made this decision, the corps went on to direct the 32d Division to move its 126th Infantry to the Villa Verde Trail and mount a two-regiment attack toward Santa Fe.[17]

The 32d Division, having failed in attempts to outflank the Salacsac defenses for the south, decided to try a flanking maneuver north of the trail with the 126th Infantry, while the 128th continued the frontal attack at Salacsac Pass No. 2. The 126th Infantry was to strike off the Villa Verde Trail from a point about a mile and a half west of Hill 502 and push northeast along the Miliwit River valley. Its first objectives were Hills 518 and 519, lying roughly 1,500 yards north (and slightly east) of Hill 504. The strongest regiment of the 32d Division on 5 April, when its drive began, the 126th Infantry was almost 900 men understrength.[18]

[15] 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 27–33; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–13; 128th Inf Daily Unit Rpts, 23 Mar–5 Apr 45.

During the Japanese attack on Hill 504, Pfc. William R. Shockley of Company L heroically covered the withdrawal of his squad at the cost of his own life. For this action, Private Shockley was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

[16] *Ibid.*; Rpt, Asst G–3 Sixth Army to G–3 Sixth Army, sub: Rpts of Obsr Visit to 32d Div, 1 Apr 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 1–3 Apr 45.

[17] *Ibid.*; 32d Div Rpt Luzon, p. 32; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 71–73; I Corp FO 13–1, 3 Apr 45; 32d Div FO 17, 4 Apr 45. See above, Chapter XXV, for the effect of these orders on 33d Division operations.

[18] 32d Div FO 17, 4 Apr 45; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 4–6 Apr 45; 126th Inf Unit Rpt, 6 Apr 45 (the only available copies of the 126th Infantry's unit reports are to be found in the 32d Division G–3 Journal Files).

By the time the new, two-pronged offensive began, the 32d Division had actually accomplished more than it thought in the Salacsac Pass No. 2 area.[19] General Iwanaka, commanding the *2d Tank Division*, had by now decided that his positions in Salacsac Pass No. 2 were practically untenable and had started making plans to redeploy forces for the defense of Salacsac Pass No. 1. His casualties at the western pass were mounting rapidly—he estimated that in the month ending 4 April he had lost over 1,000 troops killed.[20] Moreover, Allied air and artillery bombardments were making it virtually impossible for the *2d Tank Division* to move supplies to Salacsac Pass No. 2 except by infiltrating small amounts through woods on either side of the trail under cover of darkness.

Iwanaka did not propose, however, to abandon the Salacsac Pass No. 2 defenses. Instead, he directed the troops there to remain in place and hold out to the death and he also committed some reserves to a counterattack designed to gain time for preparations at Salacsac Pass No. 1. When the counterattack—executed during the night of 31 March–1 April—failed to be as effective as hoped, Iwanaka decided to make no further attempts to reinforce Salacsac Pass No. 2. Nevertheless, the troops left there, the 32d Division soon learned, were willing to carry out to the letter Iwanaka's orders to die in place.

Breakthrough at Salacsac Pass No. 2

By 7 April the 126th Infantry had secured Hills 518 and 519 against surprisingly light opposition.[21] The regiment also cut a Japanese trail leading north from Hill 504 across the eastern slopes of Hill 519 and thence up Mt. Imugan, the 5,700-foot crest of which arose approximately two and a half miles north of Salacsac Pass No. 1. This trail, a secondary route of Japanese reinforcement and supply, connected near Hill 519 with the valley of the Cataludonan River, running east to join the Imugan River a mile and a half north of Imugan. The 126th Infantry could thus either maneuver eastward to execute a wide envelopment of the entire Salacsac Pass through Imugan, or strike south against both Salacsac Passes.

Quick to see the threats, Iwanaka started to deploy new reinforcements (which had begun reaching the Villa Verde Trail in early April) across the path of the U.S. regiment. He also dispatched troops to Mt. Imugan, probably to present a counterthreat on the 126th Infantry's left and rear. These measures were reasonably effective, for it took the 126th Infantry from 7 April through 13 April to secure Hill 511, only 750 yards beyond Hill 519, and to take Hill 512, 300 yards beyond Hill 511. By the 13th, the regiment had improved its position for a strike eastward or a drive southward against the flanks and rear of the

[19] Japanese information here and in the following subsection is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 478–79; Kawai Interrog, Interrogs, I, 323–27, 330; Kawai Statement, States, II, 148; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 121–22, 124.

[20] The 32d Division estimated it had killed 2,100 Japanese in the area.

[21] U.S. sources for this and the subsequent subsections include: 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 32–40; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 4–18 Apr 45; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–15; 126th Inf Unit Rpts, 6–18 Apr 45; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 13–15; 128th Inf Unit Rpts, 5–18 Apr 45.

Japanese still holding the 128th Infantry at Salacsac Pass No. 2.

After the Japanese counterattack of 31 March, the 128th had had its hands full reorganizing, regaining lost ground, and beating off a number of minor night raids. Moreover, throughout the first week of April unseasonably heavy rains and dense fog severely curtailed operations. On 7 April the 128th Infantry launched an attack to clear the high ground south of the Villa Verde Trail from Hill 505 east to Hill 506B, where the trail turned sharply south. By 10 April the regiment had secured the saddle between Hills 505 and 504—technically Salacsac Pass No. 2. The Japanese, however, still held Hill 506 (southwest of Hill 506B) and Hill 507 as well as all of its four noses. From 11 through 17 April the 128th Infantry struggled determinedly to secure this high ground but attained only limited success. Establishing blocks along the north-south stretch of the trail from Hill 506B to the D nose of Hill 507, the regiment denied the Japanese the use of that section of the trail. The Japanese, holding out in isolated strongpoints along the Hill 507 complex, in turn prevented the 128th Infantry from employing the same part of the trail. Nevertheless, except for these isolated strongpoints, the 128th Infantry, by 17 April, had cleared almost the entire Salacsac Pass No. 2 area.

Personnel Problems

But the 128th Infantry could do no more and, at least temporarily, was finished as a fighting unit. During the period 5 through 17 April the regiment had suffered an additional 275 battle casualties, 60 men killed and 215 wounded. Its total battle casualties since moving into action along the Villa Verde Trail now amounted to 710 men killed or wounded. Evacuations for sickness and combat fatigue had taken an additional toll until, by 17 April, the regiment was reduced to few more than 1,500 effectives, about the same number remaining to the 127th Infantry when it pulled off the trail on 25 March. The 126th Infantry, in the period 5–17 April, had lost approximately 70 men killed and 145 wounded. It could now muster no more than 2,100 effectives.

During the second week of April observers from Sixth Army headquarters reported to General Krueger that the 32d Division had a major morale problem, a report that reinforced an opinion Krueger had formed from earlier, personal observation. The troops of the 126th and 128th Infantry Regiments were approaching complete mental and physical exhaustion; front-line men with considerable time overseas were becoming supercautious; rotation back to the United States had become the principal topic of conversation at all echelons of the division; the combat troops' aggressive spirit was diminishing rapidly and markedly. With its low strength and its personnel problems, the division was going to find it impossible to make spectacular gains, but if it could not speed the pace of its advance along the Villa Verde Trail it had no hope of reaching Santa Fe even by 1 June. If the division were so delayed, it might be caught on the trail by the heavy downpours of the rainy season—beginning in late May—and would find it extremely difficult to extricate itself and its equipment from the mountains.

Meanwhile, the Japanese still held terrain advantages that enabled them to use their forces economically and reinforce their front lines almost at will. Conversely, the terrain drastically limited the 32d Division's freedom of maneuver, forcing the division to employ its diminishing strength in costly frontal assault time and time again. Terrain and the weather were undoubtedly the major problems the division faced, but the personnel problem promised to loom increasingly important as a factor limiting the division's progress.[22]

The 32d Division's personnel problem had come about honestly and honorably. The division had reached Luzon tired and understrength after an arduous two-month campaign in the mountains of western Leyte.[23] As a whole the division had had less than three weeks rest — some components scarcely two — before reaching Luzon, where it arrived with barely 11,000 officers and men, almost 4,000 understrength. Roughly 30 percent of the division's troops had been overseas for nearly three years and had participated in three to five other operations before Luzon. Even as the division started up the Villa Verde Trail its was scraping the bottom of its personnel barrel to find qualified noncommissioned officers, and it could ill afford the officer and noncommissioned officer losses it had incurred to mid-April. The deteriorating quality of leadership, combined with increased interest in and desire for rotation, added to morale problems. Moreover, replacements were scarce and slow to arrive, and Sixth Army's lack of strength made it necessary to leave 32d Division regiments in the line long after they should have been relieved for rest and rehabilitation.

By mid-April the only way Sixth Army could have markedly improved the situation on the Villa Verde Trail would have been to insert a fresh division there. No such division was available; Sixth Army could not even provide I Corps with sufficient forces to relieve the 126th and 128th Infantry Regiments simultaneously. The best thing I Corps and the 32d Division could arrange was to relieve each regiment in sequence. First, the 127th Infantry, which had had three weeks' rest and had been built back up to 2,650 men—still 500 under authorized strength—would relieve the 128th Infantry. The 128th would then rest for ten days to two weeks, after which it would return to the front to relieve the 126th Infantry.[24]

Despite its grim personnel picture, the 32d Division had actually accomplished a good deal between 4 and 18 April. The 128th Infantry had broken through the Japanese defenses at Salacsac Pass No. 2; the 126th had cut the *2d Tank Division*'s secondary route to and from the pass and had taken some of the pressure off the 128th. It appeared that the 127th Infantry would have little trouble mopping up at Hill 507 and, in conjunction with a drive south by the

[22] Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 13 Apr 45, sub: Rpt of Visit to 32d Div, 10–11 Apr 45, and Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 14 Apr 45, sub: Rpt on Visit to 128th Inf, 13 Apr 45, both in Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 11–13 Apr 45; Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.

[23] See Cannon, *Leyte*.

[24] Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army Rpt on Visit to 128th Inf, 13 Apr 45; 32d Div FO 19, 18 Apr 45.

126th Infantry, would soon be able to launch a strong attack against Japanese defenses at Salacsac Pass No. 1.

It would probably have been of little consolation to the 32d Division to know that as of mid-April the *2d Tank Division*'s personnel problem had also reached a critical stage. Since 5 April the Japanese unit had lost another 1,125 men killed,[25] while all the reinforcements General Konuma, commander of *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army*, felt he could spare were already either in place along the Villa Verde Trail or were on their way there. In all, the *2d Tank Division* had received some 1,600 fresh troops during the first half of April—far more that the 32d Division received in the same period. By the 17th the Japanese had committed a total of 8,750 men to the defense of the Villa Verde Trail. The 32d Division had killed approximately 2,500 of these.[26] Only 250 Japanese remained at the isolated strongpoints in the Salacsac Pass No. 2 area, and Iwanaka had long since dismissed them from his mind. He was making his final preparations to hold Salacsac Pass No. 1, knowing that an assault against its defenses was imminent.

Salacsac Pass No. 1 to Imugan

The Isolation of Salacsac Pass No. 1

General Iwanaka intended to hold a north-south line extending from Mt. Imugan two and a half miles to Hill 508, south of the trail.[27] This line, already bent by the 126th Infantry's advance to Hills 511 and 512, blocked the Cataludonan Valley, the most obvious outflanking route north of the Villa Verde Trail. Iwanaka also defended trails leading north from Valdez by stationing a 500-man force on high ground lying a mile or so southwest of Imugan. Reserves, 300–500 men in all, were held along ridges immediately west of Imugan.

As it prepared to attack toward Salacsac Pass No. 1, the 32d Division's ultimate objective was still the Santa Fe area. Maj. Gen. William H. Gill, the division commander, set a first intermediate objective as the pass and a second as the high ground where Iwanaka's reserves were located. Apparently feeling that a wide enveloping maneuver through the Cataludonan Valley would be too dangerous and too hard to support logistically, Gill chose to send the 126th Infantry south against Salacsac Pass No. 1 and the 127th Infantry east. Patrols would mount a diversionary effort by moving north from Valdez, the patrolling to be conducted by the 1st Battalion of the Buena Vista Regiment, a guerrilla unit that the 32d Division had outfitted and trained.[28]

The 127th Infantry began moving up to relieve the 128th on 17 April and immediately instituted operations to clear the last Japanese from the Hill 507 area

[25] This estimate is based upon Japanese sources. For the period 5–17 April, the 32d Division claimed only 850 Japanese killed.

[26] 32d Division claims for the period 1 March–17 April account for 2,950 Japanese killed, while from Japanese sources a figure of 2,250 killed can be derived.

[27] Japanese information in this subsection comes from: Kawai Interrog, Interrogs, I, 323–24, 330–31; 32d Div Rpt Luzon, an. 2, G–2 Rpt, pp. 15–16.

[28] 32d Div Rpt Luzon, p. 38; 32d Div FO's 18 and 19, 12 and 18 Apr 45, respectively.

and nearby terrain.[29] The 127th found the mission considerably more difficult than anticipated, and not until 3 May was the north-south stretch of the Villa Verde Trail between Hills 506B and 507D safe for 32d Division traffic. Nevertheless, sufficient ground in the area was clear by 26 April for the 2d Battalion, 127th Infantry, to start a drive east along and south of the trail, striking toward Hill 508 at the south side of Salacsac Pass No. 1.

The Japanese reacted violently to this new drive and during the next two days launched a series of counterattacks from the east and north, at least one of which was executed by a group of over 150. The Japanese, losing 75–100 men killed, at best caused a day's delay in the 127th Infantry's progress, and the 2d Battalion pressed on to reach the crest of Hill 508 late on 29 April. That night over 200 Japanese, supported by machine gun and mortar fire, undertook another counterattack, coming up the north slopes of the hill. When the initial impetus of the attack died, the Japanese continued with small-scale raids until dawn on the 30th. This time the Japanese lost some 100 men killed; the 127th Infantry's casualties were approximately 5 killed and 10 wounded. The Japanese continued small-scale attacks against the foothold on Hill 508 through 4 May, but to no avail.

While beating off these Japanese attacks, the 2d Battalion, 127th Infantry, expanded its hold on Hill 508 and established a block on the Villa Verde Trail to the north. Some troops of the battalion sought to clear the area between Hill 508 and Hill 509, which, lying 500 yards to the southwest, fell to the 3d Battalion on 3 May. Next, Japanese cut off west of Hill 508 began to harass the 3d Battalion, but that unit had little difficulty consolidating its hold.

North of the Villa Verde Trail the 126th Infantry had also attained some measure of success, though its operations were as laboriously slow as those of the 127th. Striking south from Hill 511 on 18 April, the 2d Battalion, 126th Infantry, on 24 April reached the crest of Hill 515, which marked the north side of Salacsac Pass No. 1. This drive, covering perhaps three-quarters of a mile, was especially noteworthy in that its success depended in large part upon fire support provided by troops of the 127th Infantry on Hill 506B.

Meanwhile, elements of the 1st Battalion, 126th Infantry, had struck east from Hills 511 and 512 to Hills 513 and 514, respectively 750 and 1,000 yards east of Hill 512. The battalion then pressed south to Hill 516, 750 yards east of Hill 515, and by 27 April had advanced another 500 yards southeast to the crest of Hill 525. The next day the unit set up a block on the Villa Verde Trail immediately south of Hill 516, effectively cutting the Japanese main line of communications to Salacsac Pass No. 1. For all practical purposes the

[29] The principal sources for the rest of this subsection are: 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 38–47; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 18 Apr–5 May 45; 127th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 21–35; 127th Inf Unit Rpts, 18 Apr–5 May 45; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 15–19; 126th Inf Unit Rpts, 16 Apr–4 May 45.

On 25 April, during the course of the 127th Infantry's action described in the following paragraphs, Pfc. David M. Gonzales of Company A was killed as, exposed to enemy fire, he helped dig out a number of his fellow men who had been buried as the result of a landslide caused by a bomb that had gone astray from supporting aircraft. For his heroic action, Private Gonzales was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

32d Division had isolated the pass—the only route of withdrawal or reinforcement now left to the Japanese led through broken, heavily wooded terrain immediately south of the trail and east of Hill 508.

Into Imugan

The isolation of Salacsac Pass No. 1, like earlier operations in the Villa Verde Trail section, caused the 32d Division's casualties to mount at a rapid rate. In the period 17 April–4 May the 126th and 127th Infantry Regiments together had incurred another 700 battle and 500 nonbattle casualties, broken down as follows: [30]

	126th Infantry	*127th Infantry*	*Total*
Killed	56	128	184
Wounded	173	353	526
Nonbattle	233	270	503
Total	462	751	1,213

By early May the 126th Infantry could muster but 1,875 front-line effectives; the 127th Infantry approximately 2,175. Morale problems were still pressing and many of the nonbattle casualties were again listed as combat fatigue and psychoneurotic cases. In the 127th Infantry 10 of the nonbattle casualties involved self-inflicted gunshot wounds.

It was manifestly time to get the 128th Infantry back into the line to relieve the 126th and, insofar as possible, lighten the burden upon the 127th Infantry.[31] The relief began on 3 May, when troops of the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, took over from 126th Infantry elements at Hill 525. The 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, then struck southeast across the Villa Verde Trail and seized Hill 526, 500 yards distant, on 7 May. The battalion's left drove east on the north side of the trail toward Hill 527, which was about three-quarters of a mile beyond Hill 525 and formed part of the high ground just before Imugan. Iwanaka's reserves held up the 128th Infantry's men along the northwestern slopes of Hill 527 on 7 May.

In the meantime, the 126th Infantry had continued efforts to clean out the terrain from Hills 515 and 516 south to the Villa Verde Trail, and the 127th Infantry mopped up along the slopes of Hills 508 and 509. On 6 May the 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, took up positions on the trail west of Hill 508, and the 3d Battalion prepared to follow the 1st into the line. There were now enough relatively fresh troops available for the 32d Division to complete the relief of the 126th Infantry and make plans for a new attack.

To execute the new plan the 128th Infantry would have to send one battalion east through Salacsac Pass No. 1 to join the troops on and near Hill 526. The 2d Battalion was to continue its advance at Hill 527, simultaneously endeavoring to reverse its right flank and send it back west through the pass. The 127th Infantry would hold and mop up all rear areas, relieving the 126th Infantry's units north of the trail and at Hills 515 and 516. Until that relief could be completed, the 126th Infantry would

[30] The table is based on the 126th and 127th unit reports cited in the previous subsection.

[31] The remainder of this subsection is based generally on: 32d Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 42–43, 45–46, 48–54; 32d Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 4–30 May 45; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 19–20; 127th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 35–53; 127th Inf Unit Rpts, 5 May–2 Jun 45; 128th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–23; 128th Inf Unit Rpts, 4–30 May 45.

continue its efforts to clear the ground from those two hills south to the trail. General Gill scheduled the new attack to start on 8 May.

By the 8th the Japanese situation was deteriorating rapidly, since the 32d Division had breached Iwanaka's Mt. Imugan–Hill 508 defensive line.[32] North of the Villa Verde Trail the *2d Tank Division*'s right flank units were pivoting eastward on the Mt. Imugan anchor; its left flank troops were virtually cut off. Iwanaka realized that Salacsac Pass No. 1 was lost, but he had no choice except to hang on. He had apparently wanted to use the troops posted at Mt. Imugan to mount a counterattack against the 32d Division's left, but, if he was to hold out any longer, he had to use them to reinforce positions east of Salacsac Pass No. 1. In doing so he hoped to establish yet another defensive line along the high ground just west of Imugan.

It seems probable that Iwanaka felt that he would have no chance to set up a new line unless he either destroyed or pushed west the elements of the 128th Infantry already on the slopes of Hill 527. At any rate, beginning on 8 May, he started dispatching troops to cut the supply line to the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry. This route ran through rugged, forested country southeast from Hill 511 to Hills 515 and 516 and continued east across Hill 525 toward Hills 526 and 527. On 10 May Japanese forces cut the track between Hills 525 and 516, forcing much of the 128th Infantry and one battalion of the 127th to devote a considerable portion of their efforts to eliminating the Japanese pocket. If delay had been Iwanaka's purpose, he succeeded admirably, for it was 19 May before the supply line was once again secure and the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, could return to its drive east from Hill 525.

Meanwhile, the 1st Battalion, 128th, had grabbed a bear by the tail at Salacsac Pass No. 1 and during the two weeks following 8 May was able to make less than 500 yards east from Hill 508. Troops of the 2d Battalion, moving west from Hill 526, gained even less ground, and when, on 16 May, the 3d Battalion started to drive south and southeast from Hill 516, it found that strong Japanese forces had reoccupied many positions that the 126th Infantry had once overrun. Not until 24 May did the 128th Infantry clear the last Japanese from the trapezium formed by Hills 515, 516, 526, and 508 and report to General Gill that it had secured Salacsac Pass No. 1.

Meanwhile, the 2d Battalion, 128th Infantry, had seized Hill 527, and the 1st Battalion, Buena Vista Regiment, had started a drive northward from Valdez that culminated on 28 May with the capture of Hill 528, lying on the south side of the Villa Verde Trail opposite Hill 527. The two battalions had cleared the high ground immediately west of Imugan, now the 32d Division's final objective.

Until 23 May the division had been aiming for Santa Fe, but on that day I Corps—realizing that the 32d Division had no chance of reaching Santa Fe before the 25th Division, which was driving north along Route 5—once again

[32] Additional information on the Japanese is derived from: Kawai Interrog, Interrogs, I, 325–27, 331–32; Kawai Statement, States, II, 149; SWPA Hist Series, II, 480–82; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 157–61; 32d Div Rpt Luzon, an. 2, G–2 Rpt, p. 16.

moved the 25–32d Division boundary westward. For all practical purposes the capture of Hill 528 by the 1st Battalion, Buena Vista Regiment, marked the completion of the 32d Division's share in the drive toward Santa Fe, and on 28 May, entering the remnants of barrio Imugan against no opposition, the guerrilla unit put the finishing touches on the 32d Division's campaign. For the first time since 21 February the division had successfully carried out to the letter the provisions of an I Corps directive.

In achieving its final success, the 32d Division had received indirect assistance from the *2d Tank Division.* On 24 May Iwanaka started withdrawing the remains of his battered forces north up the valley of the Imugan River. The 25th Division was threatening his main supply route, for the *10th Division*'s last defenses on Route 5 had collapsed. Iwanaka therefore realized that there was no longer any tactical purpose to be served by continuing his efforts to hold the Villa Verde Trail, and he acted accordingly.

The last act of the drama along the trail came to a swift end. On 29 May the 1st Battalion, Buena Vista Regiment, made contact with elements of the 126th Infantry northeast of Imugan. Operating under 25th Division control, the 126th had trucked up Route 5 and had struck toward Imugan from the east and southeast. By the 29th, encountering only scattered groups of Japanese, the regiment had gained control over the Villa Verde Trail from Santa Fe to Imugan. Except for the 126th Infantry, all elements of the 32d Division began to withdraw from the trail on 30 May. Still under the control of the 25th Division, the 126th Infantry continued patrolling west from Santa Fe and up the Imugan River valley for another two weeks.

The final phase of operations along the Villa Verde Trail—from 5 through 31 May—had again cost the 32d Division dearly. The 128th Infantry, which had borne the brunt of the fighting at Salacsac Pass No. 1, had suffered especially heavy casualties: [33]

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Nonbattle*	*Totals*
126th Infantry	15	40	75	130
127th Infantry	55	75	350	480
128th Infantry	120	390	...	510
Total	190	505	425	1,120

The three infantry regiments of the 32d Division had suffered the following battle casualties during their operations to clear the Villa Verde Trail and adjacent terrain: [34]

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
126th Infantry	195	460	655
127th Infantry	350	750	1,100
128th Infantry	280	950	1,230
Total	825	2,160	2,985

In addition, another 6,000 or so of the 32d Division were evacuated from the

[33] The table is derived from the regimental unit reports cited previously. The 126th Infantry was out of action from 9 to 24 May; its totals do not include the casualties for the period 24–31 May, when it operated under 25th Division control. The 127th was engaged primarily in mopping up during the period. No nonbattle casualty figures can be found for the 128th.

[34] The figures in the table are approximations derived from all available pertinent data. As usual, the various sources employed provide irreconcilable information. The figures for the 126th Infantry do not include the regiment's battle casualties for the period 24–31 May, when the regiment operated under 25th Division control; the figures do, however, include the regiment's casualties—approximately 55 killed and 110 wounded—for the period 21 February –5 April, when most of the unit operated in the river valleys west of the Villa Verde Trail.



VILLA VERDE APPROACH TO IMUGAN

front lines either permanently or for varying periods of time because of sickness and disease of all types, mainly respiratory infections, skin troubles, intestinal afflictions, and combat fatigue and associated psychoneurotic upsets.

During the final phase of operations along the Villa Verde Trail the *2d Tank Division* lost 2,300 men killed,[35] and by the end of May at least 5,750 of the 8,750 troops the Japanese had committed to the defense of the trail were dead.[36] The *2d Tank Division* was finished as an effective infantry combat unit, just as it had been destroyed as an armored force during the defense of the approaches to San Jose in January and early February.

The 32d Division had not accom-

[35] American and Japanese estimates of Japanese killed during May coincide remarkably well.

[36] The figure 5,750 is derived principally from the Japanese sources. The claims of the 32d Division's three infantry regiments provided a total of 8,750 Japanese killed—equal to the total Japanese commitment on the trail. The 32d Division's G–2 and G–3 Sections estimated that approximately 7,675 Japanese were killed along the trail.

plished its original missions — to clear the Villa Verde Trail, seize Santa Fe, and secure Route 5 from Santa Fe south to Digdig — but this is not to detract from the division's very real and important accomplishments. Initially, Sixth Army and I Corps had expected too much of the 32d Division, especially in the light of the unit's personnel problems. When I Corps finally reduced the 32d's mission to one within reach of its capabilities, the division succeeded in executing its orders. Moreover, Sixth Army and I Corps, in assigning the division its original missions, had underestimated terrain difficulties along the Villa Verde Trail as well as Japanese capabilities and intentions with regard to the defense of that approach to Santa Fe.

Assessing the 32d Division's accomplishments, it is hardly necessary to look further than the fact that the unit pinned down the *2d Tank Division* and its attachments to the defense of the Villa Verde Trail. Destroying the *2d Tank Division* and making sure that almost 6,000 Japanese were no longer alive to fight again, the 32d Division had undoubtedly made possible the relatively more decisive operations of the 25th Division along the Route 5 approach to Santa Fe. Even with the help provided by the 32d Division's operations, the 25th Division had reached Santa Fe only one day before the 32d overran the last organized Japanese defenses west of Imugan, less than three miles west of the Villa Verde Trail–Route 5 junction at Santa Fe.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Bambang Front – II
The 25th Division On Route 5

The 25th Division's Drive Begins

On 21 February, when the 25th and 32d Divisions began their converging attacks toward Santa Fe, it had appeared to Sixth Army and I Corps that the principal Japanese defenses on the Bambang front were located along Route 5. For this reason, I Corps had initially assigned the 32d Division broader missions than the 25th, at least in terms of terrain and objectives. I Corps had expected the 32d Division to clear the Villa Verde Trail, seize Santa Fe, and then secure Route 5 from Santa Fe south to Digdig, which is eleven miles north of San Jose as the crow flies. The 25th Division would clear Route 5 from San Jose north to Digdig; open Route 100 from Rizal (ten miles southeast of San Jose) north seventeen miles to Carranglan; and secure Route 100 from Carranglan west six miles to that road's junction with Route 5 at Digdig.[1]

The Terrain and the Plan

Route 5, in February 1945 a good, two-lane gravel road, runs northeast about four miles through open, flat country between San Jose and barrio Rosaldo, which elements of the 25th Division had taken on 14 February. (*See Map XI.*) Near Rosaldo the highway swings northward through a narrow section of the valley of the Talavera River, which changes its name to Digdig River north of barrio Digdig. Three miles north of Rosaldo, at Lumboy, the highway leaves the river and swings north-northeast about seven miles to Digdig, where it drops down a sharp slope back into the river valley. The terrain west of Route 5 between Rosaldo and Digdig is generally wooded and rises steeply from 500 feet at the highway to 1,000 feet within a quarter of a mile of the road. To the east, the ground rises just as sharply, but on this side of the highway much of the terrain is more open and many of the slopes are grassy.

Starting at a point about 500 feet above sea level at Rizal, Route 100, a narrow dirt road, winds north-northeast about ten miles through rough hills that rise to a height of 1,000 feet. The road then turns north and northwest, traversing ten miles of open, gently sloping country on its way to Carranglan. From Carranglan west to Digdig, following a course that takes it over grassy hills about

[1] I Corps FO 12, 21 Feb 45; see also above, ch. XXVI.

1,000 feet high, Route 100 is a good, two-lane gravel road.

The 25th Division, on 21 February 1945, had discovered two other possible routes of advance northward in its sector. The first was a narrow trail originating at Lupao, on Route 8 nine miles northwest of San Jose, and running eastward across the tough, forested terrain of the Caraballo mountains to Puncan, on Route 5 three miles south of Digdig. The second was an ill-defined trail that originated near barrio Rosaldo and ran north through the same mountains, west of Route 5, to join the first trail near Puncan. On 21 February a battalion of the 25th Division's 161st Infantry was in contact with Japanese outposts along both trails at points about two miles south and southwest of Puncan. The 27th Infantry had halted in front of a Japanese strongpoint on Route 5 near Lumboy; the 35th Infantry had troops along Route 100 not far north of Rizal.

With the extant dispositions, the methods of attack among which General Mullins, the division commander, could choose to reach Digdig were obvious.[2] He could mount a power drive up Route 5 with the 27th Infantry, or he could stage wide flanking maneuvers with either or both the 35th and 161st Infantry Regiments. A frontal assault up the highway might prove quite costly, or might permit Japanese defensive forces that the 25th Division knew were located at Puncan to escape northward. West of Route 5 the terrain was such as to inhibit the logistic support of sufficient forces to achieve quick, decisive results during an attack toward Digdig. The remaining choice seemed the best to Mullins—to have the 35th Infantry mount a flanking attack via Route 100, swing on to Route 5 at Digdig, and cut off the Japanese at Puncan, falling upon them from the rear. Meantime, the 27th Infantry was to maintain pressure north along Route 5; the 161st was to strike for high ground overlooking Puncan on the west, ready to continue north over this terrain as far as Digdig.

North to Digdig

Starting north on 23 February and encountering negligible opposition, the 35th Infantry reached Carranglan on the 26th.[3] One battalion then filed down a rough trail leading into Puncan from the northeast, and on 1 March secured heights overlooking the battered town. The next day, as patrols entered deserted Puncan, the rest of the regiment probed cautiously west along Route 100 from Carranglan. Much to the regiment's and division's surprise this stretch of the road also proved to be virtually undefended, and on 3 March the 35th Infantry occupied Digdig without resistance. Their attention diverted by operations of the 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments south and southwest of Puncan, the Japanese had failed to protect the left and rear of their delaying force, the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit*, at Puncan.

The *Puncan Sector Defense Unit* had employed most of its artillery and mor-

[2] The remainder of this subsection is based mainly on: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 35–44; 25th Div FO's 13 and 14, 21 and 27 Feb 45.

[3] This subsection is based generally on: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 39–44; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 16–19; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–27; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle of Puncan West Sector, pp. 1–16; 161st Inf S–3 Rpts, 21 Feb–5 Mar 45.

tars against the 161st Infantry, and had likewise sent most of its infantry against that American regiment. Nevertheless, the 161st secured the trail junction a mile southwest of Puncan on 28 February, and two days later made contact on Route 5 with the 27th Infantry, which had driven north astride the highway.

The 27th Infantry, starting north on 23 February, encountered bitter resistance, especially in the high ground abutting the west side of Route 5. It took the regiment until 27 February to clear the Lumboy area, but the next day organized resistance began to collapse throughout the Lumboy-Puncan region. By 4 March the three regiments of the 25th Division had established firm contact at Puncan.[4]

While the last defenses around Puncan were falling, the 161st Infantry continued north along high ground west of Route 5. Advancing against steadily diminishing resistance, the regiment's leading troops were on hills overlooking Digdig by 5 March, and on the same day made contact with elements of the 35th Infantry in the barrio. All that remained before Mullins could declare the highway secure from San Jose to Digdig was for the 35th to clean out a Japanese pocket on the east side of Route 5 between Puncan and Digdig. This task the regiment completed quickly against organized, determined, but scattered resistance.

The Japanese Reaction

During the period 21 February–5 March the 25th Division lost approximately 40 men killed and 165 wounded. Virtually wiping out the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit,* the division had killed some 1,250 Japanese in the same thirteen days. There are many possible explanations for this wide disparity of casualty figures. For one, the Japanese defenses were of a hasty nature, manned by a force hurriedly assembled from six or seven regular and provisional units. Moreover, the 25th Division had advanced behind exceptionally heavy aerial, artillery, and mortar support, to which captured Japanese diaries gave credit for unusual effectiveness. Then, the 35th Infantry, encircling the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit,* had effected a degree of demoralization among the Japanese that was normally foreign to Japanese troops holding static defensive positions. Control within the Japanese unit, not well established when the 25th Division started north, broke down quickly and completely.

Upon its organization, the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit* had had protection on its rear. An understrength infantry battalion was deployed along Route 100 between Carranglan and Digdig, while the *11th Independent Infantry Regiment* (less one battalion) held Carranglan and the Old Spanish Trail, leading north from Carranglan to Route 5 about twelve miles northeast of Santa Fe. But the Japanese had not conducted adequate reconnaissance along Route 100 and had attached no significance to the 35th Infantry's advance up that road. The Japanese garrison in Carranglan simply withdrew to better defensive positions up the Old Spanish Trail as

[4] For heroic actions on 24 February, during the attack against Lumboy, S. Sgt. Raymond H. Cooley of Company B, 27th Infantry, was awarded the Medal of Honor.

the 35th Infantry approached, evidently expecting the 35th to continue north rather than swing west toward Digdig.[5] Meanwhile, the infantry battalion on Route 100 between Carranglan and Digdig moved over to Route 5 to reinforce the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit*, permitting the 35th Infantry to reach Puncan and Digdig before the Japanese even realized the regiment had started west from Carranglan.

As late as 25 February General Konuma, commanding the *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army*, felt that the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit* was in no danger, and he made optimistic plans for the unit to counterattack. Indeed, it was not until Konuma, on 2 March, found out that the *Puncan Sector Defense Unit* was done for that he halted counterattack preparations. Still the loss of Route 5 as far north as Digdig did not disturb Konuma. His attitude in this respect is demonstrated by the fact that on 3 March he directed the *10th Division*, responsible for holding Route 5, to send four companies of infantry west along the Villa Verde Trail to the Salacsac Passes, where, from the Japanese point of view, the situation was far more critical than along Route 5. Manifestly, Konuma had faith that the *10th Division* would be able to hold along the MLR it was building north of Digdig.

Digdig to Putlan

The unexpectedly rapid success of the 25th Division in its drive to Digdig prompted General Swift, the I Corps commander, to extend the division's zone of responsibility. On 2 March, he directed the division to push six miles northward along Route 5 from Digdig to Putlan.[6] Since mopping-up operations were largely completed in the Puncan-Digdig sector by evening on 5 March, Mullins' units were ready to start for Putlan. Mullins' plan for reaching Putlan was cut from the same pattern that had produced the successful actions against Puncan and Digdig. The 161st Infantry would attack across the high ground west of Route 5, the 27th would strike along and east of the highway, and the 35th would stage another wide envelopment. This time the 35th would march north-northwest from Carranglan up the Bonga River valley, swing northwest from the headwaters of the Bonga over a fair trail leading to the eastern reaches of the Putlan River, and descend the Putlan about two miles to its juncture with the Digdig, half a mile north of barrio Putlan.[7]

The Japanese had left the east flank approach to Putlan even less well protected than they had the Route 100 approach to Digdig.[8] As a result, the 35th Infantry's lead battalion, leaving Carranglan on 6 March, had no difficulty occupying Putlan by evening on the 8th. The next day the battalion made contact with the 27th Infantry, which had

[5] Additional information on the Japanese in this section is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 478–80; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp 99–110; Konuma Statement, States, II, 309–14; Tsuchiya Statement, States, IV, 402–03.

[6] I Corps FO 12–1, 2 Mar 45.

[7] 25th Div FO 15, 5 Mar 45.

[8] The remainder of this subsection is based on: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 44–47; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 20; 27th Inf Unit Rpts, 2–20 Mar 45; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 28–30; 35th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 5–11 Mar 45; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Pursuit and Approach March Puncan to Minuli, pt. I, pp. 1–3; *ibid.*, pt. II, pp. 4–5; 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 5–15 Mar 45.

come up Route 5 from Digdig against little opposition. Taking over from the 35th Infantry in the Putlan area, the 27th had some difficulty clearing Japanese stragglers from ravines east of Route 5 near the barrio and did not finish mopping up until 15 March.

Battling both terrain and determined, albeit scattered, Japanese resistance, the 161st Infantry had a harder time moving north. Nevertheless, its forward elements gained high ground west of Route 5 opposite Putlan by 10 March. Two days later one company was on commanding ground west of the highway halfway to Minuli, a tiny barrio on Route 5 two miles north of Putlan. By that time Route 5 was safe for military traffic as far as Putlan. Again the 25th Division had secured an objective more rapidly than anticipated.

Objective: Balete Pass

Nothing succeeds like success, or so General Swift must have thought when, on 11 and again on 13 March, he twice more extended the 25th Division's zone of responsibility northward. First, he directed the division to secure Route 5 to barrio Kapintalan, five miles beyond Putlan. Two days later, reassessing the progress of the 32d Division along the Villa Verde Trail, Swift instructed Mullins to drive on through Balete Pass, two and a half miles north of Kapintalan and two miles south of the junction of the Villa Verde Trail and Route 5 at Santa Fe.[9] Because of its own success and the concentration of the *2d Tank Division* in front of the 32d Division, the 25th Division was now responsible for a large part of the area Swift had originally assigned to the 32d. So far the 25th had not encountered the type of opposition or terrain facing the 32d. The *Puncan Sector Defense Unit* had collapsed rather rapidly, and the 25th Division had met no significant resistance between Puncan and Putlan. However, the I Corps directive for the seizure of Balete Pass was to precipitate a battle that would demonstrate to the 25th Division that the *10th Division* could fight as well as the *2d Tank Division*.

Plans and Obstacles

Initially, General Mullins laid plans to execute two separate attacks toward Balete Pass. The 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments would strike northward astride Route 5 in what was essentially a frontal assault, but one that had certain refinements. The 161st Infantry would make the main effort, driving straight up Route 5 and along rising ground immediately west of the highway. The 27th Infantry, to execute a close-in envelopment of Balete Pass, would attack over high ground adjacent to the east side of the road. The regiment would employ as its main supply route a road that Mullins proposed to construct over the mountains about a mile east of and parallel to Route 5. The second portion of the division's attack would be another wide envelopment by the 35th Infantry. Striking north up the Old Spanish Trail from Carranglan, the 35th would seek routes by which it could outflank Balete Pass, preparing to move directly on the pass or to push on to Route 5 northeast

[9] I Corps FO's 12–3 and 12–4, 11 and 13 Mar 45.

of Santa Fe, whichever proved feasible and necessary.[10]

The terrain into which the 25th Division moved in March 1945, only a degree or two less rough than that along the Villa Verde Trail, is hardly inviting, and bears superficial resemblance to that along Route 11 from Rosario to Baguio. Just as Route 11 lies in the gorge of the Bued River, so Route 5 follows the deep, sharp-sided valley of the Digdig River northward; as along the Bued, towering ridges rise abruptly from the Digdig, which has its headwaters just south of Balete Pass. But here the resemblance ends. Already 1,000 feet above sea level at Putlan, Route 5 rises to 3,000 feet at Balete Pass, dipping down north of the pass to approximately 2,500 feet at Santa Fe. Twisting northward along the noses of innumerable great and small ridges, Route 5 remains east of the Digdig—the 25th Division would not have the bridging problem that faced the 33d Division on Route 11.

Unlike the ridges along Route 11, most of the ridges along Route 5, especially those east of the highway, are heavily wooded. West of the road some of the ridges adjacent to the Digdig are grassy sloped and bare crested; north of Balete Pass Route 5 passes through densely forested territory to a point about a quarter of a mile short of Santa Fe and then hairpins down the open slopes of a steep hill. On the east side of Route 5 from Putlan to Balete Pass most of the ridges descend into the Digdig gorge from the northeast; those west of the highway come down from the northwest—the pattern is more regular than that along Route 11. West of Route 5 the ridges rise to a height of over 4,500 feet within a mile and a half of the highway; east of the road this height is reached within two miles.

About three-quarters of a mile wide at Putlan, the valley of the Digdig narrows to virtually nothing at a steep-sided gorge three and a half miles to the north. The gorge widens a bit at barrio Kapintalan, four and a half miles north of Putlan. Route 5 leaves the river about a mile and a half north of Kapintalan to twist up the last steep, forested slopes to Balete Pass. Valdez, the trail center that elements of the 32d Division employed in outflanking maneuvers against the Japanese on the Villa Verde Trail, lies about four miles west of Kapintalan —four miles of nearly impassable, densely wooded terrain of the Caraballo Mountains.

Balete Pass is a low point on a vast ridge complex that forms a watershed dividing the headwaters of streams flowing north into the Cagayan Valley from those flowing south to the Central Plains. The pass proper leads over Balete Ridge, which originates almost two miles west-northwest of Balete Pass and extends almost nine miles to the east-southeast. In the area of immediate interest to this account, the highest point of the ridge complex of which Balete Ridge forms a part is Mt. Imugan, cresting at 5,580 feet a mile and a half north of Salacsac Pass No. 1 on the Villa Verde Trail. Balete Ridge itself juts eastward off a long north-south ridge line that crosses the Villa Verde Trail at Imugan and merges into the jumbled terrain of the southern Caraballo Mountains southwest of Putlan. East of Balete Pass,

[10] 25th Div FO 16, 11 Mar 45, and Change No. 1 thereto, 14 Mar 45; 25th Div FO 17, 15 Mar 45.

Balete Ridge continues east-southeast three and a half miles to Mt. Minami, 4,530 feet high. Here the ridge turns sharply southward for a mile and ends at forested Mt. Kabuto, 4,600 feet above sea level. East of Mts. Minami and Kabuto the slopes fall away toward the Old Spanish Trail, about three miles distant. The Old Spanish Trail in this area traverses partially wooded ground lying 2,500 to 3,000 feet up in the Caraballo Mountains.

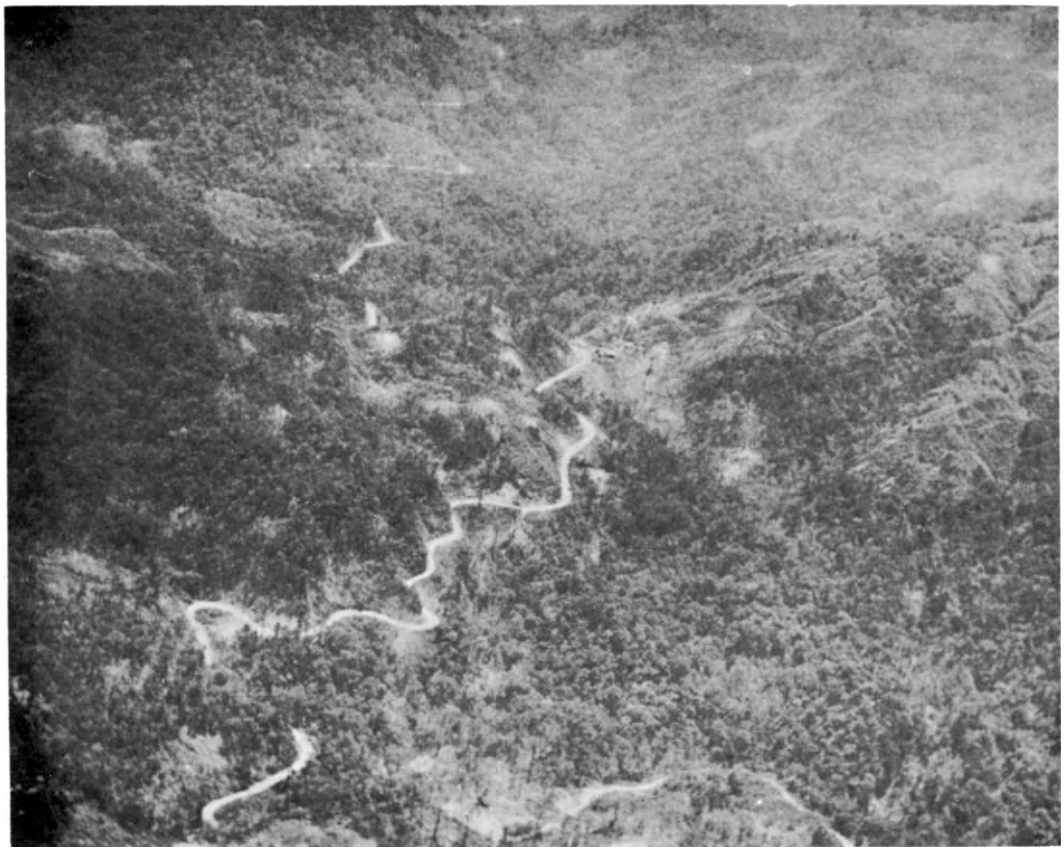
To the 25th Division the ridges rising on both sides of Route 5 presented, with their separating ravines, difficult cross-compartments lying diagonal to the division's direction of advance. The division soon learned that the separating ravines, especially those east of Route 5, were so thickly wooded and overgrown with lush, tropical vegetation as to be practically impassable. For the most part, the division would have to seek footing along the generally razor-backed crests of the ridges. The division also quickly discovered that its maneuver possibilities would be limited because the major ridges had few lateral or subsidiary fingers along which units could undertake outflanking thrusts.

The terrain would provide the 25th Division with plenty of cover and concealment, but this was an advantage that would have to be shared with the Japanese. Indeed, one of the 25th Division's major problems would be to find the Japanese. Observation in this forested terrain was so limited that troops would often be unable to find fields of fire and would always have difficulty clearing for the fields. As on the Villa Verde Trail and on Route 11, the Japanese would have the advantages of observation along Route 5.

The *10th Division* initially placed the emphasis of its defenses east of Route 5.[11] In mid-March the division's easternmost defense force, the understrength *11th Independent Infantry*, was deployed across the Old Spanish Trail seven or eight miles north of Carranglan. The *10th Infantry*, less two battalions, held the eastern end of Balete Ridge at Mts. Minami and Kabuto. The regiment also had troops on Mt. Kanami, the high point of a ridge line leading north-northwest from Mt. Minami to Route 5 about two miles northeast of Santa Fe.

The *63d Infantry* (less one battalion but with three provisional battalions attached) defended Mt. Myoko, on Balete Ridge a mile west-northwest of Mt. Minami, and Lone Tree Hill, midway between Mt. Myoko and Balete Pass. Other troops of the *63d* were dug in along Myoko Ridge, which descends from the southwestern corner of Mt. Myoko about three miles to a branching of the Digdig River near Minuli. The *63d Infantry* also had forces on Kapintalan Ridge, stretching southwest from Lone Tree Hill to the Digdig gorge just north of barrio Kapintalan. A battalion each from the *10th* and *63d Infantry Regiments*, reinforced by two provisional battalions, defended the ridges west of Route 5 north from Minuli. As of mid-March, the Japanese had perhaps 8,000 men in line on both sides of Route 5 and on the Old Spanish Trail. Some 6,000 of these troops were east of the highway, the rest west.

[11] Japanese material in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 49–50; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. I, General Situation, pp. 2–4; Tsuchiya Statement, States, IV, 403–05; SWPA Hist Series, II, 478–80.



ROUTE 5, *heading south through Balete Pass.*

The 25th Division had acquired some excellent information concerning the dispositions of the *10th Division.* A captured fire plan of the *10th Field Artillery Regiment* gave the American unit approximate locations of Japanese field artillery pieces and attached medium and heavy mortars, and, with other captured documents, indicated the location of many Japanese infantry unit command posts. Though providing invaluable order of battle information and thereby giving the 25th Division some indication of Japanese strength, the captured documents did not offer any intelligence about the location of infantry regimental and battalion guns and infantry light mortars.[12]

The Plans Amended

The 35th Infantry's share in the initial phases of the drive toward Balete Pass

[12] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 49, 115–16, 122.

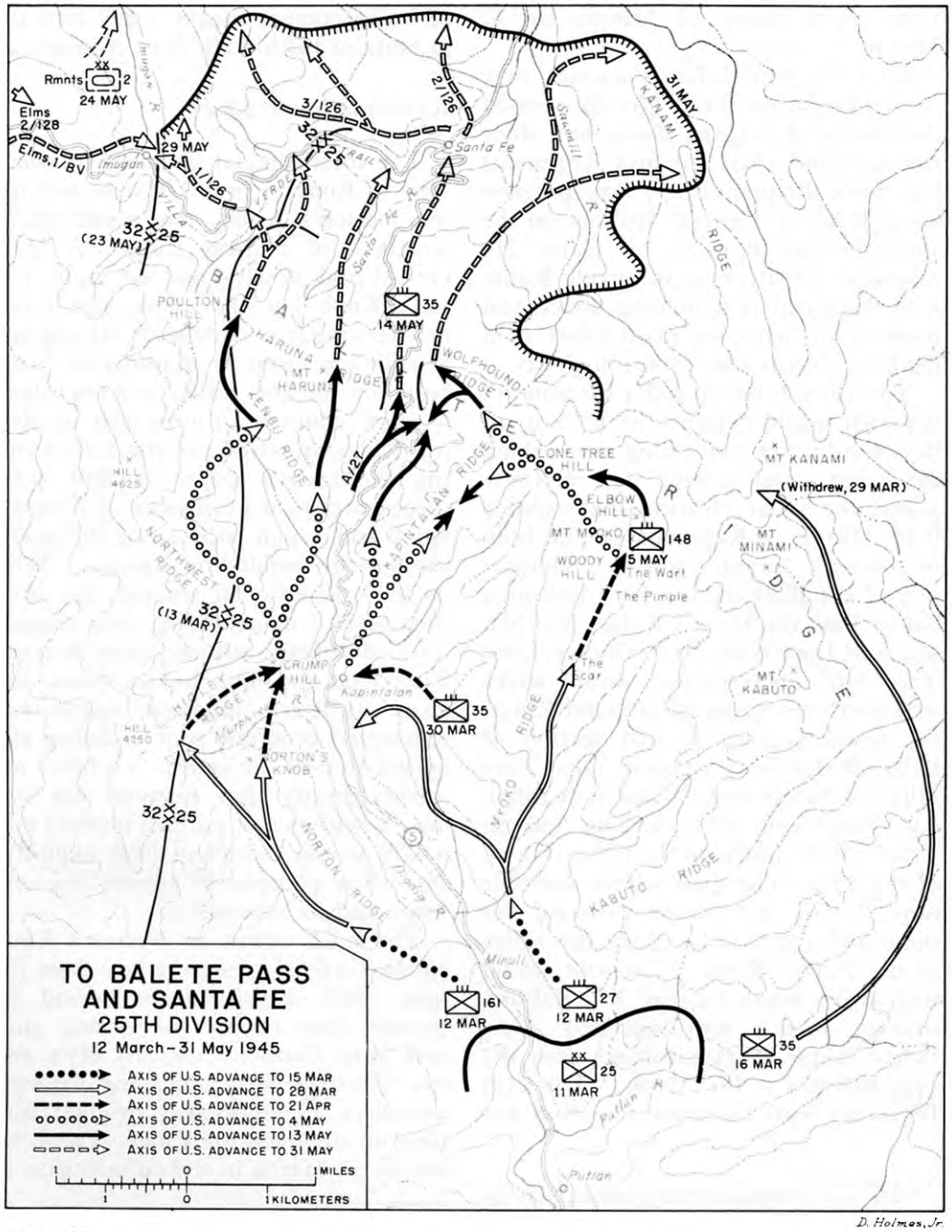
can be dismissed rather briefly, although the effect of the regiment's attack up the Old Spanish Trail was of considerable more significance than the 25th Division knew at the time.[13] By 11 March the lead companies were seven miles up the trail from Carranglan. Stopping in front of a strong Japanese roadblock these units, on succeeding days, came under increasingly heavy artillery and mortar fire, against which American supporting artillery, firing from extreme ranges on targets in unmapped country, had difficulty delivering effective counterbattery fire. Meanwhile, 25th Division engineers working on the Old Spanish Trail reported that soil conditions were such that the trail required extensive rock fill and compacting before sections of it would support heavy military traffic. Since Mullins felt that the requisite engineer effort and time could be better applied along and closer to Route 5, he directed the 35th Infantry to cease its attack.

For the Japanese, who at first believed that an entire American division had started north from Carranglan, the 35th Infantry's probing action had been downright frightening. Reacting quickly, General Konuma dispatched the *Takachiho Force*, a two-battalion provisional regiment built on a nucleus of paratroopers, south from Bambang to reinforce the *11th Independent Infantry*. By the time the *Takachiho Force* reached the front along the Old Spanish Trail on 20 March—the same day the 35th Infantry halted its attack—Konuma had learned that the threat there was not as great as he had thought. However, he still had such scanty information about the situation along the trail that he left the *Takachiho Force* there together with the *11th Independent Infantry*, thus pinning down four battalions (2,500 to 3,000 men) of his best troops. His intelligence was so poor that it was not until late April that Konuma concluded that the U.S. I Corps lacked the strength to mount simultaneous strong attacks along both Route 5 and the Old Spanish Trail. Until then, he constantly feared an outflanking thrust from Carranglan, a fear that was logical in light of the earlier, successful envelopments conducted by the 35th Infantry at Puncan, Digdig, and Putlan.

Meanwhile, the attacks of the 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments along Route 5 had attained only limited success.[14] From 12 through 15 March the 161st Infantry, employing only one battalion, secured high ground adjacent to the west bank of the Digdig River from Putlan north to Minuli. (*Map 22*) Troops also gained a foothold on Norton Ridge, running generally northwest from a branching of the Digdig half a mile up Route 5 from Minuli. The 27th Infantry, devoting much of its time to mopping-up operations in the vicinity of Putlan, cleared Route 5 to a point

[13] Information on the 35th Infantry's attack and the Japanese reaction is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 27–28; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–32; 35th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 6–25 Mar 45; Konuma Statement, States, II, 309–14.

[14] Tactical information in the rest of this subsection and in the next is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 51–54; 25th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 11–28 Mar 45; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 20–22; 27th Inf Unit Rpts, 11–30 Mar 45; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 33–36; 35th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 12–29 Mar 45; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. II, pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, pt. III, Opns for Norton's Knob, pp. 1–3; 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 12–31 Mar 45.



D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP 22

1,000 yards north of Minuli by 15 March.

Since the 35th Infantry's attack over the Old Spanish Trail already showed clear signs of bogging down, and since the 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments had made disappointingly slow progress along Route 5, General Mullins, on the 15th, decided to revise his plans. He relegated the drive north astride Route 5 to the status of a holding attack and planned to make his main effort twin flanking thrusts east of the highway.

The 161st Infantry and a battalion of the 27th would execute the holding attack, the former continuing north along the rising, rough ground west of Route 5 and the latter clearing the highway from Minuli to Kapintalan. The bulk of the 27th Infantry was to undertake one of the flanking attacks, enveloping Balete Pass via Myoko Ridge, Mt. Myoko, and Lone Tree Hill. Once at Lone Tree Hill the regiment would strike west-northwest along Wolfhound Ridge, the name applied to that section of Balete Ridge lying between Lone Tree Hill and Balete Pass.[15] The 35th Infantry, redeploying from the Old Spanish Trail, would attack on the right, or east, of the 27th. The 35th would assemble near Putlan and march eastward for three and a half miles along the valley of the Putlan River. The unit would then swing north to seize Mt. Kabuto, striking thence northwestward along Balete Ridge to gain contact with the 27th Infantry at Mt. Myoko. The 25th Division's 65th Engineer Battalion was to build combat supply roads into the mountains behind all three regiments.[16]

Reorientation of Effort

The 161st Infantry launched its attack west of Route 5 on 16 March, striking for Norton's Knob, the northwestern terminus of Norton Ridge. A bare-crested peak nearly 3,000 feet high, Norton's Knob lay about two and three-quarters miles northwest of Minuli and a mile southwest of Kapintalan. One battalion of the 161st, moving along wooded, concealed routes west of Norton Ridge, initiated the attack by securing the eastern slopes of Hill 4250, three-quarters of a mile west of Norton's Knob and a high point along the north-south ridge paralleling Route 5. With its left and left rear secured, the 161st then started maneuvering over densely forested slopes to advance upon Norton's Knob from the south and southeast. For days, stubborn Japanese opposition stalemated progress; poor visibility also helped to slow the attack. Visibility improved greatly after 105-mm. and 155-mm. howitzers and 4.2-inch mortars sent nearly 10,000 rounds of high explosive and white phosphorus against Norton's Knob and its approaches.

The final assault at Norton's Knob entailed a three-pronged attack from the west, south, and southeast behind extremely close support of 37-mm. antitank guns, Cannon Company M7's, and two Sherman tanks mounting 105-mm. howitzers, all laboriously brought into position along Norton Ridge. The knob fell on 28 March in the culmination of

[15] The name Wolfhound Ridge derived from the 27th Infantry's nickname, The Wolfhounds. The names for Mts. Myoko, Kanami, Minami, and Kabuto and associated ridges were Japanese in origin.

[16] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–54, 58–59, 169–70; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 33; 25th Div FO 17, 15 Mar 45.



NEUTRALIZING THE ENEMY ON CLIMB TO NORTON'S KNOB

an attack that since the 12th had cost the 161st Infantry about 40 men killed and 155 wounded. The Japanese had lost 150 killed, but managed to extricate many survivors in good order, deploying them in new positions along the next ridges and hills to the north.

The 27th Infantry, like the 161st, had some trouble gathering momentum, mainly because until 22 March it had to leave two battalions along Route 5 to secure the division's rear. On 22 March, finally, the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, began spreading eastward from Route 5 into high, wooded terrain up to 2,000 yards from the highway, permitting the 2d Battalion, which had already started into the hills north of Minuli, to concentrate its forces for the drive northeast up Myoko Ridge. As of 28 March the 1st Battalion was still 1,250 yards short of Kapintalan along Route 5 and rising terrain adjacent to the road. The 2d Battalion had progressed almost 3,750 yards up forested Myoko Ridge, and was on approximately the same east-west line as the 1st Battalion. The 2d Battalion had overrun one group of Japanese outposts along the ridge and, fighting onward against in-

creasingly strong resistance, had by 28 March gained contact with what appeared to be the *10th Division*'s main line of resistance. The 27th Infantry and the 25th Division had now acquired sufficient information from a variety of sources to conclude that the Japanese were going to conduct a determined defense of Myoko Ridge and that the *10th Division* was rapidly reinforcing along the ridge and at Mt. Myoko.

The 35th Infantry's attempt to envelope via Mt. Kabuto started out well but did not end up as hoped. Striking up wooded, steep, trackless slopes, one battalion of the 35th bypassed the crests of Mts. Kabuto and Minami to the east and then swung around to the northwestern side of Mt. Kanami. The maps the troops had were so inadequate that the 35th Infantry could not be certain where its forward companies were, but it appears that the leading units actually reached a point near the crest of Mt. Kanami before they encountered significant opposition. Evidently striking westward along the southern slopes of Mt. Kanami, the two forward companies, by 22 March, apparently reached the northern slope of Balete Ridge about two and a half miles east of Balete Pass.

By this time the Japanese had become well aware of the 35th Infantry's threat. Accordingly, they started moving part of the *Takachiho Force* westward from the Old Spanish Trail to Mt. Kanami and simultaneously brought south from Bambang previously uncommitted elements of the *10th Division*. With these troops the Japanese began a series of counterattacks and harassed the 35th Infantry's supply line. By 28 March the 35th was stalemated—the problems involved in protecting its supply line made it impossible for the regiment to send sufficient strength forward to Mt. Kanami to assure a continued advance. General Mullins decided once again to call off an attempted envelopment by the 35th Infantry, this time giving as his reasons:

> First, that the casualties incurred in continuing the advance would be prohibitive as the terrain permitted no room wha :oever for maneuver; second, the supply problem could get out of hand should the Japanese elect to attack in force using the Putlan River Valley as a route of approach; third, a desire to keep the division front as tight as was tactically possible.[17]

It would appear that the third of these reasons possessed the greatest validity, for the 35th Infantry's casualties since 15 March had been appreciably less than those of the other two regiments and the terrain in its zone was not much worse than that closer to Route 5, especially in the 27th Infantry's area.[18]

The 25th Division's three regiments were operating across a front six miles wide, all of it in rough, densely wooded terrain. They were finding it nearly impossible to bring decisive force to bear at critical points and were unable, thinly spread as they were, to assure steady progress against increasingly strong Japanese resistance. Though finding it necessary to concentrate his forces,

[17] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 53.

[18] Casualties for the period 16–31 March were:

Regiment	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
27th	50	160	210
35th	25	40	65
161st	35	145	180
Total	110	345	455

The figures derive from all relevant regimental sources. The division G–3 Section listed the casualties for the same period as 125 killed and 290 wounded.

Mullins could not redeploy the 27th and 161st Regiments, for to do so would open great gaps along his front. The obvious solution was to redeploy the 35th Infantry.

New estimates concerning the Japanese strength on the approaches to the pass also influenced General Mullins. When the 25th Division had started north in late February, it had estimated that no more than 4,000 Japanese would defend Route 5 and that most of these were concentrated near Santa Fe. Now, in late March, the division G–2 Section was estimating that 8,000 to 10,000 Japanese were in position to defend Route 5 and that the *10th Division* main line of resistance lay south of Balete Pass.[19] If this were so—and the new estimates were quite accurate—it well behooved the 25th Division to apply the principles of mass and economy of force. The division simply did not have the strength to continue operations on so wide a front.

From 13 March to the end of the month progress had not been that anticipated, but the period ended with perhaps the most important single tactical decision 25th Division planners made during the drive to Balete Pass. On 28 March General Mullins directed the 35th Infantry to move to Route 5 between the 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments. The 35th and 161st, his orders read, would join in an attack northward astride the highway while the 27th Infantry would press with the utmost vigor its attack up Myoko Ridge to envelop Balete Pass from the southeast.[20] The orders set the pattern of 25th Division operations for the next two months.

[19] 25th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 21 Feb–31 Mar 45, *passim*, 35th Inf Jnl Files, 21 Feb–31 Mar 45.

[20] 25th Div FO 18, 28 Mar 45.

Another Month's Progress

During the last phases of the 161st Infantry's attack at Norton's Knob, the regiment's 3d Battalion had laid some groundwork for a continuation of the attack north over the high ground west of Route 5.[21] The battalion had secured a foothold on the southwestern portion of Highley Ridge, the next ridge line north of Norton Ridge. Unlike the rest of the ridge lines west of Route 5, bare-crested Highley Ridge runs southwest to northeast, extending from Hill 4250 two miles to a branching of the Digdig River half a mile north of Kapintalan. The most prominent feature along Highley Ridge is open-crested Crump Hill, located a little over a mile northeast of Hill 4250 and three-quarters of a mile north of Norton's Knob. A creek the 25th Division called the Murphree River runs through the sharp, wooded ravine separating Norton's Knob from Crump Hill.[22]

After 28 March the 3d Battalion, 161st Infantry, drove northeast along Highley Ridge toward Crump Hill, while other troops of the regiment attempted with limited success to work their way north to the hill from Norton's Knob. The regiment established a base of fire on Norton's Knob to support the attack and set up a fire direction center there to control the fires of a heterogeneous collection of weapons. Included were

[21] Information on 161st Infantry operations in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 55–58, 64; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. II, Commentary, pp. 2–3; *ibid.*, pt. IV, 2d Bn Engagements on Highley Ridge, pp. 1–2; *ibid.*, pt. V, 1st Bn Engagement for Balete Pass, p. 1; *ibid.*, pt. VII, 3d Bn Attack Highley Ridge, pp. 1–4; 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 28 Mar–21 Apr 45.

[22] The names Norton, Crump, Highley, and Murphree derive from members of the 161st Infantry.

the 2d Battalion's heavy machine guns an 81-mm. mortars, a platoon of 4.2-inch mortars, the 2d Battalion's 37-mm. antitank guns, two M7's from Cannon Company, and two medium tanks with 105-mm. howitzers. The fire direction center also controlled the employment of the 105-mm. howitzers of the 89th Field Artillery Battalion, emplaced farther south.

Although the 3d Battalion gained the crest of Crump Hill on 8 April and was ready to push on, General Mullins ordered the 161st Infantry to halt. The regiment's right flank was now dangerously exposed, for the 35th Infantry, striking north along and immediately east of Route 5, had not kept pace, and Mullins deemed it an unjustifiable risk to send the 161st Infantry farther northward. As it was, the regiment saw plenty of action while mopping up in the ground it had gained — not until 28 April did it overcome the last pockets of Japanese resistance in the Crump Hill area.

The 35th Infantry's zone extended about 500 yards west of Route 5 and 2,000 yards into the high ground east of that road.[23] The regiment began moving into its new area on 29 March but until mid-April, required to protect the 25th Division's rear areas, could employ only one battalion in the attack. The battalion moved first against a 500-yard-long ridge lying 2,000 yards southeast of Kapintalan and about 1,000 yards west of positions the 27th Infantry had attained on Myoko Ridge at the end of March. Japanese patrols from bases on the short ridge were sallying forth to harass the 27th Infantry's supply lines, and until the 35th Infantry cleared that ridge neither it nor the 27th would be able to advance much farther.

By 11 April the 35th Infantry had captured the short ridge and then, with two battalions abreast, swung westward through ravines and over low ridges to Route 5 at barrio Kapintalan. Troops entered the destroyed barrio on 21 April, making Route 5 safe for military traffic that far north. As was the case in the 161st Infantry's zone, the 35th Infantry area needed a considerable amount of mopping up, and it was 28 April before the unit cleaned the last Japanese from the ridges and ravines immediately east of Route 5 between Minuli and Kapintalan.

While the left and center regiments were making slow progress up to an east-west line through Kapintalan, the 27th Infantry was having a rough time along Myoko Ridge.[24] To break through the Japanese defense line that it had discovered some two miles up the ridge, the regiment directed two rifle companies to execute close-in envelopments up and down the ridge's steep slopes while a third company maintained direct frontal pressure. A single medium tank was brought up the ridge over a supply road the 65th Engineers had bulldozed along the crest. Beyond the completed section of this road the terrain was such that the tank found it difficult to get traction and continually threat-

[23] Information on 35th Infantry operations is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 55–57; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 36–41; 35th Inf Opns Rpts, 29 Mar–23 Apr 45; 35th Inf Strength and Casualty Rpts, 29 Mar–23 Apr 45.

[24] Information on 27th Infantry action is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 59–61; 25th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 30 Mar–22 Apr 45; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 22–25; 27th Inf Unit Rpts, 30 Mar–22 Apr 45.

ened to belly on the ridge's razorback crest.

Believing at first that the Japanese had only hasty positions on Myoko Ridge, the 27th Infantry hoped to drive forward rapidly, bypassing Japanese strongpoints in order to retain momentum and so complete the envelopment of Balete Pass before the Japanese could send more reinforcements to Mt. Myoko and Balete Ridge. In accordance with this concept, the 27th left behind a Japanese pocket dug in along a 500-yard-long, open-topped ridge — The Scar — jutting westward from the point on Myoko Ridge that the regiment had reached on 28 March. The regiment also bypassed a second strongpoint on Myoko Ridge proper about 500 yards northeast of The Scar.

After moving around the second strongpoint, the 27th encountered strong defenses at Woody Hill, a densely forested prominence almost 4,000 feet high centering three-quarters of a mile northeast of The Scar. About 500 yards long northeast to southwest, Woody Hill marked the beginning of the central mass of Mt. Myoko, a mass that extended northeastward another mile and a half from Woody Hill's crest to the junction of Myoko and Balete Ridges at Elbow Hill. Mt. Myoko itself crested at over 4,500 feet. Near the center of Woody Hill lay a forested knob designated The Pimple; 300 yards further northeast, on the northern slope of Woody Hill, was another knob, dubbed The Wart.

By 12 April, after a two weeks' struggle during which the terrain proved a more formidable enemy than the Japanese, the 27th Infantry had secured a tenuous foothold on the southern slopes of Woody Hill, marking an advance of no more than 1,000 yards northeast from the junction of The Scar and Myoko Ridge. Japanese from The Scar and the other bypassed strongpoint had helped inhibit faster progress. Harassing the 27th Infantry's supply line along Myoko Ridge, they had forced the regiment to devote much of its energies to cleaning out the two pockets, a job not completed until 12 April.

The relatively slow American advances between 30 March and 12 April gave the Japanese ample opportunity to reinforce their Myoko Ridge defenses.[25] During this period the Japanese sent to the Myoko Ridge–Mt. Myoko sector four understrength infantry battalions, including two from the Old Spanish Trail. Thus, when the 27th Infantry was able to concentrate after 12 April to resume its attack, it found Japanese defenses greatly improved and defensive fires augmented by newly arrived mortars and machine guns. By the 15th of April the regiment's lead battalion had gained only 250 yards, but had secured The Pimple. This gain had depended in large measure upon tank support. Maneuvering with great difficulty along the slopes of Woody Hill, the tanks—three were now in the forward area—not only provided needed fire support to the infantry but also had a profound psychological effect upon the Japanese, who greeted with consternation the appearance of tanks in such impossible terrain. Not expecting to find tanks along Myoko Ridge, the Japanese had brought forward no antitank weapons and many Japanese, overcome by surprise as tanks

[25] Additional information on the Japanese is from: 25th Div G–2 Per Rpts, 30 Mar–21 Apr 45; Tsuchiya Statement, States, IV, 402–05.

loomed up through the forest, abandoned prepared defenses and fled.

Striking on from The Pimple, the 27th Infantry seized The Wart on 16 April, and its leading battalion then drove on toward a peak that, ultimately known as 1st Battalion Objective, lay 350 yards northeast across a steep-sided, deep ravine from The Pimple. Four days and a double envelopment later, the 27th secured 1st Battalion Objective. The regiment then turned its attention to 2d Battalion Objective—a hill lying 400 yards northeast across a heavily wooded saddle from 1st Battalion Objective.

Attacks against 2d Battalion Objective had actually begun on 18 April, when the 27th Infantry had attempted an envelopment from the west. Then, the 2d Battalion had started out from the end of a 200-yard-long ridge jutting northwest from The Wart, first descending into rough ground covered by dense jungle undergrowth. Swinging northeastward under the western slopes of Myoko Ridge, the battalion was within a hundred yards of its target by evening on 21 April, but then was stopped cold by Japanese fire. Attempts to move around the flanks of the Japanese proved fruitless — the 2d Battalion could find no flanks in that jungled terrain. Meanwhile, every effort of the 1st Battalion to drive northeastward across the saddle to 2d Battalion Objective had also failed. The 27th Infantry had evidently reached an impasse.

Changing Concepts, 21–23 April

From 28 March through 21 April the 35th and 161st Infantry Regiments had advanced only three-quarters of a mile northward astride Route 5, and the 27th Infantry had gained scarcely a mile and a quarter northeast along Myoko Ridge. With his leading elements still two and a quarter miles short of Balete Pass, General Mullins, understandably, began to wonder if his attack plans would ever be successfully executed. True, resistance had been stubborn, and the difficult terrain had given all the advantages to the Japanese. On the other hand, American casualties had not been abnormally high, and the three attacking regiments claimed to have killed a total of 1,600 Japanese during the period. Their own losses were: [26]

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
27th Infantry	65	150	215
35th Infantry	30	145	175
161st Infantry	65	185	250
Total	160	480	460

Whatever the causes for the failure to achieve decisive results, General Mullins began to consider entirely reorienting the division's effort. He contemplated relegating the 27th Infantry's enveloping maneuver to a holding attack, virtually placing the regiment in a reserve role. The main thrust, he decided, might better be an assault astride Route 5 on a front 1,500 yards wide. Here he would place emphasis on the 161st Infantry's zone west of the highway, with the 35th Infantry continuing north in a supporting drive.[27]

At this juncture the 27th Infantry unexpectedly altered the general dismal picture. On 17 April Col. Philip F.

[26] The sources for these figures are the regimental records cited in the previous subsection. The claimed figure of Japanese killed is manifestly exaggerated.

[27] 25th Div Opns Plan B, 21 Apr 45, 25th Div FO File.

Lindeman, the regimental commander, had made an aerial reconnaissance of terrain west of Myoko Ridge and Mt. Myoko and had decided that ground lying some 1,000 yards west of Mt. Myoko might provide a more favorable route of advance to Balete Ridge than did the Mt. Myoko mass itself.[28] When on the morning of 21 April his regiment was still stalemated at 2d Battalion Objective, Lindeman decided upon a ground reconnaissance of some of the terrain he had observed from the air. He dispatched two six-man patrols west and northwest from The Wart and 1st Battalion Objective.[29]

During the course of the day Lindeman further decided that he could probably save time and effort if he sent out a reconnaissance force strong enough to seize a foothold on Balete Ridge west-northwest of Mt. Myoko. If the unit succeeded, he could quickly reinforce it, thereby outflanking the Japanese not only on 2d Battalion Objective but also on Elbow Hill, 500 yards north of 2d Battalion Objective. Opportunity might then arise for a quick dash along Balete Ridge to Balete Pass.

In accordance with this plan a reinforced platoon of Company G, 27th Infantry struck northwest from the vicinity of 2d Battalion Objective at 0800 on 22 April. Taking a different route from those followed by the two smaller patrols —which had found only poor terrain and many signs of Japanese counter-reconnaissance—the reinforced platoon escaped detection and late in the afternoon was on the southern slope of Balete Ridge at a point about half a mile northwest of 2d Battalion Objective. Colonel Lindeman immediately made plans to send the rest of Company G over the platoon's route to Balete Ridge.[30]

Thus, at the very moment the 27th Infantry had become stalemated, the regiment had discovered a gap in the Japanese defensive line and a new route of advance toward Balete Pass. If the regiment could send a strong force to Balete Ridge, bypassing Mt. Myoko, 2d Battalion Objective, and Elbow Hill, it could regain its lost momentum. Accordingly, on 23 April the rest of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, started out after Company G with orders to drive west-northwest along Balete Ridge as far as Lone Tree Hill, a mile and a quarter beyond Elbow Hill. Another battalion would continue the attack at the Mt. Myoko mass with the aim of opening a ridge-crest supply line that would avoid the extremely rough ground over which the 2d Battalion had to pass on its way to Balete Ridge. Meanwhile, the 161st Infantry would continue its attack northward on the west side of Route 5 and would endeavor to envelope Balete Pass from the west. The 35th Infantry was to place the emphasis of its attack on a drive up Kapintalan Ridge, ascending northeastward from barrio Kapintalan to Lone Tree Hill. With this attack of the 35th, General Mullins hoped to

[28] 27th Inf Unit Rpt 21, 17 Apr 45.

[29] Rad, CO 27th Inf to G–2 25th Div, 0945 21 Apr 45, and Tele Msg, S–3 27th Inf to CO 27th Inf, 1415 21 Apr 45, both in 27th Inf Jnl File, 21 Apr 45.

[30] Tele Msg, S–2 2d Bn to S–2 27th Inf, 0850 22 Apr; Tele Msg, CO 2d Bn to CO 27th Inf, 1620 22 Apr; Tele Msg, CO 27th Inf to CO 2d Bn, 1815 22 Apr; Rads, CO 27th Inf to CG 25th Div, 1825 and 1830 22 Apr; 2d Bn 27th Inf Unit Rpt, 1200 21 Apr–1200 22 Apr 45. All in 27th Inf Jnl File, 22 Apr 45.

open a shorter supply route to the 27th Infantry than the roundabout Myoko Ridge route.[31]

The Envelopment of Balete Pass

Resuming the Attack

The 27th Infantry pressed forward enthusiastically, and on 25 April the 2d Battalion, having encountered negligible resistance, was atop Lone Tree Hill.[32] The Japanese, preoccupied with the situation at Mt. Myoko, had left Balete Ridge wide open between Elbow and Lone Tree Hills.

By 27 April the 2d Battalion had advanced half a mile beyond Lone Tree Hill, and its forwardmost elements were only three-quarters of a mile short of Balete Pass. Here, however, the battalion had to halt. Japanese resistance was growing stronger; there were signs that a counterattack was brewing; and the battalion's supply situation was becoming difficult—the Japanese at Mt. Myoko still prevented the rest of the regiment from opening a relatively easy Myoko Ridge–Balete Ridge supply route. Carrying parties were taking twelve hours to reach the 2d Battalion via the bypass west of Elbow Hill, and adverse weather conditions were inhibiting aerial supply operations.

Additional strength arrived at Lone Tree Hill beginning on 28 April when the 3d Battalion, 27th Infantry, started moving up, leaving a battalion of the 35th Infantry at Mt. Myoko (the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, guarded supply routes). Unfortunately, this movement complicated supply problems, for neither Myoko nor Kapintalan Ridge was yet open for supply movements. Therefore, the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, started a drive southwest from Lone Tree Hill along Kapintalan Ridge to help troops of the 35th Infantry, already driving up the ridge from Route 5, to speed the opening of a new supply route.

The 35th Infantry had started up Kapintalan Ridge on 23 April, and four days later its leading troops reached a knob about midway between Route 5 and Lone Tree Hill.[33] During the course of the advance the 35th Infantry had learned that Kapintalan Ridge was a major Japanese stronghold from which the Japanese could seriously delay the opening of a supply route to the 27th Infantry on Balete Ridge. Moreover, the Japanese were also able to make it difficult for the 35th Infantry to clear Route 5 north from barrio Kapintalan, since from Kapintalan Ridge the Japanese controlled the highway for a mile and a half south of Balete Pass.

During the week following 27 April a battalion of the 35th Infantry secured Route 5 for three-quarters of a mile north of Kapintalan, but on Kapintalan Ridge the regiment made painfully slow progress. By 4 May troops had gained only 350 yards of new ground northeast

[31] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 61–64; 25th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 23–24 Apr 45; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–27; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 41; Tele Msg, CO 2d Bn to S–3 27th Inf (Movement Orders, 2d Bn), 1830 22 Apr, and Tele Msg, CO 2d Bn to CO 27th Inf (2d Bn Plan for 23 Apr), 2100 22 Apr 45, both in 27th Inf Jnl File, 22 Apr 45.

[32] Material on 27th Infantry operations in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 62–63; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–28; 27th Inf Unit Rpts, 23 Apr–4 May 45.

[33] Information on 35th Infantry operations is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 63–64; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 41–47; 35th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 22 Apr–5 May 45.

from the midway knob, while elements of the 27th Infantry had advanced only 500 yards southwest along the ridge from Lone Tree Hill. On the 4th the two regiments were still 800 yards apart on Kapintalan Ridge and, since other units had made no appreciable progress at Mt. Myoko, the 27th Infantry's supply situation along Balete Ridge was still precarious.

While the 27th and 35th Infantry Regiments were struggling to secure Kapintalan Ridge, the 161st Infantry had initiated its drive to envelop Balete Pass on the west.[34] The 161st's initial objective was Kenbu Ridge, the southeastern nose of which fell to the Digdig River gorge about a mile north of Kapintalan and a mile and a half south of Balete Pass. Stretching northwestward a mile and a quarter, Kenbu Ridge joined the long north-south ridge, paralleling Route 5, half a mile south of Poulton Hill, the peak of which marked the western end of Balete Ridge. Between the 161st Infantry and Kenbu Ridge lay Northwest or Banzai Ridge, descending from Hill 4625 on the north-south ridge.

To protect the regimental left against counterattack from the north-south ridge line, elements of the 2d Battalion, 161st Infantry, struggled up Northwest Ridge to positions near Hill 4625. The rest of the battalion, together with all the 1st Battalion, then attacked generally north toward Kenbu Ridge from Crump Hill on Highley Ridge, which the 161st Infantry had secured by 28 April. On the morning of 4 May the 1st Battalion grabbed the southeastern nose of Kenbu Ridge, while the 2d Battalion pushed troops on to the ridge a half a mile to the northwest. Although the Japanese controlled the intervening gap, it appeared that with another day's effort the 161st would clear all Kenbu Ridge. Then the regiment could press rapidly on to steep-sloped, partially wooded Haruna Ridge, the name given that section of Balete Ridge between Balete Pass and Poulton Hill. Indeed, by the morning of 4 May troops all across the 25th Division's front were poised for a final drive on Balete Pass, awaiting only a solution to the 27th Infantry's supply problem before jumping off.

Planning the Final Drive

Events now began to move with bewildering rapidity.[35] To Sixth Army and I Corps a breakthrough at Balete Pass seemed as imminent as it did to the 25th Division, but Krueger and Swift knew that if the breakthrough were to be exploited, fresh troops would be needed on the Bambang front.

As of 4 May conditions within the 25th Division were somewhat better than those so seriously affecting the 32d Division's operations along the Villa Verde Trail. When the 25th Division had reached Luzon, it had been out of action for nearly fifteen months. Thoroughly rested, completed re-equipped,

[34] Material on 161st Infantry operations in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 64–65; 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 23 Apr–5 May 45; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. II, Commentary, pp. 3–4; *ibid.*, pt. IV, 2d Bn Engagement Highley Ridge, p. 2; *ibid.*, pt. V, 1st Bn Engagement Balete Pass, pp. 2–3.

[35] Planning material in this subsection is from: I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 81–84; I Corps FO 16, 2 May 45; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 65–66; 25th Div FO 19, 3 May 45.

rebuilt, and up to strength, the division's only morale problems in January 1945 were those stemming from inaction. During its operations on Luzon to 21 February, the division had incurred about 1,000 battle casualties, but when it had started up Route 5 it had already received some replacements and had suffered no impairment to its morale.

Nevertheless, the 25th Division's operations from 21 February to 4 May had been both costly and tiring. During that period the division had lost approximately 480 men killed and 1,415 wounded — the 32d Division took 650 killed and 1,500 wounded during the same ten weeks. As was the case within the 32d Division, sickness and disease were also beginning to sap the combat strength of the 25th's three infantry regiments, although it appears that the 25th Division's nonbattle casualty rate was not quite two-thirds that of the 32d.[36] Whatever the case, the 25th Division was not, after over two months' attack, in condition to exploit a breakthrough at Balete Pass.

The recent collapse of Japanese defenses at Baguio provided Sixth Army and I Corps with an opportunity to start sending at least relatively fresh troops to the Bambang front. Accordingly, on 2 May the 148th Infantry of the 37th Division began pulling into the 25th Division's area from Baguio. This reinforcement to the 25th Division, together with the 32d Division's current slow progress at Salacsac Pass No. 1, prompted I Corps to extend the 25th Division's zone of responsibility once again. General Swift directed Mullins to strike north through Balete Pass to seize Santa Fe, secure Route 5 to Santa Fe, clear the Villa Verde Trail for a mile west of the village, and clean off the high ground for two miles east of Santa Fe.

General Mullins found in the arrival of the 148th Infantry an opportunity to realign and concentrate his forces for the final drive through Balete Pass. He directed the 148th Infantry to secure the 25th Division's rear and take over the task of clearing the last Japanese from the Mt. Myoko massif. Simultaneously, he ordered the 27th and 161st Infantry Regiments to concentrate all their troops (except those required to clear Kenbu and Kapintalan Ridges) for an attack to envelop Balete Pass from the east and the west, making the pass proper the 27th Infantry's objective. He instructed the 35th Infantry to employ one battalion along Kapintalan Ridge and use the rest of its strength to secure Route 5 north to Balete Pass. All three regiments were to be prepared to strike quickly toward Santa Fe once the pass was captured.

Mullins was calling for a renewed, accelerated effort from the tiring troops of his division, one regiment of which still had a delicate supply situation. Insofar as the 27th Infantry was concerned, Mullins was taking a calculated risk. Until that regiment and the 35th Infantry could open the Kapintalan Ridge supply line, the 27th Infantry would have to depend upon intermittent airdrops—the weather was becoming stead-

[36] The only directly comparative figures available show that as of 4 May the 35th Infantry, 25th Division, had 2,450 effectives—750 men understrength. On the same day the 126th and 127th Infantry Regiments of the 32d Division had 1,875 and 2,175 effectives, respectively.

ily more inclement with the approach of the rainy season—or on hand-carry over the tortuous bypass around Mt. Myoko.

As it prepared for its final attack, the 25th Division had reason to believe that the last Japanese defenses in front of Balete Pass were about to crack — an estimate with which the Japanese would have agreed. By 4 May the *10th Division* knew it could not hold out much longer.[37] Since early March the division's defenses across Route 5 had been strengthened by two battalions of the *10th Infantry*, seven provisional infantry battalions, and the bulk of three of the four battalions once stationed along the Old Spanish Trail. Now no more reinforcements were available, for General Yamashita (who had reached the Bambang front from Baguio in late April) had decided to hold out uncommitted units in the Bambang-Bagabag regions against emergencies that might arise after the impending fall of Balete Pass.

In all, the Japanese had committed perhaps 12,000 troops to the defense of Route 5 and the Old Spanish Trail. Probably no more than 3,000 Japanese were still in position in the Balete Pass area on 4 May. Such was the state of communications within the *10th Division* that the division commander had lost almost all control over the unit, though he apparently still retained reasonably tight control over another 3,000 troops in the Santa Fe area and along the Old Spanish Trail.

[37] Japanese information in this subsection is from: SWPA Hist Series, II, 480–82; Tsuchiya Statement, States, IV, 402–05; Japanese Studies in WW II, No. 8, *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 127–28, 130–34, 143.

Denouement at Balete Pass

During the final attack toward Balete Pass operations to secure the Kapintalan Ridge supply route to the 27th Infantry, deemed so vital on 4 May, proved relatively unimportant, for by the time the 25th Division had opened the supply line, the need for it had virtually passed. Suffice it to say that it took elements of the 27th and 35th Infantry Regiments until 11 May to overcome the last organized resistance along Kapintalan Ridge, and the two units did not finish mopping up until the 13th.[38] The chronology and significance of 148th Infantry operations at Mt. Myoko were quite similar. There, organized resistance collapsed on 10 May, and the 148th finished mopping up two days later. On the 13th the 3d Battalion of the 148th Infantry began relieving 27th Infantry troops along Balete Ridge between Mt. Myoko and Lone Tree Hill.[39]

While part of Mullins' force was bringing these peripheral actions to a successful conclusion, the drive to Balete Pass had continued unabated. The first step of the last attack took place on the afternoon of 4 May when a combat

[38] Information on operations of the 27th and 35th Regiments in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 66; 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 28–30; 27th Inf Unit Rpts, 5–14 May 45; 35th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 43–44; 35h Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 4–14 May 45.

[39] Information on the 148th Infantry in this subsection is from: 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Northern Luzon, pp. 3–4; 148th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 5–14 May 45.

On 8 May, during a Japanese counterattack on a newly won position in the Mt. Myoko region, Pfc. Anthony L. Krotiak of Company I, 148th Infantry, at the cost of his life, threw himself upon a Japanese hand grenade, thereby saving four fellow soldiers from serious wounds or possible death. For this heroic action, Private Krotiak was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

patrol of Company L, 161st Infantry, started due north from the southeastern end of Kenbu Ridge.[40] Ascending a partially wooded north-south ridge lying roughly 500 yards west of Route 5, the patrol encountered little opposition and soon found itself safely on Haruna Ridge not more than 500 yards west of Balete Pass. During the late afternoon and the next morning the rest of the 3d Battalion, 161st, moved up to Haruna Ridge and, while patrolling in all directions, held against a series of minor counterattacks. The battalion might have been able to seize Balete Pass proper on 5 May, but made no attempt to do so because the pass still lay within the 27th Infantry's zone and because artillery and mortar fire supporting the latter regiment's attack made it impossible for the 161st's 3d Battalion to move eastward.

The 27th Infantry's attack toward the pass began on 5 May with the 3d Battalion striking west-northwest from Lone Tree Hill along Wolfhound Ridge. Small groups of Japanese defended fanatically from minor strongpoints at various knolls and knobs, and on 5 May the 27th's battalion had made only 350 yards before Japanese fire from a well-organized strongpoint stopped it. Two days and 75 dead Japanese later the strongpoint fell.

On 8 May Company I, 27th Infantry, struck southwest from this strongpoint along a bare-crested ridge that descended to Route 5 at a point approximately 650 yards south of Balete Pass. By mid-afternoon the company, encountering scattered but stubborn resistance, was over halfway down the ridge. At the same time Company A, 27th Infantry, came up along Route 5, deployed in the 161st Infantry's zone near the southeastern nose of Kenbu Ridge, and started up the last reaches of the Digdig River gorge, here only 50 to 75 yards west of Route 5. The company intended to push to within 500 yards of Balete Pass, establish contact with Company I on the ridge east of the highway, and patrol to feel out Japanese strongpoints at the pass. Company L would take up the attack along Wolfhound Ridge directly toward the pass, while Company I holding on its ridge, would patrol toward Route 5.

During the morning of 9 May a Company I patrol reached Route 5 at Balete Pass, finding no Japanese, and late that afternoon the patrol gained contact with elements of Company A coming up to the pass from the south. Meanwhile, other troops of Company A made contact with the 3d Battalion, 161st Infantry, on Haruna Ridge. On the 10th Companies A and L, 27th Infantry, co-operated to clear the last Japanese from Wolfhound Ridge just east of the pass. To all intents and purposes the 27th Infantry had secured the objective for which the 25th Division had been striving since late February. All that remained before General Mullins could declare Balete Pass secure was for the 35th Infantry to complete the job of clearing Route 5 from Kapintalan north to the pass.

The 35th Infantry encountered a considerable amount of determined although scattered resistance from isolated Japanese strongpoints along the east side of Route 5, but on 10 May established

[40] Information on 161st Infantry action in this subsection is from: 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 66, 79; 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 4–14 May 45; 161st Inf Rpt, Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. IV, 2d Bn Engagement Highley Ridge, pp. 2–3; *ibid.*, pt. V, 1st Bn Engagement Balete Pass, pp. 3–4; *ibid.*, pt. VI, Opns for Balete Pass, pp. 1–2.

contact with 27th Infantry patrols from Wolfhound Ridge. The 35th finished mopping up on the 13th, and on the same day General Mullins reported to General Swift that Route 5 was open from San Jose through Balete Pass.

The drive north to Balete Pass from 21 February through 13 May had cost the 25th Division's three regiments nearly 2,200 battle casualties, distributed as follows: [41]

Regiment	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
27th	225	560	785
35th	150	525	675
161st	170	565	735
Total	545	1,650	2,195

In addition the 148th Infantry, fighting under 25th Division control since 5 May, lost about 20 men killed and 95 wounded during the period 5–13 May.

While the 25th Division was able to realign its forces and push on toward Santa Fe, the fall of Balete Pass marked the end of the *10th Division* as an effective combat unit. Since 21 February that division had lost almost 7,000 men killed. Its control and communications had broken down completely, it had lost contact with the *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army*, its supplies were virtually exhausted, and almost every piece of division artillery had been captured or destroyed. A few isolated units might continue resistance, but as a whole the *10th Division* was reduced to remnant status.

Santa Fe and the Villa Verde Trail

Psychologically, to the battle-weary troops of the 25th Division, the Luzon Campaign must have seemed complete with the seizure of Balete Pass.[42] But with the division's mission enlarged by I Corps on 2 May, Balete Pass had actually become but one more spot on the terrain during the long struggle up Route 5. The 25th Division's finale would not come until the division had seized the junction of Route 5 and the Villa Verde Trail at Santa Fe. As long as Santa Fe remained in Japanese hands, just so long could the *2d Tank Division* continue its fight on the Villa Verde Trail—even the shattered remnants of the *10th Division* might be reorganized into something resembling an effective combat unit if Yamashita changed his mind and decided to send reinforcements south through Santa Fe from Bambang. Finally, Santa Fe was in a very real sense the gateway to the upper Cagayan Valley.

On the day that General Mullins declared Route 5 secure through Balete Pass, the 25th Division started northward in accordance with plans laid before the pass fell. The 27th Infantry, on the right, or east, struck north and northeast from Wolfhound Ridge to clear the Sawmill River valley, leading north to the valley of the Santa Fe River at Route 5 a mile northeast of Santa Fe. Left open, the Sawmill River valley would provide the *10th Division*'s remnants a route of withdrawal toward Bambang, or, alternatively, give Yamashita a belated opportunity to reinforce that division.

[41] The figures are based upon all relevant divisional regimental sources cited previously in this chapter, sources that are, as usual, irreconcilable.

[42] General sources for this section include: I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 87–95; I Corps FO's 16 and 17, 2 and 19 May 45; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 71–77, 82; 25th Div G–3 Opns Rpts, 13 May–1 Jun 45; 25th Div FO's 19 and 20, 3 and 11 May 45.

From 14 through 22 May, operating for the most part in heavily forested, rough terrain, the 27th Infantry fought to destroy fanatically resisting Japanese groups blocking the western approaches to the Sawmill Valley. This job finished, the 3d Battalion spread out over the valley's southern reaches, and the 1st Battalion swung north to clean out the valley to Route 5, tasks accomplished by 24 May. The 1st Battalion then wheeled east against Kanami Ridge, which, ending at Route 5 two and a half miles north of Santa Fe, had become a Japanese secondary route of access to both Balete Ridge and the Old Spanish Trail. The 27th Infantry found considerable scattered resistance along the ridge, but by the end of May had secured sufficient terrain to assure the safety of Santa Fe against counterattack from the east.[43]

On the 25th Division's left the 161st Infantry had to reduce a strong Japanese pocket on Mt. Haruna, a peak on Haruna Ridge half a mile west of Balete Pass, before advancing on northward. The 161st overran the last resistance on forested Mt. Haruna during 22 May, and on the 24th two battalions began descending the northern slopes of Haruna Ridge toward the Villa Verde Trail. The units found the rough, forested ground defended only by a few small groups of Japanese, and on 27 May the 1st Battalion reached the Villa Verde Trail at a point a mile and three-quarters west of Santa Fe. On the same day the 3d Battalion hit the trail half a mile west of Santa Fe and immediately dispatched patrols eastward to make contact with the 35th Infantry, which had been driving north from Balete Pass.[44]

Many small groups of Japanese that were holed up in caves along both sides of Route 5 north from Balete Pass had rendered difficult the 35th Infantry's task of clearing the highway from the pass to Santa Fe. In a series of patrol actions two battalions cleared most of the regimental zone by 26 May, and on the next day the 1st Battalion descended the last, bare-sloped hill into Santa Fe. That day the battalion made contact with the 161st Infantry to the west and the 27th Infantry to the east.

During the push to Santa Fe, I Corps had again extended the 25th Division's area of responsibility. Since the 32d Division was still stalled at Salacsac Pass No. 1 General Swift, on 23 May, had directed the 25th to swing west to clear the Villa Verde Trail as far as Imugan and to secure the dominating terrain up to a mile north of the trail between Santa Fe and Imugan. To help seize this new ground, Swift attached the 32d Division's 126th Infantry to the 25th Division, sending the regiment by truck to Balete Pass on 24 May.

Passing through the 161st Infantry, the 1st Battalion of the 126th struck north across the Villa Verde Trail; the 3d Battalion drove north on the 1st's right; the 2d Battalion patrolled the high ground west of Route 5 and north of the Villa Verde Trail in the vicinity of Santa Fe. The 126th Infantry met only light and scattered resistance during its operations, and by 29 May had cleared almost all the terrain for which

[43] 27th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 31–32; 27th Inf Unit Rpts 12–31 May 45.

[44] 161st Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 13–30 May 45; 161st Inf Rpt Luzon, Battle for Balete Pass, pt. V, 1st Bn Engagement Balete Pass, pp. 3–5; *ibid.*, pt. VI, Opns for Balete Pass, pp. 2–3.



ROUTE 5, *winding south from Santa Fe.*

it was responsible. On the same day the regiment made contact with troops of the 32d Division near Imugan.

If any single event can be said to have marked the end of the campaign to open the Santa Fe approach to the Cagayan Valley, it was this 29 May contact between the forces under 25th and 32d Division control. Two days earlier General Mullins had reported to I Corps that Route 5 was secure all the way to Santa Fe. On the 31st, after the 126th Infantry had mopped up, he declared the Villa Verde Trail secure from Santa Fe to Imugan. The converging attack on Santa Fe was over.

Conclusions

With the completion of the drive to Santa Fe, the operations of Sixth Army in northern Luzon were about to pass to a new stage. The time was ripe to exploit the breakthrough that had resulted from the virtual destruction of the *2d Tank Division* and the *10th Division* and to drive rapidly north into the Cagayan Valley. Sixth Army and I Corps

had already laid plans for such an attack. For the Japanese, the final collapse of the last defenses at Balete Pass, Imugan, and Santa Fe was perhaps not of as great immediate significance as was the seizure of those places to Sixth Army, for the *14th Area Army*, on or about 24 May, had already directed the remnants of its two divisions to withdraw to Bambang. But that's another story—and one that in no way detracts from the success the 25th and 32d Divisions had achieved in driving the Japanese out of their defenses on the approaches to the Bambang anchor of Yamashita's defensive triangle.

There can be no doubt that the 25th Division, as events turned out, had played the decisive role in the converging drive to Santa Fe, but it must also be made clear that the 32d Division, pinning the *2d Tank Division* to the defense of the Villa Verde Trail, had in large measure made the 25th Division's success possible. The Japanese had, indeed, been forced to send fresh troops to Salacsac Pass No. 1 to hold back the 32d Division even as troops of the 25th Division were climbing the last slope to Balete Pass.

For the cost to the infantry forces engaged in the converging attack toward Santa Fe from 21 February through 31 May, see Table 8. The *2d Tank Division* and the *10th Division* (including attachments) lost at least 13,500 men killed, of whom the 32d Division dispatched about 5,750 in the Villa Verde Trail sector and the 25th Division 7,750 in the Route 5 zone.[45] The Japanese losses in killed alone amounted to nearly two-thirds of the 20,750 or more troops the *Bambang Branch, 14th Area Army*, had committed to the Route 5 and Villa Verde Trail battles.

In assessing the conduct of the drive toward Santa Fe, one could question whether operations might have turned out better if, from the initiation of the offensive on 21 February, either the 25th or 32d Divisions had been committed on the Old Spanish Trail and the other division concentrated along Route 5. Much of the terrain along the Old Spanish Trail north from Carranglan is less formidable than that in the Villa Verde Trail sector — I Corps might have achieved decisive results on the Old Spanish Trail more quickly and at less cost against a Japanese force equal in strength to that defending the Villa Verde Trail.

However, when the offensive began in late February, both Sixth Army and I Corps had believed it necessary to maintain a continuous line across the corps front from the west coast of Luzon east at least as far as San Jose. Moreover, plans had then called for the 32d Division to devote part of its energies to an attack toward Baguio up the river valleys between the Villa Verde Trail and Route 11. To have redeployed the 32d Division eastward would have left a huge gap in the I Corps center, a gap inviting Japanese counteraction. Then, when the 33d Division spread eastward in early April to take over the river valleys on the 32d Division's left, it would have been uneconomical to have redeployed the 32d Division. In any case, had the 32d moved over to the Old Spanish Trail in April, it would

[45] The figures for Japanese killed are based upon a study of all relevant Japanese and U.S. Army sources. The 32d Division claimed it killed 7,675 Japanese and the 25th Division claimed approximately 9,150, a total of 16,825.

TABLE 8—U.S. INFANTRY CASUALTIES IN ATTACK TOWARD SANTA FE
21 FEBRUARY–31 MAY 1945

Regiment	Killed	Wounded	Total
32d Division			
126th	195	460	655
127th	350	750	1,100
128th	280	950	1,230
Subtotal	825	2,160	2,985
25th Division			
27th	275	685	960
35th	175	605	780
161st	200	630	830
148th	25	140	165
126th	10	30	40
Subtotal	685	2,090	2,775
Grand total	1,510	4,250	5,760

Source: Derived from sources cited previously in this chapter and in Chapter XXVI. Broken down another way, the figures show that infantry units of the 32d Division lost a total of 3,025 men—835 killed and 2,190 wounded; the 25th Division, proper, had a total of 2,570 casualties—650 killed and 1,920 wounded.

have had to leave at least a regiment behind to block the Villa Verde Trail and contain the Japanese there. In that event, the division might not have had sufficient strength to achieve decisive results on the Old Spanish Trail. Finally, the maps available to Sixth Army and I Corps in late February were so inadequate and inaccurate that planners at the two headquarters could not have found any advantage for the Old Spanish Trail over the Villa Verde Trail.

In the end, as in the beginning, the only real solution to the problem facing I Corps would have been at least one more infantry division. As a result of General MacArthur's directives of early February, Sixth Army could make no more strength available to I Corps. To army and corps, therefore, the plans under which the campaign was conducted seemed those best calculated to assure safety against Japanese counterattack while at the same time giving promise of steady progress toward Santa Fe.

There are also a few obvious comments that can be made about the Japanese conduct of the defense. The *10th Division*, for instance, apparently did an inordinately poor job of reconnaissance, as is exemplified by the fact that it left strong forces along the Old Spanish Trail for nearly a month after the threat there had passed, a month during which the need for additional strength was acute along Route 5. Furthermore, the division seems to have been preoccupied with its defenses on the east side of Route 5, and long had insufficient strength west of the highway. The division was also so concerned with the defense of the obvious approaches to Balete

Ridge that it failed to make adequate provision for the defense of the ridge proper. Finally, the *10th Division* made no real effort to seize clear opportunities for counterattack. It could have employed the forces immobilized along the Old Spanish Trail to strike either through the Putlan Valley or against the flank of 25th Division units at Mt. Myoko.[46] One can also question whether the Japanese made the most effective use of their opportunities for concentration and economy of force. They answered I Corps' two-division drive by dividing and spreading their forces fairly thin at the crucial time and over the critical terrain. The outcome might have been delayed had the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions* concentrated along a shorter, tighter line.

[46] In SWPA Historical Series, II, 480, and in Tsuchiya Statement, in Statements, IV, 402–05, there are indications that the *10th Division* did make some effort to mount a counterattack in mid-April. The 25th Division, during this period, remarked only increased Japanese patrolling activity along the Putlan River valley.

The field of military operations is—either fortunately or unfortunately—full of possibilities for such interesting speculations, but if one thing is certain it is that at the end of May neither General Krueger nor General Yamashita were indulging in thoughts of what might have been. On the one hand the Sixth Army commander was busy preparing to exploit the breakthrough at Balete Pass. On the other, the *14th Area Army* commander was frantically trying to ready new defenses in front of Bambang. Yamashita viewed with dismay the fact that the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions* had collapsed, leaving open the road to the Bambang anchor of his defensive triangle. A month earlier the Baguio apex of the triangle had fallen, and now the only force still holding at one of the three original apexes was the *19th Division* in the Bontoc region. Colonel Volckmann's USAFIP(NL) had been attacking toward this area since March, and at the end of May the USAFIP(NL) was poised for a breakthrough.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Action at the Northern Apex

Northwestern Luzon

The motives that prompted General Krueger to direct USAFIP (NL) to attack inland from Luzon's west coast toward Bontoc were similar to those that had led to I Corps' drives toward Baguio and Bambang, for Bontoc was equally important in the Japanese scheme of defense in northern Luzon.[1] The principal road junctions of northwestern Luzon—that portion of the island lying north of San Fernando, La Union, and west of the Cagayan Valley—lie within relatively easy distance of Bontoc. Krueger knew that if Volckmann's USAFIP (NL) could seize and hold these road junctions, simultaneously securing control of Route 4 inland from Libtong (on the coast) to Bontoc, the guerrilla division would effectively isolate Japanese forces in northwestern Luzon. The USAFIP (NL) would also be able to block Japanese secondary routes of access from the Cagayan Valley to Yamashita's defensive triangle, making it nearly impossible for the *Shobu Group* to move troops and supplies from the central and northern sections of the valley into the redoubt. The success of USAFIP (NL) 's impending attack, together with the success of I Corps operations at Baguio and Balete Pass, would seriously curtail the *Shobu Group*'s freedom of maneuver around the periphery of the defensive triangle —and only the peripheral roads could bear military traffic. Finally, if it succeeded in opening Route 4 inland from Libtong, the USAFIP (NL) would provide Sixth Army with a back door entrance to Yamashita's triangular redoubt. (*See Map 19.*)

[1] Additional background material on the decision to send the USAFIP (NL) toward Bontoc is to be found in Chapter XXIV, above.

The Roads and the Terrain

Bontoc, capital of Mountain Province, lies in the valley of the Caycayan River about 2,750 feet up in the Cordillera Central, the backbone range of northwestern Luzon. The town is the site of one of two junctions of Routes 4 and 11. Coming northeast from Baguio, Route 11 travels more or less along the top of the Cordillera Central and, reaching spots over 8,500 feet above sea level, alternately traverses grassy slopes and forested ridges. Along its ninety miles of road distance to Bontoc, the highway provides some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.

Unpaved in 1945 between Baguio and Bontoc, Route 11 was scarcely two lanes wide along most of its length. The road, only one narrow lane wide and poorly surfaced, continues northeast from Bontoc along the canyon of the Chico River,

emerging into the central portion of the Cagayan Valley nearly 35 miles—in a straight line—beyond Bontoc. At Sabangan, 16 miles southwest of Bontoc, Route 11 makes its first junction with Route 4, the two traveling together to Bontoc. Route 4, a narrow, unpaved road, strikes southeast from Bontoc and after traversing high, very rough country, joins Route 5 at Bagabag, about twenty-five miles north of Bambang. Over one-lane Route 4, the distance between Bontoc and Bagabag is approximately seventy miles.

The junction barrio of Sabangan, 3,500 feet above sea level, is 60 miles inland from Libtong via Route 4—as opposed to 32 miles straight-line distance. About 24 road miles west of Sabangan is the town of Cervantes, lying 1,000 feet above sea level in the valley of the Abra River. Going west from Cervantes Route 4 traverses first a mile or so of open, rice-paddy country, but then starts abruptly up the grassy eastern slopes of the Ilocos, or Malaya, Range. In the next two miles of straight distance westward, the one-lane unpaved road climbs to 4,600 feet at Bessang Pass,[2] where it goes through a cut in a sheer rock ridge nose. In another straight-line distance of some five miles, the road twists violently down the western slopes of the Ilocos Range to a 500-foot elevation in the Amburayan River valley.

Like Sabangan, Cervantes is an important road junction town. South from Cervantes Route 393, a one-lane, dirt road, ascends a spur of the Cordillera Central, rising from less than 1,000 feet at Cervantes to about 5,800 feet at its junction with Route 11, fourteen miles in a straight line southeast of Cervantes.[3] Passing the Lepanto Copper Mine and through the municipality of Mankayan, Route 393 joins Route 11 at KP 90, fifty-six miles northeast of Baguio and twenty miles southwest of Sabangan. Route 393 descends the east side of the ridge along which Route 11 runs at KP 90, dropping into the tiny but beautiful Loo Valley. Situated about 5,100 feet above sea level, the Loo Valley is on the upper reaches of the Agno River, the headwaters of which rise on the east side of Route 11 less than four miles northeast of KP 90.

Mankayan was of great importance to the Japanese who, in referring to the northern apex of their defensive triangle, spoke of Mankayan and Bontoc in the same breath. One reason, of course, was that Mankayan provided the *Shobu Group* with an ideal assembly area whence troops could move rapidly either to Route 11 or to Route 4. Of more importance was the nearby Lepanto Copper Mine, six twisting miles northwest along Route 393 from KP 90. The Japanese had spent an extraordinary amount of effort developing this mine—coming close to ruining it in the process—and had trucked the rich ore northwest along Route 393 to Cervantes and thence west along Route 4, over Bessang Pass, to the coast for shipment to Japan.[4]

[2] Bessang Pass is actually a redundancy, since in the local Filipino dialect a "bessang" is itself a cut or pass.

[3] Route 393 is a wartime designation, and the road has no official numerical designation in the Philippine highway system.

[4] The mine, of extreme antiquity, was worked long before the Spanish came to the Philippines. In April 1957, when the author was at the mine, trucks no longer used Route 393 to Route 4, but instead took Route 393 to KP 90, followed Route 11 to Baguio, and then Routes 9 and 3 to San Fernando, La Union.

Just as the headwaters of the Agno rise on the east side of Route 11 near KP 90, so the headwaters of the Abra River rise on the west side of the highway about a mile and a half south of KP 90. The Abra system is rivaled in size on Luzon only by the Agno and Pampanga, draining through the Central Plains, and the Cagayan-Magat complex of the Cagayan Valley. From its headwaters the Abra, passing by Cervantes, flows almost due north for seventy miles. Then, gathering to itself an increasingly large number of tributaries, the river turns westward for some sixteen miles and empties into the South China Sea near Vigan, on Route 3 about forty miles up Luzon's west coast from Libtong. Route 3, the coastal highway, continues north from Vigan some fifty miles to the large town of Laoag, and then stretches on northward to round Luzon's northwestern tip and continue east along the north coast to Aparri, at the mouth of the Cagayan Valley.

From Laoag, Route 2 extends inland about fifteen miles along various river valleys. The route then degenerates into a foot trail that crosses the Cordillera Central, swings southeast, and emerges as a narrow road running eastward through the north-central part of the Cagayan Valley to the Cagayan River. Originating at Sulvec, ten miles south of Vigan, is Route 6, which runs inland along the valleys of the Abra and other rivers for about thirty miles. The road then turns into an exhausting foot trail that crosses the Cordillera Central and joins Route 11 about twenty-five miles northeast of Bontoc. Neither Route 2 nor Route 6 through the Cordillera Central is a road over which significant military operations can be conducted; Route 11 from Bontoc to the Cagayan Valley fits into the same category.

Except along the coastal river valleys, there is scant population in the vast mountainous area of northwestern Luzon, which extends over 70 miles from the west coast to the Cagayan Valley and 140 miles north from San Fernando, La Union, to Cape Bojeador at Luzon's northwestern tip. Barren is the word to best describe much of the country. Imposing in their grandeur, most of the steep-sided mountains are grassy sloped. Thick forest is the exception in this region, and in clear weather it is easy to pinpoint movements of men and vehicles at unbelievable distances. Some ravines among the mountains have fairly thick woods and dense undergrowth, but lush tropical growth is not to be encountered except along the coast. Along Route 4 inland from Libtong, for example, there is rather scrubby jungle growth up to a height of 3,000 feet above sea level along the western slopes of the Ilocos Range. From this point to Bessang Pass scattered pines, patches of which are interspersed with open grassland, account for most of the vegetation. The east side of the Ilocos Range, where Route 4 descends to Cervantes, is completely open and grassy.

The jumbled, rough, and steep mountainous terrain of northwestern Luzon makes a major military effort a problem even in dry weather. Route 4, the USAFIP (NL)'s axis of approach toward Bontoc, traverses much rougher terrain than Route 5 between San Jose and Santa Fe, and I Corps observers declared during the war that the terrain along Route 4 was more difficult than that the Villa Verde Trail crosses. The foot trail portions of Routes 2 and 6

make the Villa Verde Trail look like a superhighway, while Route 11 between Bontoc and the Cagayan Valley is one of the roughest thoroughfares on Luzon to be dignified by the name road.

The roads of northwestern Luzon are bad enough in dry weather. In wet weather, even in peacetime, the task of road maintenance is herculean. Summer rainfalls of over ten inches a day are not uncommon in the mountains. For Route 4 from Libtong to Bontoc—and for other roads as well—such rains mean landslides and washouts, coupled with flash floods that tear out bridges and render sections of the road impassable quagmires. The USAFIP (NL) would have to strive to secure Route 4 from Libtong to Bontoc before the heavy rains began toward the end of May, or it might be unable to accomplish its mission.

The Protagonists

While it was not until late March that General Krueger directed the USAFIP (NL) to open a third front in northern Luzon with a concerted offensive toward Bontoc, strong elements of Colonel Volckmann's guerrilla force had been in action throughout northwestern Luzon ever since the Sixth Army had come ashore at Lingayen Gulf.[5] The region north of an east-west line through Vigan was the responsibility of the USAFIP (NL)'s 15th Infantry, Lt. Col. Robert H. Arnold commanding.[6] With an ostensible muster of about 2,900 officers and men, the 15th Infantry was understrength, ill trained, and poorly equipped. In early January the regiment's three battalions were scattered along the western slopes of the Ilocos Mountains from Vigan to a hideout northeast of Laoag. The country south of the line through Vigan was the responsibility of the 121st Infantry, under Col. George M. Barnett.[7] Most of the 121st was operating in the vicinity of San Fernando, but the 3d Battalion was in the hills near Route 3 from Libtong north toward Vigan. The 3d Battalion, 66th Infantry, was harassing Japanese convoys along Route 11 from Baguio to KP 90; troops of the 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry, were manning ambushes in the Sabangan-Bontoc area and along Route 11 between Bontoc and the Cagayan Valley. The bulk of the 66th Infantry later moved south to support the 43d and 33d Divisions on the Baguio front; the rest of the 11th Infantry operated in the Cagayan Valley. The Cagayan Valley and its surrounding hills were also "home" for USAFIP (NL)'s 14th Infantry, which does not figure in the story in northwestern Luzon.

In early January the principal mission of USAFIP (NL) units in northwestern Luzon was to gather intelligence and institute a program of sabotage and demolitions designed to cut Japanese lines of communication throughout the region. But as was the case everywhere under Volckmann's sphere of influence, Sixth Army's landing precipitated more direct action among the guerrilla units in northwestern Luzon, leading ultimately to such operations as the 121st Infantry's investiture of San Fernando.[8] Thus, while most of the 121st Infantry

[5] Information on the USAFIP (NL) in this subsection is based mainly on: USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 2, 12, 30–31, 38, 41–45, 62–65.

[6] A Signal Corps officer who, stationed in northern Luzon at the outbreak of war, "failed" to surrender.

[7] Another unsurrendered officer.

[8] See above, ch. XXV.

concentrated in the San Fernando area, the regiment's 3d Battalion moved to clear Route 3 from Libtong north to Vigan. Meanwhile, the 15th Infantry started operations to drive the Japanese from the rest of northwestern Luzon.

The Japanese against whom the USAFIP (NL) 's units began moving in early January were little better prepared than the USAFIP (NL) to conduct major engagements. In the early weeks of the Luzon Campaign (before the *19th Division* started north from Baguio), there were some 8,000 Japanese in northwestern Luzon, most of them near Vigan and Laoag.[9] The two towns had been of considerable importance to the enemy ever since the opening days of the Pacific war, the Japanese having seized Vigan on 10 December 1941 and Laoag the next day.[10] Throughout the war the Japanese had maintained an airfield at Gabu, near Laoag, and another near Vigan. Both towns were secondary base areas, although most shipping that put into Luzon north of San Fernando used Salomague Harbor, fifteen miles north of Vigan. The last Japanese convoy to reach Luzon arrived in the Vigan area on or about 30 December 1944, where it suffered heavily at the hands of Fifth Air Force planes.[11]

In early January the major Japanese combat unit in northwestern Luzon was the RCT-sized *Araki Force,* which was built around two independent infantry battalions of the *79th Infantry Brigade, 103d Division.*[12] Maj Gen. Shoji Araki, the force commander, stationed about 2,500 of his 3,000 men along Route 6 from Sulvec northeast fifteen miles to Bangued. His other 500 troops he scattered in small detachments along the coast from Vigan north. Araki had no control over the 500-man *357th Independent Infantry Battalion, 103d Division,* which held Route 4. The *357th* operated under the direct control of *Shobu Group* headquarters in Baguio, while General Araki reported to *103d Division* headquarters, near Aparri.

The remaining 4,500 Japanese in northwestern Luzon included a few antiaircraft units, Japanese Army Air Force ground organizations, and some Army port and service troops. Of this group about 2,000 were stationed in the Laoag area, 2,000 more at or near Salomague Harbor, and 500 at Vigan, where the *Araki Force* had 250 men. There were minor garrisons, varying from 20 to 100 men in strength, at a number of coastal barrios and inland at such points as Cervantes, Mankayan, Sabangan, and Bontoc.

Most of General Araki's men were garrison troops rendered soft and inefficient by long service on occupation duties. The service units contained a large percentage of Formosans and

[9] Japanese information in this chapter is based on: *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 89–94, 99–108, 114–17, 128; *14th Area Army* Opns Orders Nos. A–487 and A–517, 3 and 13 Feb 45, Trans, III, item 3; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List; Interrog of Col Setomu Terau (CofS *19th Div*), USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 148–50; USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 19–21, 40–41, 61 ff.; Sixth Army G–2 Wkly Rpt 86, 2 May 45; SWPA Hist Series, II, 421, 470–71, 489; *ibid.*, II, Maps following pp. 419, 468, and 485.

[10] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines,* pp. 106–08.

[11] See above, ch. III.

[12] As originally constituted, *Araki Force* was composed of the *176th IIB,* the *178th IIB* less two infantry companies and a machine gun company, the *26th Machine Gun Battalion* less one company, *79th Brigade* headquarters, and brigade service troops. Later, organizing various service troops and antiaircraft units in northwestern Luzon, *Araki Force* added two provisional infantry battalions and two machine cannon (20-mm. or 40-mm.) companies.

Koreans who were ill armed, poorly trained, and easily disaffected. For artillery, *Araki Force* had only a few 70-mm. battalion guns; it lacked ammunition of all types except for small arms. The force did not have enough weapons to arm all the service units that were passing to General Araki's control; medical supplies were short from the start; food would be at a premium within a month or two after 9 January.

Laoag, Vigan, and the Araki Force

Only a few days after the Sixth Army landed on Luzon the *Araki Force* began having serious clashes with the 15th Infantry, USAFIP(NL).[13] The 15th's initial efforts centered on a campaign of raids and skirmishes designed to clear Route 3 north of Vigan, force minor Japanese garrisons out of the regimental sector, and capture Japanese supplies and equipment for use in later operations. By mid-February the regiment had secured most of Route 3 north of a point twenty-five miles north of Vigan, and on the 15th the 1st Battalion entered Laoag. The Japanese who had been holding at Laoag retreated to the Salomague Harbor area, but under pressure from the USAFIP (NL) withdrew on south to Vigan during the first week of April. Almost immediately the *Araki Force* began a general retreat from Vigan, and by mid-April nearly all the Japanese originally stationed at or north of Vigan had withdrawn south and inland to join the main body of the *Araki Force*, now deployed along Route 6 about midway between Sulvec and Bangued. The 121st Infantry, USAFIP (NL), had meanwhile cleared Route 3 south of Vigan, thus opening the highway all the way up the west coast from Lingayen Gulf.

Assembling along Route 6, the *Araki Force* hoped to deny the USAFIP (NL) access to the northern reaches of the Abra River valley, a rich farming area centering about twenty miles inland from Vigan. Araki's men were in poor condition to accomplish this mission. Almost all supplies except small arms ammunition had long since vanished, and the ill-equipped service troops withdrawing from the coastal barrios quickly consumed the few supplies left at mid-April. Communications equipment was nonexistent, and General Araki had lost contact with *103d Division* headquarters. In mid-March Yamashita had transferred the *Araki Force* to *Shobu Group* control, which did not help. Indeed, it appears that General Araki was completely out of touch with any higher headquarters from late March until mid-May.

The 15th Infantry planned to strike northeast astride Route 6 from Sulvec with two battalions while another battalion, employing back country roads and trails to get into position, would drive toward Bangued from the east, taking the *Araki Force* in the rear. Volckmann reinforced the 15th Infantry for this attack with two companies from other USAFIP (NL) regiments. Fifth Air Force planes from Lingayen area fields provided limited support, and the 15th Infantry operated the few Japanese artillery weapons it had captured.

The 15th Infantry began its attack on 10 April and it took only five days to convince Araki that he might as well

[13] This section is based mainly on the USAFIP (NL) Report, pages 40–57.

retreat again. A general Japanese withdrawal started on the 15th of April, and by the 25th the bulk of the *Araki Force* had departed southward for the Abra River valley. Pursued by the 15th Infantry, the *Araki Force* headed for Gayaman, twenty-five miles upstream (south) from Bangued. The 15th Infantry also sent a small enveloping force inland from Route 3 to Angaki, on the Abra about twelve miles north of Cervantes. Elements of the 121st Infantry, USAFIP (NL), were already blocking the Abra Valley at Angaki in order to prevent the *Araki Force* from moving on south to reinforce Japanese units on Route 4 west of Cervantes.

Finding his way south closed, General Araki struck east and southeast from Gayaman over trackless, virtually unexplored sections of the Cordillera Central, passing through virgin pine forests and over uncharted streams and ridges. Losing far more troops from starvation and disease than in combat, and becoming increasingly more disorganized, the *Araki Force* in mid-May began straggling into Besao, a mountain barrio at the end of a third-class road seven miles west of Bontoc. Few more than 1,500 men of the *Araki Force* had survived the coastal skirmishes, the battles in the Bangued region, and the tortuous overland trek to Besao, to reassemble late in May at Bontoc. Of the nearly 8,000 Japanese stationed in northwestern Luzon at the beginning of the year some 4,000 had been killed or had died of starvation and disease by the end of May. Another 1,500 had escaped to Bontoc, and the remaining 2,500 had scattered into the mountains in small groups that Filipino guerrillas ultimately hunted down or that also died of malnutrition and sicknesses. The losses of the 15th Infantry, USAFIP (NL), in northwestern Luzon were approximately 125 men killed and 335 wounded.[14]

Relatively unimportant in the larger picture of the whole Luzon Campaign, the 15th Infantry's operations against the *Araki Force* were to stand the regiment in good stead. At the end of May the regiment was in far better shape than it had been on 9 January; it was up to strength; it had seized arms and supplies from the Japanese; it had received much equipment from the Sixth Army. The four months' fight against the *Araki Force*, however minor in nature much of the fighting had been, had given all components of the 15th Infantry the experience, training, and confidence that only combat can provide. Now the 15th Infantry was to move to Route 4, where it was urgently needed to reinforce the 121st Infantry.

The Fight for Bessang Pass

Early Operations Along Route 4

When in early January the 15th Infantry, USAFIP (NL), had started to clear Route 3 from Vigan north, the 3d Battalion of the 121st Infantry began to secure the highway from Vigan south to Libtong, the junction of Routes 3 and

[14] USAFIP (NL) G–3 Opns Rpts 21 and 22. The 15th Infantry claimed killing about 4,300 Japanese, while the USAFIP (NL) Report, page 56, provides a figure of 6,406 Japanese killed in northwestern Luzon to the end of the first week of June. Both guerrilla figures are undoubtedly exaggerated, but it seems logical to assume that certainly no more than 2,000 Japanese, including Araki's group of 1,500 that went to Bontoc, actually made their way from northwestern Luzon to rejoin other Japanese forces.

4.[15] Before the end of January the battalion had substantially completed this task. Colonel Volckmann was not, however, satisfied. He decided that the continued security of Route 3 demanded that his troops clear Route 4 inland from Libtong to Cervantes so that the *357th IIB*, known to be holding the road, could mount no raids and counterattacks toward the coast. He accordingly directed the 121st Infantry to strike inland for Cervantes and establish roadblocks in the Cervantes area along Route 393, to the south, and Route 4, to the east. The only force that could be assigned to this rather substantial mission was the 3d Battalion, 121st Infantry.

While the main body of the battalion was assembling for the drive toward Cervantes, Company L destroyed a small Japanese garrison at barrio Bitalag, a mile and half inland from Libtong. On 2 February the entire battalion moved east out of Bitalag and four days later was at the municipality of Suyo, three miles farther inland. Volckmann there called a halt. For the time being San Fernando was a more important objective than Cervantes, and he needed all the troops he could get for the attack on that port city. Accordingly, on 6 February the bulk of the 3d Battalion, 121st Infantry, departed, leaving only Company L at Suyo.

By this time outpost troops of the *357th IIB*, along with a few stragglers from coastal garrisons, had withdrawn to Bessang Pass, where the Japanese battalion had started digging in. Bypassing the pass via back-country trails, Company L, 121st Infantry, entered Cervantes on 24 February after a brisk fight with a small Japanese garrison. But at this juncture elements of the *19th Division* began pulling into the Cervantes area from Baguio and early in March drove the guerrilla company out of town. Company L recaptured Cervantes on 13 March, but soon found itself under the sights of Japanese artillery emplaced on rising ground to the south.

Volckmann saw that Company L could not hold for long by itself and reinforced the troops at Cervantes as best he could, forming a provisional battalion under Capt. Serafin V. Elizondo of the 11th Infantry. The components were Company A of the 11th Infantry, which had previously operated in the vicinity of Sabangan; Company L of the 121st Infantry; an 81-mm. mortar section from the 121st Infantry; Company D of the 66th Infantry, which came up from the Baguio area; and two platoons from the Replacement and Casualty Battalion, USAFIP(NL). The Provisional Battalion held out at Cervantes until 3 April, on which date Japanese pressure from the east and south forced the unit into hills northwest of the town.

On 23 March, about a week after the Provisional Battalion was organized and on the same day that USAFIP(NL) cleared the last Japanese from the San

[15] The remainder of this chapter is based largely upon two MSS prepared by Maj. Billy C. Mossman, AUS, at OCMH during the summer of 1954: Volckmann's Guerrillas (20 pp.), and Volckmann's Provisional Battalion (5 pp.), both in OCMH files. The sources used by Major Mossman include: USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 29–31, 58–82; USAFIP (NL) G–3 Opns Rpts, 6 Jan–15 Jun 45; USAFIP (NL) FO's 1–29, dated between 4 Jan and 14 Jun 45; USAFIP (NL) G–2 Per Rpts, 24 Apr–16 Jun 45; Terau Interrog, USAFIP (NL) Rpt, pp. 146–50. Additional sources from the Japanese side employed by the present author have been cited previously. Also checked was Col. Russell W. Volckmann, *We Remained: Three Years Behind the Enemy Lines in the Philippines* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1954), pp. 208–12.

Fernando area, General Krueger directed Volckmann to open the third front in northern Luzon with a drive inland along Route 4 to Bontoc. Krueger set Cervantes as USAFIP(NL)'s intermediate objective.[16] These orders were to project USAFIP(NL) into a fight of three months' duration.

The First Month

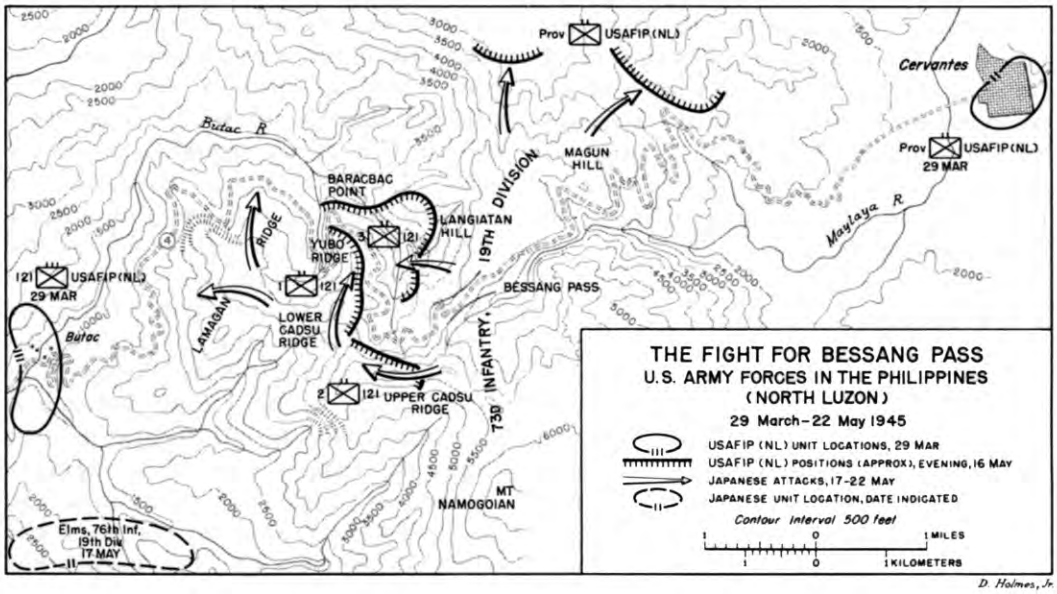
The only units that Volckmann could muster for the attack toward Cervantes were the Provisional Battalion, already on the ground, and the 121st Infantry, which had just finished the reduction of San Fernando. The 11th and 14th Infantry Regiments were scattered through the Cagayan Valley and could not be brought out; the 66th Infantry was attached to the U.S. 33d Division on the Baguio front; and the 15th Infantry was thoroughly engaged against the *Araki Force*.

The 121st Infantry, with a strength of less than 3,000 troops, was the best equipped, best trained, and most experienced regiment of the USAFIP(NL). Its supporting artillery initially included only captured Japanese weapons—two 70-mm. infantry guns and two 47-mm. antitank weapons. The two larger weapons lacked fire control equipment, and ammunition was short for both types. Lingayen-based planes of the Fifth Air Force would provide air support insofar as weather and other commitments permitted. The 121st had two ill-equipped engineer companies attached to it; its transportation consisted of seventeen captured Japanese trucks. The regiment had enough food and possessed plenty of ammunition for small arms and machine guns. Medical support was adequate, although hardly up to the standard a regular U.S. Army regiment would expect. The Provisional Battalion was attached to the 121st Infantry on 3 April, and the regiment brought north with it from San Fernando one company of USAFIP(NL)'s Military Police Battalion.

On 29 March the 121st Infantry assembled at barrio Butac, seven miles inland along Route 4 from Libtong at the point where the road begins its steep ascent to Bessang Pass. The regiment planned to push two battalions east astride Route 4, holding the third battalion in reserve. The Provisional Battalion was to hold Cervantes, block the movement of Japanese reinforcements to Bessang Pass, and revert to a reserve role when the 121st Infantry reached Cervantes. (*Map 23*)

About 2,000 yards east of Butac Route 4 swings northward, uphill, in the beginning of an irregularly shaped horseshoe bend, open on the south. The distance across the open end of this horseshoe is approximately two miles. Dominating the center of the horseshoe is Lamagan Ridge, rising from a height of about 1,000 feet at the southwestern corner of the horseshoe to more than 5,000 feet at the center—a rise of almost 4,500 feet in less than one mile. Along the west side of Route 4 at the eastern arm of the horseshoe is Yubo Ridge, the northern nose of which, crossed by Route 4, was known to the USAFIP(NL) as Baracbac Point. Ascending southward, Yubo Ridge gives way to Lower Cadsu Ridge, which in turn leads to an east-west ridge line, rising to over 6,000 feet, known as Upper Cadsu Ridge.

[16] Sixth Army FO 58, 23 Mar 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 162.



MAP 23

East across Route 4 from Yubo and Lower Cadsu Ridges is Langiatan Hill, an extremely steep-sided terrain feature that reaches a height of over 4,000 feet. Langiatan Hill gives way on the east to Magun Hill, some 4,500 feet high. Bessang Pass, proper, the rock cut, lies at a southeastern nose of Langiatan Hill. South of the pass the terrain rises within two miles to a peak of 6,830 feet known as Mt. Namogoian.

In a week of seesaw battling after 29 March the 121st Infantry gained footholds along the northern sections of Lamagan and Yubo Ridges. Meanwhile the Provisional Battalion, now reinforced by Company G of the 121st, attempted with little success to strike from the northeast against the rear of Japanese positions at Bessang Pass. Unable to hold Cervantes or Route 4 west of the town, the Provisional Battalion failed to prevent Japanese reinforcements from reaching the pass. By the end of the first week in April, the Provisional Battalion had taken up new positions northeast of Magun Hill and temporarily was out of the fighting.

The 121st Infantry, on the west side of Bessang Pass, continued to make slow and painful progress and by mid-April controlled Route 4 almost to the southeastern corner of the horseshoe. The regiment had cleared Yubo and Lower Cadsu Ridges and had gained footholds on the western slopes of Upper Cadsu and the southern portion of Langiatan Hill. The Japanese (the *73d Infantry, 19th Division,* and remnants of the *357th IIB*) still held some of Lamagan Ridge, in the center of the horseshoe, as well as most of Upper Cadsu Ridge and Langiatan Hill. On 21 April the 121st Infantry overran the last Japanese positions on Lamagan Ridge and about a week later completed the occupation of Lower Cadsu.



UPPER AND LOWER CADSU RIDGES

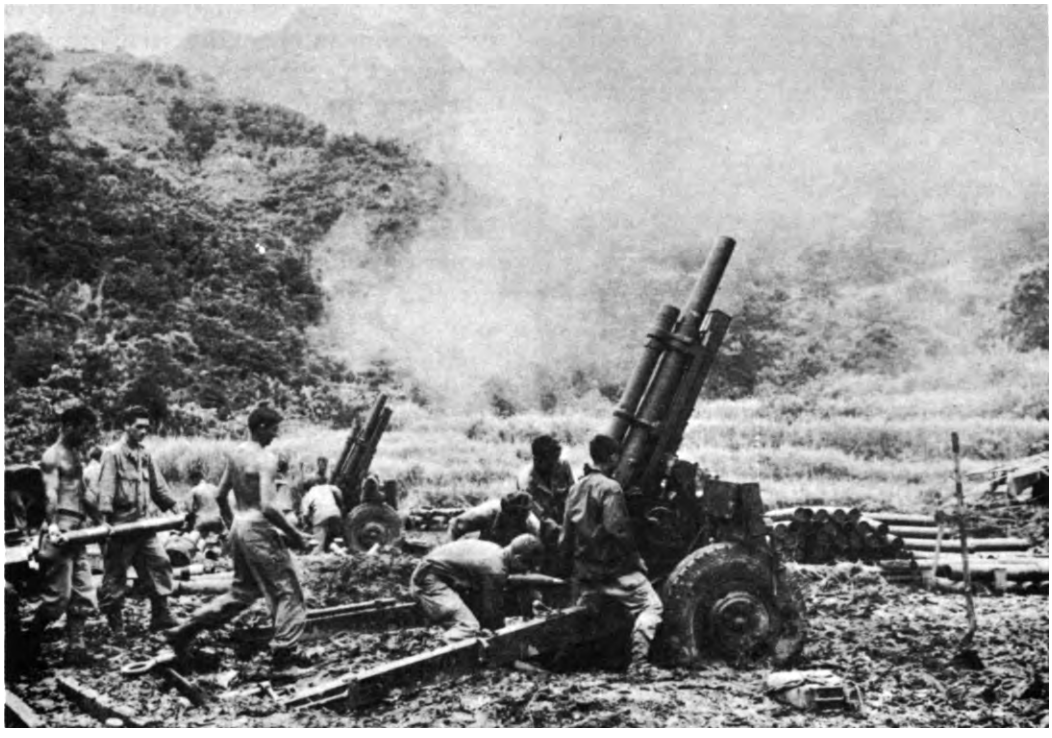
At the end of April the newly formed 1st Field Artillery Battalion, USAFIP-(NL), arrived along Route 4 to reinforce the 121st Infantry, bringing up 2 Japanese 105-mm. howitzers, 2 Japanese 75-mm. guns, and 4 American 75-mm. pack howitzers. The new support was doubly welcome. The 2 Japanese 70-mm. guns the 121st Infantry had started out with had been lost during a Japanese counterattack, and adverse weather conditions were beginning to curtail air support operations drastically. With the new artillery support, the 121st Infantry anticipated more rapid progress.

The 19th Division Counterattacks

Contrary to expectations, during the first part of May the 121st Infantry literally inched forward over precipitous terrain against Japanese defenses that daily became stronger as the *19th Division* brought more reinforcements forward, expending lives to gain time. By mid-May the lines of the 3d Battalion, 121st Infantry, facing north and northeast, extended from Route 4 at Yubo Ridge east and southeast across much of Langiatan Hill. The 2d Battalion, reduced to two companies by the attachment of Company F to the Provisional Battalion, held along Route 4 from Baracbac Point on Yubo Ridge southeast almost a mile and a quarter to the southeastern corner of the horseshoe. The 1st Battalion held a line stretching southeast from this corner of the horseshoe for three-quarters of a mile, ending along the eastern section of Upper Cadsu Ridge. Considering their limited fire power and strength, all three battalions were badly overextended. The Provisional Battalion, out of contact with the 121st Infantry, still occupied positions north of Route 4 and Magun Hill.

At this juncture the USAFIP(NL) lost almost every significant piece of ground it had secured since 29 March. On 17 May the *73d Infantry, 19th Division,* behind new artillery support, instituted a series of strong counterattacks all across the Bessang Pass front, the main weight of the effort hitting the 1st and 2d Battalions, 121st Infantry. The *73d* pushed both battalions back across Lamagan Ridge and completely dispersed the 1st Battalion, which, for a few days at least, just disappeared. Some troops of the 3d Battalion also retreated from Langiatan Hill, but elements of that unit, cut off, succeeded in holding on to rough terrain along the eastern slopes. The Japanese also struck the Provisional Battalion, forcing it farther north.

Meanwhile, a 600-man battalion of the *76th Infantry, 19th Division,* bypassing Bessang Pass far to the south, had begun moving toward Route 4 at barrio Butac, almost two miles behind the 121st Infantry's front. When the *76th Infantry* battalion neared its objective, just before the *73d* began its counterattack



105-MM. HOWITZER FIRING AT EXTREME ELEVATION *in Bessang Pass area.*

at Bessang Pass, there were few troops of the USAFIP(NL) at Butac,[17] but for reasons unknown the Japanese battalion milled around in the rough terrain south of Butac for two or three days before attempting to mount an attack on the barrio. By that time the USAFIP(NL) had a strong garrison at Butac, Volckmann having brought the 2d Battalion of the 15th Infantry south to Route 4. This USAFIP(NL) battalion immediately moved against the Japanese unit, which thereupon withdrew, having accomplished nothing.

Volckmann now sent the entire 15th Infantry into a new offensive eastward, the 121st Infantry reverting to a reserve role and reorganizing. By the end of May the 15th Infantry had resecured the south flank from Butac to Lamagan Ridge. Bypassing pockets of Japanese on Lamagan Ridge, the regiment next started a drive against Japanese forces holding Upper and Lower Cadsu Ridges. Before the month ended the 1st and 2d Battalions, 121st Infantry, had also reentered the fight and had begun to clean off Lamagan Ridge. The 3d Battalion, meanwhile, had regained some of the positions it had lost on Langiatan Hill and, this time attacking from the east, had retaken a foothold on Yubo Ridge.

[17] As far as can be ascertained from available records, a Military Police company and a few Quartermaster troops comprised the USAFIP(NL) garrison at Butac on 17 May.

Order had begun to emerge out of near chaos, and Colonel Volckmann had begun planning for a new, stronger attack against *19th Division* forces at Bessang Pass.

Preparations for a New Attack

On 1 June, with operations on the Bambang and Baguio fronts entering the pursuit stage, General Krueger turned operational control of the USAFIP(NL) over to I Corps so that General Swift could more effectively co-ordinate the efforts of all forces in northern Luzon. Simultaneously, Krueger directed Swift to provide USAFIP(NL) with the assistance necessary to assure the early capture of Cervantes, and ordered Swift to return the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), to Volckmann's control from attachment to the 33d Division. I Corps, in turn, directed the 33d Division to send north to Route 4 and Bessang Pass the 122d Field Artillery Battalion (105-mm. howitzers) and the 1st Battalion, 123d Infantry. Swift then instructed Volckmann to mount an immediate all-out offensive toward Cervantes.[18]

Volckmann set up an attack with three regiments abreast. The 121st Infantry would clear Route 4 around the horseshoe and secure the northern half of Lamagan Ridge. The 15th Infantry, striking east over the southern half of Lamagan Ridge, would drive on to seize Upper Cadsu Ridge and then advance generally northeast along the south side of Route 4. The 66th Infantry would first deal with the remnants of the *76th Infantry*'s battalion south and southeast of Butac and then swing eastward on the 15th Infantry's right. The Provisional Battalion — now commanded by Capt. Herbert Swick[19] and consisting of three companies of the 11th Infantry as well as one each from the 66th and 121st Regiments — was to clear Magun Hill and adjacent dominating terrain. The 1st Battalion, 123d Infantry, would remain at Butac as USAFIP(NL) reserve, would protect the 122d Field Artillery, and would furnish an 81-mm. mortar platoon to support the guerrilla attack. The 122d Field Artillery, with the 1st Field Artillery, USAFIP(NL), attached, would provide direct and general support.[20]

As of 1 June the 121st Infantry, USAFIP(NL), was still not in good shape. Since 15 May the regiment had lost about 150 men killed and 315 wounded, losses quite harrowing to a guerrilla unit. It had not yet completed its reorganization after the Japanese counterattack; part of its 3d Battalion was still out of contact between Langiatan and Magun Hills; one of its rifle companies was attached to the Provisional Battalion. To bring the regiment up to strength, Volckmann attached to it two companies from the 14th Infantry and three from the Military Police Battalion, USAFIP(NL). The 15th and

[18] Sixth Army FO's 62 and 63, 24 and 28 May 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 164–65; I Corps FO 18, 29 May 45. The portions of these orders relevant to the USAFIP(NL) became effective on 1 June.

[19] At the outbreak of war Swick was a civilian gold mining engineer in northern Luzon. Rather than be interned by the Japanese he had hidden out in the mountains and had joined the guerrillas in October 1942. Captured and interned as a civilian early in 1943, Swick had broken out of camp with USAFIP(NL) help in April 1943. Volckmann, *We Remained*, pp. 79, 112, 148.

[20] USAFIP (NL) FO 27, 30 May 45; 122d FA Bn Rpt Luzon, p.9.



BESSANG PASS. LANGIATAN HILL IS AT LEFT.

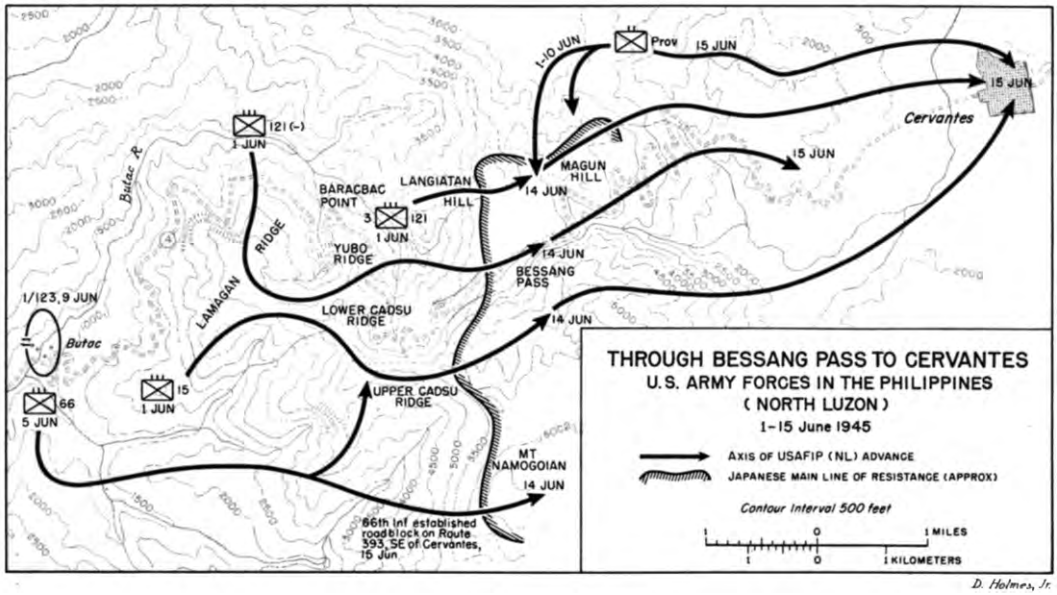
66th Regiments, although both suffered from the "disease" of attachments and detachments, were about up to strength. The 1st Field Artillery had lost the two Japanese 105-mm. howitzers and the two 75-mm. guns during the Japanese counterattack, but had saved the four American 75-mm. pack howitzers. Since the USAFIP(NL) lacked the heavy weapons organic to American units, it sorely needed the artillery and mortar support the 33d Division provided.

The Japanese at Bessang Pass on 1 June were in worse shape than the USAFIP(NL).[21] By that date only 2,250 Japanese were left in the region—1,100 of the *73d Infantry*, 450 of the *76th Infantry*, and the rest artillery and service troops. Japanese supplies were virtually exhausted and troops were rapidly dying from malaria, beriberi, and other diseases. Small arms ammunition was almost gone, and the artillery, although still possessing numerous weapons, was reduced to firing a few rounds each evening. The counterattack that had begun on 17 May had represented the last major effort—either defensive or offensive—of which the Japanese at Bessang Pass were capable. No reinforcements were available, for the rest of the *19th Division* had orders to hold Mankayan, the Lepanto Mine, and the road junctions at KP 90, Sabangan, and Bontoc.

Breakthrough to Cervantes

During the period 1–5 June the 15th and 121st Infantry Regiments had little

[21] Additional information on the Japanese is from: An. 1, Intel, to USAFIP(NL) FO 27; 122d FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–12.



MAP 24

trouble clearing all Lamagan Ridge and Lower Cadsu Ridge.[22] The 15th then turned against Upper Cadsu while the 121st struck directly toward Bessang Pass. On 12 June, after a week of bitter fighting, the 15th Infantry overran the last organized resistance on Upper Cadsu Ridge. Meanwhile, the 66th Infantry, coming in over trackless terrain south of Route 4 and chasing Japanese remnants before it, had reached the southwestern corner of Upper Cadsu. The Provisional Battalion, after a series of minor setbacks, succeeded in clearing much of Magun Hill by 10 June. (*Map 24*)

On the 10th the 121st Infantry launched a final attack toward Bessang Pass, striking from the west and southwest, and the next day the Provisional Battalion began driving in from the north and northeast. Behind exceptionally close artillery support — the 122d Field Artillery placed concentrations as close as fifty yards in front of the guerrillas—the 121st Infantry overran the last organized defenses at Bessang Pass on 14 June and made contact east of the pass with the Provisional Battalion. On the same day the last opposition melted away before the 15th and 66th Regiments, south of the pass.

Japanese remnants fled east along Route 4 toward Cervantes, pursued by elements of the 15th and 121st Infantry Regiments. Before dark on 15 June the 15th Infantry had secured the town, and on the next day the 66th Infantry put the finishing touches on the battle by setting up a roadblock across Route 393 about two and a half miles south of Cervantes.

The last phase of the drive through Bessang Pass to Cervantes, covering 1–15

[22] Additional information for this subsection comes from 122d FA Bn Rpt Luzon, pp. 12–16.

June, had cost the USAFIP(NL) approximately 120 men killed and 220 wounded, divided as follows:

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
121st Infantry	73	139	212
15th Infantry	28	71	99
66th Infantry	3	2	5
Provisional Battalion	4	1	5
1st Battalion, 123d Infantry	1	1	2
1st Field Artillery Battalion	9	4	13
122d Field Artillery Battalion	1	2	3
Total	119	220	339

The USAFIP(NL) estimated that it killed some 2,600 Japanese in the same period. This figure, however, seems exaggerated in light of the fact that the Japanese had no more than 2,250 men in the Bessang Pass–Cervantes area as of 1 June and that some of these, according to the USAFIP(NL)'s own report, escaped toward Mankayan and Bontoc.

Results of USAFIP(NL) Operations

Though by 15 June the USAFIP(NL) had not reached Bontoc—the objective Krueger had assigned it on 23 March—the "division" had accomplished the mission I Corps had given it on 1 June. The success of the final attack can be attributed almost entirely to the great strength Volckmann was at last able to bring to bear. From late March until 1 June a boy—the 121st Infantry—had been trying to do a man's job. Only that regiment's spirit and the inability of the Japanese to follow up an advantage had saved the 121st Infantry from far greater disaster than the retreat that began on 17 May.

The USAFIP(NL) had, indeed, made a substantial contribution toward the Sixth Army's campaign in northern Luzon. Even before the Sixth Army's offensives on the Baguio and Bambang fronts had begun late in February, the activities of the USAFIP(NL) had helped prompt General Yamashita to redeploy the *19th Division* deep into northern Luzon. After the 121st Infantry had begun its attack toward Cervantes late in March, the USAFIP(NL) had kept the *19th Division* pinned to the triangle formed by Bontoc, KP 90, and Bessang Pass. There can be no question that Yamashita could have employed the *19th Division* to better profit elsewhere, and there can be no doubt that he would have done so had not Volckmann's forces been operating in northern Luzon.

But the story of the USAFIP(NL)'s contributions does not end here. Taking upon itself the task of seizing San Fernando and clearing Route 3 up the west coast, the USAFIP(NL) had permitted the Sixth Army to forget about plans to use a "regular" division along that coast, thereby allowing Krueger to assign a division to more decisive operations elsewhere. Finally, the USAFIP(NL) had been directly or indirectly responsible for the death of nearly 10,000 Japanese in northwestern Luzon between 9 January and 15 June.[23] The USAFIP(NL)'s accomplishments had cost the guerrilla unit roughly 3,375 casualties: over 900 men killed, 2,360 wounded, and 110 missing.[24]

In the end, as in the beginning, it must be noted that the USAFIP(NL) ac-

[23] This figure is based upon a study of all relevant Japanese, U.S. Army, and USAFIP(NL) sources available. The USAFIP(NL) claimed 19,700 Japanese killed, including those killed by units operating under 43d and 33d Division control on the Baguio front.

[24] These figures include losses of 66th and 121st Infantry units operating under 43d and 33d Division control on the Baguio front.

complished far more than GHQ SWPA, Sixth Army, or I Corps had apparently expected or hoped. The USAFIP(NL)'s battles were not over. The "division" was next to drive south and east from Cervantes, joining the rest of I Corps in pursuit of *Shobu Group* forces that were retreating ever farther into the mountain fastnesses of northern Luzon. USAFIP(NL) and I Corps were laying plans for further advances even as the 15th Infantry moved into Cervantes. Indeed, the bulk of I Corps had already become involved in pursuit operations.

CHAPTER XXIX

Pursuit in Northern Luzon

The Shobu Group Withdrawal Plans

Long before the USAFIP(NL) had captured Cervantes and long before the 25th Infantry Division had broken through at Balete Pass, General Yamashita, influenced by the collapse of the Baguio anchor of the *Shobu Group*'s original defensive triangle, had begun laying careful plans for the group's ultimate withdrawal deep into the Cordillera Central.[1] On 5 May, less than two weeks after the fall of Baguio, Yamashita distributed to major components of the *Shobu Group* an outline plan for future operations throughout northern Luzon.

Yamashita constructed his plan on three basic premises. First, he estimated that the Sixth Army would continue to make its main effort a drive north along Route 5 and that Krueger would mount only secondary attacks toward Bontoc along Routes 4 and 11. Second, he calculated that as of 5 May the *Shobu Group* would have about three months during which it could strip the Cagayan and Magat Valleys of food and military supplies requisite to a protracted stand in the mountains, three months during which the group would move this matériel into the Cordillera Central through the junction of Routes 4 and 5 near Bagabag, twenty-five miles north on Route 5 from Bambang. Third, he knew that the success of his withdrawal and of his future delaying actions demanded that the *Shobu Group* maintain control over the Routes 4–5 junction as long as humanly possible. In this connection, Yamashita estimated that his defenses south of Santa Fe would hold until mid-June; that he could construct new defenses across Route 5 between Santa Fe and Bambang in order to hold I Corps south of Bambang until the end of June; and that he would not have to give up the junction of Routes 4 and 5 until the end of July.

Yamashita's 5 May plan required the establishment of three new defensive phase lines or perimeters in northern

[1] This section is based mainly on two slightly different translations of: *Shobu Group,* Outline of Future Opnl Policy for Northern Luzon, 5 May 45, one translation in Trans, III, Item 3; the other in *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 135–50. Also consulted were: *14th Area Army* Opns Orders Nos. A–487, 3 Feb, A–517, 13 Feb, A–690, 27 Apr, and A–719, 8 May 45, all in Trans, III, Item 3; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 157–67; SWPA Hist Series, II, 486–88; Statement of Maj Misusuke Tanaka (Staff *14th Area Army*), States, IV, 193–94; Muto Memoirs, Trans, I, 47–48; Takatsu Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 171–73; Nishiyama Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 165–66; Terau Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 150–54; Kawai Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, pt. IV.

Luzon. The first perimeter's southwestern anchor lay eight miles northeast of Baguio at KP 21, the Route 11 terminus of the *Shobu Group*'s Baguio-Aritao supply road. Thence the line stretched north through KP 90, Mankayan, the Lepanto Mine, Bessang Pass, and back northeast to Bontoc. From Bontoc the line slanted southeast to Banaue, on Route 4 some twenty-five miles northwest of Bagabag, and from Banaue continued southeast to Oriung Pass, located on Route 5 about seven miles east of Bagabag in hilly country that separated the upper reaches of the Magat and Cagayan Rivers. From Oriung Pass the perimeter went southwest along Route 5 to Balete Pass and then swung back northwest through Salacsac Pass on the Villa Verde Trail to KP 21 on Route 11.

Yamashita expected to start redeploying his forces from the first to the second phase line sometime after mid-June. Then, the southwestern anchor would pull north up Route 11 from KP 21 about six miles. The second perimeter would continue north to Mankayan and thence northeast to the Sabangan junction of Routes 11 and 4—the Japanese would abandon Route 4 west of Sabangan. Bontoc remained as the northern apex on this second perimeter, but Yamashita was prepared to withdraw on the east from Oriung Pass back to Bagabag. The southeastern anchor of the second perimeter was to be Bambang, whence the line stretched west across the mountains to the vicinity of Ambuclao, in the Agno River valley about five miles east along the Baguio-Aritao supply road from KP 21.

The third perimeter would enclose Yamashita's last-stand positions, at which he expected the *Shobu Group* to fight until annihilated. The southwestern anchor of the third line was to be located at Bokod, about five miles east of Ambuclao. The line would continue up the Agno Valley to KP 90 and would again include Mankayan. Bontoc, however, would be left out of the third perimeter, and the line would extend from Mankayan east-northeast to Route 4 at Polis Pass, between Bontoc and Banaue. The line would continue southeast along Route 4 from Polis Pass to the Rayambugan Farm School, on Route 4 about ten miles northwest of Bagabag. Thence it would strike south-southwest across the eastern slopes of the Cordillera Central to a point in the mountains about five miles west of Bambang, whence it would swing back westward across the mountains to Bokod.

Other details of Yamashita's plan of 5 May made special provisions for holding the Routes 4–5 junction and the Magat Valley from Bambang to Bagabag. For example, Yamashita feared that the Sixth Army might attempt to seize the vital road junction by airborne assault. Therefore, he directed the *105th Division* to establish bases along the Magat Valley from which to launch counterattacks against airborne troops. He also ordered the *105th* to be prepared to hold Route 5 at Bato Bridge where, three miles north of Bambang, the highway crossed from the east to the west side of the Magat.

Yamashita's plans called for the virtual abandonment of the Cagayan Valley, leaving there for the time being only the *103d Division*, which had a strength equivalent to less than two American RCT's. The division's principal duty would be to remove from the valley all the rice and other food—including cara-

baos on the hoof—it could gather, dispatching these and other supplies into the Cordillera Central through Bagabag. Once this job was finished, the *103d* would also withdraw into the mountains.

Yamashita's decision to abandon the Cagayan Valley was logical. He realized that with the strength he still had available he could not hold the valley very long, and for a variety of reasons there seemed little necessity to maintain strong forces there much longer. So far, he had kept units in the valley to raise and gather food; to deny the Allied Air Forces, SWPA, the use of airfields there as bases from which to strike Formosa and Okinawa; and to hold Aparri in the hope that supplies and reinforcements might yet reach Luzon. But by early May Yamashita had concluded that the issue at Okinawa was already decided and that there was, accordingly, no strategic purpose to be served by holding the valley airfields. Hope for reinforcements, he knew, had long since vanished. Finally, his troops had gathered the early rice harvest in the valley. A new crop would not start coming in until late September, and Yamashita knew he would never harvest that one.

I Corps' breakthrough to Santa Fe, coming at least two weeks before Yamashita expected, forced the *Shobu Group* commander to make many changes in his 5 May plan. First was his 24 May order to the *2d Tank Division* to withdraw from the Villa Verde Trail.[2] Since the 25th Division already threatened the route through Santa Fe, Yamashita directed the *2d Tank Division* to retreat up the Imugan River to Pingkian on the Baguio-Aritao supply road. Here, about six miles west of Aritao, the supply road joined another road running northeast to Bambang. Yamashita still expected the *10th Division* to withdraw in good shape via Route 5 and the Old Spanish Trail.

By 31 May what Yamashita had intended as an orderly withdrawal through successive delaying positions was, on the part of the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions*, turning into a rout. Yamashita suddenly saw that I Corps would reach Bambang before he could ready any strong delaying positions south of that town, and he accordingly directed the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions* to assemble for a defensive stand across Route 5 at Bato Bridge. He also directed the *103d Division*—less an understrength RCT in the northern Cagayan Valley and the *Araki Force*—to move into defenses along the Magat Valley between Bambang and Bagabag. He ordered the *105th Division*, which had a total strength of about 6,000 troops, to abandon the defenses it had been readying at Oriung Pass and fall back to third-line positions up Route 4 at the Rayambugan Farm School.

Only a day or two later, Yamashita learned that the *103d Division* could not reach Bagabag before I Corps. Therefore, he instructed the division to move into the *105th*'s abandoned positions at Oriung Pass. As opposed to the *105th Division*'s earlier deployment, the *103d* was to orient its Oriung Pass defenses against attack from the south. Yamashita now intended to keep I Corps out of the Cagayan Valley long enough for the bulk of the troops still there—elements of the *103d Division* and the *4th Air Division* — to withdraw westward

[2] See above, ch. XXVI.

into the Cordillera Central over back roads.

With the *105th Division* moving to the Rayambugan Farm School and the *103d Division* digging in at Oriung Pass, the defense of the Magat Valley to the junction of Routes 4 and 5 depended almost entirely upon a fast, successful withdrawal by the organized remnants of the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions*. The only other combat force Yamashita had available to defend the valley was a hurriedly organized antitank unit. Combining about ten light tanks with a like number of 47-mm. and 75-mm. guns, the unit, some 250 men strong, was deployed on 1 June along Route 5 just south of Aritao.

Sixth Army–I Corps Pursuit Plans

Preparing for pursuit operations in northern Luzon, Sixth Army estimated that since the *Shobu Group* had probably employed the bulk of its strength as well as its best troops in the defense of Baguio, the Villa Verde Trail, and Route 5 to Santa Fe, prompt exploitation of the breakthrough to Santa Fe would lead to the quick and complete collapse of organized Japanese resistance throughout northern Luzon.[3] Therefore, just as Yamashita had estimated, Krueger planned to make his main pursuit effort a drive up Route 5 into the Cagayan Valley. For this purpose Krueger intended to employ the relatively fresh 37th Division, including the 145th RCT, which was to come north after a brief rest following its operations against the *Shimbu Group*. The plans for pursuit required other redeployments, for Krueger intended to use the 25th and 33d Divisions in the initial assault against the Japanese home islands. The 32d Division would move off the Villa Verde Trail beginning on 1 June and, after a short rest, would relieve the 33d Division at Baguio. The 37th Division would pass through the 25th Division along Route 5 and by 15 June would be followed by the 6th Division, which, moving up from southern Luzon, would complete the relief of the 25th Division.

Although planning to make the main effort a drive up Route 5, Krueger also wanted to maintain pressure against the *Shobu Group* throughout northern Luzon. The 33d Division, and later the 32d Division, would mount limited attacks up Route 11 from Baguio. The USAFIP(NL), while continuing its drive to secure Cervantes and Bontoc, would simultaneously intensify guerrilla operations up and down the Cagayan Valley and assist I Corps in denying the use of Aparri to the Japanese. For the latter purpose, I Corps organized a special combat group known as the Connolly Task Force. Commanded by Maj. Robert V. Connolly of the 123d Infantry, 33d Division, this 800-man task force included a reinforced rifle company of the 127th Infantry, 32d Division, one company of the 6th Ranger Infantry Battalion, a battery of 105-mm. howitzers, and engineer, medical, and port detachments. Assembling near Vigan, Connolly Task Force would follow Route 3 around the northwest tip of Luzon to the vicinity of Aparri, where a battalion of the 11th

[3] This section is based on: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 89–91; Sixth Army FO's, 62 and 63, 24 and 28 May 45, in *ibid.*, I, 164–65; I Corps FO's 18 and 19, 29 and 31 May 45; I Corps Rpt Luzon, pp. 92–98; USAFIP-(NL) FO's 27 and 28, 30 May and 3 Jun 45, and Amendments dated 3 and 7 Jun 45 to FO 28.

Infantry, USAFIP(NL), would join.[4] Ordered to occupy the Aparri region, the task force was also to prepare minor port facilities and a liaison plane airstrip along the coast west of Aparri.

The 37th Division would first drive straight up Route 5 from Santa Fe to Bagabag and then swing east through Oriung Pass into the Cagayan Valley, continuing north up Route 5 to Aparri. After the 37th Division had passed through Bagabag, the 6th Division would strike northwest up Route 4 into the deep Cordillera Central. The 6th Division was also to strike southwest from Bambang along the road leading to Pingkian on the Baguio-Aritao supply road. The 25th Division, with the 126th RCT of the 32d Division still attached, would for the time being continue to secure Route 5 and mop up behind the 6th and 37th Divisions.[5]

[4] Detailed composition of Connolly Task Force:

Co G, 127th Inf, 32d Div
Co B, 6th Ranger Inf Bn
81-mm. Mortar Plt, Co H, 127th Inf
Battery C, 694th FA Bn
Co C (—), 339th Engr Cons Bn
Det, 543d EB&SR, 3d ESB
Det, 510th Engr Light Ponton Co
Det, 276th Port Co (TC)
Det, 6015t QM Graves Registration Co
Det, 58th Signal Bn
24th Port Surg Hosp
2d Plt, 637th Med Clearing Co

To be added at Aparri:

2d Bn, 11th Inf, USAFIP(NL)
Two Plts, Co D, Engr Bn, USAFIP (NL)

Note: This was the second of two task forces of the same name, Major Connolly having had another, separate command at Dingalan Bay during May. See below, footnote 5.

[5] The 25th Division also relieved elements of the 136th Infantry, 33d Division, at Dingalan and Baler Bays on Luzon's east coast. For over a month various elements of the 33d Division had been protecting I Corps saw mills at and near Dingalan Bay and had been intercepting Japanese trying to make their way north along the coast from the *Shimbu Group*'s area to join the *Shobu Group*. On 12 April the protective forces were organized into the Connolly Task Force under Major Connolly of the 123d Infantry. This groupment consisted of Company A and elements of Company D, 123d Infantry; Company D, 6th Ranger Battalion; a reinforced company of the Anderson Battalion of guerrillas (see above, Ch. XXII); a battalion of the 2d Provisional Regiment, East Central Luzon Guerrilla Area (see above, Ch. XXII); and, beginning on 10 May, Company D, 136th Infantry. On 11 May Pfc. John R. McKinney of Company A, 123d Infantry, despite a bloody head wound from a Japanese saber, played such a heroic and major part in turning back a Japanese attack that he was awarded the Medal of Honor and won promotion to sergeant. On 17 May Connolly Task Force was replaced by Ehrlich Task Force, under Lt. Col. Milton Ehrlich of the 1st Battalion, 136th Infantry, 33d Division. Ehrlich Task Force consisted of the 1st Battalion and the guerrilla units already mentioned. On 30 May the 2d Battalion of the 161st Infantry, 25th Division, took over and remained on the east coast until the end of June.

Compressing the Shobu Group

Santa Fe to the Cagayan Valley

With the 129th RCT leading, the 37th Division struck north from Santa Fe on 31 May.[6] In a running fight during the period 1–4 June, the Japanese antitank unit south of Aritao, now reinforced by a few pieces of artillery from the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions* as well as some rear area service troops, destroyed two tanks and damaged another of the 775th Tank Battalion, a company of which reinforced the 129th Infantry. The fight scarcely slowed the 129th In-

[6] This subsection is based on: 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 119–50; 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 11–13; 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, pp. 79–81; 145th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 62–69; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pt. II, Northern Luzon, pp. 4–5; Kawai Statement, States, II, 148–49; SWPA Hist Series, II, 487–88; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 160–67; Interrog of Lt Gen Yutaka Muraoka (CG *103d Div*), USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 176–80.

fantry, which entered Aritao on 5 June. Bambang fell bloodlessly the next day, and the 129th encountered only token resistance at Bato Bridge. Speeding north, the regiment reached Bayombong, eight miles beyond Bambang, on 7 June.

The 145th RCT took over the lead on 8 June and by dark that day had advanced another ten miles to seize, without even a skirmish, the junction of Routes 4 and 5 near Bagabag. The next day the 145th Infantry secured Bagabag and started crossing back to the east side of the Magat River. The 148th Infantry now came up to take over responsibility for Bagabag and the important junction.

The only strength left between the 145th Infantry and the Cagayan Valley was the reinforced *179th IIB, 103d Division,* the sole unit the *103d* had been able to move southward to Oriung Pass. Engaging the 145th Infantry on 10 June, the *179th IIB* did a magnificent job of delaying, but, outgunned and outnumbered, never had a chance to stop the American advance. The 145th RCT bulled its way through the pass along Route 5, depending upon the shock effect of its artillery, tanks, and tank destroyers for breakthrough, which came late on 12 June. The three-day battle cost the 145th RCT about 10 men killed and 55 wounded; the *179th IIB* lost over 300 killed.

By evening on 13 June the 145th RCT was at Santiago, twenty-two miles northeast of Bagabag. Here the advance halted because bypassed elements of the *179th IIB* were threatening to cut the line of communications not only of the 145th RCT but also of the 148th RCT, which had followed the 145th through Oriung Pass, the 129th RCT having taken over in the Bagabag area on 12 June.

The 148th had passed through Oriung Pass by dusk on the 13th. Following close behind were Battery C, 136th Field Artillery; part of Company B, 775th Tank Battalion; and a battalion of guerrillas from the Buena Vista Regiment, which had previously fought with the 32d Division on the Villa Verde Trail. About 1730 on the 13th nearly 200 men of the *179th IIB* jumped the Fil-American column. Before the melee ended, the Japanese had destroyed a tank and an ammunition truck, damaged another tank and 17 more trucks, and killed 5 men and wounded 35 others, including 10 guerrillas. By dawn most of the Japanese survivors of the action had withdrawn, and the 145th RCT, which had halted pending the outcome of the affray, resumed its advance.

The action at Oriung Pass during the night of 13–14 June was the last significant effort made by the main body of the *103d Division,* which melted westward across the Magat River in the area north of Oriung Pass after the *179th IIB* collapsed. By evening of 14 June advance elements of the 37th Division were at Echague, an airfield center eight miles east of Santiago. Two days later the 145th and 148th RCT's began moving into Cauayan, fifteen miles north along Route 5 from Echague. (*Map 25*)

The Shobu Group Plans Another Withdrawal

By 15 June the *Shobu Group*'s affairs had reached a crisis, a crisis demanding drastic revision of the careful plans Yamashita had formulated in early May. One of the principal events bringing on the situation had been the inability

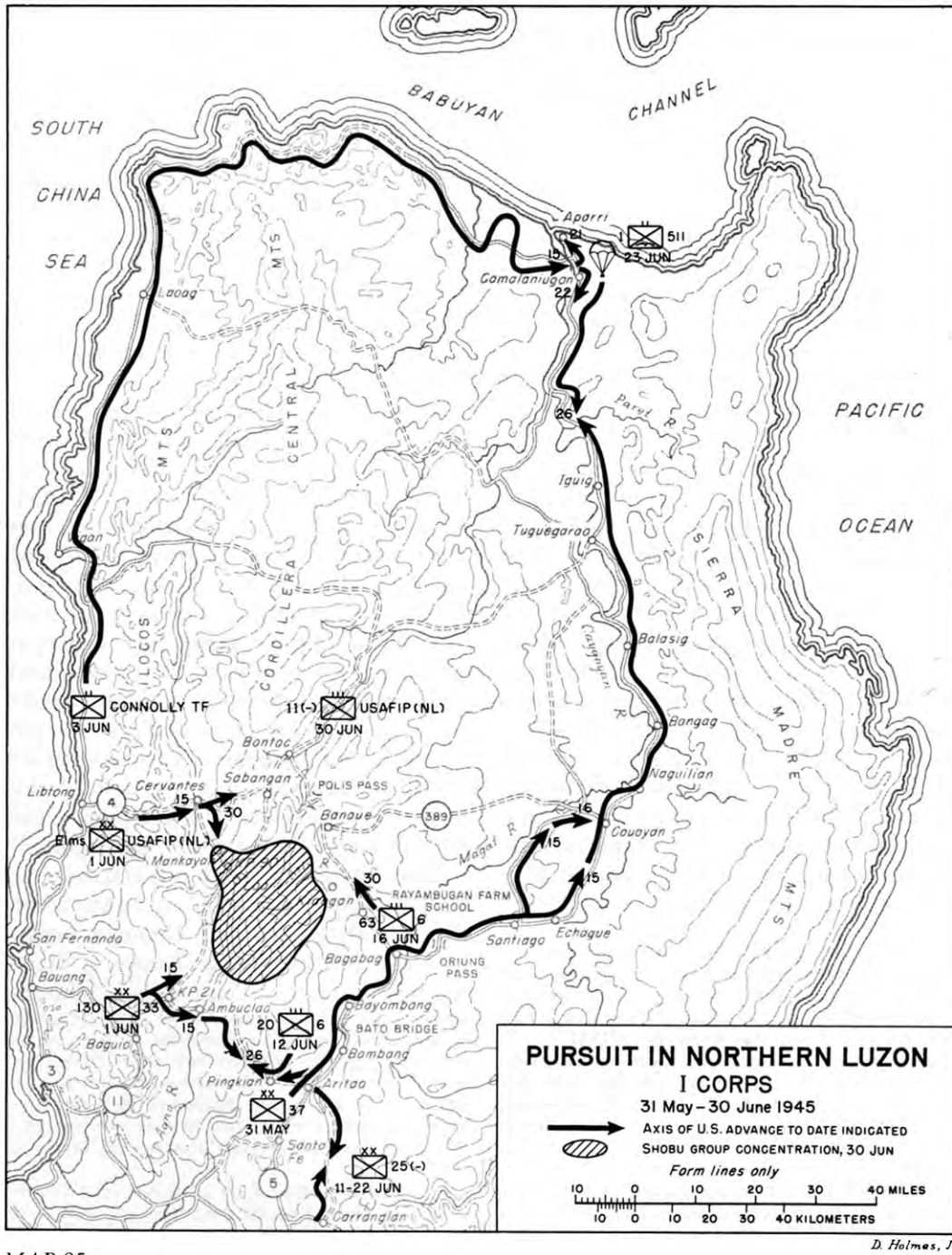


ATTACKING THROUGH ORIUNG PASS

of the *2d Tank* and *10th Divisions* to establish defenses across Route 5 south of Bagabag before the 37th Division had sped past the town. It was not, indeed, until 12 June that the *2d Tank Division* had reorganized and was ready to move toward Bambang. By that date the division had assembled around 4,750 troops —including 1,750 service personnel from the Bambang area—about halfway from Bambang along the Bambang-Pingkian road. But on the 12th the 6th Division's 20th Infantry initiated a drive southwest along the road from Bambang, and two days later part of the 32d Division's 126th Infantry began pushing west toward Pingkian from Aritao along the Baguio-Aritao supply road. The *2d Tank Division* suddenly found itself forced to the defensive, its last chance to reach Route 5 long since gone.[7]

The *10th Division*, out of contact with *Shobu Group* headquarters since 5 June, had meanwhile become hopelessly cut off east of Route 5. Ultimately, the division commander assembled about 2,500 survivors along the Old Spanish Trail south of Aritao, but on 11 June the 25th Division began a two-pronged attack against this group, sending one regiment south from Aritao and another north

[7] Kawai Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, pt. IV; Kawai Interrogs, Interrogs, I, 319; SWPA Hist Series, II, 488; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 167–79; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 51–53; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 25–26.


SOUTH CHINA SEA
BABUYAN CHANNEL
PACIFIC OCEAN
CENTRAL CORDILLERA MTS
ILOCOS MTS
SIERRA MADRE MTS
Aparri
Camalaniugan
Laoag
Paret R
Iguig
Tuguegarao
Balasig
Cagayan R
Bangag
Naguilian
Magat R
Cauayan
Echague
Santiago
Bantoc
Sabangan
POLIS PASS
Libtong
Cervantes
Banaue
Mankayan
RAYAMBUGAN FARM SCHOOL
ORIUNG PASS
Bagabag
San Fernando
Bauang
KP 21
Ambuclao
Bayombong
BATO BRIDGE
Bambang
Baguio
Pingkian
Aritao
Agno R
Santa Fe
Carranglan
CONNOLLY TF
3 JUN
11(-) USAFIP(NL)
30 JUN
Elms USAFIP(NL)
1 JUN
511
23 JUN
130 33
1 JUN
20 6
12 JUN
63 6
16 JUN
37
31 MAY
25(-)
11-22 JUN
PURSUIT IN NORTHERN LUZON
I CORPS
31 May – 30 June 1945
AXIS OF U.S. ADVANCE TO DATE INDICATED
SHOBU GROUP CONCENTRATION, 30 JUN
Form lines only
10 0 10 20 30 40 MILES
10 0 10 20 30 40 KILOMETERS
D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP 25

from Carranglan.[8] By 22 June the 25th Division had cleared the trail. Those left in the *10th Division*, which had lost about 750 men killed in the futile fight since the 11th, withdrew eastward deep into the Sierra Madre, no longer constituting a force with which I Corps had to reckon.[9]

Another event prompting Yamashita to review his May plans was the USAFIP(NL) breakthrough at Bessang Pass, which Yamashita knew could only presage subsequent drives toward Bontoc and Mankayan. Meanwhile, farther south, the 33d Division had breached the defenses north of Baguio much sooner than Yamashita had anticipated. The 130th Infantry, 33d Division, reached KP 21 on 4 June, finding the *58th IMB* capable only of weak resistance. Poor weather conditions halted the 33d Division's efforts until 12 June, but by the 15th, swinging east from KP 21 along the Baguio-Aritao supply road, elements of the division had reached Ambuclao on the Agno River, while other troops had pushed two miles up Route 11 from KP 21. The carefully planned defenses of the *58th IMB* and the *23d Division* at the southwestern anchor of the first two defense lines Yamashita had set up in May had collapsed like a house of cards.[10]

Events in the Cagayan Valley were also moving faster than Yamashita had expected. By 15 June the 11th and 14th Infantry Regiments, USAFIP(NL), had cleared almost all the valley west of the Cagayan River from Cauayan north to Aparri and had gained complete control over Route 11 from Bontoc to the valley. Meanwhile the Connolly Task Force, after an uneventful march, had neared Aparri and on 11 June, with the help of the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), had begun an attack to clear the last Japanese from the Aparri area.

Most of the Japanese combat troops left in the valley north of Cauayan were members of the *Yuguchi Force*, an understrength RCT of the *103d Division*. Upon the fall of the division's defenses at Oriung Pass, the *Yuguchi Force* had started south from the vicinity of Aparri, apparently intending to cross to the west side of the Cagayan River near Cauayan and make its way to Yamashita's last-stand area via Route 389 to Banaue, on Route 4. By 15 June the *Yuguchi Force*'s *177th IIB* was at Tuguegarao, forty-five miles north of Cauayan, and the rest of the unit was strung out along Route 5 for some twenty miles north of Tuguegarao.[11]

The last event forcing Yamashita to alter his plans came on 13 June, when the 6th Division's 63d Infantry began probing northwest up Route 4 from

[8] Terrain problems during this operation were formidable, but the regiments proved that troops could operate along the Old Spanish Trail. An attempt to do so during the 25th Division's drive to Balete Pass had been abandoned. See above, ch. XXVII.

[9] *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 167, 196–200; Tsuchiya Statement, States, IV, 405; 25th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 78–82; Capt. Robert F. Karolevitz, ed., *The 25th Division and World War 2* (Baton Rouge, La.: Army & Navy Publishing Co., 1945), pp. 145–48.

[10] 130th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 49–53; 136th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 63; Sato Statement, States, III, 258; Takatsu Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 172–73.

During the night of 6–7 June, S. Sgt. Howard E. Woodford of Company I, 130th Infantry, heroically steadied the guerrilla company of Capt. Domingo D. Quibuyen, 1st Tarlac Regiment, as it stood off a vicious Japanese counterattack near Tabio, just north of KP 21. For a combination of this action, in which he was killed, and demonstrating remarkable leadership under fire the previous afternoon, Sergeant Woodford was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

[11] I Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 4–16 Jun 45; USAFIP(NL) G–3 Opns Rpt 23, 8–15 Jun 45; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 200–201; USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 104–06.

Bagabag. The reconnaissance foreshadowed a push that Yamashita especially feared, since Route 4 provided direct access to the deep Cordillera Central. The *105th Division*, with defenses across Route 4 at the Rayambugan Farm School, did not have sufficient strength to hold the highway, Yamashita knew.

By 15 June, then, the *Shobu Group*'s phased withdrawal had progressed so poorly that nowhere in northern Luzon did Yamashita have the strength he had expected when he had formulated his plans in early May. He realized that he could not hope to hold along any of the three perimeters he had established in May, and he therefore issued new orders calling for ultimate withdrawal into a last-stand area that he would set up along the inhospitable valley of the Asin River, between Routes 4 and 11.[12]

The Asin River flows northwest to southeast across Route 4 at a point about six miles northwest of the Rayambugan Farm School. Changing its name to Ibulao River east of the highway, the stream joins the Magat about five miles north of Bagabag. About three miles west of the stream crossing on Route 4 lies the mountain town of Kiangan, in June 1945 the site of *14th Area Army–Shobu Group* headquarters. An abandoned road (once part of Route 4) connected Kiangan to Hucab, on Route 4 three miles south of the Asin crossing, and an unpaved, one-lane road led directly from Kiangan to the Asin crossing.

From Kiangan a poor road, originally constructed as a horse trail, runs northwest five miles to the Asin River at Kiangkiang. Here connection is made with Route 390, actually another horse trail that comes cross-country from Route 4 at Banaue, about ten miles north-northeast of Kiangkiang. The Asin Valley stretches south over five miles from Kiangkiang to barrio Calaban, whence it leads westward through the Cordillera Central to end near Toccucan, which lies about seven miles southeast of the KP 90 intersection on Route 11. Route 390 leaves the Asin Valley about midway between Calaban and Kiangkiang and, as a horse trail, runs west-southwest through extremely rugged, nearly vertical terrain to Toccucan. From Toccucan fairly good trails lead northwest to the Loo Valley near KP 90 and west approximately five miles to Buguias, on the Agno about seven miles south of the Loo Valley.

Two north-south trails attained considerable importance in the *Shobu Group*'s plans for its last-stand defense. From barrio Pacdan, two miles west of Kiangan on the road to Kiangkiang, one trail led south through Antipolo ten miles to Tubliao, about 1,500 feet up along the eastern slopes of the Cordillera Central at a point about twelve miles west-northwest of Bagabag. From Tubliao, river valley and mountain trails connected to the *2d Tank Division*'s concentration point on the Bambang-Pingkian road, twenty miles to the south. The other important trail led south fifteen miles along the Agno Valley from the vicinity of KP 90 to Adaoay. At Adaoay this trail forked, one branch leading south eight miles to *23d Division* front lines at Bokod, and the other branch swinging off south-southwest to the Baguio-Aritao supply road at Ambuclao, which the 33d Division had reached by 15 June.

[12] I Corps Rpt Luzon, p. 108; SWPA Hist Series, II, 488; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 167–69.

Yamashita's mid-June plans called for his units to start withdrawing slowly toward a new perimeter. The *105th Division* would retreat from Route 4 to a line stretching south five miles from Pacdan to Antipolo;[13] the *2d Tank Division* would come north to hold the line Tubliao-Antipolo. *Araki Force* remnants, which had already moved from Bontoc southeast to Banaue, were to defend Route 390 at Hapao, five miles north of Kiangkiang. Leaving some of its strength at the Lepanto Copper Mine and KP 90, the *19th Division* would pull the bulk of its troops into the Agno Valley to defend the river line from the Loo Valley south to Buguias, thus blocking the western approaches to the Asin River valley. The *58th IMB* would hold the Agno Valley from Buguias south to Adaoay, while the *23d Division* would defend along the line Adaoay-Bokod. When this last-stand perimeter collapsed, Yamashita planned, all remaining forces would hole up in the barren Asin Valley between Toccucan and Kiangkiang, there to fight to the death.[14]

The area behind Yamashita's new last-stand perimeter boasted excellent defensive terrain, and Yamashita estimated that most of his units had sufficient ammunition for machine guns, mortars, and small arms to hold the region for a long time. But the situation in regard to other supplies his supply officers termed "distressing." When I Corps had started up Route 5 at the end of May, *Shobu Group* had just begun to move food and other military supplies up Route 4 from the Cagayan Valley and Route 5. The group had virtually no medical supplies left; it had no stocks of clothing; its food would be completely exhausted by mid-September.[15] The *Shobu Group* could look forward only to slow death by starvation and disease if it were not first annihilated by the force of Fil-American arms.

New Sixth Army–I Corps Plans

Mid-June found Sixth Army and I Corps, like the *Shobu Group*, making significant changes in plans.[16] Apparently still believing that the *Shobu Group* would make its last stand in the Cagayan Valley, Krueger estimated that if the 37th Division could continue its fast drive toward Aparri, the division might be able to end the Luzon Campaign with one stroke. The main risk would be the safety of the division's lengthening supply line, but Krueger thought that if the division could advance fast enough, providing its own protection to its line of communications, Japanese resistance would become so disorganized that they would be unable to threaten the supply line.[17]

[13] Not to be confused with the town of Antipolo east of Manila.

[14] *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 167–72; SWPA Hist Series, II, 488; Takasu Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 172–73; Kawai Statement, States, II, 149; Terau Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, p. 151.

[15] Aoshima Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, pt. I; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 170–72.

[16] This subsection is based mainly on: Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 93–94; Sixth Army FO 69, 15 Jun 45, in *ibid.*, I, 168–69; I Corps FO 25, 16 Jun 45.

[17] General Beightler, the 37th Division's commander, agreed enthusiastically with Krueger's estimate, although it appears that Swift, the I Corps commander, was a bit more cautious. In Beightler Comments, 18 March 1957, General Beightler wrote: "During the entire campaign . . . the corps commander was apprehensive of our flank protection [and] urged us to stop on numerous occasions [to] consolidate our positions, without actually ordering us to do so."

While intending to make the 37th Division's drive the main effort, Krueger, having learned that elements of the *Shobu Group* were withdrawing into the Cordillera Central between Routes 4 and 11, directed I Corps to maintain strong pressure against the mountainous area from the north, south, and west. General Swift accordingly directed the 6th, 25th, and 33d Divisions to employ sufficient strength to clear the Baguio-Aritao supply road, thereby sealing off Yamashita's last-stand area on the south. The USAFIP(NL), which passed to Swift's control on 15 June, would strike east from Cervantes to seize the junction of Routes 4 and 11 at Sabangan. The 6th Division's 63d Infantry would strike up Route 4 from the southeast —objective, Kiangan.

Securing the Cagayan Valley

The 37th Division resumed its advance up Route 5 on 17 June and by 1600 the 148th Infantry was on the east bank of the Cagayan River at Naguilian, ten miles north of Cauayan. Two days later advance elements were twelve miles beyond Naguilian at Bangag. Here opposition increased, because the 37th Division was banging headlong into elements of the *Yuguchi Force* that were still trying to move south along Route 5. In a running fight from 19 through 23 June the 37th Division killed over 600 Japanese and captured almost 285 more in the fifteen miles between Bangag and Balasig. In the same general area the division destroyed or captured large amounts of Japanese equipment and supplies, including fifteen or sixteen light tanks. By the end of the period the remnants of the *Yuguchi Force* were in full flight eastward into the untracked wilderness of the Sierra Madre, separating the Cagayan Valley from Luzon's east coast.

On 23 June the 129th RCT took over the lead, striking for Tuguegarao, twenty-five miles north of Balasig. Tuguegarao, already under attack by a battalion of the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), fell to the 129th Infantry on 25 June. Before dark forward elements of the 129th were ten miles beyond Tuguegarao, at Iguig. The next day an armored column sped northward another twelve miles or so to the Paret River, forded that stream, and, about three-quarters of a mile beyond, made contact with troops of the 11th Airborne Division, who on 23 June had made a parachute drop farther north in the Cagayan Valley.[18]

General Krueger had considered it necessary to stage an airborne operation into the northern Cagayan Valley to clinch the success of the 37th Division's drive.[19] It is possible that Krueger was also motivated by a desire to clean up northern Luzon before the Eighth Army took over control of operations, an event scheduled for 1 July.[20] Whatever the motivation, and despite reports to the contrary from the USAFIP(NL), I Corps, the 37th Division, and ALAMO scout teams, General Krueger had concluded that Japanese forces in the Cagayan Valley, upon the approach of the 37th Division, were fleeing "in wild

[18] 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 141–49; 148th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 5–6; 129th Inf Rpt Luzon, p. 13; 129th Inf Hist 1810–1945, p. 82; USAFIP(NL) Rpt, p. 105.
[19] Krueger Comments, 18 Dec 56.
[20] White (G–2 Sixth Army) Comments, 23 Jan 57.

disorder on Highway 5 toward Aparri." [21] Actually, the general trend of Japanese movement had been southward for weeks, and certainly no Japanese force intended to hole up at Aparri, an indefensible, flatland cul-de-sac.[22]

In view of Krueger's estimate of the Japanese situation, "and in order to complete the annihilation of the enemy forces fleeing north, it was decided to make a vertical envelopment of airborne troops to close the trap and prevent the enemy from all possibility of escaping from Aparri." [23] Accordingly, on 21 June, Krueger directed a battalion combat team of the 511th Parachute Infantry, 11th Airborne Division, to drop near Aparri on 23 June.[24]

On the very day that Krueger issued this order, Connolly Task Force entered Aparri unopposed. By evening the next day elements of the task force and the 2d Battalion of the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), were ten miles south along Route 5 from Aparri and had secured Camalaniugan Airstrip, three miles from Aparri, on their way.[25] There was no trap for the 511th Parachute Infantry to close.

Despite the successes of the reinforced Connolly Task Force, Krueger did not change his mind about the desirability and necessity for the airdrop. Instead, he concluded that the "seizure of Aparri without opposition by elements of the Connolly Task Force on 21 June 1945, together with the almost unopposed advance of the 37th Division, indicated clearly that the time had come for mounting the airborne troops to block the enemy's retreat in the Cagayan Valley." [26] It is not clear just what retreat Krueger expected to block.

The airborne force totaled about 1,030 men, including the reinforced 1st Battalion of the 511th Infantry and Battery C, 457th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion. Aircraft involved were 54 C–47's, 14 C–46's, and 7 gliders, the latter being used for the first time in the Southwest Pacific Area. The dropping ground was Camalaniugan Airstrip, which 11th Airborne Division pathfinders, who arrived at Connolly Task Force headquarters on 22 June, marked with ease.[27]

No untoward incident marked the flight of the troop carriers from Batangas in southern Luzon to the drop zone, and paratroopers began dropping on the

[21] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 95.

[22] In addition to Japanese sources supporting this conclusion, see also: Rads, Chaney ALAMO Scout Team to G–2 Sixth Army, 19 and 21 Jun 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 18–21 Jun 45; 37th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 171–74; USAFIP(NL) G–2 Per Rpt 81, 6 Jun, and 91–95, 16–20 Jun 45.

[23] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 95.

[24] Sixth Army FO's 71 and 72, 21 and 22 Jun 45, Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 173–74.

[25] I Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 16–23 Jun 45; USAFIP(NL) G–3 Opns Rpt 24, 15–26 Jun 45.

[26] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 95.

[27] 11th A/B Div WO, 22 Jun 45, Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 21–23 Jun 45; 11th A/B Div FO 32, 22 Jun 45, 11th A/B Div Gypsy Opn File; Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army for ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 29 Jun 45 (a rpt of the A/B opn), Sixth Army G–3 Jnl File Luzon, 30 Jun 45. The major components of the airborne groupment—designated the Gypsy Task Force—were:

1st Bn, 511th Prcht Inf
Co G, 511th Prcht Inf
Co I, 511th Prcht Inf
Battery C, 457th Prcht FA Bn
Det, 511th A/B Sig Co
Det, 711th A/B Ord Co
Det, Serv Co, 511th Prcht Inf
Language Det, 11th A/B Div
CIC Det, Hq, 11th A/B Div
2d Plt, 221st Med Co
11th Prcht Maint Co
1st Plt, Co C, 127th A/B Engr Bn
Demolition Plt, Hq Co, 511th Prcht Inf

morning of 23 June while Fifth Air Force bombers and fighters flew cover and other planes laid smoke screens to conceal the drop zone from the east and south. The paratroopers were greeted on the ground by men of the Connolly Task Force and the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL).[28] Once the 'troopers were down, gliders brought in artillery and other types of heavy equipment; C–47's and C–46's dropped additional material. Jump casualties were 2 men killed and 70 injured, a rate of about 7 percent; one glider was damaged upon landing. Contributing factors were a 20- to 25-mile-an-hour ground wind—15 miles an hour being considered the maximum safe velocity—and the rough condition of the drop zone.[29]

While Connolly Task Force held in the Aparri area, the 1st Battalion, 511th Infantry, started south to gain contact with the 37th Division. The 'troopers saw only a few Japanese stragglers on their way south and on 26 June met men of the 37th Division near the Paret River, thirty-five miles south of Camalaniugan Airstrip.[30] The airborne operation had proved both useless and unnecessary.

Contact at the Paret River between the 129th and 511th Infantry Regiments marked the end of Japanese resistance in the Cagayan Valley. The 37th Division (which gained control over the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL); the airborne groupment; and the Connolly Task Force) now began mopping up and patrolling eastward into the Sierra Madre, where perhaps as many as 10,000 Japanese, the bulk of them service personnel, hid out.

Compressing the Kiangan Pocket

While the operations to clear the Cagayan Valley were being brought to a successful conclusion, I Corps had continued pressure against Yamashita's last-stand area, soon to become known as the Kiangan Pocket by the Fil-American forces involved in its reduction. Ultimately, the most important drive against Yamashita's last-stand area would turn out to be the one mounted by the 6th Division up Route 4 from Bagabag, for this attack posed the most direct threat to the Japanese along the easiest route to the Asin River valley, but I Corps did not neglect to apply pressure from other directions. In late June the USAFIP(NL) struck from Cervantes both toward Mankayan and Sabangan. By the end of the month the *19th Division*, now reduced to 2,000 effectives, was withdrawing rapidly from Bontoc and Sabangan toward KP 90, although still holding a strong defensive line at the Lepanto Mine near Mankayan.[31] Farther south, the 33d Division broke into the Agno Valley on the *23d Division* front and, probing eastward along the Baguio-Aritao supply road, made

[28] Colonel Volckmann denied the 11th Infantry the pleasure of displaying ground panels reading "Welcome to Aparri. The 11th Infantry." Volckmann Comments, 10 Jan 57.

[29] Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 29 Jun 45; 11th A/B Div Rpt Luzon, p. 9; I Corps G–3 Per Rpt, 23 Jun 45. Volckmann says that the 11th Infantry and the Engineer Battalion, USAFIP(NL), filled shell holes on the strip and, just before the drop, chased carabaos off the drop zone. Volckmann Comments, 10 Jan 57.

[30] Memo, Asst ACofS G–3 Sixth Army, 29 Jun 45; I Corps G–3 Per Rpts, 24–26 Jun 45.

[31] USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 85–87, 95–98; Terau Interrog, in *ibid.*, pp. 150–51; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 174–77.

contact on 26 June with elements of the 6th Division that had been patrolling westward from Pingkian.[32] The remnants of the *2d Tank Division*, which had barely escaped entrapment along the Bambang-Pingkian road, escaped northward via mountain trails and river valleys and began straggling into the Tubliao area, twenty miles to the north, early in July.[33]

The 6th Division's drive up Route 4 toward Kiangan began on 16 June, the 3d Battalion, 63d Infantry, leading. By dusk the next day the 63d had broken through a *105th Division* outpost line of resistance at the Rayambugan Farm School. In technical violation of its orders, the *105th Division* had established only an OPLR at the school, and had thrown its MLR across Route 4 two miles to the northwest, in better defensive terrain. The 63d Infantry reached the MLR on 19 June, but in five days' fighting, employing only one battalion in the attack, was able to gain little ground. Strengthened on 24 June, the 63d began breaking through the MLR on the 26th and by the 29th had overrun the last organized resistance in the region. By evening on the 30th of June the leading troops were almost in Hucab, where the old section of Route 4 branched westward toward Kiangan. The *105th Division* was by this time in full retreat through Kiangan.[34]

[32] 130th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–55.

[33] 25th Div Rpt Luzon, p. 83; 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 82–84; 20th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 53–56; 126th Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 26–29; Kawai Statement, States, II, 149; Kawai Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, pt. IV, pp. 15–16.

[34] 6th Div Rpt Luzon, pp. 82, 86–88; 63d Inf Rpt Luzon, pp. 34–37; 63d Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 15–30 Jun 45; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 174–77.

The End in Northern Luzon

The Situation at the End of June

At this juncture, with U.S. Army and guerrilla units pressing the attack against the *Shobu Group* on all fronts, General MacArthur relieved the headquarters of Sixth Army and of I Corps of further operational responsibility on Luzon in order that the two could begin preparations for the invasion of Japan. The headquarters of Eighth Army and of XIV Corps assumed responsibility for the further conduct of operations throughout Luzon, where the only Japanese force still capable of effective, well-organized resistance was the *Shobu Group*.

For Sixth Army and I Corps, the meeting of the 37th Division and 11th Airborne Division units south of Aparri on 26 June had marked the strategic end of the campaign in northern Luzon. This conclusion attained considerable logic. The juncture had divided the *Shobu Group*'s remaining forces and had occurred while Yamashita was desperately trying to withdraw all available units into his last-stand area. Moreover, Sixth Army estimated upon relinquishing control to Eighth Army that no more than 23,000 Japanese were left alive in northern Luzon and that these troops were disorganized and incapable of effective defensive operations. Sixth Army further estimated that only 12,000 of the 23,000 Japanese were located in the Cordillera Central between Routes 4 and 11, the rest in the Sierra Madre east of the Cagayan Valley.

XIV Corps would be able to bring to bear against the 23,000 Japanese the reinforced 6th, 32d, and 37th Divisions

(the relief of the last elements of the 25th and 33d Divisions had taken place at the end of June). In addition, XIV Corps would have under its control the USAFIP(NL), now a seasoned and reasonably well-armed force of 21,000 men supported by two U.S. Army field artillery battalions. Also under XIV Corps was the experienced Buena Vista Regiment, equivalent in size to a U.S. Army infantry regiment less supporting arms and services. All in all, it appeared that XIV Corps would become involved only in relatively easy mopping-up and patrolling operations.[35]

Sixth Army had greatly underestimated the Japanese strength left in northern Luzon, and Eighth Army's estimates, made upon its assumption of command, were but little closer to fact. Actually, at the end of June, close to 65,000 Japanese remained alive in northern Luzon, 13,000 of them in the Sierra Madre and 52,000 in the last-stand area between Routes 4 and 11.[36] Although organization, control, and morale were deteriorating, and although most of the troops were ill armed and poorly supplied, the Japanese in the last-stand area were still capable of effective resistance when the occasion demanded. The task confronting the U.S. Army and guerrilla units in northern Luzon was of far greater magnitude than any headquarters estimated at the end of June.

[35] Sixth Army Rpt Luzon, I, 97; Sixth Army FO 73, 25 Jun 45, in *ibid.*, I, 174–75; Eighth Army Rpt on Luzon Mop-up Opn, pp. 9–10.

[36] The figures are the author's own estimates from a study of all relevant Japanese and U.S. Army source materials cited in this chapter. The figures leave out of consideration the survivors as of 30 June, of the *Shimbu Group*, the *Kembu Group*, and the *Fuji Force*.

Final Operations in Northern Luzon

XIV Corps plans for operations against the remainder of the *Shobu Group* differed only in detail from those I Corps had previously employed.[37] Reduced to their simplest terms, both sets of plans called for the exertion of unremitting pressure against the *Shobu Group* wherever *Shobu Group* troops were to be found.

East of the Cagayan River the 37th Division, and for a time a regiment of the 6th Division, hampered by supply problems and torrential rains, patrolled vigorously, forcing Japanese troops ever farther into the Sierra Madre. From 1 July through 15 August the 37th Division and attached units killed about 1,000 Japanese east of the Cagayan, itself losing approximately 50 men killed and 125 wounded.

On the northwest and west, opposition was stronger and better organized. Here the 15th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), finally secured the Sabangan junction of Routes 4 and 11 on 9 July, and on the next day the 11th Infantry occupied Bontoc. The *19th Division*'s defenses in the Lepanto Mines–Mankayan area began to fall apart before attacks of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), on 10 July; Man-

[37] This subsection is based mainly on: Eighth Army Rpt on Luzon Mop-up Opn, pp. 12–30; 10th I&H, Operational Monograph on the Luzon Mop-up Operation, pp. 15–48; USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 83–102, 106–09, 111–24; *14th Area Army* Opns on Luzon, pp. 174–204; Terau Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 152–54; Kawai Narrative, 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Luzon, pt. IV; Aoshima Narrative, in *ibid.*, pt. III; Kawai Interrog, Interrogs, I, 325; Muraoka Interrog, USAFIP(NL) Rpt, pp. 176–80; Statement of Col Atsutaka Saruwatari (CofS *4th Air Div*), States, III, 245–49.

kayan fell on the 20th. The 66th Infantry secured the junction of Routes 11 and 393 at KP 90 on 25 July, making contact the same day with troops of the 15th Infantry coming down Route 11 from Sabangan. The *19th Division* now began withdrawing into the upper Agno Valley to block the northern, western, and southern approaches to Toccucan, at the western end of Yamashita's last-stand area in the Asin Valley. (*Map 26*) The 15th and 121st Regiments, USAFIP(NL), immediately began attacks toward Toccucan, but found the *19th Division* remnants still capable of effective resistance. By 15 August the USAFIP(NL)'s leading units were four miles short of Toccucan on the northwest and a mile and a half short on the west.

Meanwhile, the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), had struck south from KP 90 along Route 11 to make contact with troops of the 32d Division, coming north from KP 21. The clearing of Route 11 north from Baguio had become a matter of pressing urgency because the heavy summer rains were making it nearly impossible to supply the USAFIP(NL) either by airdrop or over tortuous Route 4 from the west coast. Mixed forces of the *58th IMB* and the *19th Division* held along Route 11, their principal defenses located in the vicinity of Gambang, about five miles south of KP 90. Here, on 29 July, the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), and the 127th Infantry, 32d Division, finally made contact.

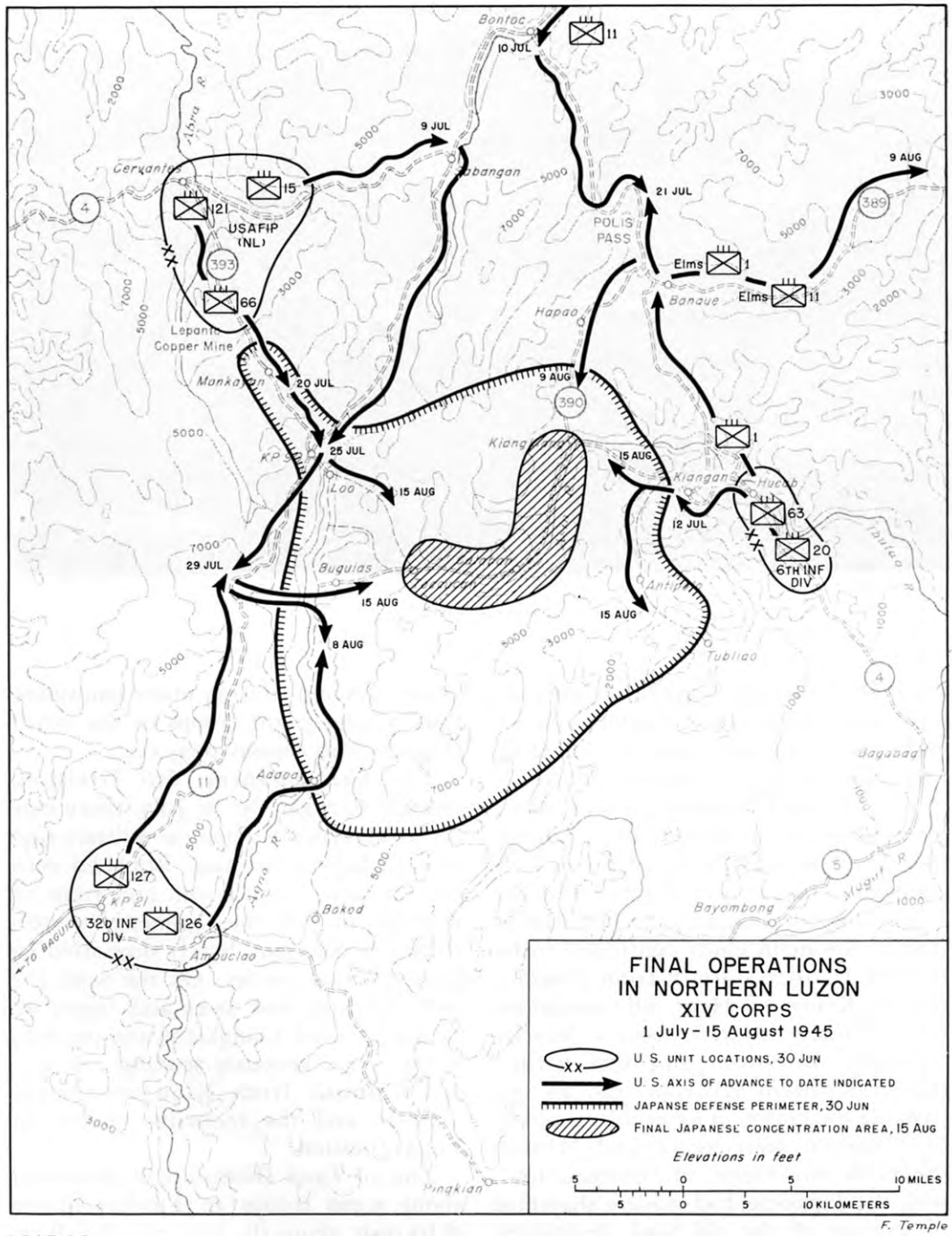
The two regiments next swung eastward into the Agno Valley near Buguias and initiated a drive south along the valley to gain contact with the 126th Infantry, 32d Division, coming north up the valley from Ambuclao and Bokod. Starting off on 1 August, the 126th Infantry found few signs of the *23d Division*, which had melted away eastward into the inhospitable Cordillera Central. On 8 August the 126th and 127th Regiments made contact near Buguias and were preparing a drive toward Toccucan when hostilities ended.

On the east side of the *Shobu Group*'s last-stand area, while the 6th Division was making its strongest effort an attack toward Kiangan, elements of the division struck north up Route 4 and reached Banaue on 20 July. Meanwhile, troops of the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), had started south along Route 4 from Bontoc and on 21 July made contact with the 1st Infantry, 6th Division, at Polis Pass, five miles north of Banaue. This contact, coupled with that between USAFIP(NL) and 32d Division units on Route 11 eight days later, marked the complete encirclement of the *Shobu Group* last-stand area.

The 1st Infantry, 6th Division, and the 11th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), turned east from Banaue along Route 389, on which about 2,500 Japanese of the *103d Division* and the *4th Air Division* had concentrated in mid-July. The 11th Infantry ultimately made its main effort from the north and east, and, with the 1st Infantry in support, cleared Route 389 by 9 August.[38] The Japanese forced off Route 389 hid in mountains north of that road and east of Route 4 until the end of the war.

The final ancillary attack toward the *Shobu Group* last-stand area was a drive

[38] Guerrilla units involved in the fighting to clear Route 389 were the 3d and Provisional Battalions, 11th Infantry; the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry; and miscellaneous elements of the 11th Infantry.


Bontoc
10 JUL
11
9 JUL
15
121
USAFIP (NL)
393
66
Lepanto Copper Mine
Gerkan
Abra R.
Sabangan
20 JUL
25 JUL
15 AUG
29 JUL
Bugulas
8 AUG
Adaoay
127
32D INF DIV
126
Agno R.
Baked
Asin Cliao
To Baguio
Pingkian
POLIS PASS
21 JUL
9 AUG
Elms 1
Elms 11
Banaue
Hapao
389
390
Kiangan
12 JUL
63
20
6TH INF DIV
Hueco
Antipolo
Tublao
Bagabag
Bayombong
Magat R.
Cagayan R.
FINAL OPERATIONS
IN NORTHERN LUZON
XIV CORPS
1 July - 15 August 1945
U. S. UNIT LOCATIONS, 30 JUN
U. S. AXIS OF ADVANCE TO DATE INDICATED
JAPANESE DEFENSE PERIMETER, 30 JUN
FINAL JAPANESE CONCENTRATION AREA, 15 AUG
Elevations in feet
5 0 5 10 MILES
5 0 5 10 KILOMETERS
F. Temple

MAP 26



KIANGAN VALLEY

south from Banaue along the horse trail known as Route 390. Undertaken by elements of the 1st Infantry, 6th Division, and the 11th Infantry, USAFIP-(NL), the attack reached a point about five miles south of Banaue by 9 August, but there the drive stopped for lack of strength and because of supply problems.

Throughout July and the first half of August the main effort continued to be the 6th Division's attack from Route 4 toward Kiangan. Here, all operations were virtually stopped about 1 July by incessant, torrential rains that turned the road toward Kiangan into an impassable quagmire. The problems of the 6th Division were aggravated because the Fifth Air Force, in "co-operation" with the Japanese, had made a shambles of sections of the old road, destroying all bridges and causing many landslides. Finally, rear-guard troops of the *105th Division* also slowed progress.

The 63d Infantry, 6th Division, reached Kiangan on 12 July, there capturing all types of Japanese military supplies in large quantities. But then even heavier rains came down, and from 16 through 20 July the regiment was marooned at Kiangan, barely supported by hand-carrying parties. On the 24th, the 20th Infantry took over and began an advance toward Kiangkiang and the Asin River, simultaneously sending one battalion south from Kiangan toward Tubliao and the remnants of the *2d Tank Division.*

The *2d Tank Division* had assembled about 5,300 troops at Tubliao—1,800 of its own, about the same number from

the *Hayakawa Naval Unit*,[39] and roughly 1,700 Army ground force service troops from the Bambang region. The Japanese unit had only the food it could find on the ground; its armed troops, 3,600 in all, had only 80 rounds of ammunition for each rifle; it had no artillery and very few mortars and machine guns. The division had hoped to reach the Asin Valley last-stand area, but the 20th Infantry blocked its route of withdrawal until 7 August, when elements of the 63d Infantry took over along the trail south from Kiangan. Rain-swollen streams, flooded rice paddies, and nearly impassable trails restricted the 63d's activities to patrolling, and as of 15 August the regiment had not established contact with the main body of the *2d Tank Division*.

Meanwhile, the Japanese had bitterly opposed the 6th Division's efforts to advance west from Kiangan toward the Asin Valley. Instead of mopping up, the division soon found itself involved in mountain fighting as rough as that experienced at any time or at any place throughout the Luzon Campaign. At the end of hostilities on 15 August the 20th Infantry, 6th Division, was scarcely three miles beyond Kiangan along the trail to Kiangkiang.

In a month and a half of bitter fighting in incredibly steep terrain and in the most miserable type of weather Fil-American forces had failed to project any strength into the Asin Valley. This last month and a half of the operation in northern Luzon had cost the forces engaged approximately 1,650 casualties, divided as follows: [40]

Unit	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Total*
USAFIP (NL)	285	715	1,000
6th Division	45	190	235
32d Division	45	140	185
37th Division	50	130	180
Other	15	35	50
Total	440	1,210	1,650

Eighth Army estimated that *Shobu Group* casualties for the same period were 13,500 men killed or dead of starvation and disease.

Results and Conclusions

How much longer the *Shobu Group* could have kept Fil-American troops out of the Asin Valley is a moot question. Yamashita had estimated in June that he had sufficient supplies to hold out until mid-September, and from the scale of effort Eighth Army was able and willing to put into the campaign from 1 July to 15 August, it appears that Yamashita would have met his deadline. When food was exhausted, he planned to have his most effective remaining troops attempt a breakout from the Asin Valley to the mountains of far northwestern Luzon where, he hoped, more food might be found. Men not participating in the breakout were to

[39] Mainly Naval Air Service personnel from the Cagayan Valley.

[40] The USAFIP(NL) casualties are for the period 21 June–15 August; the rest for 1 July–15 August. The "other" includes Eighth Army and XIV Corps troops, the Buena Vista Regiment, and miscellaneous guerrilla units.

On 29 July Cpl. Melvin Mayfield of Company D, 20th Infantry, brilliantly and bravely gave such a demonstration of leadership and heroism under heavy fire that he inspired two attached guerrilla companies, previously pinned down, to resume the advance against Japanese positions in the rugged hills on the way west from Kiangan. For his actions, Corporal Mayfield was awarded the Medal of Honor.



TERRAIN IN THE LAST-STAND AREA, *Asin Valley.*

stage banzai attacks on all fronts to cover the effectives' escape. Expecting that, successful or not, the breakout would mark the complete disintegration of his forces, Yamashita planned to commit hara-kiri during the melee.[41] Thus, the end of the war came about a month before Yamashita was ready to admit final defeat.

The effectiveness of the *Shobu Group* operations in northern Luzon must be assessed within the context of Yamashita's concept of the strategic goal of the Luzon Campaign. From the first, Yamashita had known that he had insufficient strength to hold all Luzon or to prevent MacArthur's forces from ultimately occupying all the island. The most he could accomplish, Yamashita was convinced as early as December 1944, was to delay Allied progress toward Japan by pinning down as many American divisions on Luzon as possible. He also realized that his strength, the condition of the roads, bridges, and railroads on Luzon, and the preponderance of Allied air power, would make it impossible for him to mount a decisive counterattack against the invasion forces of the Sixth Army. Any attack employing less than his entire strength would, he knew, be foredoomed to disastrous failure, but he lacked the capability of concentrating all his forces. He was certain, therefore, that counterattacks could result only in the rapid, piecemeal destruction of the *14th Area Army*. Such destruction would, of course defeat his main purpose—conducting protracted delaying actions on Luzon.

It had been this reasoning that had led Yamashita to establish his three separate defensive positions in Luzon's mountains. He had concentrated his principal strength, the *Shobu Group*, in northern Luzon because the size of that area and the nature of its terrain afforded him the best opportunities for extended delaying operations. Moreover, food requisite to such operations was available in the Cagayan and Magat Valleys, the defense of northern Luzon would deny the Allies the use of the Cagayan Valley airfields, and his best and strongest units were already in northern Luzon.

By any standard, the *Shobu Group* accomplished the delaying mission Yamashita envisaged for it. During the period of Sixth Army control of operations on Luzon, the peak commitment of major ground force units against the *Shobu Group* had been four reinforced U.S. Army infantry divisions, one separate RCT, an armored group, the USAFIP(NL), and the Buena Vista Regi-

[41] The plan is discussed in Muto Memoirs, Trans, I, 58–59.

ment.[42] When hostilities ceased on 15 August, the *Shobu Group* was still "entertaining" three reinforced U.S. Army divisions—the 6th, 32d, and 37th—the greatly strengthened USAFIP(NL), the Buena Vista Regiment, and sundry other guerrilla units. The foregoing does not include the considerable effort the Allied Air Forces expended in northern Luzon.

Sixth Army's mission vis-à-vis the *Shobu Group* had been first to contain and then to destroy that Japanese force. There can be no argument that Sixth Army effectively contained the *Shobu Group*—which in turn just as effectively contained about one-third of the Sixth Army. And given his 30 June estimate that only 23,000 Japanese were left in northern Luzon, General Krueger had reason to believe that Sixth Army had to all intents and purposes destroyed the *Shobu Group*. The destruction was not as complete as Krueger believed, although it is certainly true that as of 30 June the *Shobu Group* was no longer capable of effective or significant offensive effort. At the end of June, the *Shobu Group* still had 65,000 men of its peak strength of over 150,000. Of the 65,000, 52,000 comprised an organized force still firmly under Yamashita's control in the Asin Valley sector.

[42] The precise date of the peak commitment is difficult to ascertain. About 1 February, for example, the commitment included the 6th, 25th, 32d, and 43d Divisions; the 158th RCT; the bulk of the 13th Armored Group; and the USAFIP(NL). At the end of June the commitment was the 25th, 32d, 33d, and 37th Divisions; three tank battalions; a battalion combat team of the 11th Airborne Division; the USAFIP(NL); the Buena Vista Regiment; and miscellaneous other guerrilla units.



YAMASHITA COMES OUT OF THE VALLEY *to surrender.*

Eighth Army took up the mission of destroying the *Shobu Group* where Sixth Army had left off, but when hostilities ended on 15 August the Japanese group could have held out at least another month. After the end of the war, roughly 50,500 Japanese troops came out of the mountains of northern Luzon, nearly 40,000 of them from the Asin Valley last-stand area. Thus, the war ended with about one-third of the *Shobu Group*'s peak strength still alive and still capable of conducting organized, stubborn delaying operations. The conclusion can hardly be avoided that the *Shobu Group*, in the seven and a half months from 9 January 1945, had indeed executed a most effective delaying action.

PART SEVEN

THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

CHAPTER XXX

The Campaign Begins

The Plans and the Forces

American Plans of Attack

The Luzon Campaign had been under way less than a month when General MacArthur decided that the time had come to put into effect his plans for securing the bypassed islands of the Southern Philippines.[1] For a variety of reasons the theater commander regarded speed essential for the move into the southern islands, although he knew operations there would divert forces from Luzon and delay its reconquest. However, obvious disadvantages and dangers faced the Filipinos on the bypassed islands, garrisoned as they were by Japanese troops who had no hope of succor and whose tempers and morals could hardly be expected to improve as they came to realize that Japan's defeat was inevitable. To leave the Filipinos of the southern islands unnecessarily exposed to evident dangers for an unduly protracted period could tend only toward undermining the prestige — seriously damaged by the loss of the Philippines in 1942 — that the United States had regained in the Far East with the landings on Leyte, Samar, Mindoro, and Luzon.

Plans for the strategic conduct of the war also demanded an early move into the Southern Philippines. The Allied Air Forces was responsible, within the limits of its capabilities, for helping to sever the Japanese lines of communication through the South China Sea. This responsibility made it imperative to capture airfields as soon as possible from which the Allied Air Forces could project land-based air strength over the waters west of the Philippines more effectively than it could from the Clark Field center on Luzon or from southwestern Mindoro. The attention of Southwest Pacific planners was, accordingly, drawn toward Palawan, westernmost large island of the Philippine archipelago. Airfield sites on Palawan were 250 miles southwest of the Mindoro airstrips, 400 miles south-southwest

[1] General background sources for this subsection are: GHQ, SWPA, Basic Outline Plan for MUSKETEER Opns (MUSKETEER I), 10 Jul 44; MUSKETEER II, 29 Aug 44; MUSKETEER III, 26 Sep 44; GHQ, SWPA, PRINCETON Basic Outline Plan for Reoccupation of the Visayas–Mindanao–Borneo–NEI Area (PRINCETON I), 31 Oct 44; PRINCETON II, 20 Nov 44; MONTCLAIR III (redesignation of PRINCETON), 25 Feb 45. Copies of these plans are to be found in various files of the Operations Division, War Department; they were employed by the present author in preparing an unpublished manuscript, The Philippine Campaign, 1944–45, while a member of the G–3 Historical Division of GHQ SWPA–GHQ AFPAC in 1944–46 (copy in OCMH files), portions of which are published in United States Strategic Bombing Survey, Military Analysis Division, *Employment of Forces Under the Southwest Pacific Command* (Washington, 1947). Further background information is in Chapters I and II, above. See also, Cannon, *Leyte*, ch. I.

of Clark Field, and around 150 miles farther west than either.

MacArthur's plans furthermore called for the ultimate reoccupation of the East Indies in a campaign that would start with the seizure of Japanese-held oil resources in northern Borneo as soon as land-based air support became available. Except for the projected air base on Palawan, the Allies had no fields within medium bomber or fighter range of northern Borneo, and even Palawan was not satisfactory as a fighter base. Therefore, Southwest Pacific planners decided to secure airfields on the southern tip of the Zamboanga Peninsula of southwestern Mindanao, and along the Sulu Archipelago, which stretches southwest from Zamboanga almost to the coast of Borneo. *(See map, p. 20.)*

Weather also played a part in the decision to launch early attacks into the Southern Philippines. Planners knew how important it was to have the campaigns in the southern islands well under way before the summer rains began, and they recognized the importance of having airfield construction in hand before wet weather created engineering problems like those that so delayed air base developments on Leyte in late 1944.

Motivated not only by a sense of strategic urgency but also by his well-publicized personal desire to liberate all the Philippines quickly, General MacArthur waited only to be certain that Sixth Army could secure the vital objective area on Luzon — the Central Plains–Manila Bay Region — within a reasonable time before he directed the Allied Air Forces, the Allied Naval Forces, and the U.S. Eighth Army to launch the campaign in the southern islands. Accordingly, on 6 February 1945, after Sixth Army troops had been in Manila but three days, MacArthur ordered the seizure of Palawan. A week later he issued additional instructions for the occupation of the Zamboanga Peninsula and the Sulu Archipelago.[2]

The success of the Palawan, Zamboanga, and Sulu operations would not only assure a more effective blockade of the South China Sea and provide adequate air support for the invasion of Borneo but would also result in the creation of a virtually complete aerial blockade of the East Indies and southeast Asia, assuming the success of concurrent offensives by forces of the Southeast Asia Command.[3] Moreover, these opening offensives would draw a ring around the Japanese in the rest of the Southern Philippines, leaving them isolated and without chance of reinforcement or escape.

MacArthur intended that operations to clear the other islands would begin as soon as possible after the landings on Palawan and the Zamboanga Peninsula. The remaining islands—including Mindanao east of the Zamboanga Peninsula—had no strategic importance in the campaign for the recapture of the Philippines and the East Indies, but pressing political considerations demanded their immediate recapture as well. These subsequent offensives would be directed toward the seizure of Philippine real estate as such. They were designed for the purpose of liberating Filipinos, re-establishing lawful govern-

[2] GHQ SWPA OI's 89 and 91, 6 and 14 Feb 45, G–3 GHQ Jnl Files, 6 and 14 Feb 45.

[3] See Romanus and Sunderland, *Time Runs Out in CBI*, Ch. X.

ment, and destroying Japanese forces.

The Southern Philippines Campaign would entail a series of amphibious operations by forces ranging in size from reinforced regimental combat teams to a corps of two divisions. The amphibious assaults would differ little from previous operations in the Southwest Pacific Area except that Army amphibians and landing craft would execute much of the ship-to-shore movement and land-based planes would provide all air support. MacArthur had already returned to Admiral Nimitz all the CVE's and a large percentage of the amphibious lift that Nimitz had transferred to the Allied Naval Forces, SWPA, for the Leyte, Mindoro, and Luzon invasions, and these vessels Nimitz was employing for the Iwo Jima and Okinawa operations. The Allied Naval Forces, moreover, had to use much of the shipping remaining available to it on resupply runs to various Luzon beaches. Fire support ships left to the Allied Naval Forces consisted of only a few cruisers and destroyers. Nevertheless, the Allied Naval Forces, SWPA, had sufficient means at least to launch the campaign in the Southern Philippines. To find shipping for operations after the seizure of Palawan and Zamboanga, the Allied Naval Forces would judiciously stagger invasion target dates and transfer south vessels no longer needed to support Sixth Army on Luzon.

Major units available to General Eichelberger's Eighth Army for the reoccupation of the southern islands included X Corps headquarters, the Americal Division, the 24th, 31st, 40th, and 41st Infantry Divisions, and the separate 503d Parachute RCT. As of early February X Corps headquarters was on Leyte, while the Americal Division was split between that island and Samar.[4] The bulk of the 24th Division was on Mindoro, where divisional units originally committed on Luzon were also to be concentrated, along with the 503d RCT. The 31st Division had one RCT at Sansapor in northwestern New Guinea; the rest of the unit was on Morotai Island, between Mindanao and New Guinea.[5] The 40th Division, previously with Sixth Army, was relieved of its combat missions on Luzon in late February. Originally, the 41st Division had been scheduled to reinforce Sixth Army, but had stopped at Mindoro after General MacArthur decided to speed the reconquest of the Southern Philippines.[6] Eighth Army was also to employ most of the 2d and 3d Engineer Special Brigades, the components of which were scattered among many New Guinea, Morotai, Leyte, Mindoro, and Luzon bases. Normal reinforcing units, such as artillery and tank battalions, amphibian tractor and truck companies, and service organizations of all types, would assemble at various New Guinea and Philippine ports for attachment to the infantry divisions operating in the southern islands.

Air support was, of course, the responsibility of the Allied Air Forces, Southwest Pacific Area.[7] Allied Air Forces

[4] See above, ch. XXIII, and Cannon, *Leyte*, p. 365.

[5] See Smith, *Approach to the Philippines*, pp. 480–93.

[6] See above, ch. XX. The 41st Division staged at Biak, where the unit had been since late May 1944. See Smith, *Approach to the Philippines*, chs. XII–XVI.

[7] Additional information on air support planning is from: Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 448–58; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 108–14.

delegated this responsibility to the Thirteenth Air Force, which, under the command of Brig. Gen. Paul B. Wurtsmith, was based principally on Morotai and Leyte. Mindoro-based aircraft of the Fifth Air Force would also support the Palawan and Zamboanga invasions, and the Fifth would reinforce the Thirteenth as necessary during subsequent attacks. After the first landings, much of the support for later invasions and almost all the close support of ground operations would be executed by Marine Air Groups 12 and 14, based on Leyte and Samar in February, and by Marine Air Groups 24 and 32, which would redeploy to Zamboanga from Luzon.

Eighth Army expected to employ guerrillas to the maximum, and on many of the southern islands well-developed guerrilla forces existed. On Mindanao, once the target for the initial invasion of the Philippines, guerrillas under Col. Wendell W. Fertig, a U.S. Army reservist, had been carefully nurtured, submarine and aircraft supplying them with arms, ammunition, and other necessities. Colonel Fertig had over 33,000 on his rolls in February 1945, some 16,500 of them armed. As commander of the 10th Military District, Fertig had grouped his forces into six divisions—organized more or less along the lines of a prewar Philippine Army division—and the Maranao Militia Force, a loosely organized "division" composed of Moros.

Similar to the 10th Military District guerrillas in effectiveness and degree of organization was the 6th Military District, a guerrilla force on Panay commanded by Col. Marcario L. Peralta of the Philippine Army. Activities of potentially strong guerrilla organizations on Negros and Cebu were somewhat inhibited by the size and aggressiveness of Japanese garrisons on those two islands. The Negros guerrillas were commanded by Lt. Col. Salvador Abcede, Philippine Army, and those on Cebu by Lt. Col. James M. Cushing, an American civilian who had been a mining engineer in the Philippines before the war. Bohol had a weak guerrilla organization under Maj. Ismael P. Ingeniero, Philippine Army, and small, relatively ineffective guerrilla units existed on Palawan and on the islands of the Sulu Archipelago.[8]

Until February 1945, military intelligence had been the principal contribution of guerrilla units in the Southern Philippines. Nonetheless, the organizations were enthusiastically willing, however limited their capabilities, to provide combat reinforcements to Eighth Army's divisions. The guerrilla units had some preassault missions such as cutting Japanese overland lines of communications, clearing prospective beachhead areas, and attempting to bottle Japanese forces into small areas.

The Japanese in the Southern Philippines

The Japanese forces on the southern islands were under the control of the *35th Army*, which had conducted the de-

[8] General information on guerrilla units throughout the chapters on the Southern Philippines operations is from: G–2 GHQ FEC, The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines, *passim*. Additional information on Mindanao guerrillas is from Historical Record, Mindanao Guerrilla Resistance Movement, Tenth Military District, From 16 September 1942 to 30 June 1945 (hereinafter cited as Mindanao Guerrilla Record), pp. 39–60.

fense of Leyte.[9] In February 1945 General Suzuki, commanding *35th Army*, still had his headquarters on Leyte, but with the approval of General Yamashita had already begun an attempt to evacuate the best of the troops left on Leyte to Negros, Cebu, Panay, and Mindanao Islands. Yamashita, of course, had long since written off the Southern Philippines, having neither the intention nor the capability of sending reinforcements to the islands. His instructions to Suzuki mirrored the *14th Area Army*'s concept for the defense of Luzon—*35th Army* would pin down for as long as possible as many Allied divisions as it could.

Suzuki planned to make his stand in east-central Mindanao, where he hoped to set up a little self-sustaining empire that could hold out indefinitely. For this purpose he would use the *30th* and *100th Divisions*, already deployed in that portion of Mindanao lying east of the Zamboanga Peninsula, as well as a large body of naval troops stationed in the same area. He made no plans, apparently, to redeploy other forces in the southern islands to eastern Mindanao. The *54th Independent Mixed Brigade* and attached naval units would continue to hold the Zamboanga Peninsula, and the *55th IMB* would remain along the Sulu Archipelago, concentrated on Jolo Island. The *102d Division* would continue to garrison Panay, Negros, Cebu, and Bohol. About half of the *102d Division* had been sent to Leyte, but Suzuki anticipated that strong reinforcements would reach the unit from Leyte. His plans made no provision for sending Leyte evacuees to Zamboanga, Palawan, or the Sulu Archipelago, although he apparently hoped that elements of the *30th Division* could return to Mindanao.[10]

Suzuki's attempts to evacuate Leyte ended in dismal failure. In the first formal effort, undertaken in mid-January, about 750 men of the *1st Division* managed to get across the Camotes Sea from northwestern Leyte to northern Cebu. Thereafter, Allied aircraft and PT boats prevented the 20,000 Japanese still alive on Leyte from undertaking large-scale evacuation, although about 1,000 Japanese of various units, in every conceivable type of small craft, did make their way to Cebu during the next two or three months. Suzuki himself reached Cebu in mid-March, but lost his life a month later as he attempted to sail on to eastern Mindanao. His chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Yoshiharu Tomochika, reached Mindanao in late April after an epic trip from Cebu in a small sailing vessel.

By February 1945 the time was long past when the Japanese on the southern islands could hope for anything more than to die while conducting a static defense. There were over 102,000 Japa-

[9] The main sources for this subsection are: Tomochika, True Facts of the Leyte Opn, pp. 33–39; 10th I&H, Staff Study of Operations of Japanese *102d Div* on Leyte and Cebu, Background Notes, pp. 2–5; *ibid.*, Org of the *102d Div*, p. 5; *ibid.*, Dispositions of the *102d Div*, Jan–Apr 45, pp. 1–2; 10th I&H Staff Study of Operations of the Japanese *35th Army* on Leyte, pt. I, Narrative of Maj Gen Yoshiharu Tomochika, pp. 11–12; 10th I&H, Staff Study of Japanese Operations on Mindanao, Narrative of Maj. Gen Gyosaku Morozumi (CG *30th Div*), pp. 2–3, 6; *ibid.*, Narrative of Lt Gen Jiro Harada (CG *100th Div*), pp. 3, 7–8, 11; 10th I&H, Staff Study of Japanese Operations in Zamboanga, Narrative of Maj Yasura Hanada (CofS *54th IMB*), p. 1; *14th Area Army* Tr Org List. Copies of all foregoing documents are in OCMH files. See also, Cannon, *Leyte*, pp. 365–67.

[10] See apps. F and G.

nese on the islands, including approximately 53,000 Army ground combat and service troops; 19,400 men of the Army air forces, almost all of the service category; 15,000 naval personnel, mostly of service units; and 14,800 noncombatant civilians. The total included few more than 30,000 trained ground combat effectives—infantry, artillery, armor, and combat engineer troops. The units were scattered over many islands, all were understrength, and most were relatively poorly equipped. Moreover, they were psychologically ill prepared for large-scale fighting. As a result of preoccupation with the Leyte operation, Suzuki, who was also plagued by communications difficulties, had been unable to exercise effective control over the units in the Southern Philippines for some months. It further appears that most of the unit commanders did not expect American forces to make a major attempt to retake the Southern Philippines in the near future. Rather, remembering how large Japanese concentrations had been bypassed previously during the Pacific war, they believed that the Southern Philippines might be forgotten as the Allies moved toward Japan or the Indies; that, at most, U.S. Army formations might seize the principal port cities; and that advances inland would probably be undertaken by guerrillas, with whom the Japanese felt they could cope almost indefinitely.

The Japanese in the Southern Philippines, therefore, apparently felt quite secure if not downright complacent. Such an outlook would be dangerous enough if shared by first-class troops; it was doubly so when held by the types of units comprising the bulk of the forces in the southern islands. The *54th* and *55th IMB*'s, for example, had been formed in the Philippines in 1943 from a confusion of garrison units, replacements, and a miscellany with no combat experience. The *100th* and *102d Divisions* were not organized until mid-1944, having then been expanded from two independent mixed brigades formed about the same time and in much the same manner as had the *54th* and *55th IMB*'s. Indeed, the progenitor of the *102d Division* had been on garrison duty on Mindanao since early May 1942. Probably the best unit, at least on paper, was the *30th Division*, which had formed in Korea during 1943 from elements of three "regular" divisions that had had considerable combat experience. The division, however, had lost about half its combat strength on Leyte, and the nature and extent of the unit's defensive preparations on Mindanao raise some doubts as to the quality of the leadership within the organization. The best defenses were those of the *54th IMB* at Zamboanga and of the *102d Division* at Cebu City, Cebu.

Most of the Japanese units in the Southern Philippines had enough military supplies to start a good fight, but far from enough to continue organized combat for any great length of time. The most glaring weakness, painfully evident to the Japanese commanders, was a shortage of artillery ammunition. Wheeled transport was also at a premium, the guerrillas and the Allied Air Forces having destroyed most of the trucks that had once been available to the Japanese on the southern islands. Certain classes of medical supplies, especially malaria preventives, were also short, and there were not enough arms to supply all the available service units,

let alone the able-bodied male Japanese civilians who could have been drafted into the armed services. Food was plentiful in the settled areas, but once forced into the mountainous interiors of the islands in the Southern Philippines, *35th Army* would face food shortages similar to those that were so debilitating the *14th Area Army* on Luzon. As was the case on Luzon, the Japanese in the Southern Philippines, given their determination not to surrender, faced only one end —death by combat, starvation, or disease.

Airfields on Palawan

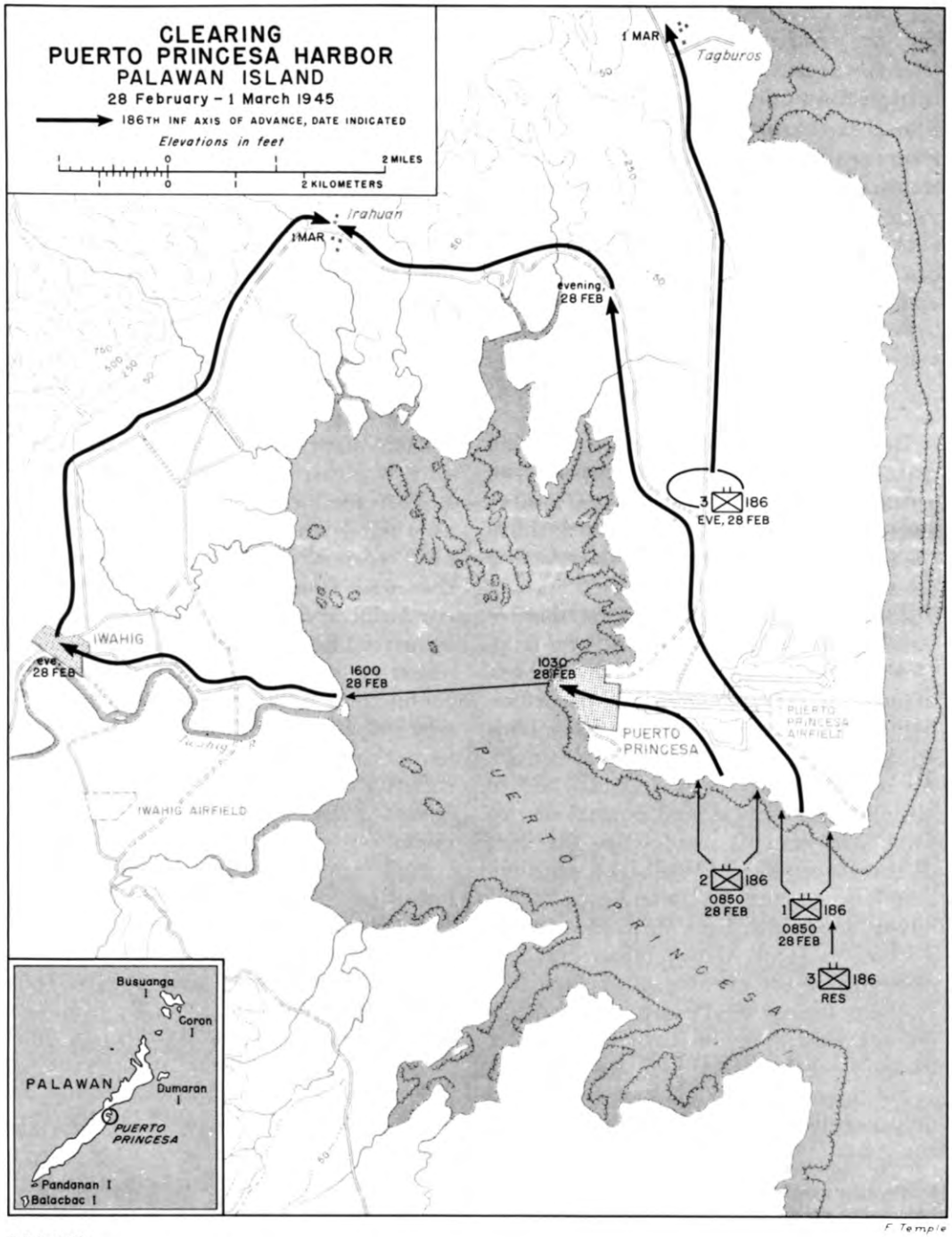
Designated by Eighth Army as the unit responsible for executing the ground phases of the Palawan, Zamboanga, and Sulu Archipelago operations, the 41st Division, Maj. Gen. Jens A. Doe commanding, organized the Palawan Force for the seizure of Palawan Island.[11] Palawan Force was commanded by Brig. Gen. Harold Haney, the assistant commander of the 41st Division; its principal combat component was the 186th RCT, under Col. Oliver P. Newman. Antiaircraft units, engineers assigned to airfield construction, and normal service force attachments made up the rest of the force, which numbered approximately 8,150 men. Palawan Force loaded at Mindoro aboard the ships of Admiral Fechteler's Task Group 78.2, and left Mindoro on the evening of 26 February in the company of the supporting cruisers and destroyers of Task Group 74.2 under Rear Adm. Ralph S. Riggs.

Following half an hour of naval gunfire, assault waves of the 186th Infantry landed unopposed along the northern shore of Puerto Princesa harbor, east-central Palawan, about 0850 on 28 February. (*Map 27*) The regiment occupied the town of Puerto Princesa, at the northwest corner of the harbor entrance, about 1030 against no resistance, secured two airstrips immediately east of the town before noon, and marched to the western and southern shores of the harbor late in the afternoon. The 186th did not sight a single Japanese during the day and found none on 1 March as its troops combed all the flat land in the Puerto Princesa area and established a defensive perimeter to assure the safety of the airfields, where engineers had already started work.

The Japanese garrison on Palawan numbered about 1,750 men and was built around two rifle companies from the *102d Division*, to which some 900 Air Force and 250 Navy troops were attached. The only significant organized resistance conducted by the garrison was confined to hills ten miles north-northwest of Puerto Princesa. During the period 3–8 March, elements of the 186th Infantry reduced two or three fanatically defended strongpoints in those hills, and thereafter operations on Palawan devolved into a series of far-flung amphibious and overland patrols the 186th Infantry and guerrilla units conducted. The Japanese were interested primarily in avoiding contact and fought only when cornered. As a result, the task of clearing Palawan—270 miles long northeast to southwest and about 20 miles across—was impeded mainly by rough, trackless terrain and the distances involved.

Palawan Force also reconnoitered many offshore islets, finding no Japanese

[11] The principal source for this section is 10th Information and Historical Service, Operational Monograph on the Palawan Operation, pages 16–82.


CLEARING
PUERTO PRINCESA HARBOR
PALAWAN ISLAND
28 February – 1 March 1945
186TH INF AXIS OF ADVANCE, DATE INDICATED
Elevations in feet
2 MILES
2 KILOMETERS
1 MAR
Tagburos
Irahuan
1 MAR
evening, 28 FEB
3 186
EVE, 28 FEB
IWAHIG
EVE 28 FEB
1600 28 FEB
1030 28 FEB
PUERTO PRINCESA
PUERTO PRINCESA AIRFIELD
IWAHIG AIRFIELD
PUERTO PRINCESA
2 186
0850 28 FEB
1 186
0850 28 FEB
3 186
RES
Busuanga I
Coron I
PALAWAN
Dumaran I
PUERTO PRINCESA
Pandanan I
Balacbac I
F. Temple

MAP 27

on some and quickly clearing others. American infantry occupied Dumaran Island, off the northeast coast, on 9 March; secured Coron and Busuanga, between Palawan and Mindoro, against negligible resistance from 9 to 17 April; and cleared Balabac and Pandanan Islands, off Palawan's southwestern tip, during the period 12–21 April. By 21 April all elements of the 186th RCT except for the 2d Battalion, 186th Infantry, and the regimental Cannon Company had left for Mindanao. The remaining units, protecting the new air base, stayed on Palawan until 4 July, when elements of the 368th Infantry, 93d Division, relieved them. To that date U.S. Army forces on Palawan had lost about 10 men killed and 45 wounded. Japanese losses had been 890 killed or found dead and 20 taken prisoner.

Airfield construction on Palawan did not proceed as rapidly as planned.[12] Originally, the Allied Air Forces had hoped to ready a 5,000-foot dry-weather strip by 5 March, in time to provide air support for the landing on the Zamboanga Peninsula. An all-weather field, 7,000 feet long, was also to be constructed in the Puerto Princesa area. However, after inspecting the airfield sites, Thirteenth Air Force engineers concluded that the soil in the area compacted so poorly that it would take an inordinately long time to prepare a dry-weather strip. Accordingly, the engineers repaired and extended a concrete-paved Japanese strip already some 4,500 feet long. So much work was necessary at this field that it was not operational until 20 March, too late for any Palawan-based aircraft to help support the Zamboanga landings. Later, however, planes from Palawan provided some support for operations in eastern Mindanao and on Borneo. Allied Air Forces bombers from Palawan, as planned, covered vast reaches of the South China Sea and struck at targets along the Indochina and southern China coasts. Water-based and land-based patrol bombers of the Allied Naval Forces, also stationed at Puerto Princesa, co-operated in the air effort to cut the Japanese lines of communication to the Indies by flying search and combat missions over the South China Sea. Although the war ended before the Palawan air base came to serve all the purposes for which it was intended, the strategic value of the air base seemed well worth the small price paid for its seizure.

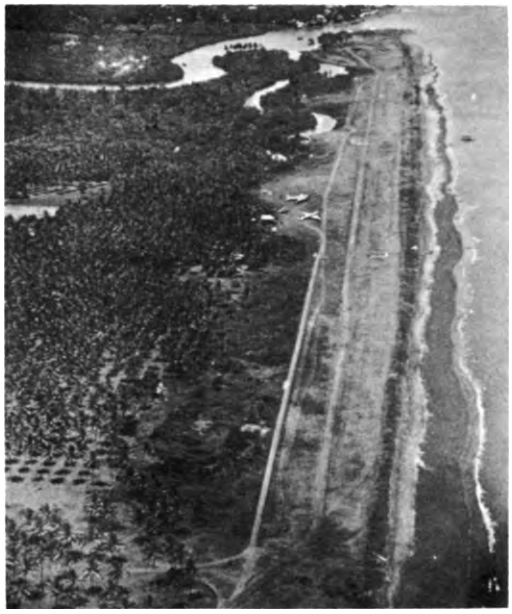
Zamboanga

Securing the Airfield Area

The fact that a fighter strip was not ready at Palawan as early as planned complicated preparations for air support at Zamboanga, since Eighth Army and the Allied Naval Forces considered it essential to have aircraft based closer to Zamboanga than Mindoro, Leyte, and Samar.[13] The problem was solved in a somewhat novel manner. Troops of the guerrilla 105th Division, Col. Hipolito Garma commanding, had long held a good, prewar landing strip at Dipolog,

[12] Information about airfield construction and air operations from Palawan is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Palawan, pp. 21, 65; Eighth Army Rpt Palawan and Zamboanga Opns, pp. 15, 115–16, 118; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 453–54, 461, 465.

[13] The story of providing air support for the Zamboanga assault is derived from: Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 454–55; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 112–14; 10th I&H, Operational Monograph on the Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago Operation, pp. 31–32; Mindanao Guerrilla Record, *passim*.



DIPOLOG AIRSTRIP

on the north coast of the Zamboanga Peninsula 145 miles from the peninsula's southern tip.[14] Allied Air Forces planes taking supplies to Fertig's guerrillas had been using the field since late 1944; the field had also been the site of many emergency landings by American aircraft. The field was known to be capable of accommodating at least one squadron of fighters. The Thirteenth Air Force therefore decided to send a squadron from Marine Air Group 12 to Dipolog to supplement the air support that could be provided from other available bases.

To strengthen the guerrilla garrison at Dipolog during the critical support period, two reinforced companies of the 21st Infantry, 24th Division, flew in from Mindoro on 8 March aboard C–47's. On the same day sixteen Marine Corsairs arrived. The Marine planes flew cover for the naval bombardment and for mine sweeping groups that began operating off Zamboanga on 8 March, two days before the amphibious assault; augmented air cover for the attack convoy, which departed Mindoro and Leyte the same day; and helped provide close support for operations ashore at Zamboanga from 10 to 15 March. The planes then left Dipolog for Zamboanga. The 21st Infantry's two companies evacuated by C–47 before the end of the month.

Colonel Fertig had informed Eighth Army that unopposed landings could be made in the vicinity of Zamboanga City, and underwater demolition teams, engineers, and guerrillas had with impunity marked the landing beaches on 9 March. Nevertheless, the Allied Naval Forces executed preassault bombardments against landing beaches in the Zamboanga vicinity as scheduled on 8, 9, and 10 March.[15] The bombardment vessels — and accompanying mine sweepers — received fire from a few Japanese 75-mm. artillery weapons emplaced on high ground two to three miles inland, but suffered no damage. The bombardment covered the landing beaches thoroughly and reached inland to knock out some of the Japa-

[14] Garma was a former Philippine Constabulary officer. The Dipolog field was garrisoned by the 105th Division's 107th Infantry, commanded by Maj. Marcelo Bonilla, PA.

[15] The remainder of the story of clearing the Zamboanga Peninsula is based mainly on: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago Opn, pp. 9–10, 27, 32–53, 61–65; Eighth Army Rpt Palawan and Zamboanga Opns, pp. 46–56; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 112–16; Intervs, author with Col Fertig (CO 10th Mil Dist), Lt Comdr (Lt Col, 10th Mil Dist) Sam J. Wilson (CofS 10th Mil Dist), Maj Patrocenio B. Garcia (G–1 10th Mil Dist), and others, Chicago, Ill., ex-Mindanao Guerrilla Reunion, 26 Jul 56. A tape recording of these interviews, which are hereinafter cited as Fertig Interviews, is in OCMH files.

nese artillery. The mine sweepers had no trouble clearing Basilan Strait, between the Zamboanga Peninsula and Basilan Island, twelve miles south. Meanwhile, Rear Adm. Forrest B. Royal's Task Group 78.1, with the 41st Division less the 186th RCT aboard, sailed south and entered Basilan Strait from the west early on 10 March.

Troops of the 162d Infantry landed virtually unopposed about 0915 near barrio San Mateo, four and a half miles west-northwest of Zamboanga City. (*Map 28*) Light machine gun fire greeted the regiment's leading assault wave, and artillery and mortar fire from the inland high ground harassed later echelons, but no casualties resulted. By 1015 the regiment had secured Wolfe Field, an abandoned prewar strip located half a mile inland, and had begun spreading out to the west, north, and east. The 163d Infantry started ashore about 0935 and two hours later had reassembled to strike eastward toward Zamboanga City. Opposed by sporadic long-range rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire, the 163d halted for the night a mile northwest of the city. Meanwhile, the 162d Infantry drove inland a mile and a half and westward along the southern shore of the peninsula for a like distance.

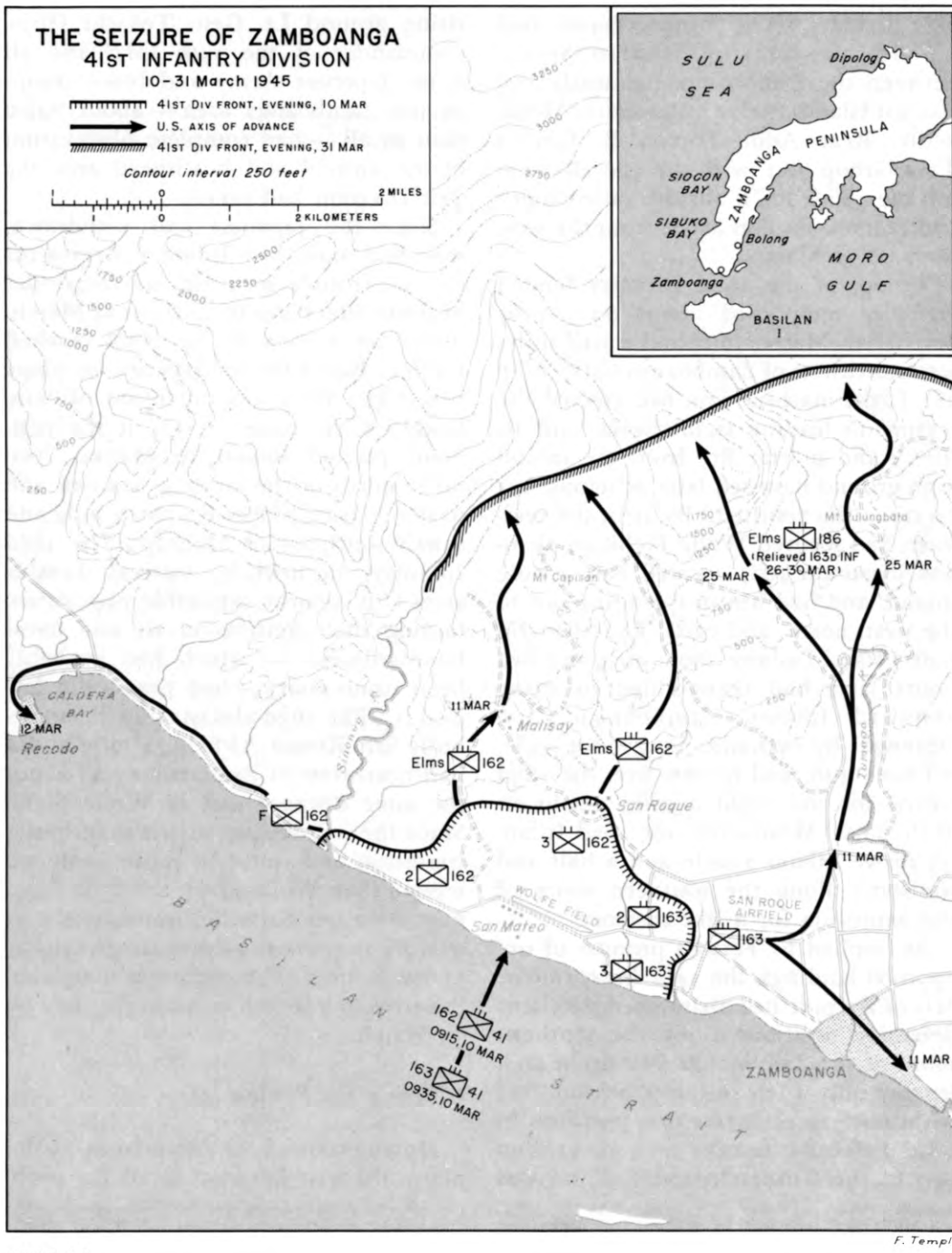
As implied by Fertig's promise of unopposed landings, the *54th Independent Mixed Brigade* had abandoned excellent defensive positions along the southern shore of the Zamboanga Peninsula and, leaving only a few outposts behind, had withdrawn to elaborate new positions in good defensive terrain in high ground two to three miles inland.[16] From this rising ground Lt. Gen. Tokichi Hojo, commander of the *54th IMB* and all other Japanese Army and Navy troops in the Zamboanga area — about 8,900 men in all — had complete observation of the airfield and beachhead area the 41st Division had taken.

Since the Japanese had withdrawn, the 162d and 163d Infantry Regiments had no trouble securing the remainder of the coastal plain by dusk on 11 March. That day troops of the 162d reached Caldera Bay, a former Japanese seaplane base eight miles west-northwest of Zamboanga City; other troops of the regiment pushed inland to Malisay, two miles north of the landing beaches, and to the vicinity of San Roque, a mile and a half southeast of Malisay. The 163d Infantry, meanwhile, secured Zamboanga City against negligible opposition, finding that preinvasion air and naval bombardment — which had probably been unnecessary — had practically leveled it. The 163d also overran Japanese-built San Roque Airfield, a mile and a half northwest of Zamboanga and about the same distance east of Wolfe Field. Since the San Roque strip was in better condition and could be more easily extended than Wolfe Field, the 873d Engineer Aviation Battalion immediately set to work to prepare a dry-weather runway at San Roque. The engineers completed the strip to a length of 5,000 feet late on 15 March.

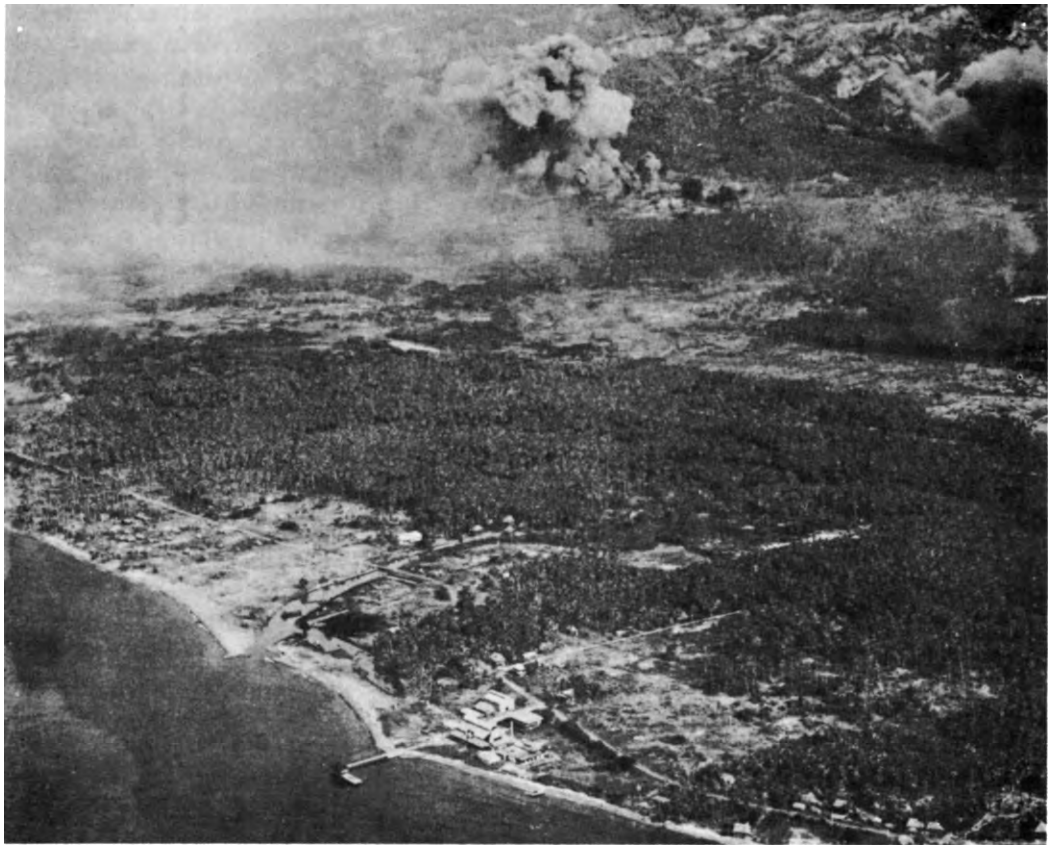
Clearing the Peninsula

Having secured the Zamboanga coastal plain, the 41st Division faced the prob-

[16] Additional information on Japanese operations on the Zamboanga Peninsula is from 10th Information & Historical Service, Staff Study, Japanese Operations in Zamboanga, *passim*, which was largely prepared by Major Hanada, chief of staff and later commander of the *54th IMB*.


THE SEIZURE OF ZAMBOANGA
41ST INFANTRY DIVISION
10-31 March 1945
41ST DIV FRONT, EVENING, 10 MAR
U.S. AXIS OF ADVANCE
41ST DIV FRONT, EVENING, 31 MAR
Contour interval 250 feet
0 2 MILES
0 2 KILOMETERS
SULU SEA
Dipolog
ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA
SIOCON BAY
SIBUKO BAY
ZAMBOANGA
Balong
MORO GULF
Zamboanga
BASILAN I
CALDERA BAY
12 MAR
Recodo
11 MAR
Elms 162
Malisay
Elms 162
F 162
San Roque
3 162
2 162
WOLFE FIELD
San Mateo
2 163
3 163
SAN ROQUE AIRFIELD
163
11 MAR
Elms 186
(Relieved 163d INF 26-30 MAR)
25 MAR
25 MAR
11 MAR
162 41
0915, 10 MAR
163 41
0935, 10 MAR
BASILAN STRAIT
ZAMBOANGA
F. Temple

MAP 28



AMPHIBIOUS LANDING AREA, ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA

lem of driving the Japanese from the high ground overlooking the airfield area. To accomplish its share in this task, the 163d Infantry struck generally north from Zamboanga City astride the Tumaga River valley, its ultimate objective Mt. Pulungbata, five miles inland. The 162d Infantry advanced in two columns, the right flank striking north from the vicinity of San Roque and the left driving north from Malisay. The regimental objective was Mt. Capisan, a mile and a half north of Malisay.

Guerrillas had an important share in the plan of offense. Three years earlier, when the Japanese invaded the peninsula, the small Fil-American garrison at Zamboanga had withdrawn up the east coast of the peninsula to the vicinity of Bolong, eighteen miles north-northeast of the city. Holding excellent defensive terrain in the Bolong area, the garrison had assembled supplies in anticipation of conducting guerrilla warfare but had simultaneously kept open a line of retreat northward and northeastward to permit ultimate escape into eastern Mindanao. The general surrender in the southern Philippines came before the Fil-American force had much opportu-

nity to put either guerrilla warfare or escape plans into effect.[17] To prevent the Japanese from repeating the projected Fil-American maneuver of 1942, Eighth Army directed Colonel Fertig's forces to block the east coast road in the Bolong area, a task Fertig entrusted to Capt. Donald J. LeCouvre's 121st Infantry, 105th Division.[18]

The two regiments of the 41st Division faced arduous tasks. General Hojo's troops held excellent defenses in depth across a front five miles wide, some portions of the line being three miles deep. All installations were protected by barbed wire; abandoned ground was thoroughly booby-trapped; mine fields, some of them of the remote-control type, abounded; and at least initially the *54th IMB* had an ample supply of automatic weapons and mortars. While Japanese morale on the Zamboanga Peninsula was not on a par with that of *14th Area Army* troops on Luzon, most of the *54th IMB* and attached units had sufficient spirit to put up a strong fight as long as they held prepared positions, and Hojo was able to find men to conduct harassing counterattacks night after night. Finally, the terrain through which the 41st Division had to attack was rough and overgrown, giving way on the north to the rain forests of the partially unexplored mountain range forming the backbone of the Zamboanga Peninsula. Only poor trails existed in most of the area held by the Japanese, and the 41st Division had to limit its advance to the pace of bulldozers, which laboriously constructed supply and evacuation roads. Once the American troops entered the peninsula's foothills, tanks could not operate off the bulldozed roads.

Behind continuous artillery fire and with exceptionally close support from Marine Corps planes, the 41st Division's two regiments pushed slowly but steadily northward after 11 March. On the 20th the *54th IMB*'s prepared defenses finally began to disintegrate, and on or about the 23d the 41st Division drove a wedge between the Japanese defensive units in the Mt. Pulungbata and Mt. Capisan sectors. On the 25th the 162d Infantry overran the last organized resistance in the vicinity of Mt. Capisan, forcing northward the remnants of the central of three defense units that Hojo had organized. The western unit, originally holding the hills north of Caldera Bay, had not yet been subjected to much pressure, but had been seriously weakened by transfers of troops to reinforce the center and eastern sectors. The eastern unit had, meanwhile, lost heavily in the face of steady progress on the part of the 163d Infantry.

On 26 March the 186th Infantry (less its 2d Battalion, on Palawan) began to relieve the 163d Infantry on the east. On 30 and 31 March the relatively fresh 186th extended the front to the east and drove rapidly northward against diminishing opposition. Realizing that it was no longer possible to continue effective resistance, General Hojo ordered a retreat late on the 31st, and before dark on 1 April all forces under his command had

[17] Col. A. T. Wilson, Pacific War 1942—The Defense of Zamboanga, in Hist Rpt, Visayan Mindanao Force, Defense of the Philippines, 1 Sep 41–10 May 42, pp. 567–91 (an. XI to Rpt of Opns of USAFFE and USFIP in the P.I., 1941–42), copy in OCMH files; Col. H. W. Tarkington, MS, There Were Others, pp. 230–39, copy in OCMH files.

[18] LeCouvre, an unsurrendered Air Forces enlisted man, had joined Fertig's guerrillas in December 1942 and had been in command of the 121st Infantry since August 1944.

begun withdrawing northward. Their logical route of withdrawal—up the east coast—blocked by the guerrilla 121st Infantry at Bolong, the Japanese had to strike into the wild interior of the peninsula. 41st Division and guerrilla patrols pursued. Physical contact between patrols of the 121st and 186th Infantry Regiments in a river valley two miles north-northeast of Mt. Pulungbata on 2 April marked the end of effective Japanese resistance in the Zamboanga area.

After 2 April 41st Division troops and guerrillas continued patrolling throughout the Zamboanga Peninsula, hunting down Japanese concentrations wherever and whenever reported. Organized remnants of the *54th IMB*, facing incredible hardships, first made their way across the rough mountains to Sibuko Bay, on the west coast thirty miles north of Zamboanga City. Chased from this area in late April, some units struck northward another thirty miles to Siocon Bay, while others headed east across the peninsula and then turned north. By the end of the war almost all survivors had gathered in the north-central part of the peninsula about midway between Zamboanga and Dipolog, where elements of the guerrilla 105th Division contained them.

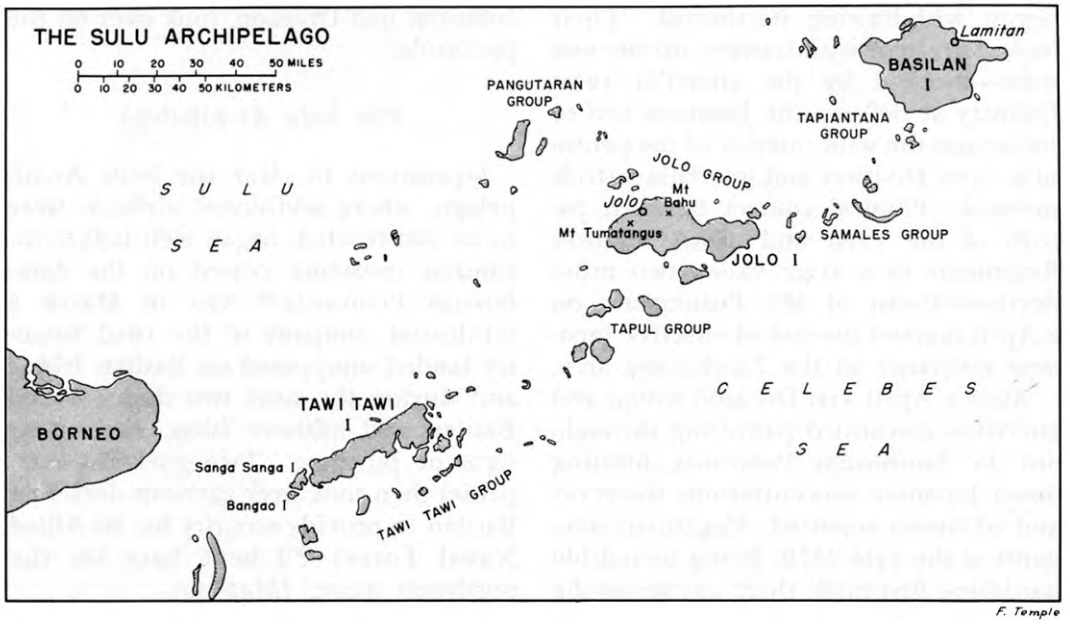
When the *54th IMB* began its general retreat in early April, it had left nearly 5,000 of its original 8,900 troops. Approximately 1,385 men of the retreating force survived the war, joining about 1,100 more who were captured before 15 August. Thus, roughly 6,400 Japanese were killed or died of starvation and disease on the Zamboanga Peninsula. The casualties of the 41st Division were about 220 men killed and 665 wounded to early July, when the 368th Infantry, 93d Division, took over on the peninsula.

The Sulu Archipelago

Operations to clear the Sulu Archipelago, where additional airfields were to be constructed, began well before organized resistance ceased on the Zamboanga Peninsula.[19] On 16 March a reinforced company of the 162d Infantry landed unopposed on Basilan Island and during the next two days combed Basilan and offshore islets, finding no signs of Japanese. Two guerrilla companies then took over garrison duties on Basilan to provide security for an Allied Naval Forces PT-boat base on the northwest shore. (*Map 29*)

The next invasion along the Sulu Archipelago coincided with the collapse of *54th IMB* resistance on the Zamboanga Peninsula. On 2 April the reinforced 2d Battalion, 163d Infantry, landed on Sanga Sanga Island of the Tawitawi Group, 200 miles southwest of Zamboanga and less than 40 miles from the coast of Borneo. A little ineffective mortar and machine gun fire from a nearby islet, Bangao, was the only opposition, and by 6 April the battalion had cleared both Bangao and Sanga Sanga at the cost of 2 men killed and 4 wounded, the Japanese losing about 30 men killed. The Japanese had already withdrawn from Tawitawi Island,

[19] This section is based largely upon: Eighth Army Rpt Palawan and Zamboanga Opns, pp. 28–29, 41–42, 44, 56–60; 10th I&H, Opnl Monograph Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago Opn, pp. 10–11, 45–46, 53–61, 63–64, 77; 10th I&H, Staff Study of Japanese Operations on Jolo Island, 9 Apr–16 Sep 45, *passim* (based mainly on materials supplied by Maj Tokichi Tenmyo, CO *365th IIB 55th IMB*); 163d Inf Unit Jnl 6 Apr–20 Jun 45.



MAP 29

which guerrillas had controlled since mid-March.

In jumping from Zamboanga to the Tawitawi Group, the 41st Division had bypassed the only significant concentration of Japanese along the Sulu Archipelago. On Jolo Island, about midway between Zamboanga and Tawitawi, the garrison included approximately 2,400 men of the *55th IMB*, 1,000 Army Air Force personnel, and 350 Japanese naval troops. As at Zamboanga, the Japanese on Jolo Island made no serious effort to defend the beaches, and about 0845 on 9 April the reinforced 163d RCT (less 2d Battalion, 163d Infantry) landed against no resistance near Jolo Town, on the island's northwestern shore. By evening on 11 April the 163d Infantry had driven Japanese forces off heights immediately south and southeast of the town and had secured a nearby airstrip.

Having retired to hill masses farther inland where defenses had been long in preparation, the Japanese began to resist stubbornly. One concentration was located at Mt. Daho, six miles southeast of Jolo, and another on Mt. Tumatangus, about the same distance southwest of the town. Attacks against the Mt. Daho defenses began on 15 April, local guerrillas under Col. Alejandro Suarez, Philippine Army, leading off. Since the guerrillas alone were unable to reduce the Japanese positions, the 1st Battalion of the 163d Infantry joined the fight. Artillery support and close air support by Zamboanga-based Marine Corps planes enabled the combined 163d Infantry and guerrilla force to overrun the Japanese defenses on 22 April. Some of the defenders escaped westward to Mt. Tumatangus, where guerrillas and the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, began an attack

on 25 April. These troops reduced most of the prepared defenses at Mt. Tumatangus by 2 May, and operations on Jolo Island passed to the mopping-up stage.

Some organized resistance continued in the Mt. Tumatangus area into July, when the remaining Japanese attempted to move to the eastern end of Jolo. Meanwhile, the bulk of the 163d RCT had pulled out of action and the last elements left Jolo for Mindanao on 19 June, to be replaced by troops of the 368th Infantry, 93d Division, and Colonel Suarez' guerrillas. The 163d RCT lost approximately 35 men killed and 125 wounded on Jolo to mid-June, by which time the Japanese had lost over 2,000 men killed. Less than 90 of the Japanese not killed or captured by mid-June survived to surrender after the end of the war.

Zamboanga-Sulu Airfield Development

While the landing on Jolo Island marked the end of the most significant action of the ground phase of the Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago operation, the strategic purposes for which the operations had been designed were not satisfied until planned airfield construction had been completed.[20] The first field at Zamboanga was a dry-weather strip 5,000 feet long, completed on 15 March and immediately put to use by Marine Corps planes. The field, named Calarian Drome, could not answer the need for an all-weather strip 6,000 feet long. Accordingly, engineers constructed a new strip, which the Marine aviators based there called Moret Field, about a mile to the east, and had it ready for all-weather operations by 16 May. Used primarily by Marine Air Groups 12, 24, and 32, Moret Field was also employed by a Thirteenth Air Force night-fighter squadron, an emergency rescue squadron, and Thirteenth Air Force B–24's and P–38's staging through for strikes against Borneo. Marine Corps planes on 16 March executed the first support mission flown from a field in the Zamboanga area, covering the landing on Basilan Island. Later, Marine Corps planes from Zamboanga flew support for the Tawitawi and Jolo operations and undertook preassault bombardment and cover for the invasion of eastern Mindanao. While Thirteenth Air Force planes executed most of the support for the invasion of Borneo, Marine Corps B–25's from Zamboanga also flew some missions.

At Sanga Sanga Island there was a Japanese coral-surfaced strip about 2,800 feet long. Engineers repaired and extended this strip to a length of 5,000 feet by 2 May, when fighters of the Thirteenth Air Force began moving to Sanga Sanga from Palawan to provide close support for the initial landings on Borneo. These U.S. Army planes were replaced in mid-May by units of the Royal Australian Air Force, which employed the all-weather Sanga Sanga field during later operations on Borneo. Finally, a Japanese field 3,800 feet long on Jolo Island was repaired and used for aerial supply and evacuation operations in support of ground troops throughout the Sulu Archipelago.

[20] This subsection is based on: 10th I&H, Opnl Monograph Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago Opn, pp. 41, 58; Eighth Army Rpt Palawan and Zamboanga Opns, pp. 97, 105, 116; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 114–17, 121–22, 125; Craven and Cate, *AAF V*, pp. 456, 466; Office of the Chief Engineer, General Headquarters, Army Forces, Pacific, "Engineers of the Southwest Pacific, 1941–1945," VI, *Airfield and Base Development* (Washington, 1951), 373.

Planes based at both Zamboanga and Sanga Sanga were to have had a share in the air support of post-Borneo operations in the Indies, and preparations for these operations were well along when the war ended. As it was, the Zamboanga and Sanga Sanga fields had already assumed greater importance for operations in the Indies than originally contemplated. Engineering problems at the first Borneo landing areas were such that airstrips on that island were not ready in time to provide support for subsequent Borneo operations, so the Philippine fields had to serve instead. Strategically and tactically, the Zamboanga and Sanga Sanga fields had proved invaluable, and in the process of seizing the sites for these fields Eighth Army had liberated some 250,000 Filipinos.

CHAPTER XXXI

The Central Visayan Islands

Well before organized Japanese resistance in the Zamboanga-Sulu region had collapsed, Eighth Army had initiated operations to secure the central Visayan Islands. In fact, 41st Division troops had scarcely crossed the Zamboanga coastal plain when, on 18 March, the 40th Infantry Division landed on Panay Island to begin a campaign to secure Panay, smaller offshore Guimaras Island, and the northern section of Negros Island, east across Guimaras Strait from Panay. *(See map, p. 20.)*

Panay and Guimaras

The reinforced 40th Division (less the 108th RCT, which moved to Leyte) staged at Lingayen Gulf for the Panay–Guimaras–northern Negros operation.[1] The forces for Panay included 40th Division headquarters, the 185th RCT, the 2d Battalion of the 160th Infantry, most of division artillery, and normal combat and service attachments. The groupment left Lingayen Gulf on 15 March aboard vessels of Task Group 78.3, Admiral Struble commanding, and reached Mindoro the next day. There, a group of 542d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment landing craft (mostly LCM's) from Leyte joined. Taking the engineer craft in tow, Task Group 78.3 made an uneventful voyage to Panay and was in position off selected landing beaches on the southeast coast before dawn on 18 March.

Following a brief destroyer bombardment, the 1st and 3d Battalions, 185th Infantry, landed unopposed about twelve miles west of Iloilo, principal city of Panay and third largest commercial center in the Philippines. The beach bombardment was unnecessary—the first assault wave was greeted on shore by troops of Colonel Peralta's guerrilla forces, drawn up in parade formation and "resplendent in starched khaki and shining ornaments."[2] Numbering over 22,500 men, about half of them armed, the Panay guerrillas controlled much of their island. GHQ SWPA had sent supplies to Peralta by submarine, had relayed some by small craft through Fertig's guerrillas on Mindanao, and, after the landing on Leyte, had flown supplies to guerrilla-held airfields on Panay. Engaged primarily in intelligence work until the invasion of Leyte, the guerrillas had expanded their con-

[1] This section is based mainly on: 10th I&H, Operational Monograph on the Panay–Negros Occidental Operation, pp. 6–14, 22–32, 37–56, 130–131; 10th I&H Staff Study of Japanese Operations on Panay (based on materials from Capt Sadoyoshi Ishikawai, Opns and Intel Off *170th IIB 102d Div*); Eighth Army Rpt Panay-Negros and Cebu Opns, pp. 13–15, 18, 21–27.

[2] Rpt, Asst ACofS G–3 Eighth Army to ACofS G–3 Eighth Army, 19 Mar 45, Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File VICTOR I (Panay), 10–22 Mar 45.

trol in late 1944, when over half the original Japanese garrison went to Leyte.

In March 1945 about 2,750 Japanese were on Panay, including 1,500 combat troops and some 400 civilians. The principal combat units were the *170th Independent Infantry Battalion* of the *102d Division* and a company each from the *171st* and *354th IIB*'s, same division. The remainder of the garrison consisted of Air Force service personnel.

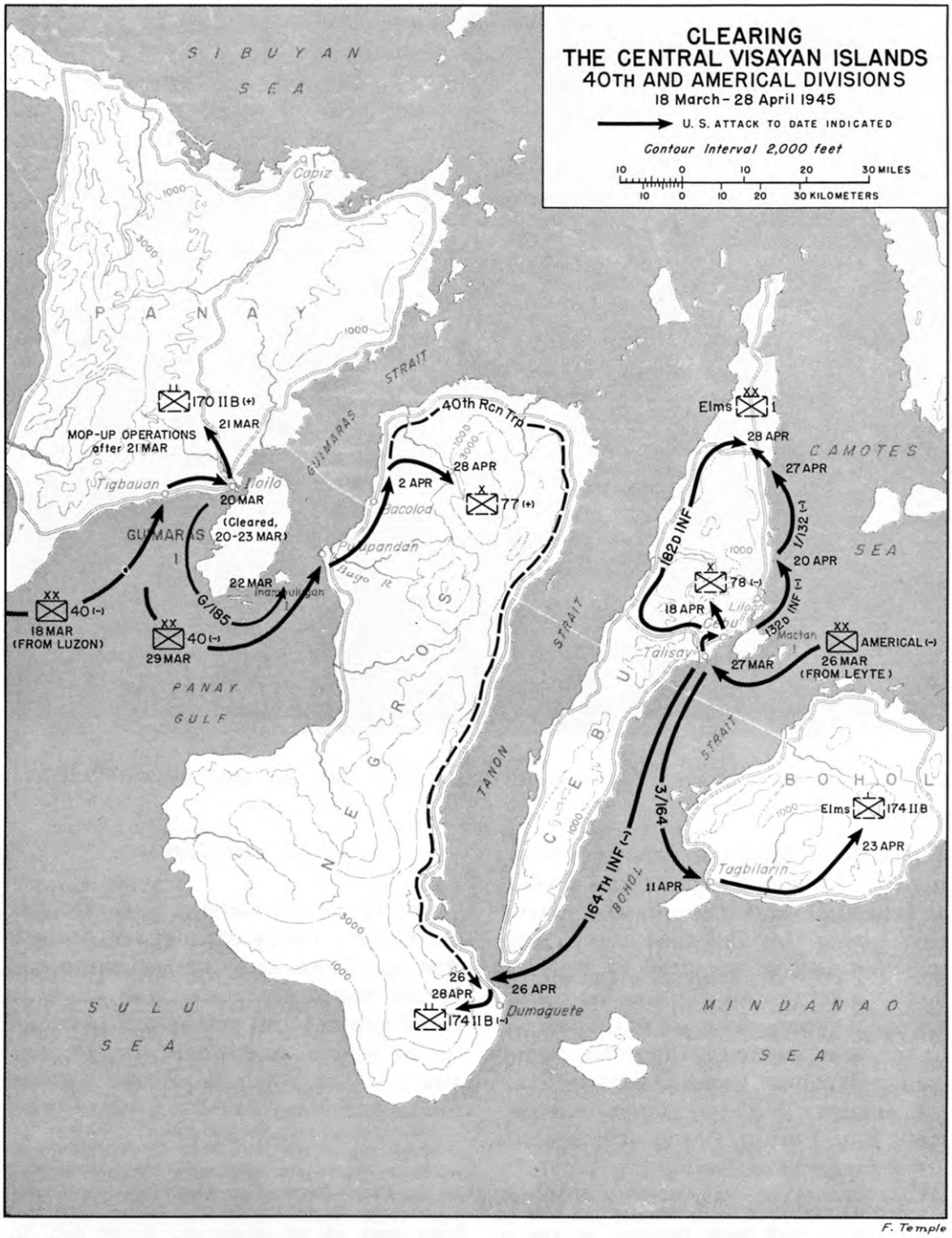
Most of the Japanese, commanded by Lt. Col. Ryoichi Totsuka, who was also commander of the *170th IIB*, were stationed at or near Iloilo. Totsuka planned to defend the Iloilo area and its excellent harbor and airfield facilities for as long as possible, but he had no intention of presiding over the annihilation of his force in a battle he knew he could not win. Therefore he decided to withdraw to the rough mountains of south-central Panay as soon as he felt his Iloilo defenses were no longer tenable. Avoiding contact with U.S. forces, he would attempt to become self-sufficient in the mountains, where he anticipated he could hold out almost indefinitely. Whether Totsuka knew it or not, his plan was strikingly similar to that executed by Col. Albert F. Christie's Panay Force in April 1942. The Fil-American garrison on Panay in 1942 had withdrawn troops and equipment into the mountains and successfully held out until directed to surrender.[8]

The 185th Infantry rapidly expanded its beachhead on 18 March 1945 against light, scattered resistance, and during the afternoon started along the coastal road toward Iloilo. By dusk the next day Colonel Totsuka had concluded that further resistance would be pointless and accordingly directed his forces to begin their withdrawal that night. Breaking through an arc of roadblocks that guerrillas and the 40th Reconnaissance Troop had established, the Japanese made good their escape, and by 1300 on 20 March the 185th Infantry was in complete control of Iloilo. (*Map 30*)

The Japanese withdrawal decided the issue on Panay. The 40th Division, estimating that only 500 Japanese in disorganized small groups remained on Panay, mounted no immediate pursuit, and it was not until April and May that Fil-American forces launched even minor attacks against the Japanese concentrations. The guerrillas and the 2d Battalion, 160th Infantry, which assumed garrison duties on Panay on 25 March, never closed with Totsuka's main body, and at the end of the war Totsuka came down out of the mountains to surrender approximately 1,560 men, over half his original garrison. U.S. Army casualties on Panay to late June, when control passed to Colonel Peralta, numbered about 20 men killed and 50 wounded.

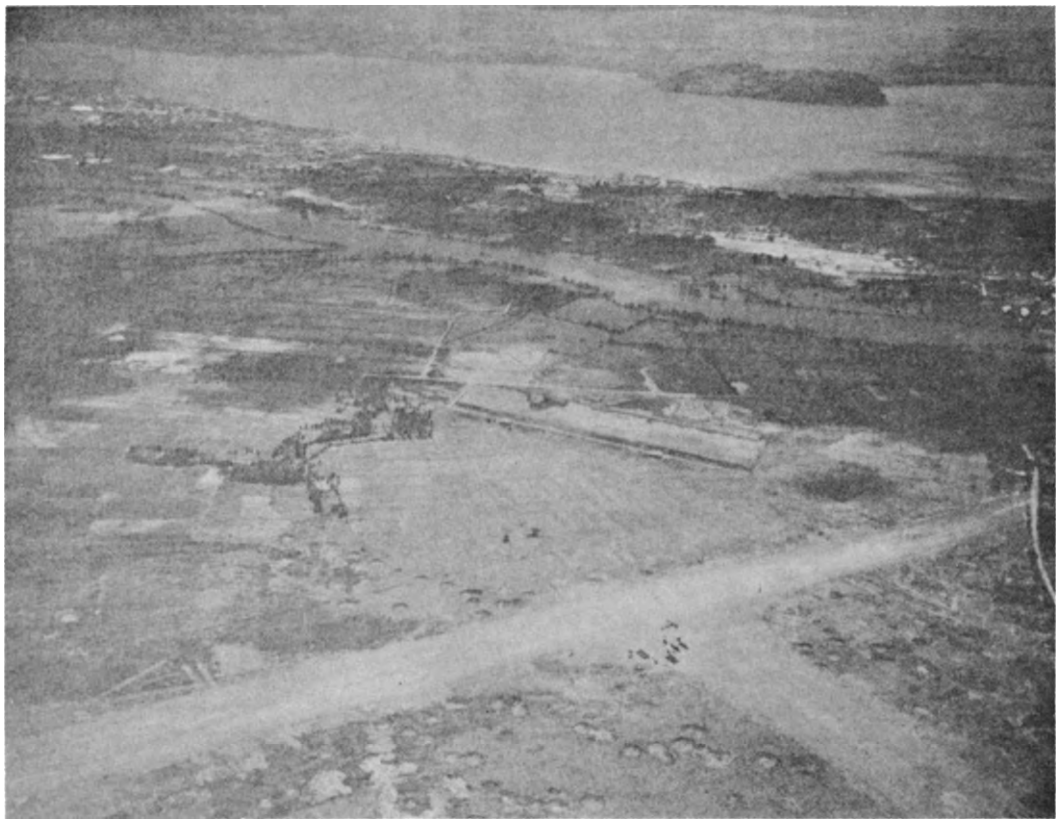
Operations to clear Guimaras Island began as soon as the 185th Infantry secured Iloilo, and on 20 March 40th Division patrols found no signs of Japanese on the island. Next, men of the 185th took tiny Inampulugan Island, off the southeastern tip of Guimaras. The Japanese on Inampulugan, who manned a control station for electric mines in Guimaras Strait, fled without offering resistance when the Americans landed.

[8] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 502–03, 506–07, 579–81. Actually, about 90 percent of Christie's 7,000 men failed to surrender and became the nucleus of the Panay guerrilla movement. Peralta, who was one of those not surrendering, had been Christie's G–3.



F. Temple

MAP 30



PANAY COASTAL PLAIN OPPOSITE GUIMARAS ISLAND. *Iloilo City, upper left; airstrip in foreground.*

Base development on Panay was rather limited. Engineers repaired an existing airfield at Iloilo for supply and evacuation planes, but kept additional construction to that required in order to mount a reinforced division for the invasion of Japan. The 40th Division was to mount at Panay for the initial assault on the Japanese home islands, and the 5th Infantry Division, upon redeployment from Europe, was to stage at Iloilo for subsequent operations in Japan.[4]

[4] GHQ AFPAC, Staff Study OLYMPIC, 28 Mar 45; GHQ AFPAC, Staff Study CORONET, 15 Aug 45, copies in OCMH files.

Northern Negros

On 24 March General Eichelberger, the Eighth Army's commander, decided that operations on Panay had proceeded to the point where the 40th Division could move against northern Negros and set 29 March as the date for the new attack.[5] The 185th RCT would make the assault; the 160th RCT (less the 2d

[5] Principal sources for American operations in northern Negros are: 10th I&H, Opnl Monograph on the Panay–Negros Occidental Opn, pp. 14, 67–115, 127–30; Eighth Army Rpt Panay-Negros and Cebu Opns, pp. 16, 27–44, 125, 137–38; 40th Div G–3 Per Rpts, 29 Mar–1 Jun 45.

Battalion, 160th Infantry) would follow on 30 March.[6] The 503d Parachute RCT, staging at Mindoro, would jump to reinforce the 40th Division upon orders from Eighth Army. Eighth Army reserve for the operation was the 164th RCT, Americal Division, on Leyte. The 40th Division could expect help from Negros guerrillas under Colonel Abcede since, with about 14,000 troops, over half of them armed, Abcede controlled two-thirds of the island.

Lt. Gen. Takeshi Kono, commander of the *77th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division,* had around 13,500 men in northern Negros.[7] Another 1,300 Japanese were concentrated at the southeast corner of the island but, tactically unrelated to Kono's force, reported to a headquarters on Cebu. Kono commanded about 5,500 men of the *102d Division,* 7,500 troops of the *4th Air Army*'s *2d Air Division,* and 500 naval personnel. The trained combat effectives, about 4,000 in all, were from the *102d Division.*[8]

Kono's troops lacked many essential items of supply. For example, less than two-thirds of his men were armed—he had only 8,000 rifles. Small arms ammunition was far from adequate; food, assuming no losses, could last for little more than two months. On the other hand, in some respects the Japanese were very well armed. Home of the *2d Air Division,* northern Negros had bristled with antiaircraft weapons, which Kono could use for ground operations. Kono's troops had also remounted numerous automatic weapons taken from *2d Air Division* planes destroyed or damaged on the northern Negros fields.

Like Japanese commanders elsewhere in the Philippines, Kono did not plan to defend the most important ground under his control, the airfield area of the northwestern Negros coastal plain. He intended to withdraw into the mountains of north-central Negros for a long stand, leaving only token forces behind in the coastal plain to delay American penetrations and to destroy bridges and supplies. In late March, accordingly, the bulk of his forces were on their way to inland positions, but unfortunately for Kono he was unable to take many of the larger antiaircraft guns with him.[9] Kono's first defense, an outpost line of resistance, extended along the foothills of the mountains generally seven miles inland (east) from Bacolod, twenty-five miles east across Guimaras Strait from Iloilo. His main defenses lay five to six miles deeper into the mountains.

[6] Additional planning information is from: Eighth Army FO 27, 24 Mar 45, and 40th Div FO 15, 24 Mar 45, both in Eighth Army G–3 Jnl File VICTOR I, 22–31 Mar 45.

[7] Japanese information in this section is from: Narratives and Interrogs of Lt Col Shigekatsu Aritomi (Staff *102d Div* and *77th Inf Brig*) and Lt Col Kiyoshi Suzuki (Staff *2d Air Div*), 10th I&H, Staff Study of Japanese Operations on Negros; Suzuki Statement, States, III, 357–61.

[8] The major combat components were: *172d IIB,* less one company; *354th IIB,* less one company; and *355th IIB,* less three companies. All were brought up to strength by absorbing other units.

[9] Kono's armament, apparently after the withdrawal from the coast, included:

Light machine guns	20
Heavy machine guns	8
Dismounted aircraft machine guns	30
75-mm antiaircraft guns	7
Antiaircraft machine guns	12
77-mm. guns	1
57-mm. guns	4

This information is from a review of the MS of this volume prepared by former Japanese Army and Navy officers under the auspices of the Foreign Histories Division, Office of the Military History Officer, Headquarters, U.S. Army in Japan (hereinafter cited as Japanese Review, 30 Sep 57).



90-MM. ANTIAIRCRAFT GUN FIRING GROUND SUPPORT, NORTHERN NEGROS

The 40th Division's first landing on Negros took place about 0500 on 29 March when a reinforced platoon of Company F, 185th Infantry, went ashore unopposed in the vicinity of Pulupandan, fifteen miles south of Bacolod. The platoon moved directly inland about three miles to secure a bridge over the Bago River, a bridge that provided the best and closest means of egress from the Pulupandan area to the Bacolod region. Clashing sharply with Japanese bridge guards, the platoon seized the Bago span before the guards, caught by surprise, could set off prepared demolitions. The platoon then held the bridge against minor counterattacks until relieved about 0930 by the main body of the 185th Infantry. The 185th had begun landing at Pulupandan about 0900. There was no preliminary naval bombardment and there was no Japanese resistance.

Spreading northward and eastward the 185th Infantry, which the 160th followed, secured almost the entire coastal plain of northwestern Negros by noon on 2 April at the cost of approximately 5 men killed and 10 wounded. By evening on the 8th the two regiments had

overrun the Japanese OPLR and were readying an attack toward Kono's inner fortress. Meanwhile, no need for the 503d Parachute Infantry to jump on Negros having developed, the regiment had flown from Mindoro to Panay and moved to Negros aboard small craft. Assembling to the left of the 185th Infantry (the 160th was now on the 185th's right), the parachute regiment prepared to participate in the attack against Kono's main defenses.

Launching a general offensive on 9 April, the three regiments drove slowly into rugged terrain where the Japanese had every defensive advantage. Kono's men had prepared cave and bunker positions, most of them mutually supporting and many connected by tunnels or trenches. The Japanese had dug tank traps along all roads and trails in the mountains, and had also laid mine fields using aerial bombs. Kono's men had excellent observation, for most of the hills in their last-stand area were open, grass covered, and steep sided. During daylight, the Japanese were content to conduct a static defense, but they undertook harassing attacks almost every night.

Little purpose can be served by describing in detail the mountain fighting in northern Negros. The battle soon degenerated into mountain warfare of the roughest sort involving all the problems, frustrations, delays, failures, and successes that American troops were encountering in the mountains of Luzon. The 40th Division employed air and artillery support liberally,[10] but in the end, as on Luzon, had to close with each individual Japanese position with flame throwers and the rifle-carrying infantrymen. As the campaign wore on, weather also became a factor with which the 40th Division had to reckon, for dense fogs and heavy rains slowed all operations.

By 2 June the 40th Division had overrun almost the last strong, organized Japanese resistance in northern Negros. On the 4th General Kono, realizing that his remaining forces were incapable of further sustained effort, directed a general withdrawal deep into the mountains behind his broken defensive lines. The surviving Japanese dispersed into small groups seeking food and hideouts and trying to avoid contact with Abcede's guerrillas who, under the direction of the 503d Parachute RCT, took over responsibility for the pursuit of Kono's men. On 9 June the 503d relieved all elements of the 40th Division in northern Negros. By that date the Japanese had lost over 4,000 men killed. Kono lost another 3,350 troops, mainly from starvation and disease, before the end of the war. After the general surrender in August 1945, over 6,150 Japanese came down from the mountains to turn themselves in, joining about 350 others who had been captured earlier. In all, about 7,100 Japanese lost their lives in northern Negros, pinning down the equivalent of an American infantry division for

[10] Artillery support available from the beginning was composed of a 75-mm. pack howitzer battalion, two 105-mm. howitzer battalions, a 155-mm. howitzer battalion, the 105-mm. SPM's of two regimental cannon companies, a 75-mm. tank company, two batteries of antiaircraft automatic weapons, and two 4.2-inch mortar companies. On 20 April a 90-mm. antiaircraft gun battalion arrived and was set up for employment against ground targets.

On 23 May S. Sgt. John C. Sjogren of Company I, 160th Infantry, 40th Division, singlehandedly killed 43 Japanese and destroyed 9 pillboxes as he led his squad during an attack in the rough hills of northern Negros. For his bravery and aggressive leadership, Sergeant Sjogren was awarded the Medal of Honor.

over two months. The 40th Division's casualties for the operation, including those of the attached 503d Parachute RCT, totaled approximately 370 men killed and 1,025 wounded.

Cebu

The Plan and the Japanese

The 40th Division had not begun the third phase of its campaign to secure Panay, Guimaras, and northern Negros when, on 26 March, the Americal Division launched a three-part operation of its own to clear Cebu Island, east of Negros; Bohol Island, southeast of Cebu; and the southern section of Negros Island.

While primarily designed to clear Filipino real estate and liberate Filipinos from the Japanese yoke, the Cebu operation was also executed to secure an additional staging base for the assault on Japan. Cebu City, on the east-central shore of the 150-mile-long island, is the second largest city of the Philippines and boasts port facilities second only to those of Manila. GHQ SWPA planned to develop at Cebu staging facilities adequate to mount a corps of three reinforced divisions: the Americal Division, and, upon their redeployment from Europe, the 44th and 97th Infantry Divisions.[11] Airfield development on Cebu would be limited to that required to provide a small base for transport and evacuation aircraft.

For the assault on Cebu the Americal Division (less the 164th RCT, held out as Eighth Army Reserve) staged at Leyte and moved to the objective aboard vessels of Task Group 78.2, Capt. Albert T. Sprague commanding.[12] With normal combat and service unit attachments, the Americal Division numbered nearly 14,900 men. The division proper was understrength, and, having recently moved down out of the mountains of northwestern Leyte, received few if any replacements before staging for Cebu. Already tired from arduous mopping-up operations on Leyte, the division received only the rest its hurried loading operations afforded.

Maj. Gen. William H. Arnold, commanding the Americal, expected considerable help from Cebu guerrillas under Colonel Cushing, who had about 8,500 men in his group. Before the Americal Division landed, Cushing was to attempt to secure the Cebu City water sources, located in rough hills three miles west-northwest of the city. After the assault, the Americal would provide Cushing with arms and other military equipment and employ the guerrillas to the maximum.

There was good reason for Arnold to hope for guerrilla aid. Lacking one RCT of his division, Arnold expected to encounter around 12,250 Japanese on Cebu, an estimate quite close to the actual strength—14,500—of the Japanese

[11] GHQ AFPAC, Staff Studies OLYMPIC and CORONET, 28 Mar and 15 Aug 45.

[12] The American side of the Cebu operation is derived mainly from: 10th I&H, Operational Monograph Cebu–Bohol–Negros Occidental Operation, pp. 18–81, 123, 130–33, and apps. I, II, and V; Eighth Army Rpt Panay–Negros and Cebu Opns, 56–57, 61–74, 137–39; Cronin, *Under the Southern Cross*, pp. 273–308; Interv, author with Maj Gen Eugene W. Ridings (on Cebu, Asst Div Comdr Americal Div), 19 Feb 57; Comments of Maj Gen William H. Arnold (CG Americal Div), 26 Dec 56.

garrison.[13] Roughly 12,500 Japanese were deployed in and near Cebu City, while another 2,000 held positions in far northern Cebu. Trained ground combat strength was low. At Cebu City there were less than 1,500 Army ground combat troops, most of them members of the reinforced *173d IIB, 102d Division.*[14] Naval ground combat strength at Cebu City totaled 300 men, all from the *36th Naval Guard Unit, 33d Naval Special Base Force.* In northern Cebu the combat element numbered about 750 men of the *1st Division*, who had recently arrived from Leyte. Finally, the 14,500 Japanese on Cebu included about 1,700 noncombatant civilians.

In late March 1945, the Japanese command structure on Cebu was in a somewhat confused state. Lt. Gen. Shimpei Fukue, commander of the *102d Division*, was present but had been relieved of his command by General Sosaku Suzuki, the *35th Army* commander, for leaving Leyte without permission. Until 24 March, only two days before the Americal Division landed, all Japanese in the Cebu City region had nominally been under control of Rear Adm. Kaku Harada, commanding officer of the *33d Naval Special Base Force.* Harada chose not to exercise all his authority and left defensive preparations largely in the hands of Maj. Gen. Takeo Manjome, commander of the *78th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division.* The northern Cebu groupment, independent of both Harada and Manjome, was under Lt. Gen. Tadasu Kataoka, Commanding General, *1st Division.*

General Suzuki, when he reached Cebu from Leyte on 24 March, immediately took steps to centralize the command. Assuming control of all forces on Cebu, Suzuki made General Manjome *de jure* commander in the Cebu City region and left Kataoka in control in northern Cebu. At the end of the month Suzuki went north to prepare for his ill-fated attempt to escape to Mindanao,[15] leaving Manjome complete discretion in the Cebu City sector. Manjome's command also embraced Japanese forces on Bohol Island and southern Negros.

Manjome designed his defenses so as to control—not hold—the coastal plains around Cebu City, and for this purpose set up defenses in depth north and northwest of the city. A forward line, constituting an outpost line of resistance, stretched across the first rising ground behind the city, hills two and a half to four miles inland.[16] A stronger and shorter second line, the main line of resistance, lay about a mile farther inland and generally 350 feet higher into the hills. Back of this MLR were Manjome's last-stand defenses, centering in

[13] The Japanese side of the Cebu story comes from: Narrative of Maj Gen Yoshiharu Tomochika (CofS *35th Army*) and narrative of Col Junkichi Okabayashi (CofS *1st Div*), 10th I&H Staff Study, *35th Army* Opns on Leyte; Disposition of *102d Div* Units, Jan–Apr 45, and Progress Outline of the Cebu Opn (based on materials from Maj Chuji Kaneko, Intel Off *102d Div*, and Col Satoshi Wada, CofS *102d Div*), 10th I&H, Staff Study of *102d Div* Operations on Leyte and Cebu; Statement of Col Okabayashi, States, III, 119–21; Statement of Capt Kenkiche Shigaki (Staff *33d Naval Special Base Force*), States, III, 283–84.

[14] The *173d IIB*'s reinforcements included a company of the *355th IIB, 102d Division*, and a provisional company composed of *54th IMB* troops stranded on Cebu on their way to Leyte.

[15] See also above, ch. XXX.

[16] Before the bulk of the *102d Division* went to Leyte, this OPLR had been intended as an MLR. But when he lost so many combat troops to the *35th Army* on Leyte, Manjome decided he had insufficient strength to hold such an extensive MLR so far forward.

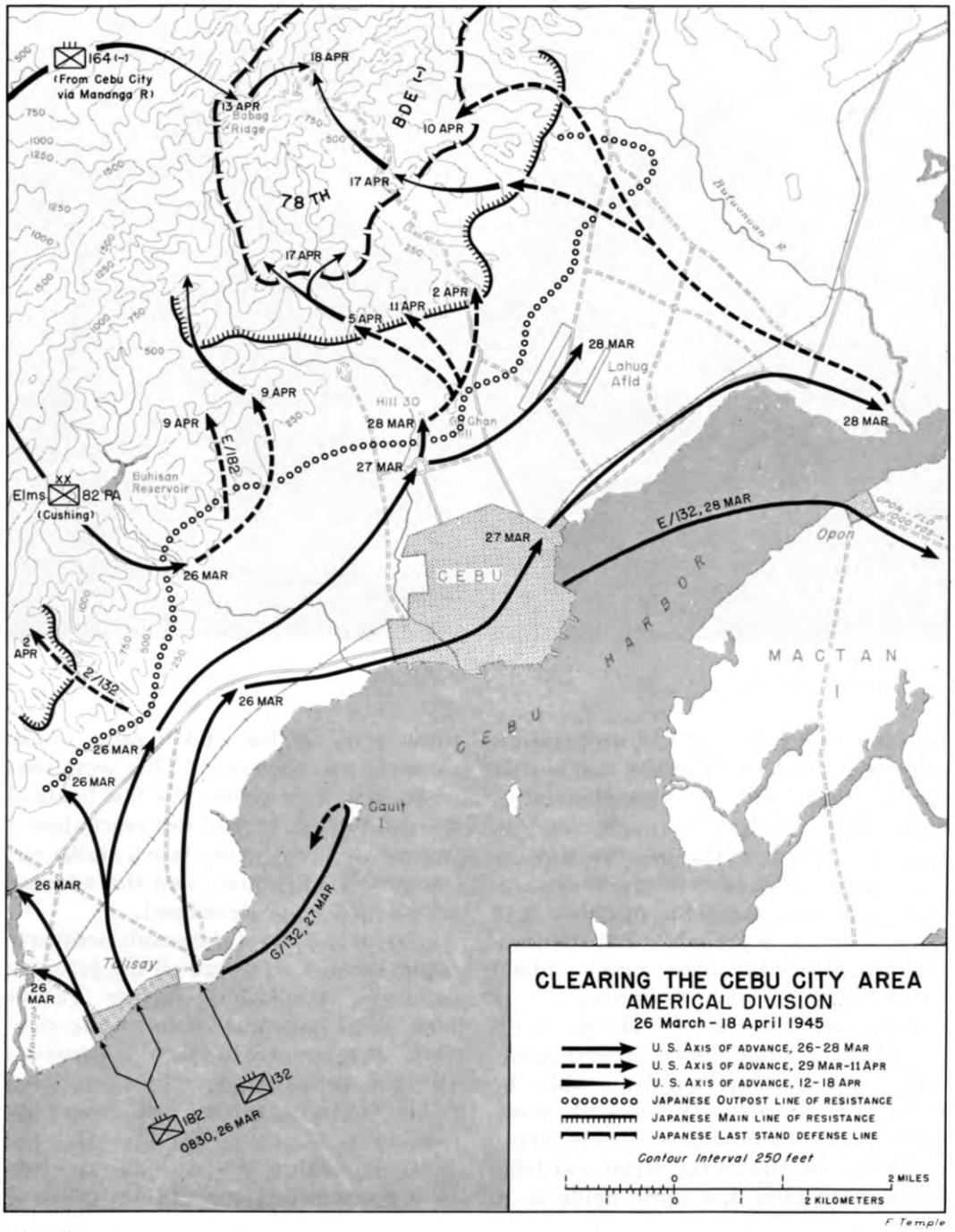
rough, broken hills five miles or so north of the city. Anticipating that American forces would attempt to mount wide envelopments of his defensive lines, Manjome set up one flank protective strongpoint in rugged, bare hills about three and a half miles north of barrio Talisay, on the coast about six miles southwest of Cebu City, to block the valley of the Mananga River, a natural axis of advance for forces enveloping from the south and west. Similarly, he established strongpoints on his left to block the valley of the Butuanoan River, roughly four miles northeast of Cebu City. Against the eventuality that the American invading forces might land north of Cebu City and strike into the Butuanoan Valley, Manjome set up another flank protective position in low hills overlooking the beach at Liloan, ten miles northeast of Cebu City.

General Manjome did not intend to hold the beaches, but at both Talisay and Liloan, the best landing points in the Cebu City region, he thoroughly mined all logical landing areas. The Japanese also constructed tank barriers along the shore line and planted tank traps and mine fields along all roads leading inland and toward Cebu City. The inner defense lines were a system of mutually supporting machine gun positions in caves, pillboxes, and bunkers. Many of these positions had been completed for months and had acquired natural camouflage. Manjome's troops had an ample supply of machine guns and machine cannon and, like the Japanese on Negros, employed remounted aircraft and antiaircraft weapons. Manjome had some light and heavy mortars, but only a few pieces of light (70-mm. and 75-mm.) artillery. For the rest, however, Manjome's forces were far better supplied than Kono's troops in northern Negros.

The Cebu City Coastal Plain

The Americal Division encountered some problems at Cebu that merit special attention, meeting the first at Talisay, site of the assault beaches. Following an hour's bombardment by three light cruisers and six destroyers of Admiral Berkey's Task Force 74, leading waves of the 132d and 182d Infantry Regiments, aboard LVT's, landed unopposed on beaches just north of Talisay at 0830 on 26 March. (*Map 31*) Within minutes confusion began to pervade what had started out to resemble an administrative landing. Japanese mines, only a few yards beyond the surf line, knocked out ten of the leading fifteen LVT's. Troops in the first two waves halted after about 5 men were killed and 15 wounded from mine explosions, and as subsequent waves came ashore men and vehicles began jamming the beaches.

Colonel Cushing had reported the existence of mine fields at Talisay, and the Americal Division had sent engineer mine disposal teams ashore with the first waves. The mine fields proved much more extensive than anticipated and the mines themselves quite a problem. The Japanese had placed 50-kilogram (111-pound) aerial bombs under most of the mines and when these blew they tore LVT's apart and left huge holes in the beach. Appalled by the nature of the explosions, the leading troops were also surprised at how thickly the Japanese had sown the mines, as well as by the fact that the preassault naval bombardment had not detonated the bulk of them. The effect was the more serious


164 (-)
(From Cebu City via Manunga R)
18 APR
13 APR
Babag Ridge
BDE (-)
10 APR
17 APR
78 TH
17 APR
2 APR
11 APR
5 APR
28 MAR
Lahug Afld
9 APR
9 APR
E/182
Hill 30
28 MAR
27 MAR
28 MAR
Elms XX 82 FA
(Cushing)
Buhisan Reservoir
26 MAR
27 MAR
E/132, 28 MAR
Opon
CEBU
HARBOR
MACTAN
I
2 APR
2/132
26 MAR
26 MAR
26 MAR
CEBU
I
Gault I
26 MAR
G/132, 27 MAR
Talisay
26 MAR
132
182
0830, 26 MAR
CLEARING THE CEBU CITY AREA
AMERICAL DIVISION
26 March - 18 April 1945
U. S. Axis of advance, 26-28 Mar
U. S. Axis of advance, 29 Mar-11 Apr
U. S. Axis of advance, 12-18 Apr
Japanese Outpost line of resistance
Japanese Main line of resistance
Japanese Last stand defense line
Contour Interval 250 feet
0
2 MILES
0
2 KILOMETERS
F. Temple

MAP 31



LANDING AT CEBU

because the troops had had no previous experience with an extensive and closely planted mine field. Another element of surprise that helped, paradoxically, to halt the troops on the beaches was the complete absence of Japanese resistance. Had a single Japanese machine gun opened fire, it is probable that the leading troops would have struck inland immediately, mines or no mines.

Brig. Gen. Eugene W. Ridings, Assistant Division Commander, found movement at a complete standstill when he came ashore with the second wave. Feeling that commanders already ashore had failed to employ the means available to them to clear the mine fields or to find a way through them, General Ridings set men of the 132d Infantry to work probing for and taping routes through the obstacles. This work was under way by the time the last boats of the third wave reached the beach, but it was nearly 1000 before beach traffic was completely unjammed and the advance inland had fully developed.

The air and naval preassault bombardments had not destroyed all the Japanese defensive installations in the Talisay area. Had Japanese manned the positions that remained intact, Americal Division casualties, given the stoppage on the beaches, might well have been disastrous. Luckily for the division, Japanese tactical doctrine at this stage of the war called for withdrawal from the beaches to inland defenses. The few outposts left in the Talisay area evi-



CEBU CITY

denced no stomach for sitting through the naval bombardment and had fled when Task Force 74 opened fire. The Japanese had missed an almost unparalleled opportunity to throw an American invasion force back into the sea.

Once past the beach mine fields, the Americal Division's leading units probed cautiously through abandoned defenses as they advanced inland to the main highway to Cebu City. Encountering only one delaying force during the day, the main bodies of the 132d and 182d Infantry Regiments nevertheless halted for the night about a mile and a half south of the city. Patrols entered the city before dark but did not remain for the night. The next day the infantry secured Cebu City against no opposition and on the 28th moved to clear Lahug Airfield, two miles to the northeast.

While maneuvering to take the airfield, the Americal Division encountered its first strong, organized resistance. Initially, this took the form of machine gun and mortar fire directed against the left of troops moving toward the airfield, but during the afternoon forward elements discovered that Hill 30 and Go Chan Hill, close together a mile north of Cebu City, were infested with Japanese. The 182d Infantry seized Hill 30 after a sharp fight on 28 March and on the next morning launched an attack to clear Go Chan Hill, half a mile to the east. The regiment made some progress during the morning of 29 March, but Japanese machine gun and rifle fire con-

tinued to pour down, unabated, along all slopes of the hill. The assault battalion prepared to withdraw from Go Chan to permit air and artillery to give the objective a thorough going-over, but at this juncture the Japanese, by remote control, blew an ammunition dump located in caves along an eastern spur of the hill. In the resulting explosions Company A, 182d Infantry, lost 20 men killed and 30 wounded; Company B, 716th Tank Battalion, lost one tank and crew and suffered damage to two more tanks. The infantry company, already understrength as the result of long service on Leyte, ceased to exist, and the regiment distributed its survivors among Companies B and C.

In a revengeful mood almost the entire 182d Infantry returned to the attack on 30 March. All available tanks, artillery, and mortars provided support, and the 40-mm. weapons of the 478th Antiaircraft Automatic Weapons Battalion joined in. By dusk the 182d had cleared all Go Chan Hill.

Meanwhile, the 132d Infantry had cleared the coastal plains area north to the Butuanoan River. West of Cebu City, since Cushing's guerrillas had failed to clear the terrain, the 132d moved to secure the city's water supply sources. The fighting for four days was bitter, and it was not until 2 April that the 132d had made the water supply facilities safe. Unopposed, troops of the 132d Infantry had meanwhile landed on Mactan Island, two miles east across Cebu Harbor from Cebu City.[17] Japanese fire from the hills overlooking Lahug Airfield on the Cebu mainland had made it impossible for engineers to work at the Lahug site, and Eighth Army had accordingly directed the Americal Division to seize a strip on Mactan. The strip was operational for transport planes by 2 April, meeting the immediate airfield requirements for the Cebu operation.

The Main Defenses

By the end of March the Americal Division had acquired a good idea of the nature and extent of General Manjome's principal defenses, and had learned that it had already overrun some of the strongpoints along the Japanese OPLR. On the other hand, the division had not been able to pinpoint the Japanese flanks. With the enemy firmly entrenched and having all the advantages of observation, General Arnold knew that the process of reducing Manjome's positions would be slow and costly no matter what type of maneuver the Americal Division employed. Lacking the strength required for wide envelopments and specific information about the Japanese flanks, Arnold hoped he might achieve decisive results with a single sledgehammer blow against the Japanese center. He therefore decided to use the bulk of his strength in a frontal assault into the hills due north of Cebu City.

This attack the 182d Infantry launched on 1 April, and by the 11th the regiment had reduced almost all the important defensive installations along the center of Manjome's second line. Meanwhile, General Arnold had moved most of the 132d Infantry against the Japanese left. Striking up the west bank of the Butuanoan River and then west from that stream, the 132d, by 11 April, actually turned the Japanese left and

[17] It was on Mactan that Magellan was killed during his famous voyage of circumnavigation.

reached a point on the extreme left of Manjome's last-stand positions. But the Americal Division, still lacking information on Japanese dispositions in the hinterland. did not recognize the significance of the 132d Infantry's gains and made no immediate provision to exploit the success.

Casualties during the attacks between 1 and 12 April were quite heavy, and as early as the 3d General Arnold had concluded that he was not going to realize his hopes for quick breakthrough in the Japanese center. He decided that success at a reasonable cost and within a reasonable time required a wide envelopment—as opposed to the 132d Infantry's more or less frontal attack on the Japanese left—and for this purpose he asked General Eichelberger to release the 164th RCT from Eighth Army Reserve and dispatch it to Cebu. Arnold planned to have the 164th Infantry envelop the Japanese right and right rear via the Mananga River valley. Guerrillas would screen the regiment's movement with operations off the east bank of the Mananga while the 132d and 182d Infantry Regiments would concentrate on the Japanese left, undertaking maneuvers the Japanese would interpret as presaging a major attack from the Butuanoan River. (The 132d Infantry's attack up that river had in large measure been tied to this deception plan.) Finally, Arnold directed the 182d Infantry to employ part of its strength in a holding attack against the Japanese center.

The 164th Infantry, less one battalion, reached Cebu on the 9th and started up the Mananga Valley during the night of 11–12 April. Halting throughout the 12th, the regiment then swung northeast and during the night of 12–13 April moved into position about a mile northwest of the major strongpoint on the right rear of Manjome's last-stand area. Hoping to achieve surprise, the 164th attacked on the morning of 13 April without preliminary artillery bombardment. The Japanese, however, reacted quickly and strongly. The American unit soon lost the element of surprise, and by the end of the day found its outflanking thrust evolving into another frontal assault.

Meanwhile, the 132d and 182d Infantry Regiments had resumed their attacks. The 182d succeeded in overrunning the last strongpoint along the Japanese second line, but the 132d Infantry had made no significant gains by 13 April. All three regiments of the Americal Division now settled down to a series of costly, small unit attacks during which they gained ground painfully, yard by yard, behind close artillery and air support. Finally, on 17 April, organized resistance in the Japanese last-stand area began to collapse, and by evening that day the division had reduced all of Manjome's major strongpoints. The end of organized resistance in the hills north of Cebu City came on the 18th.

On 16 April the Americal Division had estimated that Manjome could hold out in his last-stand area for at least another two weeks, and the sudden collapse of organized opposition came as something of a surprise. Unknown to the Americal Division, Manjome had decided about 12 April that further resistance would be futile and had directed a general withdrawal northward to begin during the night of 16–17 April. By the morning of the 17th the withdrawal was well under way, and some 7,500 men managed to extricate themselves in fairly

good order. Manjome left behind large stores of ammunition, weapons, and food and also lost a good many troops as they ran through a gantlet of 132d Infantry outposts.

After the war one Japanese survivor of the fighting on Cebu, Col. Satoshi Wada, the *102d Division*'s chief of staff, ventured the opinion that the Americal Division had been inordinately slow in mounting envelopments. He believed the frontal attack in the center had been wasteful of time and lives and that the Americal would have done better to execute an early, strong envelopment of the Japanese left via the Butuanoan Valley. He felt that the Mananga River envelopment, on the Japanese right, had started too late and had been too weak to achieve much significance. It appears, indeed, that the Mananga Valley maneuver accomplished little more than to speed Japanese preparations for withdrawal in accordance with plans Manjome had made before the Americal Division ever reached Cebu.

Colonel Wada's hindsight analysis leaves at least three important factors out of consideration. First, until 9 April General Arnold had only two RCT's on Cebu. With these he not only had to execute an attack but also had to protect and secure the Cebu City coastal area, clear Mactan Island, and guard against the possibility of a Japanese counterattack. Arnold, accordingly, did not feel he had sufficient strength to mount wide envelopments. Second, the Americal Division had not undertaken an envelopment of the Japanese left via the Butuanoan Valley because, until almost mid-April, it had not been able to ascertain just where the Japanese left was anchored—which may reflect adversely on the depth of 132d Infantry reconnaissance. In any case, the terrain on the Japanese left hardly invited concerted attack. Finally, the Americal Division had feared that the Japanese at Liloan (a force actually comprising some 1,500 ill-armed service troops) might strike the exposed right flank of units pushing up the Butuanoan Valley. It is true, however, that the envelopment via the Mananga Valley did not turn out as successfully as anticipated and that failure to push the attack via the Butuanoan Valley allowed a large Japanese force to escape relatively intact into northern Cebu.

Mop-up on Cebu

Following the collapse of Japanese resistance in the hills north of Cebu City, the Americal Division quickly set up a pursuit operation, but had a difficult time finding out where Manjome's forces had gone. Moving over mountain trails and through unmapped terrain, Manjome at first hoped that he might somehow evacuate the bulk of his troops to northern Negros. Quickly realizing this hope futile, he endeavored to join forces with *1st Division* remnants in northern Cebu. Here again Manjome's hopes were frustrated, for the Americal Division cut his line of march.

The division's pursuit began on 20 April when elements of the 132d Infantry, moving by small craft, landed on the east coast seventeen miles north of Cebu City. Eight days later the regiment had cleared the coastal highway for thirty-five miles north of the city. The 182d Infantry, meanwhile, had marched overland to Cebu's west coast, swung back east over an east-west road crossing the

northern section of the island, and made contact with the 132d on 28 April. The two regiments had thus split the *1st* and *102d Division* forces.

At the end of the first week of May the 132d Infantry began a drive to break up organized resistance on the part of the *1st Division* groupment and, with guerrilla aid, largely accomplished its task in a campaign lasting to the end of the month. During early June the bulk of the 132d and 182d Infantry Regiments, reinforced by two newly equipped guerrilla regiments, turned south against the *102d Division*'s groupment, which had holed up in wild, mountainous country in the north-central portion of the island. In two weeks' time the Fil-American units destroyed the last effective Japanese resistance, and the remaining Japanese broke up into small groups seeking only to survive. By 20 June most of the Americal Division, withdrawing from action to prepare for the invasion of Japan, left further patrolling to Cushing's guerrillas.

The Americal Division estimated that it killed nearly 9,000 Japanese on Cebu from 26 March to 20 June. This figure seems exaggerated, for after the surrender in August 1945 over 8,500 Japanese turned up alive on Cebu.[18] It therefore appears that roughly 5,500 Japanese lost their lives on Cebu from 26 March to the end of the war. The Americal Division, defeating a military force of approximately its own size—the division was considerably outnumbered by the Japanese until the 164th RCT reached Cebu on 9 April—had suffered battle casualties totaling roughly 410 men killed and 1,700 wounded. In addition, the division had incurred over 8,000 nonbattle casualties, most resulting from an epidemic of infectious hepatitis. Other tropical diseases also took a toll, and toward the end of the operation, according to the Eighth Army's surgeon, relaxed discipline on Cebu led to an increase in malaria and venereal diseases.[19]

Bohol and Southern Negros

A week before Japanese resistance collapsed north of Cebu City, the Americal Division, pressed by General Eichelberger to speed its three-phase campaign to clear Cebu, Bohol, and southern Negros, had sent a battalion combat team of the 164th RCT to Bohol Island.[20] On 11 April the battalion landed unopposed over beaches already controlled by guerrillas under Major Ingeniero. Patrols of the 164th Infantry on 15 April discovered the main body of the Japanese along low hills seven or eight miles inland from the center of Bohol's south coast. The Japanese force, built around a company of the *174th IIB, 102d Division*, numbered about 330 men in all. In a series of attacks lasting from 17

[18] Some of these 8,500 undoubtedly included a few late escapees from Leyte, for a tiny trickle of Japanese continued to make their way to Cebu from Leyte even after 26 March.

[19] Eighth Army Report Panay-Negros and Cebu Operations, pp. 163–64. General Arnold, in his comments on this MS dated 26 December 1956 took exception to the part about relaxed discipline in the medical report.

[20] This section is based primarily on: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Cebu – Bohol – Negros Oriental Opn, pp. 88–114, 123–25, and apps. III and IV; Eighth Army Rpt Panay-Negros and Cebu Opns, pp. 70–72; Narrative and Interrog of 1st Lt Komei Fujitomi (Staff Off *174th IIB 102d Div*), 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Negros; Cronin, *Under the Southern Cross*, pp. 309–34.

through 20 April the 164th Infantry's battalion broke the back of Japanese resistance; it overran the last organized opposition by the 23d. Most American forces withdrew from the island on 7 May, leaving the mop-up to Major Ingeniero's guerrillas and a detachment of the 21st Reconnaissance Troop, Americal Division. As of that date about 105 Japanese on the island had been killed; the 164th Infantry had lost 7 killed and 14 wounded. About 50 men of the Japanese garrison, harried and hunted, survived to surrender at the end of the war.

While one battalion of the 164th was securing Bohol, the rest of the regiment moved to southern Negros, where it landed unopposed on 26 April. Almost immediately after landing the 164th Infantry made contact with elements of the 40th Division's 40th Reconnaissance Troop, which had rounded the north coast of the island and had sped down the east coast without encountering any Japanese. The 164th Infantry then turned to the task of locating and dispersing the small Japanese garrison of southern Negros. Totaling about 1,300 men, this garrison was built around the *174th IIB*, less three rifle companies, and included ground service troops of the *2d Air Division* as well as about 150 seamen from ships sunk in the Mindanao Sea during late 1944.

By 28 April the 164th Infantry had located the main force of Japanese in rough, partially jungled hills about ten miles inland. The Japanese repelled the first attacks, which one battalion of the 164th launched, and on 6 May all available strength, including a guerrilla regiment, began a new, concerted offensive. By 17 May the Japanese were withdrawing from their best defenses, but it was the 28th before the 164th Infantry and attached guerrillas overran the last organized resistance at the Japanese stronghold. The regiment reduced a final pocket of Japanese opposition between 7 and 12 June, and by the 14th could find no further signs of organized resistance.

On 20 June the last elements of the 164th Infantry left southern Negros, and a company of the 503d Parachute Infantry came down from northwestern Negros to control the guerrillas and help hunt the remaining Japanese. The southern Negros operation cost the 164th Infantry roughly 35 men killed and 180 wounded, while the Japanese, to 20 June, lost about 530 men killed and 15 captured. As it left Negros, the 164th Infantry estimated that not more than 300 Japanese were left alive in the southern part of the island, but after the war about 880 Japanese came out of the southern hills to surrender.

Conclusions

The end of organized Japanese resistance in southern Negros marked the completion of Eighth Army's campaign to recapture the central Visayan Islands. During that campaign the reinforced Americal and 40th Divisions (the latter less its own 108th RCT but with the 503d Parachute RCT attached) had faced approximately 32,350 Japanese, of whom 8,500 can be counted as trained combat effectives. By 20 June the two U.S. divisions had lost some 835 men killed and 2,300 wounded; as of the same date Japanese losses were approximately 10,250 killed and 500 captured. Perhaps another 4,000 Japanese were

killed or died of starvation and disease from 20 June to 15 August 1945, but almost 17,500 of the original 32,350 survived and surrendered after the end of the war.

The collapse of organized opposition on Panay, Cebu, Bohol, and Negros did not complete Eighth Army's job in the southern Philippines. In fact, even as the Americal and 40th Divisions were finishing up their tasks on the central Visayans, other units of Eighth Army were heavily engaged against the strongest and most effective Japanese concentration in the southern islands, that holding eastern Mindanao.

CHAPTER XXXII

The Conquest of Eastern Mindanao

Plans, Preparations, and Penetration

The Concepts of Attack and Defense

Eighth Army assigned the task of destroying the Japanese holding that portion of Mindanao lying east of the Zamboanga Peninsula to Maj. Gen. Franklin C. Sibert's X Corps, composed of the reinforced 24th and 31st Infantry Divisions.[1] Army and corps plans called for the 24th Division, staging at Mindoro, to land on 17 April along the shores of Illana Bay, on the west-central coast of eastern Mindanao. The 31st Division would go ashore on 22 April over beaches the 24th Division had secured. The 31st's mounting areas were Morotai Island, between Mindanao and New Guinea, and Sansapor, on the northwest coast of New Guinea.

Illana Bay lies nearly a hundred miles northwest of the main objective in eastern Mindanao, the Davao area, and only a poor road connects its beaches to Davao. Still, Eighth Army had ample reason to select Illana Bay as the site of the initial assault. For one thing, the army knew that the Japanese had their main concentrations in the Davao region, where they seemed especially well prepared to repel an amphibious assault. It would be foolish to stick one's hand into a hornet's nest if there were no urgency for such action, and Eighth Army could not, of course, avoid the long view that the eastern Mindanao operation was in essence a mopping-up campaign rather than an action of great strategic importance. Second, the Illana Bay area was relatively weakly defended —the 24th Division would have a much better chance to achieve tactical surprise there. Finally, X Corps would have to seize and rehabilitate an airstrip quickly so that land-based aircraft could provide proper support for subsequent operations in eastern Mindanao, other air bases being too distant. A reasonably good strip existed at Malabang, on the northwestern shore of Illana Bay. Given the estimate that the Japanese maintained a weak garrison at Illana Bay, Malabang seemed the spot for the main assault.

After landing at Malabang, the 24th Division was to advance by land and water to secure Parang and Polloc Harbor, twenty miles southeast from Malabang. The division was then to strike south about fifteen miles to seize Cotabato and block the two mouths of the Mindanao River. X Corps made no detailed plans before the assault for operations after the occupation of the Mala-

[1] American plans are derived from: 10th I&H, Operational Monograph on the Mindanao Operation, pp. 9, 33–54; X Corps Rpt Mindanao, pp. 6–10; Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, pp. 124–25, and n. 26, p. 126; Eighth Army FO 26, 20 Mar 45; X Corps FO 27, 25 Mar 45.

bang-Cotabato region. However, it was generally understood that upon the arrival of the 31st Division the 24th would strike eastward across Mindanao via Route 1 to Davao. General Sibert anticipated that for the first forty miles or so inland the 24th Division would employ both Route 1 and the Mindanao River as axes of advance, repeating a pattern the Japanese had established three years earlier.[2] About forty-five miles inland, at Kabacan, Route 1 joins Route 3. Route 3, known locally as the Sayre Highway, runs northward almost 150 miles from Kabacan to Macajalar Bay on Mindanao's north-central coast. Sibert anticipated that he would have to use the entire 31st Division in a drive north along the Sayre Highway in order to destroy strong Japanese forces known to be holding that road.

On 15 April, just two days before the 24th Division was to launch its assault, X Corps made sweeping changes in its attack plans. Since early March elements of the guerrilla 108th Division, part of Colonel Fertig's 10th Military District guerrilla force, had been moving against the Japanese garrison at Malabang.[3] The guerrillas received some support from Marine Corps planes based on the new fields at Zamboanga and from Thirteenth Air Force planes from other bases, all controlled by a Thirteenth Air Force air support party that had recently reached Mindanao. By late March the guerrilla attack had progressed so well that L–5 liaison planes could use the Malabang strip, and on 5 April Marine Corps aircraft started operating from the field, which was in good condition. By the 11th of April the last Japanese had fled toward Parang and the guerrillas had completed the occupation of the entire Malabang region.[4] On 13 April Colonel Fertig radioed Eighth Army that X Corps could land unopposed at Malabang and Parang and that the Japanese had probably evacuated the Cotabato area as well.

Receiving confirmation from Marine Corps aviators that guerrillas held Malabang, Eighth Army and X Corps changed landing plans. Rear Adm. Albert G. Noble's Task Group 78.2 would set only one battalion of the 24th Division ashore at Malabang; the rest of the division would land in the vicinity of Parang. Planners also canceled naval bombardment against Malabang, but despite subsequent messages from Fertig to the effect that no naval shelling would be required anywhere along Illana Bay's shores, did not cancel bombardment of the Parang and Cotabato areas.

American estimates of Japanese strength in eastern Mindanao ran from 34,000 (Eighth Army), to 40,000 (X Corps), to 42,600 (Fertig), with more agreement on the deployment of major units. Fertig's estimates were the closest, for there were over 43,000 members of the Japanese armed forces in eastern

[2] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 510–13.

[3] In addition to U.S. Army sources cited, guerrilla information in this chapter comes from: Mindanao Guerrilla Record, *passim*; Fertig Interviews; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57. The 108th Division was commanded by Lt. Col. Charles W. Hedges, an unsurrendered American officer, while the forces at Malabang were under Maj. Rex Blow, an Australian officer who had escaped from Borneo. The Malabang guerrilla forces included the Expeditionary Battalion, 108th Division; part of the 105th Infantry of the same division; and the bulk of the separate Maranao Militia Force, a Moro organization that acted under the operational control of the 108th Division.

[4] The operations cost the guerrillas 17 men killed and 21 wounded; the Japanese lost perhaps 250 men killed. Less than 100 Japanese escaped from the area.

Mindanao, and there were, in addition, nearly 12,850 Japanese noncombatant civilians in the area.[5] Japanese Army ground combat and service troops (including about 7,350 civilians recently inducted into the armed forces) numbered roughly 28,600. There were some 8,000 Army Air Force troops, almost all of the service category, and around 6,450 Navy personnel. Of the total, almost 15,000, including 500 men of the Navy, could be classed as trained ground combat effectives. Most of the service troops were armed as auxiliary infantry.

The major units in eastern Mindanao were the *100th Division*, commanded by Lt. Gen. Jiro Harada; the *30th Division*, under Lt. Gen. Gyosaku Morozumi; the *32d Naval Special Base Force*, headed by Rear Adm. Naoji Doi; and the *Hosono Unit*, an Air Force command of ill-armed service personnel. The *100th Division*, with the *32d Naval Special Base Force* attached for ground combat operations, held the Davao area and controlled the southeastern third of eastern Mindanao. The *30th Division* was responsible for the defense of the rest of eastern Mindanao.[6]

Nominal command in eastern Mindanao rested with General Morozumi, who became *de jure* commander of the *35th Army* after General Suzuki's death during the latter's voyage from Cebu.[7] But Morozumi chose not to exercise his authority except insofar as to largely ignore advice from General Tomochika, *35th Army* chief of staff, who reached Mindanao in late April. Beset with formidable communications difficulties, and realizing that most inhospitable terrain separated the main bodies of the *30th* and *100th Divisions*, Morozumi believed he could render his best service by staying with the *30th*, leaving General Harada and Admiral Doi more or less to their own devices.

Neither Harada nor Morozumi had any offensive missions. Rather, in accordance with Yamashita's December 1944 plans, the Japanese on Mindanao were to direct their efforts to pinning down as many American units as possible in order to delay the progress of the war. Harada and Morozumi had little hope of conducting organized, major defensive operations for more than two months. Once American forces had overrun their prepared defenses, the two planned to retreat into largely unexplored mountains of east-central Mindanao, organizing a last-stand area like Yamashita's in the Asin Valley of northern Luzon.

The *30th* and *100th Divisions* were not in good shape to conduct a delaying, defensive operation. Hopelessly isolated, short of artillery, small arms ammunition, transportation, and communications equipment, they had no chance of obtaining supplies. They had some

[5] Japanese information in this subsection is from: G–2 X Corps, Summary of the Defense of Mindanao Gained from Interrogs of Officers of *35th Army*, *30th Div*, and *32d Naval Base Force* (hereinafter cited as X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao), pp. 5–14, 18–21; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao (based on info from Gen Morozumi, Gen Harada, and Maj Hiroshi Owada, Staff Off *100th Div*), passim; Tomochika, True Facts of the Leyte Opn, pp. 36–40; Statement of Col Hyobunosuke Yamazu (CofS *30th Div*), States, IV, 509–19; Statement of Col Mueichi Hattori (CofS *100th Div*), States, I, 304–10; Kusumi Statement, States, II, 380–81; Statement of Comdr Shinji Saji (Staff Off *32d Naval Sp Base Force*), States, III, 185–87; Japanese Review, 30 Sep 57, pp. 34–35.

[6] See apps. G–1 and G–3.

[7] See above, ch. XXX.

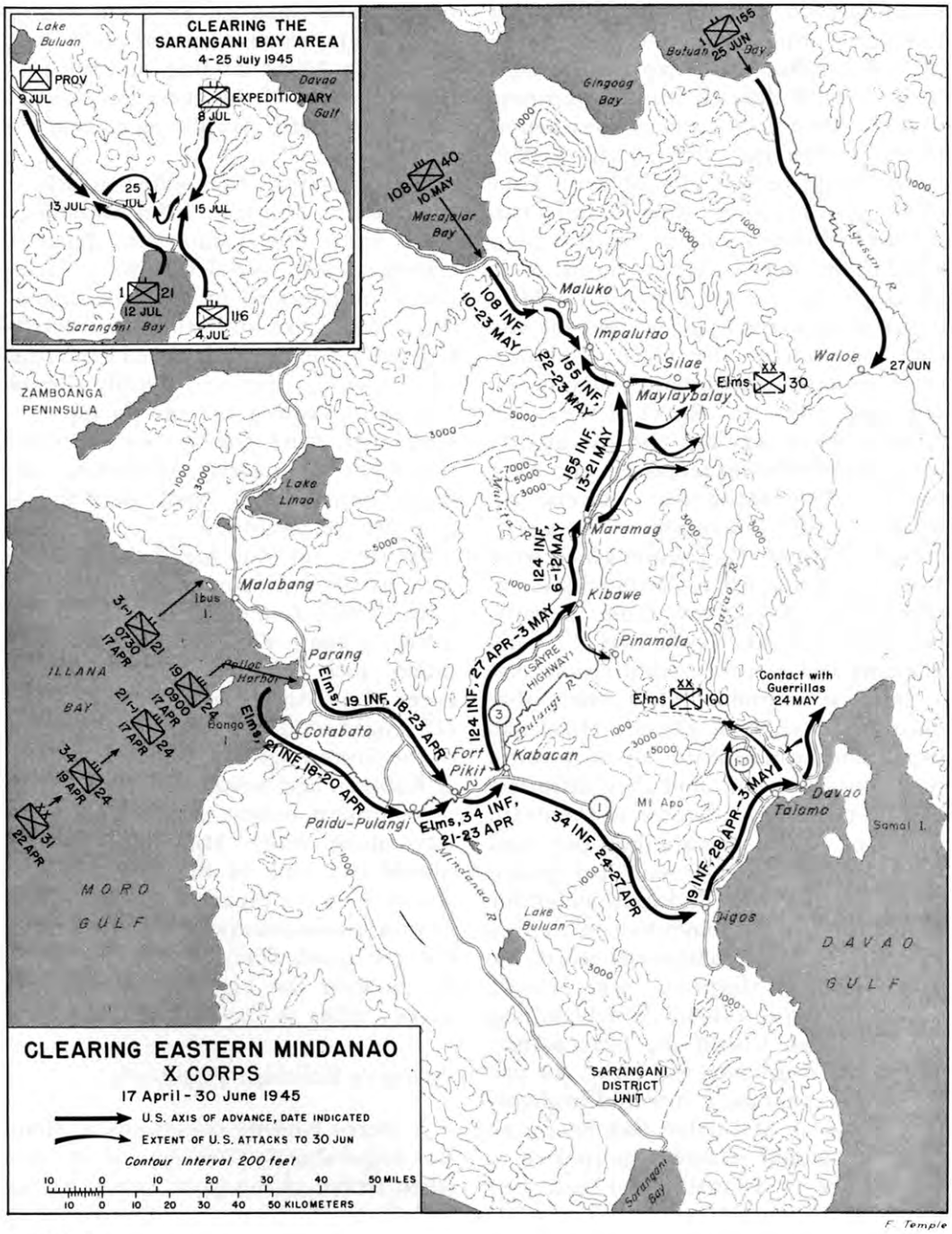
stocks of food, but their transportation shortage, coupled with the poor condition of eastern Mindanao roads would make it most difficult for the Japanese to move their food from central depots to the mountains. Both divisions also faced serious personnel problems. Four of the *30th Division*'s nine infantry battalions had gone to Leyte and had been annihilated there. Garrison units, some of which had led an easy life on Mindanao since early 1942, formed the nucleus of each of the *100th Division*'s eight independent infantry battalions. Not more than ten officers of the *100th Division* were regulars, and the quality of the division's junior officers and most of its noncommissioned officers approached the lamentable. Moreover, about a third of the division's men were Koreans, not noted for enthusiastic adherence to the Japanese cause. Finally, there can be little doubt that the commanders and staffs of both divisions had a defeatist attitude. They knew that once an invasion of eastern Mindanao began they would enter upon a battle they could not win, and they definitely had no relish for a defense to the death in place. It also appears that, pervaded by a feeling that the war had passed them by, the two divisions' defensive preparations were somewhat on the leisurely side. After Zamboanga fell to the 41st Division, Morozumi and Harada anticipated no additional Allied landings on Mindanao within the near future. When and if invasion did come, the two commanders thought, it would probably take place at Macajalar Bay or Davao Gulf and would probably be limited to the seizure of a small beachhead area from which the Allies could provide support to Fertig's guerrillas. The Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area ran a poor third in Japanese estimates of a likely site for an Allied landing, and not even the operations of the guerrillas there in March and early April caused them any concern.

The guerrillas had added greatly to the woes of Morozumi and Harada by April 1945. For example, the Japanese transportation problems were many times compounded by guerrilla demolitions, roadblocks, and bridge destruction. Guerrilla raids had destroyed communications equipment and supply dumps. It was impossible for the Japanese to send small truck convoys up and down the roads of eastern Mindanao, and small patrols had been out of the question for months.

Japanese in the Malabang-Cotabato area numbered 1,500 men — the reinforced *166th Independent Infantry Battalion*, a *100th Division* unit operating under *30th Division* control. In the event of an American attack, the *166th IIB* would conduct a fighting withdrawal to the Sayre Highway–Route 1 junction at Kabacan and would then help defend the southern section of the Sayre Highway, along which Morozumi had deployed the bulk of the *30th Division*. There were no Japanese along Route 1 from Kabacan southwest for thirty miles, but the *100th Division* was responsible for holding the highway for the next twenty miles to Davao Gulf.

Parang to Kabacan: Penetration

X Corps landing operations at Illana Bay began shortly after 0730 on 17 April when troops of the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, 3d Engineer Special Brigade, went ashore on tiny Ibus


CLEARING THE SARANGANI BAY AREA
4-25 July 1945
PROV
9 JUL
EXPEDITIONARY
8 JUL
13 JUL
25 JUL
15 JUL
1
21
12 JUL
116
4 JUL
Lake Buluan
Davao Gulf
Sarangani Bay
155
25 JUN
Butuan
Bay
Gingoog Bay
108
40
10 MAY
Macajalar Bay
108 INF, 10-23 MAY
Maluko
Impalutao
155 INF, 22-23 MAY
Silae
Maylaybalay
Elms
XX
30
Waloe
27 JUN
Agusan R.
ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA
Lake Linao
155 INF, 13-21 MAY
Maramag
124 INF, 6-12 MAY
Kibawe
Pinamola
Malabang
Ibus I.
31
21
17 APR
0730
ILLANA BAY
Parang
Pettet Harbor
19
24
0900
17 APR
Elms, 19 INF, 18-23 APR
124 INF, 27 APR-3 MAY
(SAYRE HIGHWAY)
Elms
100
Contact with Guerrillas 24 MAY
Cotabato
Fort Pikit
Kabacan
Pulangi R.
Mt Apo
Davao
Talomo
Samal I.
Elms, 21 INF, 18-20 APR
Paidu-Pulangi
Elms, 34 INF, 21-23 APR
34 INF, 24-27 APR
19 INF, 28 APR-3 MAY
Digos
MORO GULF
Mindanao R.
Lake Buluan
DAVAO GULF
SARANGANI DISTRICT UNIT
CLEARING EASTERN MINDANAO
X CORPS
17 April - 30 June 1945
U.S. AXIS OF ADVANCE, DATE INDICATED
EXTENT OF U.S. ATTACKS TO 30 JUN
Contour Interval 200 feet
10 0 10 20 30 40 50 MILES
10 0 10 20 30 40 50 KILOMETERS
F. Temple

MAP 32



LCM Carries Troops Up Mindanao River to Fort Pikit

Island, just off Malabang.[8] At 0730 guerrillas greeted the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry (minus Company K), on the beach near Malabang, and about 0745 Company K landed against no resistance on Bongo Island, fourteen miles off Parang. At 0900, following an unnecessary two-hour cruiser and destroyer bombardment, the 19th Infantry began moving ashore at Parang against no opposition; the main body of the 21st Infantry followed. (*Map 32*) During the afternoon the 19th Infantry secured the entire Parang area. The 24th Reconnaissance Troop, meanwhile, reconnoitered and found clear the shores of Polloc Harbor and, aboard LVT's, poked its nose into the northern mouth of the Mindanao River.

The units had moved so swiftly that X Corps, which had originally anticipated spending three or four days consolidating the beachhead area, decided to launch an immediate drive toward Kabacan. The intermediate objective was Fort Pikit, thirty-five miles inland, where Route 1 crosses the Mindanao River. The 19th Infantry would strike toward Fort Pikit along Route 1 while

[8] Principal sources for this subsection are: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 60–71; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 2–11; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 1–2; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 3–4; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 4–8.

the 21st Infantry, aboard LCM's of the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, would employ the Mindanao River as its principal axis of advance.

The drive to Pikit began on 18 April and by dusk advance elements of the 21st Infantry were about twenty miles up the Mindanao River. The next day troops of the 21st, still aboard LCM's and now supported by naval and engineer gunboats, reached Paidu-Pulangi, nine miles short of Fort Pikit. Although the 21st Infantry had encountered no resistance worthy of note, Maj. Gen. Roscoe B. Woodruff, commanding the 24th Division, was worried that the regiment was getting too far east—the 19th Infantry had not kept pace along Route 1—and directed the regiment to pull back downstream about ten miles for the night. Crews of five engineer LCM's held Paidu-Pulangi that night and throughout 20 April. On the 21st a battalion of the 34th Infantry came up to Paidu-Pulangi and, moving both overland and along the river—here called the Pulangi—reached Fort Pikit late in the afternoon. The infantry found the old fort in the hands of troops from LCM gunboats of the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment.

The 19th Infantry's advance along Route 1 had been slowed by the poor condition of the route, which was hardly more than a trail, and by elements of the *166th IIB*. Heat and the necessity for hand-carrying all supplies had also helped delay the 19th Infantry, which did not reach Pikit until 23 April. The remnants of the *166th IIB*, cut off by the seizure of Fort Pikit, melted away into rough hills north of Route 1.

Upon the capture of Pikit, the 24th Division turned its attention toward the Kabacan junction of Route 1 and Sayre Highway, only nine miles distant. Since the level of the Pulangi River had dropped, the division had to employ Route 1 as its main axis of advance, but happily found this section of the road in better shape than the Parang-Pikit stretch. Elements of the 34th Infantry reached the junction about noon on 22 April. During the ensuing night and early the next morning Japanese machine gun and rifle fire harassed both infantry and engineer troops in the Kabacan area, but by noon on the 23d all Japanese resistance had vanished.

The fire that the 34th Infantry encountered at Kabacan probably originated from elements of the *1st Battalion, 74th Infantry*, which General Morozumi, upon hearing of the X Corps landing, had dispatched southward along Sayre Highway to reinforce the *166th IIB*.[9] When he learned that American troops had reached Fort Pikit, Morozumi immediately directed the *74th*'s battalion to halt lest it, too, be cut off south of Kabacan. Next, he ordered the unit to pull back up Sayre Highway a few miles and await developments.

Plans of Exploitation

To a large extent, the 24th Division's seizure of the Kabacan road junction was strategically, if not tactically, decisive in the eastern Mindanao campaign.[10]

[9] Japanese information here is from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, pp. 12–14; Yamazu Statement, States, IV, 509–19; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao.

[10] This subsection is mainly derived from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 71–72, 75; X Corps FO 28, 21 Apr 45; X Corps FO 29, 24 Apr 45; X Corps Rpt Mindanao, pp. 21–22; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 20–21; Woodruff (CG 24th Div) Comments, 6 Jan 57.

Reaching the junction a week or so earlier than X Corps had anticipated, the 24th Division had projected U.S. Army strength into the very center of eastern Mindanao. Hopelessly separating the *30th* and *100th Divisions*, the 24th Division had opened two routes of further attack—the first north up Sayre Highway against the *30th Division*'s concentrations and the second southeast along Route 1 toward Davao Gulf and the main body of the *100th Division*.

The course before General Sibert, X Corps' commander, was clear. To speed the reconquest of eastern Mindanao, exploiting the success already achieved, he would have to divide his forces. He directed the 31st Division, which began unloading on 22 April, to start one regimental combat team up the Sayre Highway from Kabacan. The RCT's initial objective was Kibawe, forty-five miles north of Kabacan. Sibert had information that a fairly good trail led southeast across unmapped and partially unexplored mountains from Kibawe to Talomo on the northwestern shore of Davao Gulf, and he had a tentative idea that elements of the 31st Division might be able to employ this trail in order to fall upon the rear of the *100th Division* in the Davao area.[11]

While one RCT of the 31st Division drove to Kibawe, another would protect the X Corps lines of supply from Illana Bay to Kabacan. The division's third RCT would initially remain out of the fighting as a reserve.

Simultaneously, Sibert ordered the 24th Division (less the 21st Infantry, in X Corps Reserve) to mount an immediate drive southeast along Route 1 from Kabacan. The division's first objective was Digos, on the western shore of Davao Gulf approximately twenty miles southwest of Davao. After establishing a base at Digos, the division was to strike northeast to secure Davao and destroy the *100th Division*. Sibert also made tentative plans to employ the 31st Division's reserve RCT in an amphibious landing at Davao Gulf in the event that the 24th Division encountered strong opposition at Digos or on its way to that town. Dive bombers of Marine Air Group 24, which reached the Malabang strip from Luzon on 22 April, were to provide close air support for the 24th and 31st Divisions, while other Marine Corps planes from the new field at Zamboanga would reinforce MAG 24 as necessary.[12]

The Destruction of the 100th Division

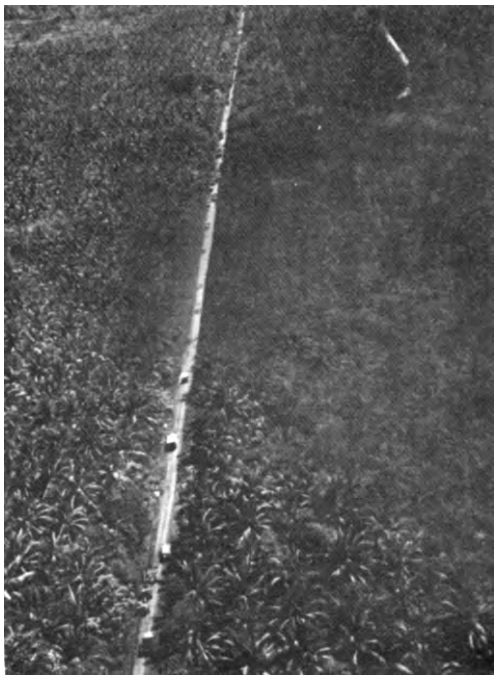
The Seizure of Davao

The 24th Division knew that speed was of the essence in its drive to Digos in order to prevent the Japanese from setting up strong defenses along Route 1 west of Digos or along the same highway between Digos and Davao. Accordingly, the 34th Infantry, spearheaded by the 24th Reconnaissance Troop, set out from Kabacan at a fast clip on the morning of 24 April.[13] Slowed mainly by

[11] For additional information on the Kibawe-Talomo Trail, see below, pp. 640, 644–45.

[12] Boggs, *Marine Aviation in the Philippines*, p. 128.

[13] This subsection is based largely upon: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 74–96; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 11–21, 26–30; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 8–18; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 2–5; X Corps Rpt Mindanao, pp. 22–25; Statement of Lt Gen Jiro Harada, States, I, 261–66; Statement of Col Rinzo Shizuru (CO *163d IIB* and *Digos District Unit*), States, III, 300–305; Col Mueichi Hattori Statement, States, I, 304–10; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao.



ROUTE 1. *19th Infantry heads through hemp plantation toward Davao.*

destroyed bridges and the poor condition of Route 1, the 34th reached the outskirts of Digos in midafternoon on 27 April.

Responsibility for the security of the Digos region was vested in the *Digos District Unit*, a combat force of about 3,350 troops who had nearly 600 Japanese civilians under their wing.[14] Prepared to defend the western shores of Davao Gulf against amphibious assault, the *Digos District Unit* received no instructions to reorient its defenses against attack from the west until 22 April. Indeed, it was not until 22 April that General Harada, commanding the *100th Division*, learned that American forces had landed on Mindanao.

The *Digos District Unit* made frantic preparations to meet the 24th Division's attack, but held out only until after dark on the night of 27–28 April, when it withdrew to the foothills of Mt. Apo, a volcanic peak cresting about seventeen miles north of Digos. On the 28th the 34th Infantry patrolled through formidable but abandoned beach defenses in the Digos area. During the period 29 April–12 May elements of the 34th Infantry and the Expeditionary Battalion of the guerrilla 108th Division cleared the Davao Gulf coast for fifteen miles south of Digos. Other troops of the 34th Infantry pursued the *Digos District Unit*, which held its ground in the Mt. Apo region until 9 May before withdrawing northward to join the rest of the *100th Division*.

Meanwhile, the 19th Infantry had reached Digos from Kabacan and, passing through the 34th Infantry, had begun driving northward toward Davao. The 24th Division was now responsible for capturing Davao, preparing an attack against the main body of the *100th Division*, and gaining contact with the guerrilla 107th Division, which held a line of outposts about twenty miles north of Davao.

Starting north on 28 April, the 19th Infantry found no strong defenses along Route 1 between Digos and Davao—it was plain that Harada had no intention of making a determined effort to hold the city. On the afternoon of 2 May the regiment overran the last resistance in front of the city and on the next day occupied Davao against negligible opposition, finding the city long since

[14] Major combat elements included the bulk of the *163d IIB*; half of the *3d Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment*; and the *4th Naval Battalion*, a provisional infantry unit. See app. G–1.

bombed into a shambles by Allied land-based and carrier-based aircraft.

Into Contact With the 100th Division

To the 24th Division, the capture of Davao was as decisive as the seizure of the Kabacan road junction had been to X Corps as a whole.[15] Clearing the shores of Davao Gulf from Digos to Davao, the division had secured for itself an excellent base area from which it could launch subsequent attacks against the *100th Division*. The 24th Division had also learned that it had bypassed the Japanese unit's main defenses, which lay two to four miles inland along rising ground paralleling the northwestern shore of Davao Gulf. The *100th Division* had obviously retired to position defenses; it had no offensive intent, and the 24th Division's task was going to be to root out the Japanese. From the theater point of view, the 24th's future operations would be mopping up, although tactically speaking the division was about to enter upon a frontal attack as rough as any the U.S. Army troops had engaged in the Philippines. In the end, though, the 24th Division's operations are important mainly as they serve to amplify and illustrate Eighth Army's share in the reconquest of the Philippines.

One of the first problems facing the 24th Division as it prepared to drive against the *100th Division*'s main defenses would be to concentrate sufficient strength to carry its attack through to a successful conclusion. General Sibert, commanding X Corps, faced essentially the same problem in regard to the 31st Division's proposed drive up Sayre Highway and tentative enveloping attack southeast toward Davao over the Kibawe-Talomo trail. With their extended lines of communication and supply, Sibert knew, neither the 24th nor the 31st Division would be able to make fast progress unless he could obtain additional troops. General Eichelberger, Eighth Army's commander, recognized the problem and gave X Corps the 41st Division's 162d RCT, which had completed its tasks at Zamboanga. One battalion combat team of the 162d came to Digos to protect the 24th Division's rear areas. The remainder took over the task of protecting the region from Illana Bay's shores inland to Kabacan, leaving the 31st Division free to employ additional strength on Sayre Highway. The arrival of the 162d RCT also permitted Sibert to release the 21st Infantry from X Corps Reserve and return it to the 24th Division in time to engage in the main attack against the *100th Division*.

The *100th Division* located the southern anchor of its defenses at Catigan, thirteen miles southwest of Davao, and the northern anchor in hills some twelve miles north of Davao.[16] The Davao River, flowing generally south-southeast

[15] American planning and operational material in this subsection is mainly from: X Corps FO's 30, 31, and 32, dated 27 Apr, 29 Apr, and 3 May 45; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 82–88, 96–101, 105–09; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 21–22, 30–37, 54–62; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 5–11; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 5–7; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 19–20; Woodruff Comments, 6 Jan 57; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57.

[16] Japanese information in this subsection is from: Harada Statement, States, I, 261–66; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao, and atchd maps; X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, pp. 18–22; Comments by Japanese Study Group, p. 34.

into Davao Gulf at Davao, divided the defensive forces into two groupments. The *Right Sector Unit*, west of the river, was composed of five infantry battalions, three regular and two provisional. The territory east of the river was the responsibility of the *Left Sector Unit*—two regular infantry battalions, two provisional battalions, and the Air Force's *Hosono Unit* of ill-armed service personnel. The *Right* and *Left Sector Units* had a little artillery attached, for General Harada kept under his direct control most of the artillery as well as many engineer and service units. As a reserve Harada had about a battalion of regular infantry.[17]

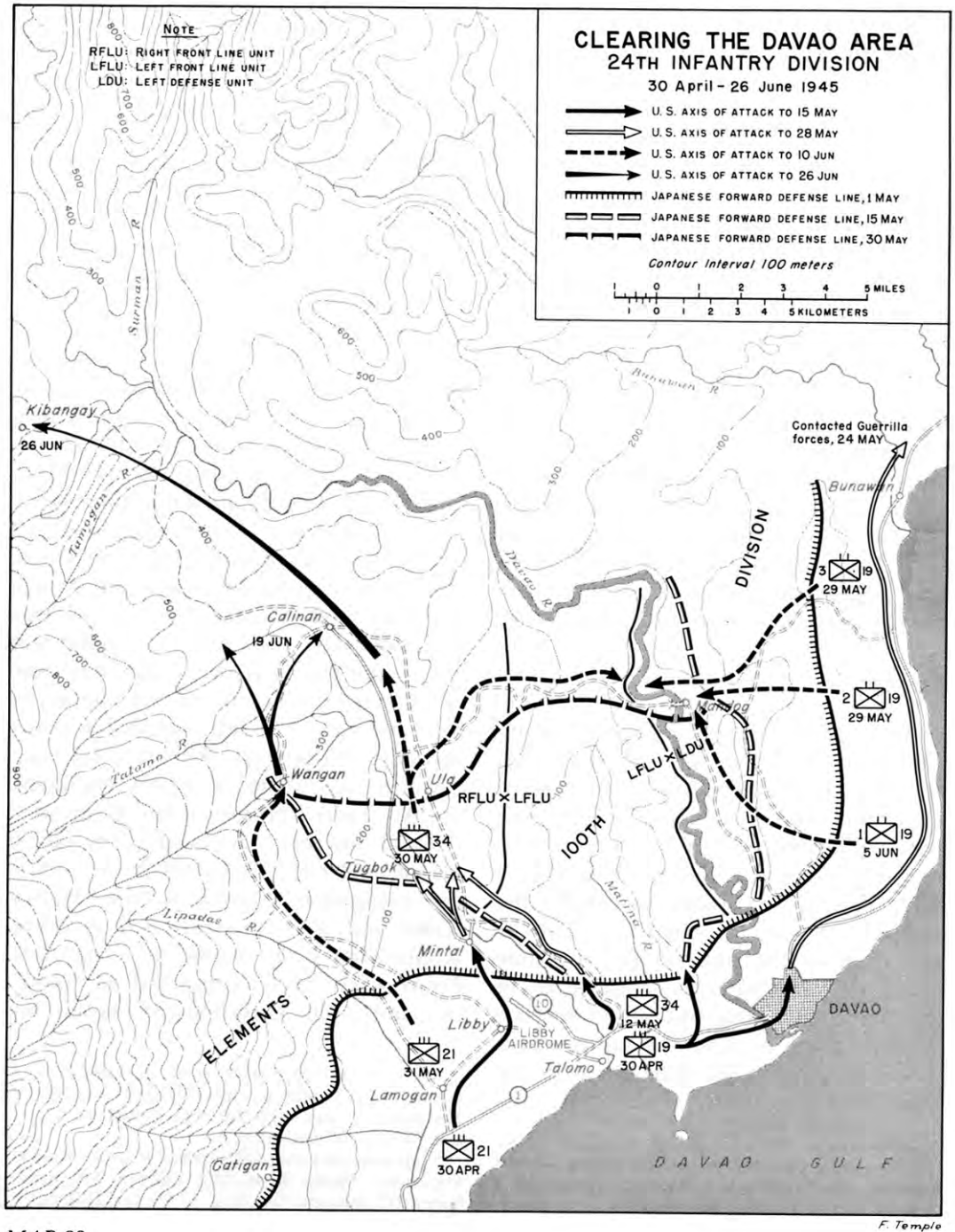
The central and strongest portion of Harada's defenses rested its right on rising ground overlooking Libby Airdrome, two miles northwest of Talomo on the coast. From this point the central defenses, along which Harada initially deployed three battalions, extended eastward across the Talomo River and some rough hills to the west bank of the Davao River. The focal point of the central defenses was Mintal, four miles up Route 1–D from Talomo. Anticipating ultimate withdrawal into the mountains via Route 1–D, the southeastern section of the so-called Kibawe-Talomo trail, Harada had prepared defenses in depth along the highway and along ancillary roads paralleling it.

One phenomenon of flora that the 24th Division was about to face as it moved against the *rooth Division* deserves special mention. Much of the region west of the Davao River from Talomo northwest twelve miles to Calinan was covered with overgrown abaca, or hemp, plantations. Resembling banana plants, and growing to a height of about twenty feet, the abaca plants had originally been planted in rows ten feet apart, with ten feet between plants. With harvesting slack during the war, the plantations had become thick with shoots, and older plants had grown to a foot or so in diameter. Plants of various sizes were, in April 1945, scarcely a foot apart. Visibility was virtually nil, and the heat at the hemp plantations was like that of an oven.

On 30 April the 21st Infantry attacked to clear Libby Airdrome, Route 1–D between Mintal and Talomo, and Mintal itself. Bypassing Libby Airdrome to the west, one battalion came into Mintal from the southwest on 3 May. The rest of the regiment, reinforced by a battalion of the 34th Infantry, cleared the airdrome by 5 May, but could make little progress up Route 1–D toward Mintal. For a time, at least, there was a very real danger that the Japanese might surround and annihilate the battalion at Mintal.

Elements of the 34th Infantry next tried to drive north along high ground on the east bank of the Talomo River to bypass the Japanese Route 1–D defenses on the east. A battalion of the 21st Infantry, attempting to make a pincers movement out of the attack east of the Talomo River, crossed to the east side near Mintal on 8 May but, in the face of Japanese artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire, had to withdraw back to the west bank on the 10th. A two-battalion attack northward along the east bank of the Talomo started on 12 May, and by the 14th the troops had cleaned out so many positions from which the Japanese had directed fire on

[17] For details of Harada's order of battle at this time, see app. G–1.


NOTE
RFLU: RIGHT FRONT LINE UNIT
LFLU: LEFT FRONT LINE UNIT
LDU: LEFT DEFENSE UNIT
CLEARING THE DAVAO AREA
24TH INFANTRY DIVISION
30 April - 26 June 1945
U. S. AXIS OF ATTACK TO 15 MAY
U. S. AXIS OF ATTACK TO 28 MAY
U. S. AXIS OF ATTACK TO 10 JUN
U. S. AXIS OF ATTACK TO 26 JUN
JAPANESE FORWARD DEFENSE LINE, 1 MAY
JAPANESE FORWARD DEFENSE LINE, 15 MAY
JAPANESE FORWARD DEFENSE LINE, 30 MAY
Contour Interval 100 meters
5 MILES
5 KILOMETERS
Kibangay
26 JUN
Tamugan R.
Surnan R.
Calinan
19 JUN
Talomo R.
Wangan
Ula
RFLU × LFLU
34
30 MAY
Tugbok
Lipadas R.
Mintal
ELEMENTS
Libby
21
31 MAY
Lamogan
Catigan
21
30 APR
LIBBY AIRDROME
Talomo
34
12 MAY
19
30 APR
100TH
DIVISION
Marilog
Marilog R.
LFLU × LDU
Contacted Guerrilla forces, 24 MAY
Bunawan
Bunawan R.
Davao R.
3 19
29 MAY
2 19
29 MAY
1 19
5 JUN
DAVAO
DAVAO GULF
F. Temple

MAP 33

Route 1–D that the 21st Infantry was finally able to secure the highway all the way north to Mintal. The division thereby obtained a good supply route for subsequent advances northward and simultaneously secured its left rear.[18] (*Map 33*)

Meanwhile, the 19th Infantry had been expanding its hold in the Davao area and on 10 May struck into high ground controlling the coast road immediately west of the Davao River. The 34th Infantry took over in this area on 15 May, before the 19th had completed its task. Other elements of the 19th, beginning 10 May, cleared scattered Japanese strongpoints on hills just north of Davao City, and one battalion combat team cleared Samal Island, in Davao Gulf just east of the city, in order to halt Japanese artillery fire that had been harassing troops in the city area.

Breakthrough in the Center

By 15 May the 24th Division, having established firm contact with the *100th Division* all across its front, had evolved plans for future operations. The 21st and 34th Infantry Regiments would attack abreast north and northwest in a drive against the Japanese center, the 34th east of the Talomo River and the 21st west of that stream. For the time being, the 19th Infantry would hold in the Davao City area, but would prepare to strike north to clear the northeastern shores of Davao Gulf, link up with the guerrilla forces north of the gulf, and, ultimately, swing westward against the *100th Division*'s left flank forces, which were holding high ground overlooking the gulf's shores for some twelve miles north of Davao.[19]

General Harada, the *100th Division* commander, had been surprised that the 24th Division had mounted no attacks against his flanks, and by the end of the first week of May had concluded that the American forces were going to neglect his flanks in favor of a frontal assault against his center.[20] Anticipating a drive astride Route 1–D, he had shifted two battalions from his flanks to the highway sector, and committed the bulk of his reserve to the same area. In mid-May, however, Harada decided that these steps were insufficient to meet the threat to his center. Accordingly, he undertook a wholesale reorganization of his forces that involved transferring most of the Army ground combat forces stationed east of the Davao River to the area west of the river. Control east of the river was now vested in Admiral Doi as commander of the *Left District Unit*, the major components of which included the Air Force's *Hosono Unit*, three provisional infantry battalions of naval troops, and two reinforced Army infantry companies. Between the Davao River and a north-south line crossing Route 1–D near Mintal was the *Left Front Line Unit*, composed of about two and a half battalions of regular in-

[18] Pfc. James H. Diamond of Company D, 21st Infantry, was awarded the Medal of Honor for a series of unusually brave actions during the attacks toward Mintal, actions that culminated on 14 May with wounds that caused his death.

[19] 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, p. 23; X Corps FO's 32 and 33, 3 and 11 May 45; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, p. 149; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, p. 11; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, p. 7.

[20] Japanese planning information is from: Harada Statement, States, I, 261–66; Shizuru Statement, States, III, 300–305; Col Mueichi Hattori Statement, States, I, 304–10; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao.

fantry, an Army provisional infantry battalion, a Navy provisional infantry battalion, a reinforced battery of artillery, and various service units. The area west of Mintal was the responsibility of the *Right Front Line Unit*, which included the equivalent of three regular infantry battalions, about two batteries of artillery, miscellaneous service units, and, after 21 May, the remnants of the *Digos District Unit*.[21]

The *Left District Unit* dug in along rising ground overlooking Davao Gulf between Davao and Bunawan, twelve miles to the north, and held a series of outposts along Route 1 north of Davao. Admiral Doi's strongest—and last-stand—defenses were near Mandog, a hill barrio on the east bank of the Davao River seven miles north of the city. Doi's *Hosono Unit* took little part in subsequent operations, but hid out in hilly country ten miles northwest of Bunawan.

Harada's new *Left* and *Right Front Line Units* completed their deployment on 17 May, the very day that the 24th Division launched a renewed attack.[22] On the 17th the 19th Infantry struck north from Davao to establish contact with the guerrilla 107th Division, which, about 1,300 strong, had been trying since 2 May to drive in Japanese outposts north of Davao. The guerrillas attained only limited success, but did deny the Japanese egress from the Davao coastal plains to the north.[23] By 24 May the 107th Division and the 19th Infantry had established contact, while the 19th Infantry had secured Route 1 north of Davao and was ready to turn west against the *Left District Unit* main defenses.

The 21st Infantry had struck north from Mintal on 17 May along two roads, Route 1–D and a secondary road east of the Talomo River. Three days later the regiment drove into Tugbok, on Route 1–D two miles northwest of Mintal, against determined opposition. East of the Talomo, progress was even slower against artillery, machine gun, rocket, mortar, and rifle fire, and it was not until 27 May that the regiment's right flank had drawn abreast, seizing a road junction about a mile east of Tugbok. The 21st Infantry held in place until the 29th, when the 34th relieved it.

To almost the end of May the 34th Infantry had had three battalion-sized, separate offensives under way between the Talomo and Davao Rivers. The dirtiest job the regiment faced was clearing coastal hills between the two rivers, hills from which Japanese units were constantly launching harassing attacks. On 23 May the regiment largely finished its task, but it was 3 June before it completed mopping up. On 14 May the regiment's left had attacked north near the east bank of the Talomo. Costly, laborious, small unit actions, combined with extremely close and heavy air and artillery support, produced slow but constant progress as units often found

[21] See app. G–2.

[22] The remainder of this subsection is based mainly on: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 101–05, 109–30, 149–68; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 35, 37–40, 62–66; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 11–15; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 7–8; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 21–30; Mindanao Guerrilla Record; Fertig Interviews; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57.

[23] Understrength, the 107th Division included only the 130th Infantry and the 111th Provisional Battalion. From 2 through 24 May the division, which was commanded by Col. Claro Laureta, PA, lost 17 men killed and 39 wounded in action north of Davao.

themselves hemmed in on three sides by veritable hornets' nests of Japanese. On 28 May the 34th Infantry made contact with the 21st Infantry at the road junction east of Tugbok.

Disappointing as the two weeks' gains had been in terms of terrain, the 21st and 34th Infantry Regiments had actually accomplished far more than the 24th Division thought at first glance. Penetrating as far as Tugbok, the two regiments had broken through the center of the *rooth Division*'s strongest defenses. The 21st Infantry, moreover, had decimated one of the *rooth Division*'s independent infantry battalions, while four other regular battalions and one provisional battalion had lost up to half their strength during the action to 28 May.

Taking a second glance at the situation at the end of May, General Woodruff realized that the Japanese center had begun to fall apart, and he ordered the attack continued across a much broader front than he had previously considered feasible. He directed the 21st Infantry to strike north along secondary roads lying west of Route 1–D, the 34th to continue the drive up Route 1–D and a secondary road east of that highway. The 19th Infantry's mission was now to overrun all Japanese defenses east of the Davao River and destroy Admiral Doi's concentration in the Mandog area.[24]

Overrunning the Second Line

Whether the 24th Division knew it or not, the division was going to attack toward a second line of *rooth Division* defenses.[25] By the end of May Harada realized that he would have to take some drastic steps if he wanted to conduct an organized defense much longer. Accordingly, he established new defenses along an east-west line crossing Route 1–D in the vicinity of Ula, about three and a half miles north of Mintal. The right anchor was at Wangan, about four miles west of Ula, and the left flank extended northeast and east from Ula to tie in at the Davao River with the *Left District Unit* defenses at Mandog. The right (west) portion of this second defense line was manned by 25 May, the left by the end of the month. How long Harada expected to hold his new line is not certain, but it is known that as early as 25 May he began preparing detailed plans for the ultimate withdrawal of all forces into the inhospitable mountains northwest of Wangan.

Attacks against Harada's positions east of the Davao River began on 29 May when the 19th Infantry, starting from the coast north of Davao, struck westward toward Admiral Doi's Mandog defenses.[26] The regiment began closing with Doi's main defenses on 31 May, and on 7 June the 19th Infantry, having overrun the outer defenses, was ready to drive into the main positions near Mandog. That day, attacking behind

[24] 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 116, 168–69; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 40, 66; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, p. 31; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, p. 8; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, p. 15; X Corps Rpt Mindanao, pp. 33–34.

[25] Japanese information in this subsection is from: Harada Statement, States, I, 261–66; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao, and atchd maps.

[26] The remainder of this subsection comes from: 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 40–48; 66–71; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 15–23; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp 8–9; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 31–36; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 116–30, 169–87.

close air support, the regiment pushed steadily forward and on the 9th overran the last major defenses. For all practical purposes the eastern section of the *rooth Division*'s second line had fallen apart, although it was not until 15 June that the 19th Infantry reduced the last organized opposition on hills a mile or so north of Mandog. Since General Woodruff wanted to pull the regiment out for operations to the west, it set up no pursuit but rather mopped up in the Mandog area until 18 June, when guerrillas took over. The remnants of the *Left District Unit* retired northward into rugged hills where, like the *Hosono Unit* farther north, it sat out the war in relative security, losing few men in combat.

The 34th Infantry's attack against the center of Harada's second line began on 30 May. Ula, a mile east of Route 1–D on a secondary road, fell on 31 May, but then progress slowed in the face of fanatic resistance. The 3d Battalion of the 163d Infantry, 41st Division, which had recently reached Davao from Zamboanga, took over on the 34th Infantry's left, along Route 1–D, on 4 June. With these reinforcements, the 34th Infantry had by the 6th progressed a mile beyond Ula on the secondary road and had reached an opposite point along Route 1–D. Elements of the regiment then swung eastward in an attempt to cut off portions of Harada's *Left Front Line Unit.* The attempt was not entirely successful, for by the time the 34th Infantry reached the west bank of the Davao River in the vicinity of Mandog on 9 June most of the organized remnants of the *Left Front Line Unit* had escaped westward. Nevertheless, the 34th Infantry's swing to the Davao River, together with the 19th Infantry's capture of Mandog on the 9th, marked the collapse of all that section of the *rooth Division*'s second line east of the secondary road upon which Ula lay.

The center, along Route 1–D and the Ula road, also began to collapse on 9 June. Two days later the 34th Infantry and the attached 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, were almost three miles north of Ula along both roads and were finding few signs of organized Japanese resistance.

On the left (west) flank of the 24th Division, the 21st Infantry had struck north from Lamogan, four miles west of Talomo, on 31 May. Following secondary roads west of Route 1–D, the regiment seized Wangan, western anchor of the *rooth Division*'s second line, on 9 June, and as of evening the next day all elements of Harada's *Right Front Line Unit* were in full retreat northward.

Thus, by dark on 10 June the 24th Division had overrun the *rooth Division*'s second line all across the front from Wangan east to Mandog, a distance of over ten miles. A beaten force, the *rooth Division* sped its withdrawal into the mountains; the 24th Division's operations entered the mop-up and pursuit phase. The task of crashing through the *rooth Division*'s organized defenses had cost the 24th Division approximately 350 men killed and 1,615 wounded; the *rooth Division* and attached units had lost roughly 4,500 men killed and 30 captured from late April to mid-June.[27]

[27] X Corps G–2 Per Rpt 55, 10 Jun 45; X Corps G–3 Per Rpt 235, 11 Jun 45. The casualty figures listed above include both 24th Division and Japanese casualties from 17 April to 11 June in the 24th Division's zones of responsibility.

The Collapse of 30th Division Resistance

31st Division and 30th Division Plans

While the 24th Division had been pushing the *100th Division* into the mountains northwest of Davao, the 31st Division had been methodically proceeding with the destruction of the *30th Division*. In accordance with X Corps plans, Maj. Gen. Clarence A. Martin, commanding the 31st Division, had upon arrival on Mindanao dispatched his 124th RCT to the Kabacan junction of Route 1 and Sayre Highway to prepare a drive north along the latter road. The 31st Division's initial objective was the junction of Sayre Highway and the trail that was presumed to lead southwest from Kibawe, forty-five miles north of Kabacan, to Talomo on Davao Gulf.[28]

General Morozumi, commanding the *30th Division*, had about 17,500 troops under his control.[29] His strength included 8,000-odd men of his own division, around 4,500 troops of attached combat and service elements, and nearly 5,000 Army Air Force personnel. Trained ground combat effectives numbered roughly 5,800. Considering the Air Force troops more of a hindrance than a help—he lacked arms to employ them profitably even in a defensive role—Morozumi kept in his lines only one battalion of Air Force engineers, which he turned into a provisional infantry outfit. Most of the rest of the air units early moved into the mountains east of the Sayre Highway to seek their own salvation.

Morozumi divided his combat strength among five defensive units. The 24th Division, in its drive from Illana Bay to Kabacan, had virtually destroyed the *Western Sector Unit*, built upon the *100th Division*'s *166th IIB*. Responsibility for the defense of Sayre Highway from Kabacan north to Kibawe rested with the 2,500-man *Southern Sector Unit*, which included a battalion of regular infantry, the equivalent of a battalion of engineers, and miscellaneous groups. The next 85 miles of highway, from Kibawe north to Maluko, was held by the *Central Sector Unit*—5,500 troops including an infantry regiment less one battalion, a reinforced artillery battalion, and service units. Near Malabalay, over 40 air miles north of Kibawe, were headquarters and division troops of the *30th Division*, another 1,000 men in all. The *Northern Sector Unit* defended the shores of Macajalar Bay, on Mindanao's north-central coast 30 air miles northwest of Malabalay, and Sayre Highway from the bay southeast 25 miles to Maluko. With around 4,500 men, the *Northern Sector Unit* included the *30th Division*'s reconnaissance regiment, a regular infantry battalion, miscellaneous combat and service units, and the provisional infantry battalion Morozumi had formed from Air Force engineers.[30] From the deployment of his *Central* and *Northern Sector Units*—well over half his strength — it seems obvious that Morozumi was more concerned with the

[28] X Corps FO's 29, 30, and 31, dated 24, 27, and 29 Apr 45; 31st Div FO 14, 25 Apr 45. See also above, p. 626.

[29] Japanese information in this subsection is from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, pp. 10–14; Statement of Maj Gen Gyosaku Morozumi, States, II, 594–603; Yamazu Statement, States, IV, 509–19; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao, Map VI.

[30] For details of the *30th Division's* Order of Battle, see Appendix G–3.

possibility of an attack from Macajalar Bay than with an American drive north from Kibawe.

Far northeast, at Butuan Bay, was the 2,200-man *Eastern Sector Unit*, built around one regular infantry battalion. Morozumi had intended to bring the unit westward to Sayre Highway, but before the end of April he decided that the force could not reach central Mindanao in time to be of use in the defense of the highway—guerrillas had blocked the roads and destroyed all bridges the unit had to use. Having already laid plans for the *30th Division* to retreat east from Sayre Highway, Morozumi directed the *Eastern Sector Unit* to move up the Agusan River from Butuan Bay to collect food and prepare the southern reaches of the river's broad valley as the last-stand area for the main body of the *30th Division*.

As the battle for Sayre Highway began, Morozumi already had several counts against him, some of his own making. Preoccupied with the prospect of attack from Macajalar Bay, he had prepared few defenses along the southern third of the highway. His units were so scattered up and down the road that under ideal conditions Morozumi would have had difficulty redeploying or concentrating them. Conditions along Sayre Highway were far from ideal. Neglected by the Japanese, the road was in poor repair and in spots overgrown with grass. Guerrilla activity had seriously inhibited Japanese employment of the road; every time the Japanese rebuilt a bridge the guerrillas would destroy it again. Allied domination of the air made it nearly impossible for Morozumi to undertake daylight movements, while elements of the guerrilla 106th and 109th Divisions harassed Japanese movements day and night.[31] Short of transportation before the campaign began in April, and shorter still of maintenance equipment, Morozumi would soon see almost all his vehicles either destroyed or deadlined for lack of spare parts and fuel. Finally, Morozumi apparently entered upon the battle for Sayre Highway with a defeatist attitude, evidently expecting to hold only long enough to permit the bulk of his forces to escape westward into the mountains through Malaybalay.

Kabacan to Kibawe

The 31st Division's 124th Infantry left Kabacan about 1800 on 27 April and advanced northward through gathering darkness until after 2200, when a meeting engagement suddenly opened with the *1st Battalion, 74th Infantry*.[32] Morozumi had earlier dispatched this unit southward to reinforce the *166th IIB* but had pulled it back when, on 21 April, he had learned that the 24th Division had reached Fort Pikit. On the 26th, no American thrust up Sayre Highway having developed, Morozumi again started the battalion south, directing it to hold the crossing over the

[31] The 106th Division was commanded by Lt. Col. Frank D. McGee, a U.S. Army regular who had been retired for physical disability after World War I. He volunteered for active duty in December 1941 from his home on Mindanao and did not surrender in 1942. The 109th Division was commanded by Lt. Col. James R. Grinstead, a reservist and former member of the Philippine Constabulary, who also failed to surrender in 1942.

[32] Information on 31st Division operations in this subsection is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 232–39; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 21–24; 124th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 4–14; 124th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 27 Apr–4 May 45.

Pulangi River just north of Kabacan.[33]

At a point about nine miles north of the Pulangi crossing the *1st Battalion, 74th Infantry,* with a strength of 350 in the forward area, was caught by surprise as its point ran headlong into the fast-moving advance elements of the 124th Infantry. During the ensuing engagement Battery C, 149th Field Artillery, hurriedly unlimbered its 105-mm. howitzers and delivered accurate support fire, employing sound-ranging adjustment methods. Before the skirmish was over at dawn on 28 April, the 124th Infantry had lost about 10 men killed and 25 wounded, and had killed at least 50 Japanese. Its morale apparently shattered by the unexpected turn of events, the Japanese battalion broke and disappeared from the Sayre Highway.

After 28 April the 124th Infantry drove on northward against very scattered opposition, delayed mainly by the poor condition of the highway. Guerrilla demolitions, given the finishing touch by engineers of the *Southern Sector Unit,* had accounted for most of the bridges along the road north of Kabacan, and there were some seventy bridges, in varying states of ruin, from Kabacan north twenty-five miles to the Mulita River. Deep gorges and landslides induced by heavy rains added to the 31st Division's supply problems. At one pair of gorges the 124th Infantry and the 108th Engineer Battalion had to rig cables to get north jeeps, quarter-ton trailers, three-quarter-ton weapons carriers, and 105-mm. howitzers. It was not until 3 May, when engineer bulldozers completed fills, that the 124th could bring up heavier equipment. Obviously, the 31st Division would have to depend in large measure upon air supply to maintain its advance northward.

By 3 May leading elements of the 124th Infantry had reached Kibawe, set up roadblocks north of that barrio, and probed about a mile southeast along the trail that supposedly led to Talomo on Davao Gulf. Despite its supply problems the regiment had, within a week's time, secured the 31st Division's first objective. The advance from Kabacan to Kibawe had cost the 124th Infantry approximately 15 men killed and 50 wounded, while the *Southern Sector Unit* had lost over 175 men killed.

Until the first week of May the 31st Division had been able to employ only one RCT along Sayre Highway.[34] Then the 41st Division's 162d Infantry reached eastern Mindanao from Zamboanga, took over responsibility for the protection of the X Corps rear areas from Parang to Fort Pikit, and permitted the 31st Division to bring its 155th RCT forward. The 167th RCT, 31st Division, aided by guerrilla units, protected the supply lines from Fort Pikit to Kibawe.

Since two RCT's were now available along Sayre Highway, General Sibert assigned additional tasks to the 31st Division. First, he directed the division to continue northward to clear the high-

[33] Information on Japanese operations in this subsection is from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, p. 14; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao; Trans of captured *1st Bn 74th Inf* documents, 124th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 5–10.

[34] Subsequent material on American plans is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 72–73, 81–83, 231, 241, 260; X Corps Rpt Mindanao, pp. 26–27; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 20–21, 25–27; X Corps FO's 31, 32, and 33, dated 29 Apr, 3 and 11 May 45; 31st Div FO 15, 9 May 45; Fertig Interviews; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57.



CLEARING ENEMY FROM SAYRE HIGHWAY

way and to establish contact with the 108th RCT, 40th Division. General Eichelberger, the Eighth Army's commander, had decided to put the 108th ashore at Macajalar Bay both to speed the conquest of Mindanao and to open a new supply route to the 31st Division, the supply problems of which increased with every step its troops took northward.

The 31st Division's second job was to strike southeast along the Kibawe-Talomo trail. General Sibert's preoccupation with this maneuver reflects the state of mapping and of weather information the Army had concerning Mindanao. Sibert soon learned from Colonel Fertig that much of the Kibawe-Talomo trail was a figment of the imagination. Wheeled vehicles could negotiate only the first five or six miles of the trail south from Kibawe even in dry weather, and as a recognizable trace the trail extended only thirteen miles southeast from Kibawe to the Pulangi River. In the Davao area the trail was fairly good from Calinan (terminus of Route 1–D from Talomo) northwest about six miles to the Tamogan River, but then disappeared. In the unmapped region between the Pulangi and Tamogan Rivers rainfall in April, May, and June sometimes reached a total of forty inches per month. During June and July 1945 Japanese troops hacked a fairly definite path through the jungles and rain forest across the forty-five miles of rugged terrain separating the Pulangi and Tamo-



TRANSPORTING HOWITZER OVER GORGE BY CABLE

gan Rivers, but never was this stretch such that large bodies of men could use it.

After making an aerial reconnaissance over the ground southeast from Kibawe, General Eichelberger put an end to plans to make a major effort southeast along the trail from Kibawe and about 10 May directed Sibert to limit operations on the trail to a battalion-sized reconnaissance-in-force. By this time, the 24th Division had the situation well in hand in the Davao area and the 31st Division could employ additional troops to good advantage along Sayre Highway. Sibert accordingly directed the 31st Division to push one battalion southeast from Kibawe as far as the Pulangi River and with the rest of its available strength to resume the drive up Sayre Highway.

General Morozumi was also making changes in his plans in early May.[35] Appalled by the speed of the 31st Division's advance as far as Kibawe, Morozumi directed his units to start assembling at Malaybalay immediately in preparation for retreat eastward to the Agusan Valley. He ordered a battalion of infantry southward to delay the 31st Division in the vicinity of Maramag, fifteen miles north of Kibawe, until 10 May at least, by which date he hoped his main forces would have passed through Malaybalay. The Japanese battalion was hardly in position when the 124th Infantry, which had started north

[35] Additional material on Japanese plans is from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, p. 14; Yamazu Statement, States, IV, 509–19; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao.

from Kibawe on 6 May, reached the Maramag region.

Clearing Sayre Highway

The Japanese battalion at Maramag more than accomplished its mission, for it was not until 12 May that the 124th Infantry overcame the last organized resistance in the area.[36] The fighting from 6 through 12 May cost the 124th Infantry about 60 men killed and 120 wounded, while the Japanese, in a tour de force of fanatic resistance, lost at least 130 men killed.

On 13 May the 155th Infantry passed through the 124th to continue the drive northward. Organized opposition along Sayre Highway south of Malaybalay had now melted away, and the 155th Infantry was delayed principally by supply problems and difficulties entailed in keeping supporting artillery within range of possible points of Japanese resistance. About noon on 20 May the 155th reached the outskirts of Malaybalay, where fire from remnants of the *30th Field Artillery Regiment* halted the advance. Realizing that the regiment could not haul its weapons into the mountains east of Malaybalay, Morozumi had left the unit at Malaybalay to fight a rear-guard action, which was successful in keeping the 155th Infantry out of the town until late on 21 May.

On 22 and 23 May the 155th continued up Sayre Highway, encountering elements of Morozumi's *Northern Sector Unit* that had not learned that American troops had reached Malaybalay and were still withdrawing southward to join the *30th Division*'s main body. Pressed by troops of the 108th Infantry, 40th Division, which had already landed at Macajalar Bay, the retreating forces gave the 155th Infantry little trouble and, about 1400 on 23 May, the 155th made contact with the 108th Infantry near Impalutao, twelve miles northwest of Malaybalay.

The 108th Infantry had landed unopposed along the southeastern shore of Macajalar Bay on 10 May, making contact almost immediately with guerrilla units already operating in the region.[37] Advancing inland, the 108th Infantry encountered no significant resistance until 13 May, when, eighteen miles inland, it came upon strong Japanese defenses where Sayre Highway zigzags up and down the steep slopes of the Magima River canyon. Here Morozumi had posted a delaying force of about 1,250 men who had the support of a few pieces of light artillery.[38]

Although Morozumi probably did not

[36] Information in this subsection derives mainly from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, pp. 14–16; Yamazu Statement, States, IV, 509–19; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao; Morozumi Statement, States, II, 594–603; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 25–28, 50–57, 62; 31st Div G–3 Per Rpts, 12–24 May 45; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 244–63; 124th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 14–19; 124th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 6–13 May 45.

[37] Additional information on 108th RCT operations is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 260–63; Fertig Interviews; Mindanao Guerrilla Record, *passim*. Guerrilla units involved in the Macajalar Bay area included the 120th Infantry, 108th Division; the 109th and 111th Infantry Regiments, 109th Division; and the 110th Infantry, 110th Division. The commander of the latter division was Lt. Col. Paul H. Marshall, who had escaped from a Japanese prison camp at Davao in April 1943 and had joined the guerrillas.

[38] The Japanese force was composed of the headquarters and one company of the *30th Reconnaissance Regiment*; the *6th Company* of the *74th Infantry*; the *103d Airfield Battalion*, the only Air Force unit Morozumi had armed; a few *30th Division* engineers; and a provisional, two-gun battery of artillery.

know it, he had stationed his delaying groupment at the same point a Fil-American force had chosen to hold just three years earlier when a Japanese unit, foreshadowing the 108th RCT's operation, had landed at Macajalar Bay to drive south along Sayre Highway.[39] In May 1942 the Fil-American force had held at the Magima Canyon area for four days, and now in May 1945 history repeated itself, for it took the 108th Infantry, 40th Division, from 15 through 18 May to clean out the region.

Following this action the 108th Infantry—its rear protected by the 3d Battalion of the Americal Division's 164th Infantry, which reached Macajalar Bay on 14 May—continued south to its rendezvous with the 31st Division on 23 May. Supply problems slowed the 108th Infantry's advance to some degree, but Sayre Highway was in so much better shape from Macajalar Bay south to Malaybalay than it was from Kabacan north that Eighth Army immediately changed the 31st Division's supply route to one originating at Macajalar Bay.

Its share in the task of clearing Sayre Highway cost the 31st Division approximately 90 men killed and 250 wounded, while the 108th Infantry, 40th Division, lost roughly 15 men killed and 100 wounded. Together, the two units killed almost 1,000 Japanese during their operations along the highway, and captured nearly 25 more.[40]

It takes little reflection to conclude that the *30th Division* made a poor showing along Sayre Highway. Morozumi had employed effectively just two of the six regular infantry battalions available to him, while only at Malaybalay had his artillery become a factor with which X Corps troops had to reckon. From the start Morozumi had had no real intention of conducting an all-out defense of Sayre Highway, but rather had been busy withdrawing the bulk of his division through Malaybalay. Thus, except for brief stands, his forces had melted away in one of the sorriest showings made by any Japanese unit during the course of the war.

Mop-up and Pursuit in Eastern Mindanao

With Sayre Highway cleared of the *30th Division* and with the collapse of the *100th Division* second line of defense northwest of Davao, the campaign for eastern Mindanao had reached a tactical conclusion. However, as was the case on most of the other islands of the Philippines, the war was not over in eastern Mindanao. X Corps operations now entered the mop-up and pursuit phase.

Malaybalay to the Agusan Valley

General Morozumi planned to reassemble the *30th Division* forces he had withdrawn from Sayre Highway at or near Silae, eleven miles east of Malaybalay, and hoped to hold in the Silae area for at least a month before retreating further across the mountains to the upper reaches of the Agusan Valley.[41]

[39] See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pp. 516–19.

[40] X Corps G–3 Per Rpts 216, 218, and 221, dated 23, 25, and 28 May 45; X Corps G–2 Per Rpts, 37 and 39, 23 and 25 May 45; 31st Div G–3 Rpt 243, 23 May 45.

[41] Information on Japanese operations in this subsection is mainly from: X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, pp. 6, 14–17; Morozumi Statement, States, II, 594–603; 10th I&H Staff Study, Japanese Opns on Mindanao.

Morozumi's intent had become obvious to X Corps before the end of May, and as early as the 22d elements of the 124th Infantry had begun probing into the mountains east from Sayre Highway.[42] Rough terrain and poor trails slowed operations from the inception of the pursuit, and aerial supply was employed continuously. Small groups of Japanese constantly harassed lines of communication back to Sayre Highway; heavy rains inhibited aerial observation of Japanese activity; and, as American troops pushed deeper into the mountains, Japanese resistance stiffened markedly. In contrast with their defense of Sayre Highway, troops of the *30th Division* made the most of their capabilities in the mountains, where they fought tenaciously and fanatically over every inch of ground. Nevertheless, elements of the 124th Infantry reached Silae on 9 June, and four days later troops of the 108th Infantry, brought into the drive east from the highway, reached the Bobonawan River seven miles south of Silae. Another six miles to the south men of the 155th Infantry arrived on the Pulangi River on 12 June, and elements of the 162d Infantry, 41st Division, struck twenty miles into the mountains east from Maramag during the period 13–26 June.

On 5 June Morozumi gave up his plan to hold in the Silae area for a month and started his best troops eastward toward Waloe, in the Agusan River valley some 35 miles east of Silae and 55 miles upstream from the Agusan's mouth on Butuan Bay. The new Japanese withdrawal was not long in gathering momentum, and American units soon found it difficult to locate any Japanese up to 15 miles east of the Sayre Highway. At the end of June troops of the guerrilla 109th and 110th Divisions took over in the territory east of the highway from Maramag north to Malaybalay.[43]

The *30th Division* was not permitted to reassemble a significant force in the Agusan Valley. Ever since Morozumi's *Eastern Sector Unit* had started up the river in late April to prepare an ultimate refuge for the *30th Division*, guerrillas of the 110th Division had been harassing Japanese up and down the valley.[44] Thus the leading elements of the *Eastern Sector Unit* did not reach Waloe until late June, just in time to be chased out of the barrio by guerrillas and troops of the 155th Infantry, 31st Division.[45]

[42] Material on American operations in this subsection is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 263–69, 274–75; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 29–31, 35; 31st Div G–3 Per Rpts, 22 May–30 Jun 45; 124th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 19–31; 124th Inf S–3 Opns Rpts, 22 May–30 Jun 45; X Corps G–3 Opns Rpts, 22 May–30 Jun 45.

On 5 June Cpl. Harry R. Harr of Company D, 124th Infantry, 31st Division, in action with a southern column of the 124th Infantry heading into the mountains south of the main trail from Malaybalay to Silae, was killed as he covered a Japanese hand grenade with his body, saving at least four fellow soldiers from serious wounds or possible death. For his courageous act, Corporal Harr was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

[43] By the time this relief was effected, the 109th Division's commander, Colonel Grinstead, had gone back to the United States. His place was taken by Lt. Col. Cecil E. Walter, an American civilian resident of Mindanao who had joined the guerrillas in 1944.

[44] The principal guerrilla force in the valley at this time was the 113th Infantry, 110th Division. The regiment was commanded by Maj. Khalil Khodr, a Syrian who had been a mining engineer on the island before the war.

[45] Fertig's headquarters had been at Waloe from mid-May to early June.

A battalion combat team of the 155th Infantry, making its way up the Agusan River aboard engineer LCM's, assembled near Waloe on 27 June, and the remnants of the *Eastern Sector Unit* withdrew east and south. Japanese troops from the Silae sector began to straggle into the Waloe area on 3 August, harassed by 31st Division artillery and Marine Corps aircraft. Morozumi gathered the troops he was able to keep organized about seven miles up the Agusan from Waloe, and at the end of the war was preparing to move on to Mindanao's inhospitable east coast.

The Kibawe-Talomo Trail

Pursuit operations along the so-called Kibawe-Talomo trail were shared by the 24th and 31st Divisions.[46] After overrunning the *rooth Division*'s second line of resistance on 10 June, the 24th Division struck toward Calinan, terminus of Route 1–D from Talomo. General Harada employed most of his best troops to defend the road junction town of Calinan and, managing to hold it until 19 June, extricated his organized remnants from possible entrapment east of Route 1–D. American units participating in the drive to Calinan included the 21st Infantry, 24th Division, and the 41st Division's 162d Infantry, less its 2d Battalion but with the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, attached.

Taking over at Calinan on 19 June, the 34th Infantry of the 24th Division reached the Tamogan River, six miles northwest, on 23 June. The next day elements of the 19th and 34th Infantry Regiments secured a crossing over the Tamogan and for a few days thereafter the *rooth Division*'s retreat turned into a rout. By 26 June, following a portion of the Kibawe-Talomo trail that the Japanese had recently improved, troops of the 34th Infantry reached the mountain barrio of Kibangay, two miles beyond the Tamogan. Here the pursuit halted, and Harada was able to restore some semblance of order among his forces. The *rooth Division* held defenses in the Kibangay area until mid-July when, with food supplies running out, Harada directed his remaining units to disperse and forage for themselves in the mountains. Taking over from the 24th Division in late July, men of the guerrilla 107th Division continued to hunt down Japanese stragglers to the end of the war, gradually extending control over the southeastern section of the Kibawe-Talomo trail.[47]

Far to the northwest, units of the 31st Division had been probing southeast along the upper section of the Kibawe-Talomo trail ever since early May, and on the 11th of that month a battalion combat team of the 167th Infantry launched the reconnaissance-in-force

[46] Information on operations along the southeastern section of the trail is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 186–209; 24th Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 68–74; 19th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 23–27; 21st Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 9–10; 34th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 36–46; Fertig Interviews; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57; Harada Statement, States, I, 261–66; Hattori Statement, States, I, 304–10; 10th I&H Staff Study of Japanese Opns on Mindanao, and atchd maps.

[47] By this time Colonel McGee, formerly commanding the 106th Division, had succeeded Colonel Laureta as commander of the 107th Division. McGee was also attached to the 24th Division as officer in charge of all guerrillas in the 24th's sector. McGee was killed by a Japanese sniper on 7 August.

directed by General Sibert, the X Corps commander.[48] Japanese along this section of the trail, about 1,000 men in all, comprised a conglomerate mass of service troops with a small leavening of infantry. Control was vested in General Tomochika, chief of staff of the *35th Army*, who had set up a small headquarters groupment near barrio Pinamola, about twenty miles southeast of Kibawe.[49]

The Japanese force had a defensive potential far greater than its strength and nature would indicate, for the terrain gave the Japanese every conceivable advantage. Bounded on both sides by dense jungle and thick rain forest, the trail as far as Pinamola ran up and down steep ridges and was scarcely jeep-wide. Rains of late May soon rendered all sections of the trail completely impassable to wheeled vehicles, and supplies had to come in by airdrop, supplemented when possible by hand-carrying parties and laden carabaos. The mud was so deep that often troops had to pull, push, or even jack the carabaos out of gooey holes.

Delayed by the Japanese, the terrain, and the weather, the 167th Infantry's battalion did not reach the Pulangi River, thirteen miles southeast of Kibawe, until 29 May. Then, although the Japanese from the trail could no longer offer any threat to the 31st Division, the battalion continued south toward Pinamola, aided considerably by guerrillas.[50] Troops of the 167th Infantry finally reached Pinamola on 30 June as the remaining Japanese were withdrawing southward another eight miles to the crossing of the Kuluman River. Progress as far as Pinamola had cost the 167th Infantry approximately 60 men killed and 180 wounded, while the Japanese had lost almost 400 killed along the same section of the trail.[51]

Elements of the 167th Infantry held along the northwestern section of the Kibawe-Talomo trail until the end of the war, and as of 15 August the regiment was preparing to send troops across the Kuluman River to continue the advance southeastward. On that date nearly 30 miles of Japanese-improved trail—only 19 air miles—still separated the 167th Infantry from guerrilla units operating in the vicinity of Kibangay. Organized remnants of Harada's *100th Division* holed up until the end of the war in rugged terrain north of this 30-mile stretch of the trail.[52]

[48] Information on operations along the northwestern section of the trail is from: 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 269–74; 31st Div Rpt Mindanao, pp. 23, 25, 32–34, 52, 57–58, 63, 67; 31st Div G–3 Per Rpts, 3 May–30 Jun 45; 167th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pp. 1–2; 167th Inf S–3 Per Rpts, 10 May–30 Jun 45; Mindanao Guerrilla Record, *passim*; Fertig Interviews; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57; X Corps G–2 Per Rpts, 10 May–30 June 45; Tomochika, True Facts of the Leyte Opn, pp. 40–41, 44; X Corps G–2 Summary Mindanao, p. 5.

[49] See app. G–4.

[50] Elements of the 106th and 109th Divisions supported the 167th Infantry. The guerrilla combat commander was Maj. Pedro Aquino, especially selected by Fertig as a good "trouble shooter." Aquino's normal job was the commander of the 108th Infantry, 108th Division.

[51] 167th Inf Rpt Mindanao, pt. VI, Battle Casualties, 18 Apr–30 Jun 45; 167th Inf S–2 Per Rpt 40, 30 Jun 45; 167th Inf S–3 Per Rpt 110, 30 Jun 45.

[52] In June and July about 300 infantrymen of various *100th Division* units moved northwest from Kibangay to reinforce the Japanese holding at the Kuluman River. With whatever means they had at hand, the Japanese worked until the end of the war to improve the Kibangay-Kuluman stretch of the Kibawe-Talomo trail.

Sarangani Bay: Anticlimax to the Campaigns in the Philippines

From the beginning of his planning for the return to the Philippines, General MacArthur had intended to initiate his campaign with the seizure of airfield sites along the shores of Sarangani Bay, on the south-central coast of eastern Mindanao, about seventy-five miles southwest of Davao. With the decision of mid-September 1944 to launch the Philippine campaign with the invasion of Leyte, GHQ SWPA quietly laid aside its plans to land at Sarangani Bay with a two-division corps. Over nine months later planners of the Southwest Pacific Area again turned their attention to the bay. Thus, by a sharp turn in the march of events, Sarangani Bay became the site of the last attack against hitherto unmolested Japanese forces on the Philippine archipelago. However, instead of committing a corps of two reinforced divisions, the Sarangani Bay operation as ultimately executed involved a force scarcely equivalent to one regimental combat team.[53]

The Japanese at Sarangani Bay in July 1945, when operations to clear the area began, numbered approximately 2,000 troops, including roughly 1,500 infantry and artillery from various *30th* and *100th Division* units and some 450 miscellaneous naval personnel.[54] In April and May the Japanese artillery at Sarangani Bay had attempted to escape northward, but finding its routes of withdrawal to Sayre Highway and Davao cut, had given up the attempt. Ultimately organized as the *Sarangani District Unit*, the force at the bay set up defenses about ten miles inland where, having at their disposal the resources of rich agricultural lands, the Japanese lived bountifully until July, only occasionally harassed by elements of the guerrilla 116th Infantry, 106th Division.[55]

If for no other reason, Fil-American operations to secure the Sarangani Bay region are interesting because of the varied and complicated nature of the maneuvers involved. The operations began on 4 July when a patrol of the 24th Reconnaissance Troop, 24th Division, coming from Davao Gulf aboard Allied Naval Forces PT boats, landed on the southeastern shore of the bay to establish contact with the 116th Infantry. By 11 July the guerrilla unit, to which 150 M1 rifles were delivered, and the reconnaissance patrol had cleared the bay's shores against negligible resistance. On 12 July a battalion combat team from the 24th Division's 21st Infantry landed on the northwest shore.

Meanwhile, X Corps had assembled a provisional infantry battalion of U.S. Army antiaircraft troops at Fort Pikit and had sent it south aboard engineer LCM's some thirty miles to Lake Buluan. Unloading on the lake's southern shores, the battalion picked up Battery B, 496th Antiaircraft Gun Battalion, and

[53] Background information on the foregoing planning is to be found in ch. II, above. See also, Cannon, *Leyte*, ch. I; Smith, *Approach to the Philippines*, ch. I.

[54] See app. G–1.

The remainder of this subsection is based on: Statement of Maj Makoto Takasuka (CO *1st Bn 30th FA Regt* and Comdr *Saragani District Unit*), States, IV, 48–51; 10th I&H Opnl Monograph Mindanao, pp. 290–301; Sarangani Task Force Rpt, 4 Jul–11 Aug 45, pp. 1–88; Fertig Comments, 2 May 57.

[55] Colonel Grinstead, previously the commander of the 109th Division, succeeded to the command of the 106th Division on 25 June 1945 just before he left for the United States. The commander of the 116th Infantry was Maj. Herbert Page, a 68-year-old retired Army officer.

the Combat Company of the guerrilla 118th Infantry, 106th Division, both of which had come overland from Pikit. The battalion started southeast toward Sarangani Bay from the Lake Buluan region on 9 July, led by Col. Robert V. Bowler, Fertig's second in command.

Still another force involved in the Sarangani Bay operation was the Expeditionary Battalion, 108th Division, which had been operating with the 24th Division ever since the landing at Malabang in April.[56] Striking southwest from the shores of Davao Gulf on 8 July, the Expeditionary Battalion followed an old cattle drive trail through dense rain forest and by 12 July was within fifteen miles of Sarangani Bay.

With all elements of the Sarangani Bay Task Force (into which the varied echelons were finally organized) on the march by 12 July, events began to move rapidly. On the 13th the provisional infantry battalion from Pikit and the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, made contact at a point about sixteen miles northwest of the bay's northwestern corner. On the 15th the guerrilla 116th Infantry and the Expeditionary Battalion gained contact about ten miles northeast of the bay. A few days later the combined forces discovered the main body of Japanese hiding out along river valleys and hilly peaks about fifteen miles north of the bay. Organized Japanese resistance collapsed on 25 July, and operations entered the mop-up and pursuit stage. By 11 August, when most of the Sarangani Bay Task Force returned to Davao, the task of securing the bay region had cost the Fil-American units involved 13 men killed and 13 wounded, while the Japanese had lost 450 killed.[57] The campaign on Mindanao was finished.

The End of the War in Eastern Mindanao

On 30 June General Eichelberger declared the eastern Mindanao operation closed, and reported to General MacArthur that organized opposition in the region had ceased. Actually, fighting against organized bodies of Japanese continued after that date, but there can be no doubt that by 30 June the main ends of the campaign had been realized.

U.S. Army casualties of the campaign to secure eastern Mindanao, through 15 August 1945, totaled approximately 3,700. (*Table 9*) Through 30 June U.S. Army units and attached guerrillas had killed almost 10,540 Japanese in eastern Mindanao, of which number the 24th Division had killed roughly 6,585. From 30 June through 15 August Fil-American units killed another 2,325 Japanese. Roughly 600 Japanese prisoners, over 250 of them civilians, were captured before 15 August, and after the war about 22,250 Japanese troops and 11,900 civilians turned themselves in. These figures account for a total of 47,615 Japanese. With approximately 55,850 Japanese in eastern Mindanao as of 17 April 1945, the total of 47,615 leaves 8,235 unaccounted for. It appears that this number of Japanese must have lost their lives from starvation and disease between April and the war's end.

[56] It was the 24th Division's opinion that the Expeditionary Battalion was an excellent unit and that it was the only battalion-sized guerrilla unit with which the 24th Division came in contact that was capable of cohesive offensive action. Woodruff Comments, 6 Jan 57.

[57] U.S. Army casualties were 4 killed and 7 wounded.

TABLE 9—U.S. ARMY CASUALTIES, EASTERN MINDANAO, THROUGH 15 AUGUST 1945

Unit	Killed	Wounded	Total
24th Infantry Division	540	1,885	2,425
31st Infantry Division	185	485	670
162d RCT, 41st Infantry Division (including 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry)	25	85	110
108th RCT, 40th Infantry Division (including 3d BCT, 164th RCT, Americal Division)	15	105	120
X Corps troops	40	215	255
Bugo–Del Monte Area Command	15	105	120
Total	820	2,880	3,700

Source: Based on sources cited previously in the chapter. The 24th Division casualties include the U.S. Army casualties of the Sarangani Bay Task Force, and those of the 162d RCT (less 3d Battalion, 162d Infantry) and the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, while attached to the division. The Bugo–Del Monte Area Command, existing from 29 May to 23 June, included antiaircraft units, elements of engineer boat and shore regiments, and various service force units.

PART EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The formal end to hostilities in the Pacific came while fighting was still under way in the Philippines. On 15 August 1945 almost 115,000 Japanese —including noncombatant civilians— were still at large on Luzon and the central and southern islands. One Japanese force, the *Shobu Group* in northern Luzon, was still occupying the energies of major portions of three U.S. Army infantry divisions and the USAFIP(NL) as well. Indeed, on 15 August the equivalent of three and two-thirds Army divisions were engaged in active combat against Japanese forces on Luzon, while the equivalent of another reinforced division was in contact with Japanese forces on the central and southern islands. On Luzon the 21,000 guerrillas of the USAFIP(NL) were still in action, and some 22,000 other Luzon guerrillas were engaged in patrolling and mopping-up activities. At least another 75,000 guerrillas were mopping up on the central and southern islands.

Tactically, then, the campaign for the reconquest of Luzon and the Southern Philippines was not quite finished as of 15 August 1945. On the other hand, the Sixth and Eighth Armies, together with supporting air and naval forces, had smashed the *14th Area Army*, the organized remnants of which, slowly starving to death, were incapable of significant offensive action. The bulk of the American forces in the Philippines were already preparing for the awesome task of assaulting the Japanese home islands, and many guerrilla units were being transformed into regular formations under Philippine Army Tables of Organization and Equipment.

Strategically, the issues in the Philippines had long since been decided. The principal strategic prize of the Philippines—the Central Plains–Manila Bay area of Luzon—had been secure since early March, five and a half months before the war ended. Before mid-April American forces had possession of the most important secondary strategic prizes —air base sites from which to help sever the Japanese lines of communication to the Indies and from which to support projected ground operations in the Indies. The end of April found American forces holding virtually all the base areas in the Philippines required to mount the scheduled invasion of Japan. By 15 August base development was well along throughout the archipelago, and the first troops of a planned mass redeployment from Europe had reached the Philippines. Finally, by mid-August, few Filipinos were still under the Japanese yoke —the Allies had freed millions and had re-established lawful civilian government on most of the islands.

On Luzon and the central and southern islands, forces of the Southwest Pacific Area had contained or taken out of the war over 380,000 Japanese, ren-

dering them unavailable for the defense of the homeland.[1] The Japanese had already expended another 70,000 lives, more or less, in the defense of Leyte, where the Allies had also eliminated Japan's vaunted naval power as a significant factor in the Pacific war. The Allies had destroyed nine of Japan's very best, first-line divisions in the Philippines and had also knocked out six other divisions or their equivalent in separate brigades and regiments. Losses stemming directly or indirectly from the defense of the Philippines had reduced Japanese air power to the desperate expedient of kamikaze operations. If no other campaign or operation of the war in the Pacific had done so, then Japan's inability to hold the Philippines had made her ultimate defeat clear and certain.

The cost had not been light. Excluding the earlier campaign for the seizure of Leyte and Samar, the ground combat forces of the Sixth and Eighth Armies had suffered almost 47,000 battle casualties—10,380 killed and 36,550 wounded—during their operations on Luzon and in the Southern Philippines. Nonbattle casualties had been even heavier. From 9 January through 30 June 1945 Sixth Army on Luzon suffered over 93,400 nonbattle casualties, losses that included 86,950 men hospitalized for various types of sickness, 6,200 men injured in various ways, and 260 troops dead of sickness or injury. The bulk of the battle casualties occurred, of course, on Luzon, where the heaviest fighting took place and where the opposing forces had their greatest concentration of strength. The operations to recapture the central and southern islands cost approximately 9,060 — 2,070 men killed and 6,990 wounded.[2] But these personnel losses cannot reflect the total cost of the campaign — the huge losses of military supplies and equipment of all kinds, together with the money and time they represented.

As usual, the Queen of Battles took the brunt of the losses. The Infantry incurred roughly 90 percent of all Sixth Army casualties on Luzon and 90 percent of all troops killed in action on Luzon from 9 January through 15 August.

The battle casualty rate was higher in other campaigns of World War II—for example, that of Third Army in Lorraine and Tenth Army on Okinawa—than for Sixth Army on Luzon, but it is doubtful that any other campaign of the war had a higher nonbattle casualty rate among American forces. For this there were many contributing factors. Men from the more temperate United States found the climate of the Philippines enervating—it was impossible for them to expend their energies at the rate they could at home, yet the demands of battle required just such an expenditure. The troops encountered new diseases, too, in the Philippines, while the contrasting hot, dry days and cold, wet nights of the mountains created obvious health problems.

Moreover, many of the units that fought in the Philippines were tired. With one exception, all the divisions committed under Sixth Army on Luzon had participated in at least one previous

[1] See app. H–2.

[2] See app. H–1.

operation, and the majority of them had been through two. As much as a third of the officers and men of six divisions had been overseas three years; almost all the divisions and separate regimental combat teams had been in the Pacific two years. Under such conditions debilitation increased in geometric progression as Sixth Army, with the limited forces available to it, had to leave units in the line for month after month with little or no time for rest and rehabilitation.

The replacement problem also had a great deal to do with the high nonbattle casualty rate. Almost all of Sixth Army's combat units reached Luzon understrength; none received significant numbers of replacements until April was well along. The Infantry replacements Sixth Army received from 9 January to 30 June were barely sufficient to cover the army's battle losses—they could not cope with the problem of filling the gaps left by nonbattle casualties.

Actually, the bulk of the so-called nonbattle casualties were directly attributable to combat operations although not classed as battle casualties under the U.S. Army's personnel accounting system. For example, an infantryman hospitalized for pneumonia contracted in the mountains of northern Luzon was as much a loss as an infantryman who was hospitalized with a wound inflicted by a Japanese rifle bullet. Combat fatigue casualties, permanent or temporary, fit into the same category.

In the sense of lessons learned, there was little new for the American units that fought on Luzon and in the Southern Philippines. As noted, all but one of the divisions had had previous experience in fighting Japanese on ground of Japanese choosing. In the reconquest of the Philippines, therefore, units applied lessons learned both in earlier combat and in training. The only really "new" type of action experienced was the city fighting in Manila, where the troops perforce made quick and thorough adjustment to different conditions of combat.

Generally, American arms and armament proved quantitatively and qualitatively superior to those of the Japanese. The only significant innovations on the American side — helicopters, recoilless weapons, and television observation of the battlefield—came on the scene too late in the campaign for complete and objective evaluation. All, however, gave promise of great things to come.

On the Japanese side, there were a few items that the American forces especially noted. Among these were the huge rockets the *Shimbu Group* employed in the mountains northeast of Manila. Although the rockets were generally ineffective and caused few casualties, the experience with Japanese rockets on Luzon, together with similar experiences of Tenth Army on Okinawa, portended a possibly messy situation during the planned assault on the home islands. Noteworthy also was the abundance of automatic weapons the Japanese employed. For example, to the men of the 32d Infantry Division it must have appeared that at least every third Japanese defending the Villa Verde Trail was armed with a machine gun. Also notable, if not downright surprising, was the fact that some Japanese units on Luzon proved themselves capable of employing artillery effectively. Allied forces had developed scant respect for Japanese artillery during previous campaigns in

the Pacific, but those U.S. Army units that fought against the *58th IMB* and the *10th Division* on Luzon had a different point of view.

On Luzon, and to a lesser extent in the Southern Philippines, the Japanese proved themselves remarkably adaptable, quick to make the best of an adverse situation, possessed of an excellent feel for terrain, tenacious to the point of fanaticism on the defense, and, contrary to general opinion, sufficiently flexible to change plans and dispositions at a moment's notice. The tactical flexibility of Yamashita's plans and maneuvers throughout northern Luzon, considered within the framework of his defensive concepts, is certainly notable. It is, indeed, possible to raise questions concerning the Sixth and Eighth Armies' flexibility as compared to that of *14th Area Army* and, in some instances, to that of Filipino guerrilla forces. The record suggests that in many respects the Japanese and the guerrillas may have adapted themselves more effectively than the Sixth and Eighth Armies to the conditions of ground warfare obtaining throughout most of the Philippine archipelago.

Such a comparison raises questions that do not necessarily concern leadership or command, but rather involve the training and generally ponderous organization of the mechanized forces that the United States put into the field. In previous campaigns throughout the Southwest Pacific Area, American ground forces had proved themselves equal or superior to the Japanese in flexibility and adaptability. In those campaigns, the U.S. armies had employed comparatively light forces to seize island perimeters or to clear small islands. But in the Philippines, and on Luzon especially, American forces were faced with the necessity of seizing and clearing relatively large land masses. In these operations, therefore, the Sixth and Eighth Armies had to bring into play mass and maneuver, and had to apply other concepts and methods, including those entailing logistical operations, that the U.S. Army had developed for waging continental land warfare. The application of these concepts had an inevitable effect upon flexibility. On the other hand, the record of the campaigns for the reconquest of the Philippine archipelago raises the question whether the Sixth and Eighth Armies, confronted with the more obvious requirements of ground operations in the Philippines, may not have moved too far toward the adoption of the methods and concepts of continental ground warfare. It also seems legitimate to suggest that the two armies might have employed these concepts and methods, as well as the power under their control, more resourcefully had their previous experience in the Southwest Pacific Area prepared them for the type of warfare required on the land masses of the Philippines.

For American forces, departures from the norm of combat (if such a thing ever existed) involved the development and employment of field expedients to meet special situations. Noteworthy in this category was extensive and effective employment of antiaircraft artillery—both 90-mm. guns and automatic weapons—against ground targets in the mountainous *Kembu*, *Shimbu*, and *Shobu* strongholds and on northern Negros as well. It should also be noted that a few antiaircraft units that were not needed in their

normal role came to serve creditably as Infantry.

Another notable departure from normal operating procedure was the varied use to which the artillery liaison plane was put. This versatile light aircraft served not only as the eyes of the artillery but also was employed in a general intelligence role. It evacuated casualties from remote mountain airstrips and was often even pressed into service for supply drops.

Other field expedients are worthy of mention. LVT's and Dukws were employed for long, overland supply hauls, a task for which these vehicles were not designed; flanged wheels were mounted on jeeps to haul supplies over the railroads of Luzon until conventional engines could be found and placed in service; carabaos were used to haul supplies over muddy trails that wheeled or tracked vehicles could not negotiate and over which infantrymen could barely slog carrying rifles; and, finally, Army engineer LCM's, as well as Navy craft of various types, were employed on the rivers of Mindanao. None of these field expedients originated in the Philippines, nor were some of them original with U.S. forces. However, in the Philippines American combat and service units developed these and other field expedients to such a degree that they became, in effect, part of the Army's standing operating procedure.

The road to triumph in the Philippines was not, of course, solely the story of the Infantry. The contributions of the air forces, the naval forces, the artillery, other supporting arms, and the service echelons were indispensable.

An evaluation of air support operations is difficult. Generally, long-range bombing attacks, by whatever air element, were executed with dispatch, accuracy, and good effect. The story of close ground support operations presents a different picture. Ground combat units that at one time or another had close support from both U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps aviation were virtually unanimous in preferring the latter, at least during the earlier months of the campaigns. Later, when Fifth Air Force units became more experienced in close ground support activity and began to work more closely with the ground combat forces, confidence in the Army's air arm grew. Nevertheless, the campaign ended with almost all ground units still hoping for an improved, more effective air-ground liaison system insofar as Army air echelons were concerned, and also seeking methods by which to establish a closer, more effective working relationship between the Army's ground and air units.

Any evaluation of the effectiveness of close air support as opposed to artillery support is difficult. Each type of support had capabilities not possessed by the other, and it was normal practice if both were available to employ whichever could best do the job. The Japanese are not of much help in making a determination. Interrogated after the surrender by a ground forces officer, a Japanese might say that artillery was the more effective; interrogated by an air officer the same Japanese might say that air bombardment was more effective. On the other hand, the Japanese pointed out that aircraft could conduct strikes against positions that artillery bombardment could not reach. Moreover, Allied air superiority in the Philippines se-

verely inhibited Japanese movements, forcing them to undertake marches under cover of darkness or to make long, exhausting detours through woods and forests. The sight of an artillery liaison plane in the sky normally prompted every Japanese for miles around to seek cover.

There can be no denying the effectiveness of artillery in the battle for Manila. Whether the air arm could have done the job more effectively and more rapidly is, of course, and unanswerable question —General MacArthur denied it the chance. One of the major air successes, probably, came in the support provided the 43d Infantry Division during that unit's drive to capture Ipo Dam. Aerial bombardment and close support certainly contributed in large measure to the success of the 503d Parachute RCT's risky undertaking at Corregidor, and it is not possible to dismiss the air arm's contribution without mentioning once again the fact that the 1st Cavalry Division's exposed left flank was protected during the dash to Manila only by aircraft. Finally, one of the most effective weapons throughout the entire campaign to recapture Luzon and the Southern Philippines was the napalm all air elements dropped.

The campaign produced no insoluble logistical problems, and there were no persistent, critical shortages of supplies of any type. As might be expected, there were many logistical difficulties, beginning with the adverse surf conditions at Lingayen Gulf that upset supply operations during the first week on Luzon and brought to light weaknesses in the planning and execution of the amphibious undertaking. Most of the supply problems the Sixth and Eighth Armies encountered during the campaign, however, grew out of transportation difficulties. These in turn resulted from destruction of rail and highway bridges, lack of railroad rolling stock, problems inherent in moving supplies over the rugged, trackless terrain where much of the fighting took place, the poor condition of many roads, and the fact that limitations on shipping space made it impossible for most units to bring forward all their organic transportation during the early stages of the operation. Field expedients already mentioned solved some of the transportation problems. Other solutions, on Luzon, included the leapfrogging of bridging equipment, and, throughout the islands, the extensive employment of Filipino hand-carrying parties.

A theaterwide shortage of artillery ammunition (and of some types of mortar ammunition) compelled Sixth Army on Luzon to impose a rather strict rationing system. The rationing, in a larger sense, did not affect the ultimate outcome of the campaign, although some units may have lacked the artillery support they desired for a specific attack. But it must be remembered that it is almost a principle of warfare that no infantry commander ever gets the artillery support he wants or thinks he needs.

Shortages of other types of supplies were invariably temporary and usually stemmed from transportation problems. Whatever their causes, solution of the multitude of major and minor logistical problems involved in a campaign of the magnitude of the Luzon–Southern Philippines operations demanded round the clock work. It is doubtful that the service forces put in longer hours on any Amer-



PHILIPPINE GUERRILLA SCOUT

ican battleground of World War II than they did on Luzon and in the Southern Philippines.

One phenomenon of the reconquest of the Philippines was certainly far different from any other experience of the war in the Pacific. That was the presence of a large, organized guerrilla force backed by a generally loyal population waiting only for the chance to make its contribution to the defeat of Japan. It is debatable whether American headquarters were adequately prepared to make the most effective use of the guerrilla forces that existed on Luzon and in the Southern Philippines; it is also questionable whether American forces made the best possible use of the guerrillas after the campaign began. From GHQ SWPA on down through infantry divisions in the field, the orders and plans concerning the guerrillas, as well as the machinery set up at various echelons to control and supply the guerrillas, indicate that before the invasion of Luzon U.S. forces expected little more of the guerrillas than the acquisition of tactical intelligence and certain types of service support. It appears that in many instances American commanders were reluctant to assign guerrilla units specific combat missions of even the most innocuous sort. Sometimes guerrilla units acquired a combat mission only after they had launched an operation themselves; sometimes, as seems to have been the case with Sixth Army vis-à-vis USAFIP(NL), the combat mission came only after American headquarters realized that they did not have sufficient regular forces to undertake assigned tasks. In any case, it is certain that both the Sixth and the Eighth Army ultimately made more extensive use of guerrillas than was originally contemplated.

It is unfortunately impossible to measure in concrete terms the contribution of guerrilla forces to the outcome of the campaigns. Some units were good; some were not. An occasional guerrilla force, with political aims or under a leader with delusions of grandeur, caused more trouble than it was worth. In the end, however, almost all served in one way or another to the limits of their capabilities. Beyond the shadow of a doubt the guerrillas saved many thousands of American lives.

The story of the Filipino contribution to the final triumph in the Philippines does not end with mention of guerrillas,

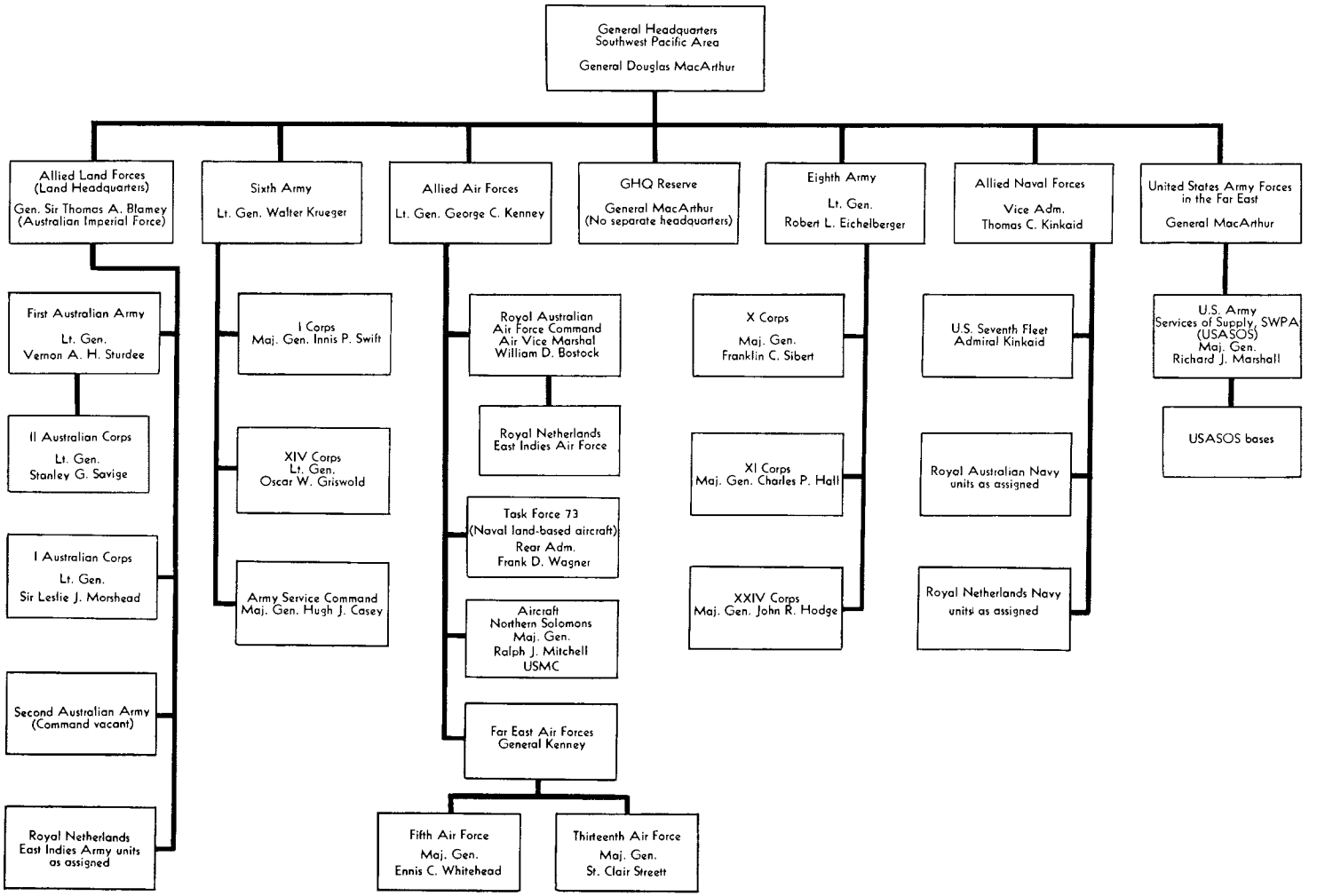
for thousands of other Filipinos aided the U.S. Army in many capacities. Filipinos contributed services of all types, as railroad men, truck drivers, engineers, clerks, government officials and employees, guides, spies, and carriers who often risked their lives hand-carrying supplies to the front lines. There is no doubt that the guerrillas and the other Filipinos made the task of the U.S. Army infinitely less difficult. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine how the Southwest Pacific Area could have undertaken the reconquest of the Philippines in the time and manner it did without the predominately loyal and willing Filipino population.

Though the end of the war came before the Philippines (and the Filipinos) could fulfill the roles planned for them in Japan's inevitable defeat, the fact of Japan's sudden collapse in no way detracts from the significance of the triumph in the Philippines. Hindsight arguments about the desirability and necessity of tying up strong American forces—sixteen divisions, or equivalent, in ground combat troops alone—in the reconquest of Luzon and the Southern Philippines may rage for decades to come, with justice and logic undoubtedly to be found on both sides of the argument. The fact remains that it was the consensus of military planners in the fall of 1944, when they decided to seize Luzon and bypass Formosa in favor of a jump to Okinawa, that the successful prosecution of the war against Japan demanded the reoccupation of Luzon. In the military-political milieu of October 1944, it is hard to imagine that the planners could have reached any other decision.

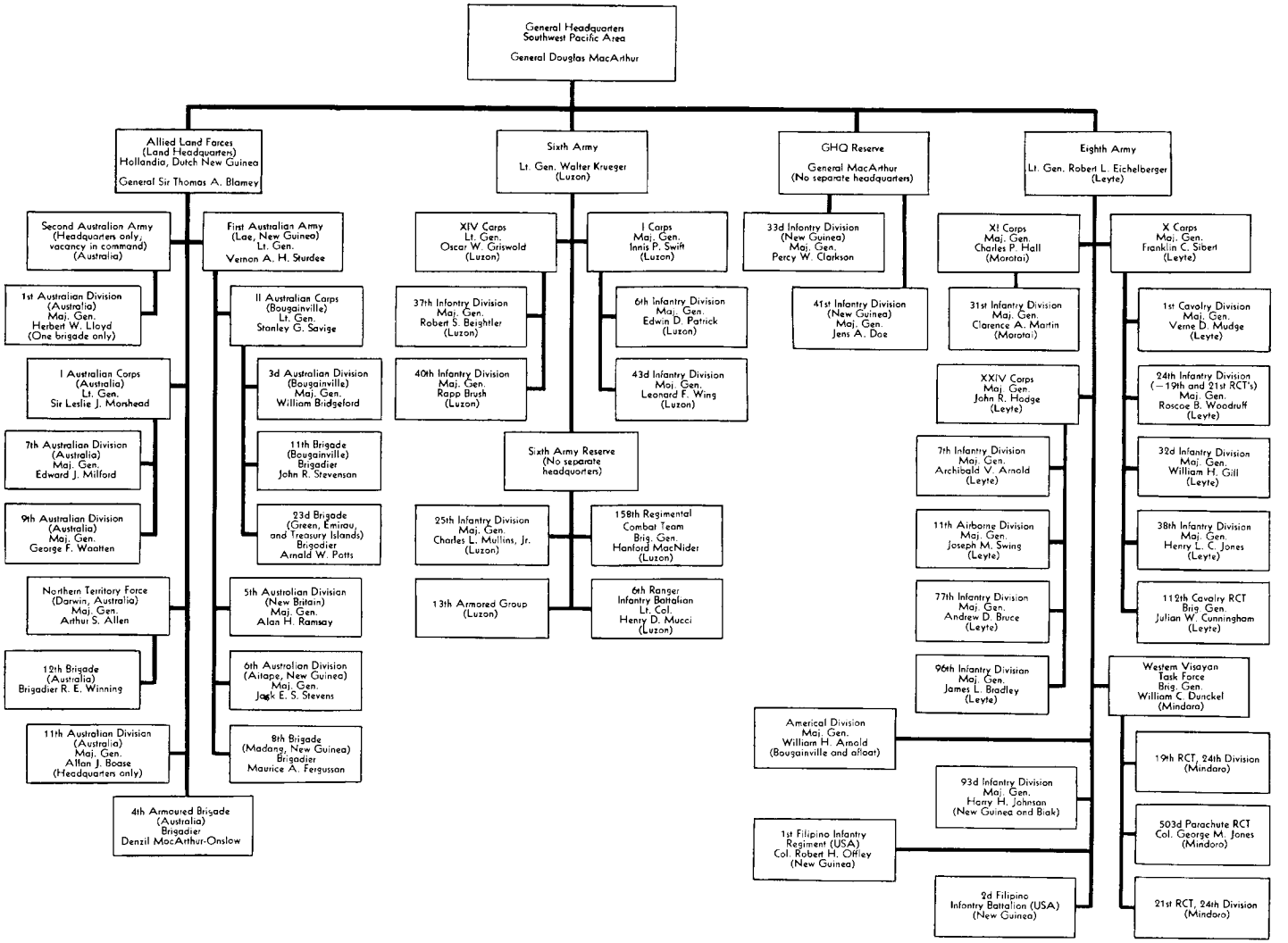
Appendix A

Organization for the Invasion of Luzon

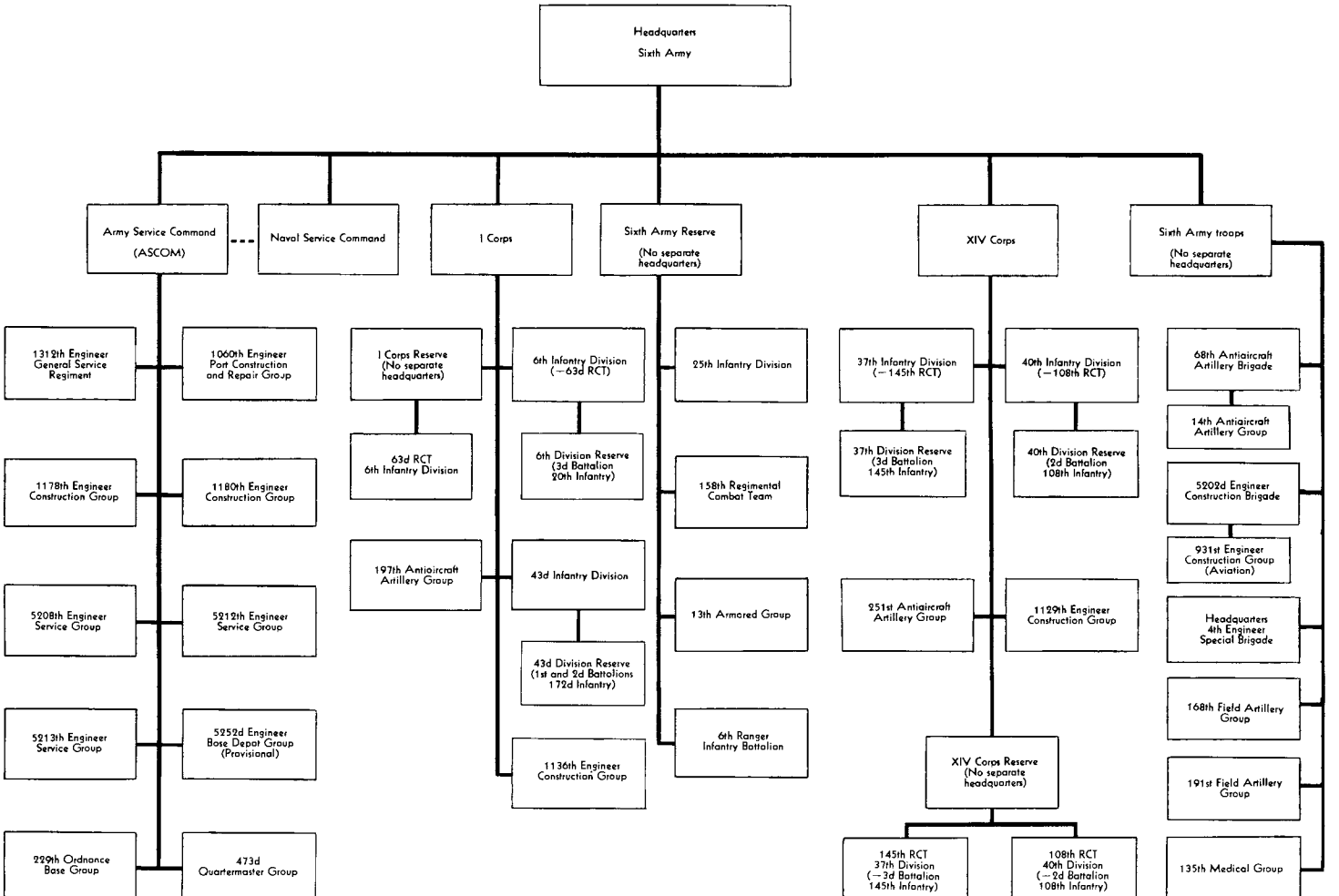
Appendix A–1—Generalized Organization of the Southwest Pacific Area, December 1944



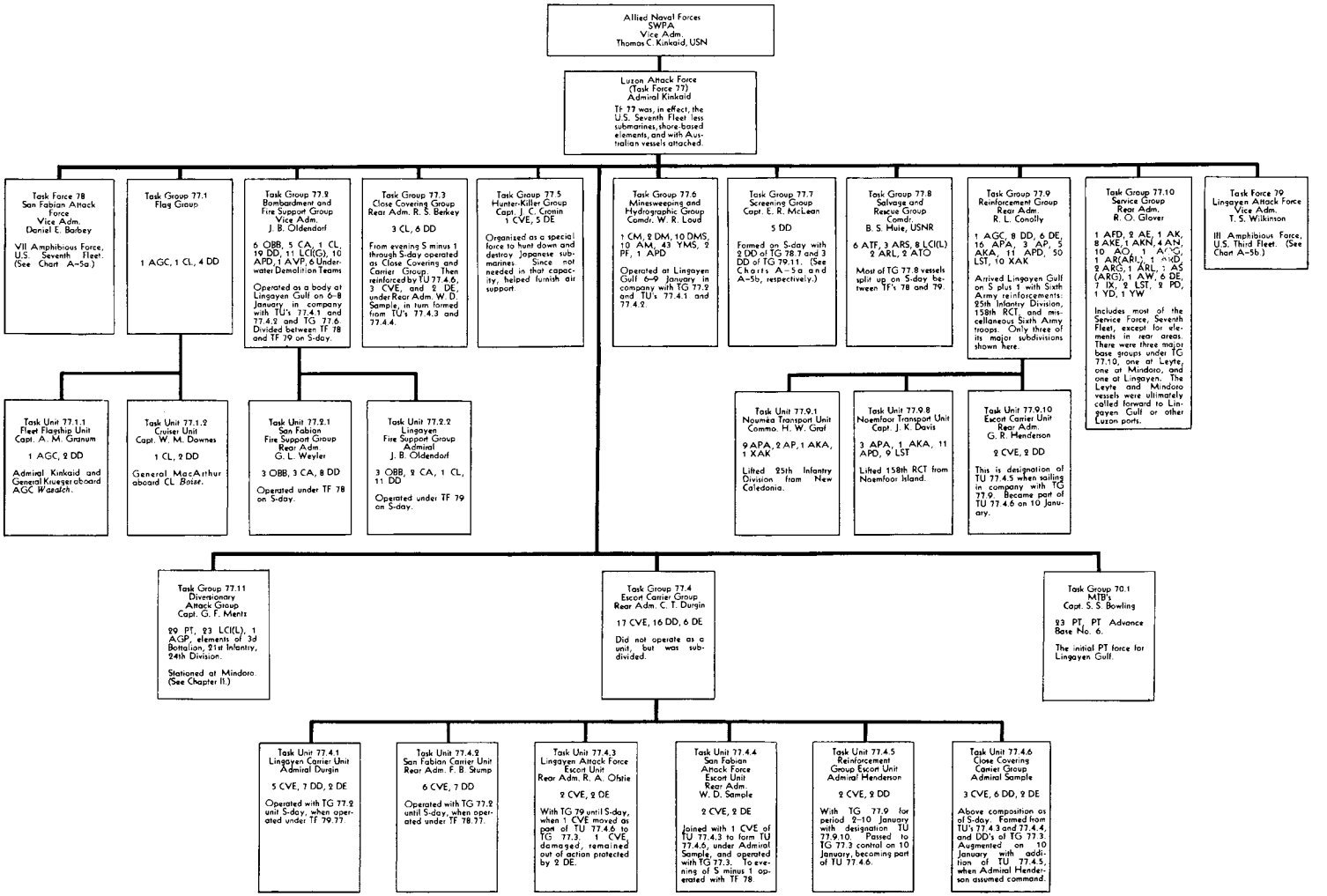
Appendix A–2—Organization of Ground Combat Forces in the Southwest Pacific Area, 9 January 1945



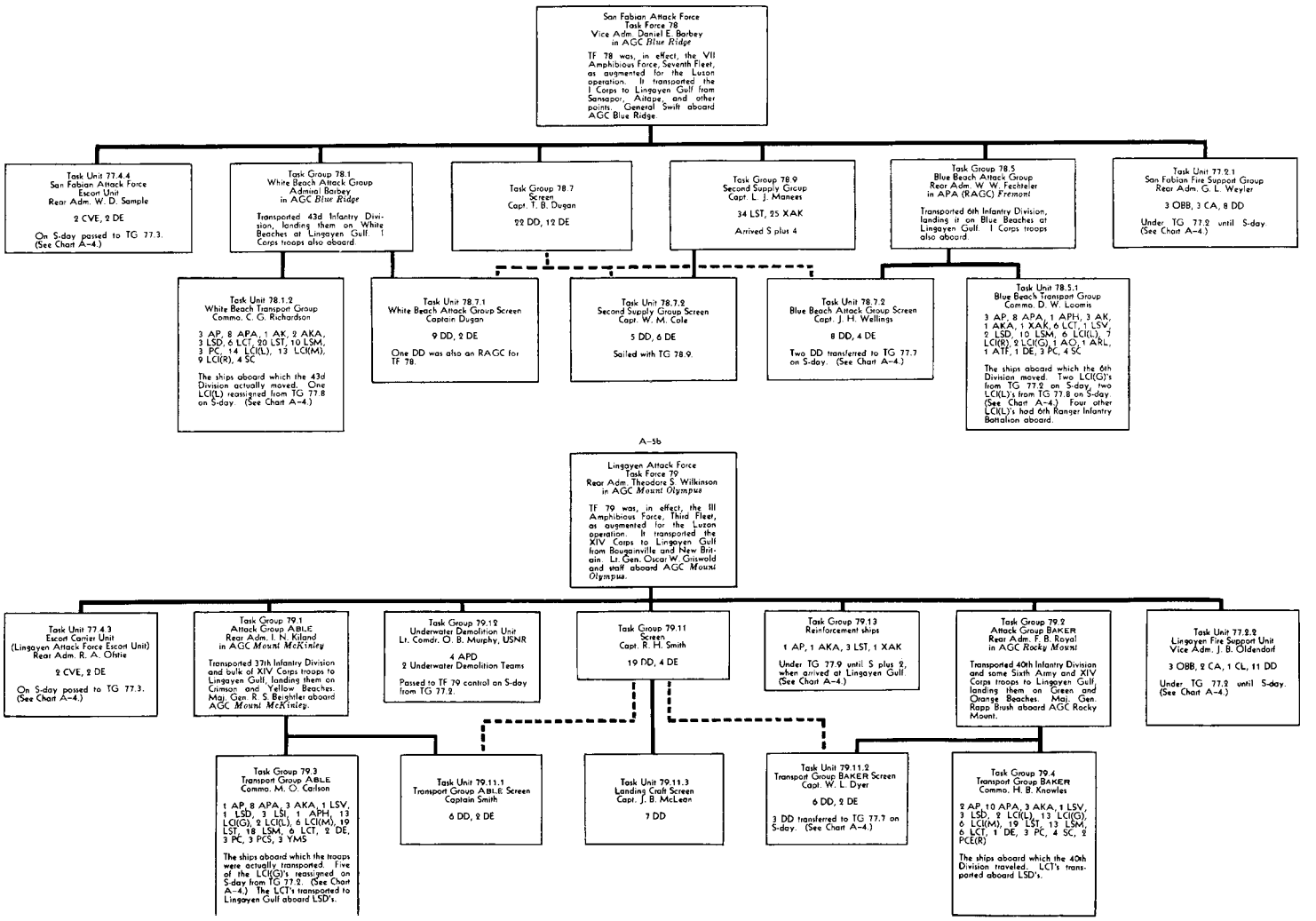
Appendix A-3—Organization of the Sixth Army for the Invasion of Luzon



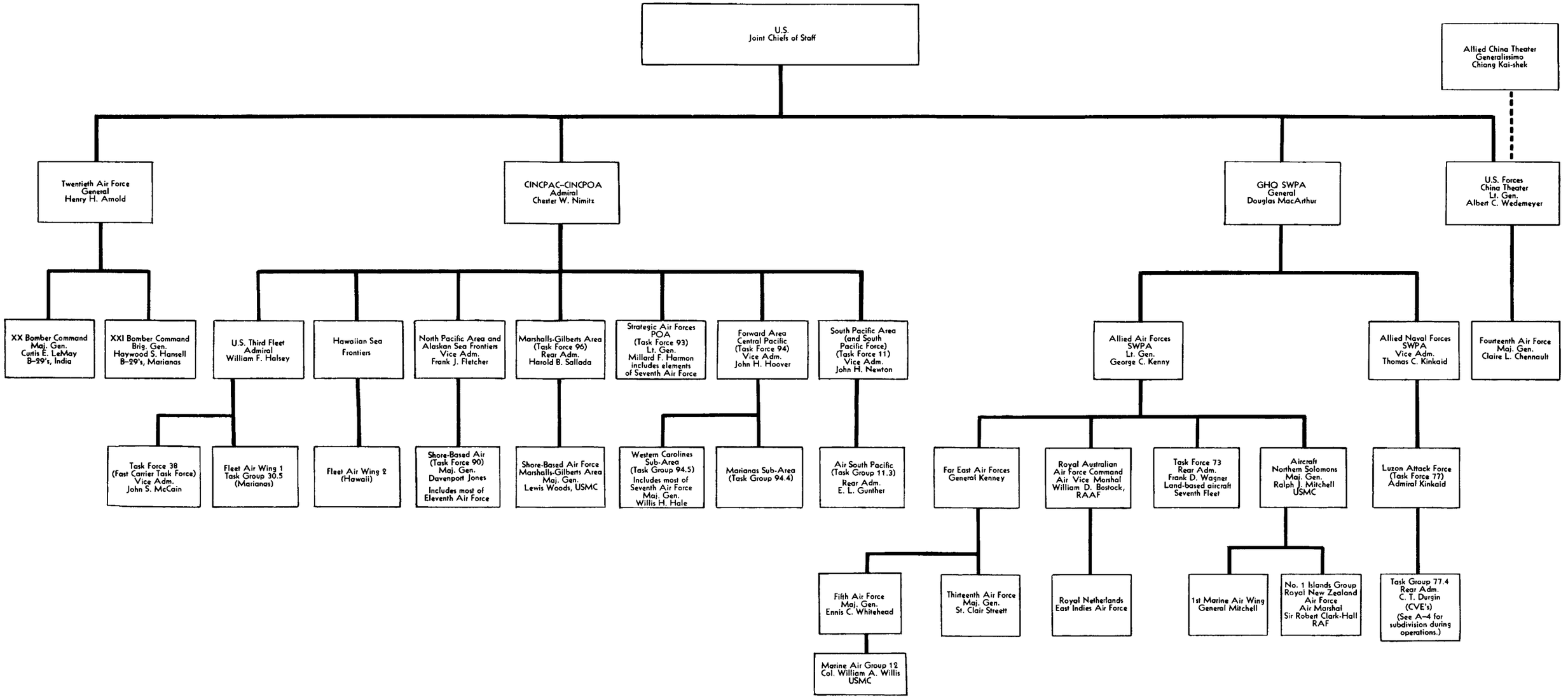
Appendix A-4—Organization of the Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific Area, for the Lingayen Gulf Operation



Appendix A–5—Organization of the Amphibious Forces for the Lingayen Gulf Operation



Appendix A–6—Operational Organization of Allied Air Commands in the Pacific, 9 January 1945



Appendix B

Composition of the Landing Waves, Lingayen Assault, 9 January 1945

Time of Landing (H-Hour Plus Minutes)	I Corps					XIV Corps							
	43d Infantry Division			6th Infantry Division		37th Infantry Division				40th Infantry Division			
						129th RCT		148th RCT		160th RCT		185th RCT	
	1st BLT 172d RCT White 1	169th RCT White 2	103d RCT White 3	1st RCT Blue 1	20th RCT Blue 2	Crimson 1	Crimson 2	Yellow 1	Yellow 2	Green 1	Green 2	Orange 1	Orange 2
H-Hour	4 LVT(A), 8 LVT	2 LVT(A), 10 LVT	5 LVT(A), 8 LVT	4 LVT(A)	4 LVT(A)	4 LVT(A)	3 LVT(A)	3 LVT(A)	3 LVT(A)	10 LVT	10 LVT	10 LVT	10 LVT
H+½				12 LVT	12 LVT								
H+1						8 LVT	8 LVT	8 LVT	8 LVT				
H+2						5 LVT	5 LVT	5 LVT	5 LVT				
H+3	12 LVT	2 LVT(A), 10 LVT	13 LVT	12 LVT	12 LVT					10 LVT	10 LVT	8 LVT	8 LVT
H+4						8 LVT	8 LVT	8 LVT	8 LVT				
H+6	3 LVT	3 LVT	3 LVT	6 LVT	6 LVT	3 LVT	2 LVT	2 LVT	3 LVT	3 LVT	5 LVT(A)	7 LVT	5 LVT(A), 9 LVT
H+8	6 LCVP	12 LCVP	12 LCVP										
H+9				12 LVT	12 LVT					6 LCVP	8 LCVP	6 LCVP	8 LCVP
H+11						6 LCVP	6 LCVP	6 LCVP	6 LCVP				
H+13	6 LCVP	12 LCVP	12 LCVP										
H+14				11 LCVP, 1 LCM	11 LCVP, 1 LCM								
H+16						6 LCVP	6 LCVP	6 LCVP	6 LCVP				
H+18	6 LCVP	13 LCVP	12 LCVP										
H+19				11 LCVP, 1 LCM	11 LCVP, 1 LCM					6 LCVP, 1 LCM	8 LCVP	6 LCVP	8 LCVP, 4 LCM
H+21						6 LCVP	4 LCVP	8 LCVP	8 LCVP				
H+23	6 LCVP	12 LCVP	13 LCVP										
H+24				11 LCVP, 1 LCM	11 LCVP, 1 LCM					6 LCVP, 1 LCM	7 LCVP, 2 LCM	6 LCVP	8 LCVP

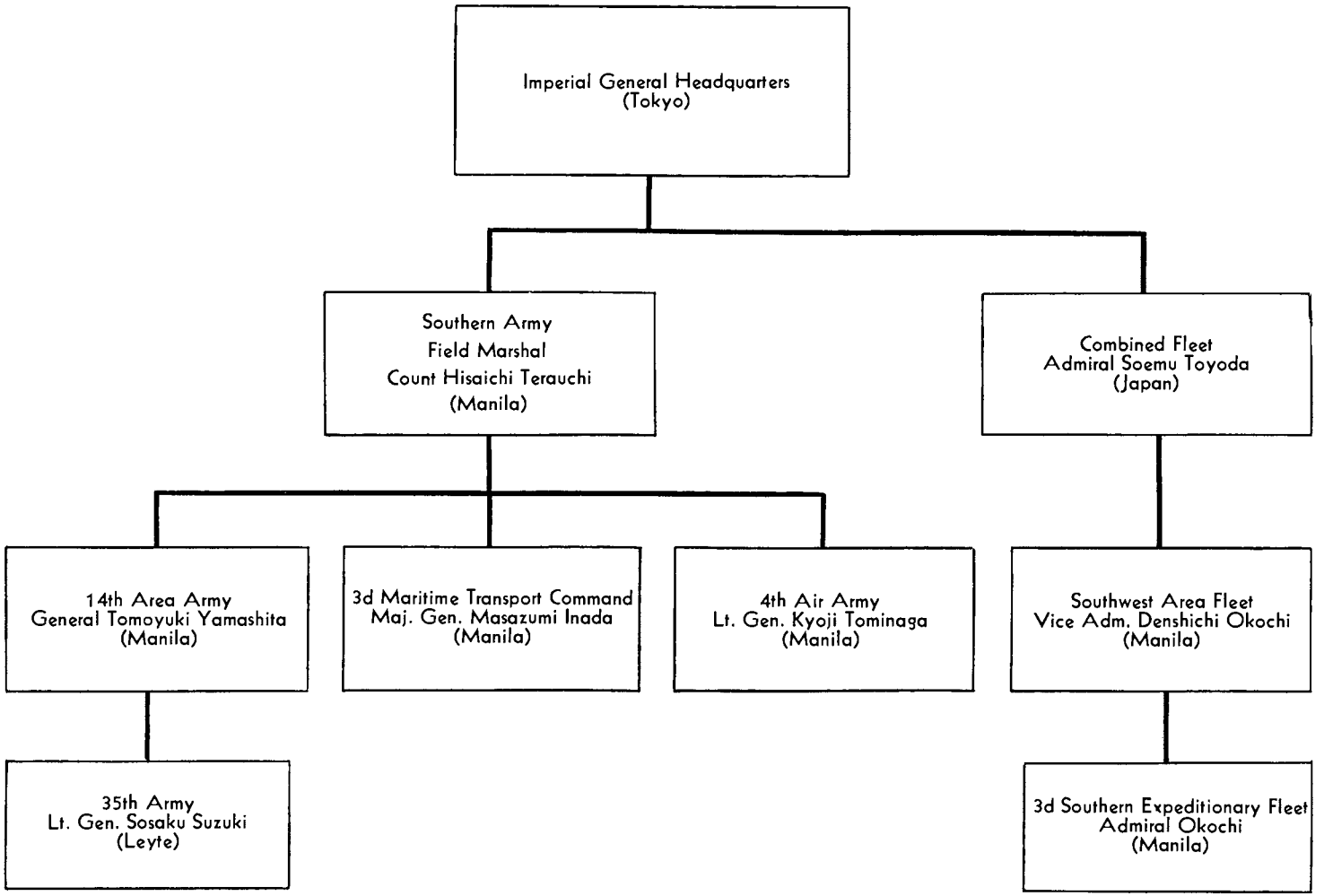
H+26						6 LCVP	6 LCM	2 LCM	3 LCM				
H+28		10 LCVP, 1 LCM	2 LSM										
H+29				12 LCVP	11 LCVP, 1 LCM								
H+31										5 LCVP	3 LCT	3 LCVP, 2 LCM	3 LCT
H+33	7 LCM	6 LCM	8 LCM										
H+34				11 LCVP, 1 LCM	12 LCVP								
H+38		6 LCT	12 LCVP										
H+41				6 Dukw, 3 LCT	5 Dukw, 3 LCT, 1 LVT		7 LCVP	3 LCVP	4 LCVP				
H+43	3 LSM		13 LCVP										
H+45		4 LCM				24 Dukw							
H+46							7 LCVP	3 LCVP	4 LCVP				
H+48			12 LCVP										
H+51							7 LCVP	3 LCVP	4 LCVP				
H+53			2 LCM										
H+54				5 LSM	5 LSM								
H+55		5 LSM											
H+56							7 LCVP	3 LCVP	4 LCVP				
II+61							7 LCVP	3 LCVP	4 LCVP				
H+69				11 LCVP, 2 LCM	11 LCVP, 2 LCM								
H+74				11 LCVP, 2 LCM	11 LCVP, 3 LCM								
H+79				3 LCVP, 9 LCM	8 LCVP, 4 LCM								

Source: CTG 78.I, Attack Order No. 2–44, 9 Dec 1944
CTG 78.5, Attack Order No. 2–44, 11 Dec 44
CTU 78.1.2, Landing Attack Order No. A2–44, 10 Dec 44
CTG 79.1, Attack Order No. A701–44, 1 Dec 44
CTG 79.2, Attack Order No. A605–44, 5 Dec 44
CTG 79.4, Landing Attack Order No. A22–44, 12 Dec 44
6th Inf Div, FO No. 1, 28 Nov 44
6th Inf Div, Change No. 1, 22 Dec 44 to FO No. 1
37th Inf Div, FO No. 19, 12 Dec 44
43d Inf Div, FO No. 1, 25 Nov 44
43d Inf Div, an. 3c (revised), 12 Dec 44, to FO No. 1

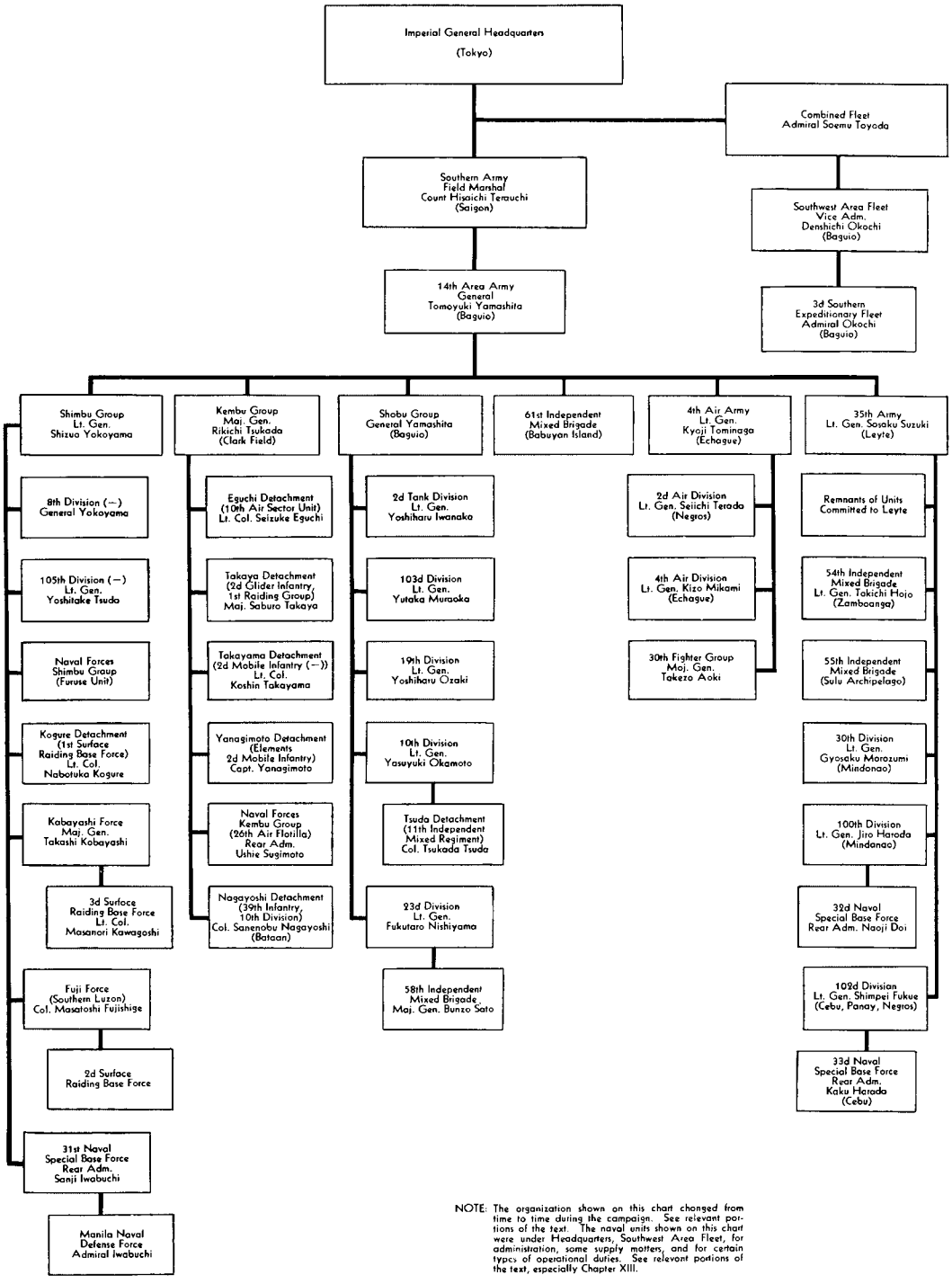
Appendix C

Japanese Command Structure in the Philippines

APPENDIX C–1—SIMPLIFIED ORGANIZATION, NOVEMBER 1944



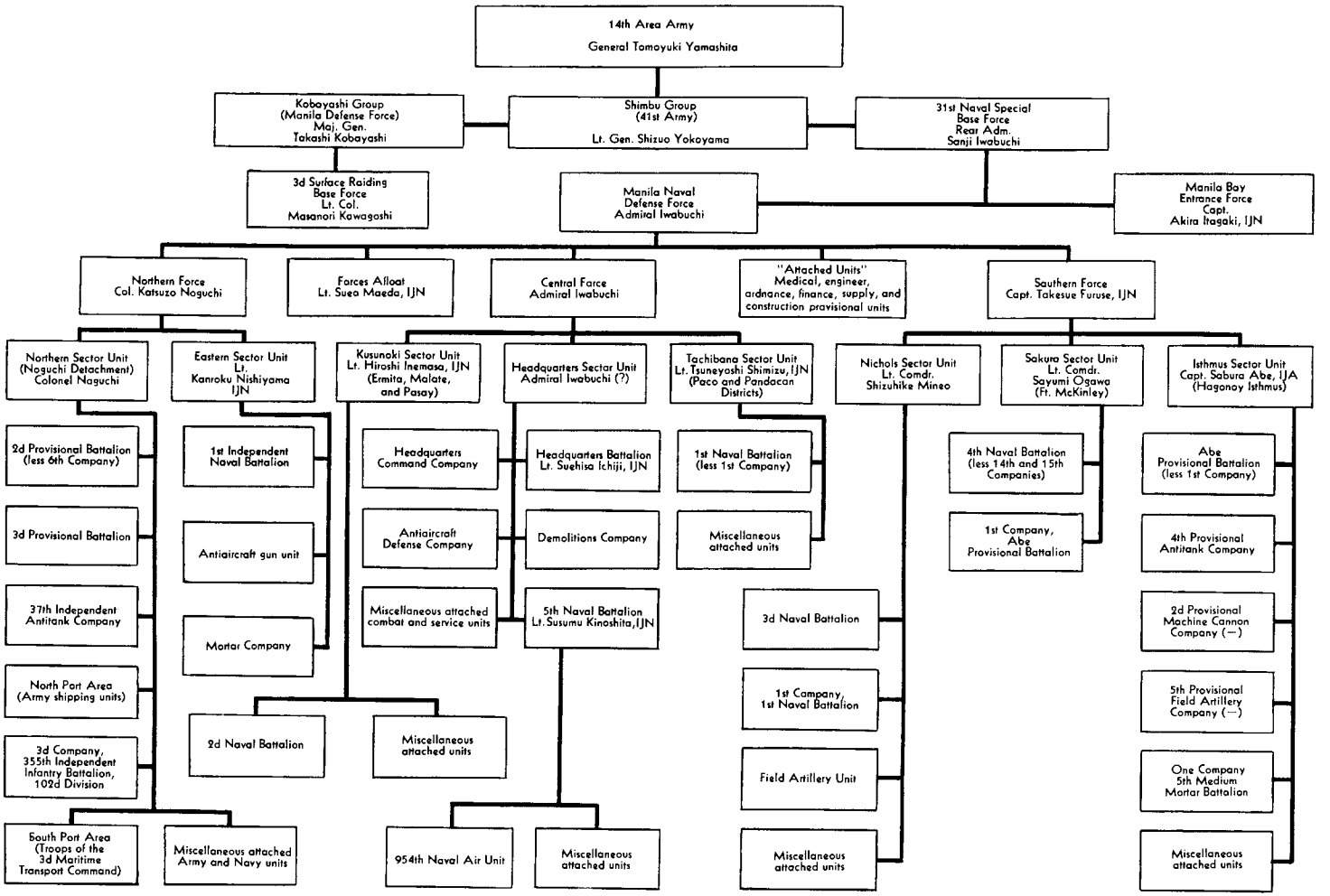
APPENDIX C-2—ORGANIZATION AS OF 9 JANUARY 1945



NOTE: The organization shown on this chart changed from time to time during the campaign. See relevant portions of the text. The naval units shown on this chart were under Headquarters, Southwest Area Fleet, for administration, some supply matters, and for certain types of operational duties. See relevant portions of the text, especially Chapter XIII.

Appendix D

Organization of Japanese Forces at Manila



Appendix E

SHIMBU GROUP Order of Battle

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE TROOPS
- Headquarters, 8th Division
- 8th Engineer Regiment (less 1st Company), 8th Division
- 8th Transport Regiment (less 3d Company), 8th Division
- Signal Unit (less elements), 8th Division
- Ordnance Service Unit, 8th Division
- Chemical Unit, 8th Division
- Veterinary Unit, 8th Division
- Water Supply and Purification Unit, 8th Division

SHIMBU GROUP ARTILLERY
- 22d Medium Artillery Regiment (less 1st Battalion)
- 20th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion (less 1st and 4th Batteries)

SHIMBU GROUP RESERVE FORCE
- Kobayashi Unit
  - Headquarters, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - 1st Battalion, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - 2d Battalion (less 6th Company and less two platoons, Machine Gun Company), 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - Elements, Regimental Gun Company, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - Elements, Antitank Company, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - Elements, Labor Unit, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - Elements, Signal Unit, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - 11th Company, 3d Battalion, 31st Infantry, 8th Division
    - 23d Independent Antitank Battalion
    - 13th Independent Machine Gun Battalion (less 1st Company)
      - 12th Provisional Machine Gun Company
    - 3d Company, 114th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 2d Surface Raiding Base Force
    - Takahashi Platoon

Takanami Unit
Headquarters, 26th Independent Infantry
2d Battalion, 26th Independent Infantry
Elements, Antitank Company, 26th Independent Infantry
Elements, Regimental Gun Company, 26th Independent Infantry
Elements, Signal Unit, 26th Independent Infantry
Kuwazawa Unit
Headquarters, 3d Battalion, 17th Infantry, 8th Division
3d Battalion (less 10th Company), 17th Infantry, 8th Division
2d Company, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry, 8th Division
Elements, Regimental Gun Company, 17th Infantry, 8th Division
Elements, Labor Unit, 17th Infantry, 8th Division
Elements, Signal Unit, 17th Infantry, 8th Division
1st Company, 21st Medium Mortar Battalion
Railway Provisional Infantry Battalion (8th Railway Regiment)
Nagamatsu Provisional Infantry Battalion
1st Signal Unit, Southern Area Army
4th Signal Unit, Southern Area Army
Elements, 2d Signal Unit, Southern Area Army
8th Reconnaissance Regiment, 8th Division

EAST OF MANILA NAVAL FORCE (FURUSE UNIT)
Elements, 31st Naval Special Base Force
Elements, 3d Naval Battalion, Manila Naval Defense Force
Elements, 4th Naval Battalion, Manila Naval Defense Force
Elements, 1st Independent Naval Battalion, Manila Naval Defense Force
Fujiyoshi Unit (Antiaircraft Artillery)

KAWASHIMA FORCE
Headquarters and Service Troops
Headquarters, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Signal Unit, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Labor Unit, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
10th Company, Engineer Unit, 105th Division
1st Platoon, 7th Company, Engineer Unit, 105th Division
Elements, Field Hospital, 105th Division
Elements, 2d Field Hospital, 8th Division
Elements, 4th Field Hospital, 8th Division
Elements, 137th Line of Communications Hospital
Elements, 141st Line of Communications Hospital
Elements, Transport Unit, 105th Division
Elements, Water Supply and Purification Unit, 30th Division

Antiaircraft Unit (Ueda Detachment)
1st Company, 78th Field Antiaircraft Battalion
51st Machine Cannon Company
52d Machine Cannon Company
Kawashima Force Artillery (Setoguchi Detachment)
Headquarters, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division
2d Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division (less 8th Battery)
3d Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division (less 9th Battery)
4th Provisional Artillery Battery
11th Battery, 4th Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division
12th Battery, 4th Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division
1st Assault Regiment (Hanabusa Detachment)
Headquarters and Regimental Troops
Headquarters, 9th Air Intelligence Regiment
Maeda Unit
Nishimura Company
Harai Company
Yagi Company
Regimental Antitank Unit
1st Provisional Antitank Platoon
2d Provisional Antitank Platoon
Hattori Antitank Unit
Regimental Machine Gun Unit
1st Company, 25th Independent Machine Gun Battalion
Araki Independent Machine Gun Unit
1st Battalion
Headquarters, 10th Air Intelligence Regiment
10th Air Intelligence Regiment (less elements)
1st Company, 13th Independent Machine Gun Battalion
118th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 2d Surface Raiding Base Force
2d Battalion
9th Air Intelligence Regiment (less Headquarters)
3d Battalion
9th Provisional Infantry Battalion (convalescents from Manila hospitals)
2d Assault Regiment (Tomono Detachment)
Headquarters, 12th Air Intelligence Regiment
23d Independent Antitank Battalion
1st Battalion
1st Company, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 8th Division
4th Company, 12th Air Signal Regiment
3d Company, 359th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Elements, Southern Area Army Motor Transport Depot

4th Provisional Machine Gun Company
11th Provisional Machine Gun Company
Adachi Heavy Machine Gun Unit
Shigeo Machine Gun Unit
Sato Antitank Platoon
Kanda Antitank Platoon
2d Battalion
2d Company, 12th Air Signal Regiment
1st Company, 4th Special Air Signal Unit
10th Provisional Machine Gun Company
3d Battalion
4th Company, 10th Air Intelligence Regiment
Guard Company, 10th Air Intelligence Regiment
Machine Gun Company, 1st Battalion, 153d Infantry, 49th Division
Muroya Provisional Infantry Battalion
Headquarters, 2d Air Signal Regiment
Elements, 12th Air Signal Regiment
Elements, 5th Air-Ground Signal Unit
Elements, 61st Air-Ground Signal Unit
124th Independent Radio Platoon
128th Independent Radio Platoon
129th Independent Radio Platoon
Replacements and casuals, 132d Infantry Regiment, 57th Division
Replacements and casuals, 154th Infantry Regiment, 54th Division
Kasama Battalion
358th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
4th Company (less 1st Platoon), 355th Independent Infantry Battalion, 78th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division
1st Platoon, 3d Company, 359th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Elements, 2d Survey Regiment
Elements, 5th Air-Ground Signal Unit
Elements, 61st Air-Ground Signal Unit
2d Company, 25th Independent Machine Gun Battalion
2d Platoon, Antitank Unit, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division

KOBAYASHI FORCE
Headquarters and Service Troops
Headquarters, 1st Field Replacement Depot (Headquarters, Manila Defense Force)
Elements, 63d Line of Communications Hospital
Veterinary Section, 85th Line of Communications Sector Headquarters

7th Company (less 1st Platoon), Engineer Unit, 105th Division
1st Provisional Engineer Company
2d Provisional Engineer Company
1st Provisional Truck Company
Kobayashi Force Artillery
3d Battalion, 53d Field Artillery Regiment
Kobayashi Force Reserve
"X" Provisional Infantry Battalion
1st Company, 359th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
2d Company, 359th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
2d Company, 355th Independent Infantry Battalion, 78th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division
3d Company, 178th Independent Infantry Battalion, 79th Infantry Brigade, 103d Division
1st Platoon, 4th Company, 355th Independent Infantry Battalion, 78th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division
5th Provisional Infantry Company
Elements, Signal Unit, 102d Division
Elements, Signal Unit, 77th Infantry Brigade, 102d Division
Elements, Artillery Unit, 102d Division
Yamauye Provisional Infantry Battalion
Kawabe Provisional Infantry Battalion
Right Sector Unit (Hayashi Detachment)
4th Provisional Infantry Battalion
7th Provisional Infantry Battalion
1st Platoon, 2d Provisional Machine Cannon Company
6th Provisional Antitank Company
Sector Machine Gun Unit
5th Provisional Machine Gun Company
10th Provisional Machine Gun Company
12th Provisional Machine Gun Company
Sector Artillery
2d Battery, 1st Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 8th Division
5th Provisional Artillery Battery
7th Provisional Artillery Battery
Central Sector Unit (Degura Detachment)
10th Provisional Infantry Battalion
Ebisu Provisional Infantry Battalion (prisoner of war and internment camp guards from Manila area camps)
4th Medium Mortar Battalion

Left Sector Unit (Nambu Detachment)
8th Provisional Infantry Battalion
Imanari Provisional Infantry Battalion
11th Company, 3d Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 8th Division
Elements, 14th Area Army Field Ordnance Depot
11th Air Sector Command Provisional Infantry Battalion
Headquarters, 11th Air Sector Command
77th Field Antiaircraft Battalion
78th Field Antiaircraft Battalion (less 1st Company)
11th Airdrome Battalion
134th Airdrome Battalion
148th Airdrome Battalion
149th Airdrome Battalion
180th Airdrome Battalion
111th Land Duty Company
8th Machine Cannon Company
5th Provisional Antitank Company
7th Provisional Machine Gun Company
Sector Artillery
6th Provisional Artillery Battery
3d Rocket Gun Battalion
Ishimaru Unit
106th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 3d Surface Raiding Base Force

NOGUCHI FORCE
Headquarters and Service Troops
Headquarters, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Elements, 63d Line of Communications Hospital
Elements, Field Hospital, 105th Division
Elements, Veterinary Unit, 105th Division
Elements, Water Supply and Purification Unit, 105th Division
Elements, Transportation Unit, 105th Division
22d Special Motor Transport Company
Signal Unit, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Labor Unit, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Elements, Signal Unit, 105th Division
2d, 8th, and 9th Companies, Engineer Unit, 105th Division
Noguchi Force Artillery
3d Battalion (less 9th Company), 53d Field Artillery Regiment
1st Battalion, 22d Medium Artillery Regiment
1st Company, Artillery Unit, 105th Division
3d Company, Artillery Unit, 105th Division

4th Company, 20th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion
3d Company, 21st Medium Mortar Battalion
2d Company, 21st Medium Mortar Battalion
Okita Detachment
186th Independent Infantry Battalion, 82d Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
108th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 2d Surface Raiding Base Force
1st Company, 107th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
1st Provisional Infantry Battalion (replacements from Southern Area Army Replacement Depot, Manila)
Suzuki Provisional Infantry Battalion
22d Airdrome Construction Unit
136th Airdrome Construction Unit
137th Airdrome Construction Unit
Ogasawara Unit
1st Company, 109th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
2d Company, 107th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
2d Company, 110th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
Lusena Military Police Squad
1st Platoon, 3d Provisional Artillery Battery
Elements, 21st Shipping Engineer Regiment
Kuromiya Detachment
181st Independent Infantry Battalion, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Iwashita Provisional Infantry Battalion
Fukuzawa Provisional Infantry Battalion, 8th Division
Detachment Artillery
21st Medium Mortar Battalion (less 1st, 2d, and 3d Companies)
1st Company, 4th Medium Mortar Battalion
6th Company, Engineer Unit, 105th Division
1st Platoon, 1st Provisional Engineer Company
Kimura Detachment
182d Independent Infantry Battalion (less 3d Company), 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
2d Company, 113th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 2d Surface Raiding Base Force
Sugiyama Detachment
185th Independent Infantry Battalion, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division

Fujita Provisional Infantry Battalion
1st Company (less one platoon), 183d Independent Infantry Battalion, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
2d Company (less one platoon), 183d Independent Infantry Battalion, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
3d Company, 183d Independent Infantry Battalion, 81st Infantry Brigade, 105th Division
Kumazawa Provisional Infantry Battalion (24th Shipping Engineer Regiment, less 1st Battalion)
Noguchi Force Reserve
107th Surface Raiding Base Battalion (less 1st and 2d Companies), 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
109th Surface Raiding Base Battalion (less 1st Company), 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
113th Surface Raiding Base Battalion (less 2d Company), 2d Surface Raiding Base Force

KOGURE DETACHMENT
Headquarters, 1st Surface Raiding Base Force
1st Surface Raiding Base Force Units
7th Surface Raiding Battalion (less one company)
9th Surface Raiding Battalion
10th Surface Raiding Battalion
110th Surface Raiding Base Battalion
107th Surface Raiding Base Battalion
Elements, 109th Surface Raiding Base Battalion
Other Units
Elements, 108th Surface Raiding Base Battalion, 2d Surface Raiding Base Force
2d Company, 10th Air Intelligence Regiment
5th Company, 10th Air Intelligence Regiment
1st Battalion, 24th Shipping Engineer Regiment

Appendix F

STRENGTH AND DEPLOYMENT OF JAPANESE IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

Palawan and Offshore Islets			
Army ground forces	600	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	900	Army	300
Naval forces	250	Navy	50
Noncombatant civilians	—		350
	1,750		
Zamboanga Peninsula			
Army ground forces	4,600	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	800	Army	3,500
Naval forces	3,500	Navy	1,000
Noncombatant civilians	—		4,500
	8,900		
Sulu Archipelago			
Army ground forces	2,400	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	1,150	Army	1,650
Naval forces	350	Navy	50
Noncombatant civilians	—		1,700
	3,900		
Panay and Offshore Islets			
Army ground forces	2,235	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	175	Army	1,500
Naval forces	25	Navy	—
Noncombatant civilians	400		1,500
	2,835		
Northwestern Negros Island			
Army ground forces	5,500	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	7,500	Army	4,000
Naval forces	500	Navy	—
Noncombatant civilians	100		4,000
	13,600		

Cebu Island			
Army ground forces	8,690	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	400	Army	2,250
Naval forces	3,710	Navy	300
Noncombatant civilians	1,700		2,550
	14,500		
Bohol Island			
Army ground forces	230	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	50	Army	180
Naval forces	50	Navy	—
Noncombatant civilians	—		180
	330		
Southeastern Negros Island			
Army ground forces	800	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	350	Army	500
Naval forces	150	Navy	—
Noncombatant civilians	—		500
	1,300		
Eastern Mindanao			
Army ground forces	28,775	Trained combat effectives	
Army air forces	8,050	Army	14,370
Naval forces	6,465	Navy	500
Noncombatant civilians	12,580		14,870
	55,850		
Totals			
Army ground forces	53,810	Trained ground combat troops	
Army air forces	19,375	Army	28,250
Naval forces	15,000	Navy	1,900
Total military	88,185	Total	30,150
Noncombatant civilians	14,780		
Grand Total	102,965		

Appendix G

Japanese Order of Battle in Eastern Mindanao

APPENDIX G-1—*100TH DIVISION*, 17 APRIL 1945

Davao District Unit (Lt. Gen. Jiro Harada, Commanding General, 100th Division)
- 100th Division Headquarters Unit
  - Headquarters, 100th Division
  - 167th Independent Infantry Battalion, less two companies
  - 3d Company, 163d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - 100th Division Transportation Unit
  - 1st Field Hospital, 30th Division, less elements
  - 13th Army Hospital
  - Elements, 35th Army Signal Unit
  - Elements, 35th Army Information Section
  - Elements, Provisional Chemical Unit
  - Elements, 14th Area Army Field Freight Depot
  - Special Tank Platoon (U.S. light tanks)
  - Davao Coast Artillery Unit
  - Davao Line of Communications Squadron
  - 2d Provisional Construction Duty Company
  - 100th Division Signal Unit
  - 100th Division Artillery Unit, less one battery
  - 100th Division Engineer Unit, less five companies
- Right Sector Unit (Maj. Gen. Ko Tochigi, Commanding General, 76th Infantry Brigade, 100th Division)
  - Headquarters and Brigade Troops, 76th Infantry Brigade
  - 352d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - 353d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - 168th Independent Infantry Battalion, less 3d and 4th Companies
  - 8th Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
  - 10th Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit

Ide Battalion
12th Airfield Battalion
14th Airfield Battalion
3d Naval Battalion, 32d Naval Special Base Force
114th Naval Air Defense Unit
126th Naval Air Defense Unit
28th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
Left Sector Unit (Maj. Gen. Muraji Kawazoe, Commanding General, 75th Infantry Brigade)
Headquarters and Brigade Troops, 75th Infantry Brigade
164th Independent Infantry Battalion
165th Independent Infantry Battalion
Battery, 100th Division Artillery Unit
Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
Elements, 1st Field Hospital, 30th Division
1st Naval Battalion, 32d Naval Special Base Force
97th Naval Air Defense Unit
954th Naval Machine Cannon Unit
25th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
26th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
27th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
2d Naval Battalion, 32d Naval Special Base Force
Force troops, 32d Naval Special Base Force
129th Naval Air Defense Unit
Headquarters, 32d Naval Special Base Force
Hosono Unit
Headquarters, 13th Air Sector Command
8th Airfield Battalion
127th Airfield Battalion
126th Field Airfield Construction Unit
Elements, 26th Airfield Construction Battalion

Strength, Davao District Unit

Army ground forces	13,100
Army air forces	2,900
Naval forces	3,675
Noncombatant civilians	12,000
Total	31,575

Digos District Unit (Col. Rinzo Shizuru, Commanding Officer, 163d Independent Infantry Battalion, 100th Division)
Headquarters, 163d Independent Infantry Battalion
163d Independent Infantry Battalion, less 3d Company

3d Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Division, less 9th and 11th Batteries
Platoon, 100th Division Engineer Unit
Headquarters, 4th Naval Battalion, 32d Naval Special Base Force
94th Naval Air Defense Unit
225th Naval Construction Unit
22d Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
23d Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
24th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
Naval Supply Depot
Naval Flying Unit

Strength, Digos District Unit	
Army ground forces	1,290
Army air forces	0
Naval forces	2,040
Noncombatant civilians	580
Total	3,910

Sarangani District Unit (after 1 May) (Maj. Makoto Takatsuka, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Division)
Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment
1st Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment, less 3d Battery
Company, 168th Independent Infantry Battalion
Hospitalized patients, 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry, 30th Division
Elements, 2d Field Hospital, 30th Division
Naval Construction Unit
Naval Air Defense Unit
Naval Flying Unit

Strength, Sarangani District Unit	
Army ground forces	1,050
Naval forces	450
Total	1,500

Kingking District Unit (east coast of Davao Gulf)
Company, 167th Independent Infantry Battalion
Company, 168th Independent Infantry Battalion

Strength, Kingking District Unit	
Army ground forces	400
Total	400

Total Japanese Strength in the 100th Division Area

Army ground combat and service elements, including civilians inducted into the Army ground echelons, November 1944–April 1945	15,840
Army air force elements, all of the service category but some armed as auxiliary infantry	2,900
Naval combat and service elements	6,165
Noncombatant, nonmilitarized civilians	12,580
Grand total	37,485
Subtotal of trained ground combat effectives	
100th Division and attached units	8,320
32d Naval Special Base Force	500
Total	8,820

APPENDIX G–2—*100TH DIVISION* REORGANIZATION OF MID-MAY
(Major Combat Units Only)

Headquarters, 100th Division (Lt. Gen. Jiro Harada)
- Right Front Line Unit (Maj. Gen. Muraji Kawazoe, Commanding General, 75th Infantry Brigade)
  - Headquarters and Brigade Troops, 75th Infantry Brigade
  - 164th Independent Infantry Battalion, less one company
  - 165th Independent Infantry Battalion, less one company
  - 168th Independent Infantry Battalion, less one company
  - Company, 166th Independent Infantry Battalion
  - Remnants, 163d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - Remnants, 3d Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Division
  - Battery, 100th Division, Artillery Unit
  - Reinforced company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
- Left Front Line Unit (Maj. Gen. Ko Tochigi, Commanding General, 76th Infantry Brigade)
  - Headquarters and Brigade Troops, 76th Infantry Brigade
  - 352d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - 353d Independent Infantry Battalion
  - Ide Battalion
  - 167th Independent Infantry Battalion, less two companies
  - 3d Naval Battalion, 32d Naval Special Base Force
  - 100th Division Artillery Unit, less one battery (actual strength is about one battery)
  - Two companies, 100th Division Engineer Unit
- Left District Unit (Rear Adm. Naoji Doi, Commanding Officer, 32d Naval Special Base Force)
  - Headquarters and Service Troops, 32d Naval Special Base Force
  - 1st Naval Battalion

2d Naval Battalion
Remnants, 4th Naval Battalion
Company, 164th Independent Infantry Battalion
Company, 165th Independent Infantry Battalion
Hosono Unit

APPENDIX G–3—*30TH DIVISION*, 17 APRIL 1945

Eastern Sector Unit
Headquarters, 3d Battalion, 41st Infantry, 30th Division
3d Battalion, 41st Infantry
Platoon, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry
1st Company, 19th Shipping Engineer Regiment
Surigao Coast Artillery Unit
Elements, 30th Division Ordnance Service Unit
Miscellaneous army units
Miscellaneous naval units

Strength, Eastern Sector Unit	
Army ground forces	1,900
Naval forces	300
	2,200

Northern Sector Unit (Col. Toshiro Nawa, Commanding Officer, 30th Reconnaissance Regiment)
Headquarters, 30th Reconnaissance Regiment, 30th Division
30th Reconnaissance Regiment, less 3d Company
1st Battalion, 77th Infantry, 30th Division
3d Company, 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry, 30th Division
19th Shipping Engineer Regiment, less 1st Company
15th Debarkation Unit
61st Anchorage Headquarters
Provisional Artillery Battery, 30th Field Artillery Regiment
Reinforced company, 30th Engineer Regiment
Headquarters, Del Monte Sector Air Force Unit
102d Airfield Battalion, less elements
103d Airfield Battalion
1st Special Airfield Construction Unit
Elements, 125th Field Airfield Construction Unit
Elements, 37th Airfield Battalion
Miscellaneous 2d Air Division units

Strength, Northern Sector Unit	
Army ground forces	2,100
Army air forces	2,400
	4,500

Central Sector Unit (Col. Kan Negishi, Commanding Officer, 74th Infantry, 30th Division)
- Headquarters, 74th Infantry, 30th Division
  - 74th Infantry, less 1st Battalion
  - 6th Company, reinforced, 77th Infantry
  - 3d Company, 30th Reconnaissance Regiment
  - Headquarters, 30th Field Artillery Regiment
    - 2d Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment
    - 3d Battery, 1st Battalion, 30th Field Artillery Regiment
  - Company, 30th Engineer Regiment
- Valencia Sector Air Force Unit
  - Rear Strong Point Construction Force
    - Headquarters, 31st Air Sector Command
    - 32d Airfield Battalion
    - 37th Airfield Battalion, less elements
    - 125th Field Airfield Construction Unit, less elements
  - Valencia Sector Force
    - 1st Repair Depot, Manila Air Depot
    - Headquarters, 3d Airfield Construction Unit
    - 8th Special Airfield Construction Unit
    - 33d Airfield Battalion
    - 18th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
    - 19th Special Machine Cannon Unit (Army)
    - 8th Independent Maintenance Unit, 14th Field Air Depot
    - 1st Branch Depot, 2d Repair Depot
    - Headquarters, 1st Signal Unit
    - Miscellaneous 2d Air Division units

Strength, Central Sector Unit

Army ground forces	2,900
Army air forces	2,600
	5,500

30th Division Headquarters Unit (Lt. Gen. Gyosaku Morozumi, Commanding General, 30th Division) (Located in Central Sector Unit's Area)
- Headquarters, 30th Division
  - 30th Transportation Regiment, 30th Division
    - Two companies, 30th Engineer Regiment
  - 2d Field Hospital, 30th Division
  - 4th Field Hospital, 30th Division
  - 4th Company, 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry
  - Water Supply and Purification Unit, 30th Division
  - Signal Unit, 30th Division
  - Elements, Ordnance Service Unit, 30th Division

Sick Horse Depot, 30th Division
Miscellany

Strength, Headquarters Unit
Army ground forces 1,000

Southern Sector Unit (Col. Koritaki Ouchi, Commanding Officer, 30th Engineer Regiment)
Headquarters, 30th Engineer Regiment, 30th Division
30th Engineer Regiment, less four companies
7th Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
9th Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
1st Battalion, 74th Infantry, less two companies
3d Company, 166th Independent Infantry Battalion, 100th Division, less two platoons
1st Field Hospital, 30th Division
Medical Service Unit, 30th Division (Murase Battalion)

Strength, Southern Sector Unit
Army ground forces 2,500

Western Sector Unit (Lt. Col. Yutaka Takumi, Commanding Officer, 166th Independent Infantry Battalion)
Headquarters, 166th Independent Infantry Battalion, 75th Brigade, 100th Division
166th Independent Infantry Battalion, less 3d Company (less two platoons)
1st Company, 12th Airfield Battalion
Elements, Medical Service Unit, 30th Division
Elements, 4th Company, 100th Division Engineer Unit
Miscellany

Strength, Western Sector Unit
Army ground forces 1,350
Army air forces. 150
1,500

Total Strength in the 30th Division Area

Army ground combat and service elements	11,750
Army air force elements, all of the service category but some armed as auxiliary infantry	5,150
Naval forces	300
Grand total	17,200
Subtotal of trained ground combat effectives 30th Division and attached units	5,800
	5,800

Appendix G-4—Order of Battle of Japanese Forces Along the Northwestern Section of the Kibawe-Talomo Trail

Ca. 10 May 45

Command Groupment, Chief of Staff, 35th Army (Maj. Gen. Yoshiharu Tomochika)

Chief of Staff's Office

Elements, 35th Army Signal Unit
100th Division Field Hospital
13th Southern Army Hospital

Headquarters, 58th Field Road Construction Battalion

58th Field Road Construction Battalion
Remnants, 4th, 7th, and 9th Companies, 100th Division Engineer Unit
1st and 2d Provisional Construction Duty Companies
Platoon, 37th Construction Duty Company
Company, 30th Transportation Regiment, 30th Division
Elements, Medical Service Unit, 30th Division
One-half Machine Gun Company, 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry
Stragglers, rifle companies, 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry
Elements, 1st Shipping Engineer Replacement Unit
Elements, 3d Company, 19th Shipping Engineer Regiment

Service troops	750
Combat troops	250
Total	1,000

Added in mid-June

Understrength company, 163d Independent Infantry Battalion, 100th Division
Understrength company, 353d Independent Infantry Battalion, 100th Division

Added in late July

Remaining remnants, 353d Independent Infantry Battalion, 100th Division

Appendix H

The Cost of the Campaigns

Appendix H–1—Battle Casualties of U.S. Army Ground Combat Forces, Luzon and the Southern Philippines, 1945[a]

	Killed	Wounded	Total
Luzon			
Shobu Area[b]	4,035	12,155	16,190
Shimbu Area[c]	1,020	3,615	4,635
Kembu Area	835	3,380	4,215
Manila[d]	1,010	5,565	6,575
Corregidor[e]	240	675	915
Bataan[f]	315	1,285	1,600
Southern Luzon[g]	255	880	1,135
Bicol Peninsula	95	475	570
Miscellaneous[h]	505	1,530	2,035
Subtotal	8,310	29,560	37,870
Central and Southern Philippines			
Mindoro and the Visayan Passages[i]	125	255	380
Palawan and offshore islets	15	60	75
Zamboanga Peninsula	220	665	885
Sulu Archipelago	35	130	165
Panay and offshore islets	20	50	70
Northern Negros	370	1,025	1,395
Cebu and Mactan	420	1,730	2,150
Bohol Island	10	15	25
Southern Negros	35	180	215
Eastern Mindanao	820	2,880	3,700
Subtotal	2,070	6,990	9,060
Grand total	10,380	36,550	46,930

[a] While primarily reflecting the casualties of ground combat units, the figures in the table include the casualties of ASCOM units while under Sixth Army control from 9 January to 13 February, and also include the casualties of ground service units attached directly to ground combat units. Such casualties were usually reported as those of division, corps, and army troops. Because of many obvious duplications, it is impossible to derive any reliable figures for service units as a whole. There being no reliable figures except for the USAFIP(NL), guerrilla casualties are not included. Slight differences between the figures given in the text and those in the table are explained on the one hand by differences in time coverage and on the

other by the fact that the text figures are normally those of the infantry regiments alone. As an example of the differences in time coverage, it can be noted that the text's figures for Corregidor are as of 4 March, while the table's figures carry the casualties through the end of the war.

[b] Includes XIV Corps casualties only from 9 through 17 January; I Corps casualties from 9 January through 30 June; Eighth Army casualties from 1 July through the end of the war.

[c] Includes XIV Corps casualties (except for units in the *Kembu* area) during the last stages of the approach to Manila, 31 January–3 February, and also the casualties of all units engaged against the *Shimbu Group* from 20 February to the end of the war.

[d] Covers the period 3 February–4 March only.

[e] Includes jump casualties of the 503d Parachute RCT and casualties incurred on the smaller islands of Manila Bay.

[f] Includes XI Corps operations from the Zambales landing beaches to the northwestern base of Bataan Peninsula and also operations on Grande Island.

[g] Includes jump casualties of the 511th Parachute Infantry and all other 11th Airborne Division casualties through 4 February.

[h] Includes Army casualties resulting from kamikaze raids at Lingayen Gulf; ASCOM units to 13 February; the casualties of corps and army troops that cannot be placed on the ground (for example, the XIV Corps had operations at Manila and against the *Kembu* and *Shimbu Groups* under way at the same time); and the casualties of attached service units after 13 February.

[i] Excludes Leyte and Samar except for the operations in northwestern Samar and on offshore islets that were part of the Eighth Army's campaign to clear the Visayan Passages.

[j] Includes Army casualties resulting from kamikaze attacks and includes both Sixth and Eighth Army operations on Mindoro.

Source: The table is based upon all relevant American sources cited in the text. The primary sources are, for the most part, the regimental and divisional records. Casualties of corps and army troops are derived from the records of the Sixth and Eighth Armies and the I, X, XI, and XIV Corps. The table comprises deliberate approximations because various sets of sources are mutually irreconcilable. In general, since the Japanese took very few prisoners, the figures for Missing in Action are included in the Killed in Action column. Missing in action figures for all echelons of the commands were very incomplete and contradictory. The figures in this table will not necessarily agree with the official figures arrived at by The Adjutant General after the war. In this connection, however, it should be noted that a similar breakdown relative to location cannot be obtained from the latter source.

APPENDIX H–2—JAPANESE CASUALTIES, LUZON AND THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, 1945

	Initial[a] Strength	Prisoners of War	Surrendered After 15 Aug 45	Killed[b] or Died
Luzon				
Shobu Area[c]	152,000	4,415	50,000	96,085
Shimbu Area[d]	50,000	2,010	6,300	48,690
Kembu Area	30,000	510	1,500	27,990
Manila	17,000	915	0	11,585[d]
Corregidor[e]	5,670	35	0	5,635
Bataan[f]	4,000	340	150	3,510
Southern Luzon	13,500	260	2,500	9,240[d]
Bicol Peninsula	3,515	565	150	2,800
Subtotal	275,685	9,050	61,100	205,535
Central and Southern Philippines[g]				
Mindoro and the Visayan Passages	2,900	105	65	2,730
Palawan and offshore islets	1,750	20	10	1,720[h]
Zamboanga Peninsula	8,900	1,105	1,385	6,410
Sulu Archipelago	3,900	30	90	3,780
Panay and Guimaras	2,835	45	1,560	1,230
Northern Negros	13,600	350	6,170	7,080
Cebu and Mactan	14,500	405	8,550	5,545
Bohol Island	330	15	50	265
Southern Negros	1,300	20	880	400
Eastern Mindanao	55,850	600	34,150	21,100
Subtotal	105,865	2,695	52,910	50,260
Grand total	381,550	11,745	114,010	255,795

[a] All figures include civilians, of whom there were, originally, about 23,500 on Luzon and approximately 14,780 in the central and southern islands. This total of 38,280 Japanese civilians included government officials and families; civilian employees of the armed forces, many of whom had a quasi-military status before 9 January 1945; businessmen and their families; farmers and their families, especially on Mindanao; and some families of service personnel. Except for the extremely aged and the very young, almost all these Japanese civilians came to serve the armed forces in one way or another. For example, on Luzon most male civilians were ultimately drafted into the service to help form provisional infantry battalions, while on Mindanao many male civilians were used as fillers in combat units or were formed into labor organizations. Lack of information makes it impossible to furnish any breakdown for civilian casualties.

[b] Includes both the Japanese killed as a direct result of military operations and those who died of disease and starvation. Most of the latter succumbed after organized resistance ceased and units broke up into small groups foraging for food.

[c] Includes the original strength of the *Shobu Group* (roughly 141,000) plus about 10,000 other troops, mainly of the *105th Division*, who were transferred northward from the *Shimbu Group* during January.

[d] The initial strength figure for the *Shimbu Group* excludes the *105th Division* contingent that was transferred to the *Shobu Group;* it includes approximately 4,500 troops of the *Manila Naval Defense Force* who escaped entrapment in Manila and a group of some 2,500 men who made their way northward to the *Shimbu* area from southern Luzon before the evacuation route around the eastern shore of Laguna de Bay was cut. The casualty figures for Manila and southern Luzon, reflecting these redeployments, are accordingly considerably lower than the initial strength in both areas, while the casualty figures for the *Shimbu Group* are higher than the initial strength figure.

[e] Includes the smaller islands in Manila Bay. A few Japanese — no reliable figures can be found—swam from Corregidor and Bataan and were killed or captured there. There is, therefore, some obvious but minor error in both the Corregidor and Bataan figures.

[f] Includes XI Corps operations from the Zambales landing beaches to the northwestern base of Bataan Peninsula and also operations on Grande Island. See also note[e].

[g] Excludes Leyte and Samar, except for the operations in northwestern Samar and on offshore islets that were part of the Eighth Army's campaign to clear the Visayan Passages.

[h] Some Japanese carried as killed or died on Palawan undoubtedly escaped to Borneo by small craft, but no reliable figures can be found for such an exodus.

Source: The table is based upon all relevant Japanese and American sources cited in the text. Since virtually all sets of figures employed are mutually irreconciliable, the table represents deliberate approximations.

The Sources: A Critical Note

This volume is based primarily upon the official records of the United States armed services involved in the operations described. Additional material on strategic planning was taken from the records of Allied and American combined and joint agencies and headquarters. Information on the Japanese side of the story derives principally from Japanese sources, the bulk of them postwar in nature. The written record has been supplemented by correspondence, interviews, and comments upon all or parts of the draft manuscript by participants in the action described. Supplementary and complementary sources include both published works and unpublished manuscripts. Unless otherwise indicated, all records employed in the preparation of this volume are in the World War II Records Division, National Archives and Records Service (NARS), General Services Administration (GSA).

Official Records

Materials on strategic planning in this volume derive mainly from the records of the U.S.-U.K. Combined Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and their various subordinate committees. Copies of these materials are to be found in the files of the wartime Operations Division, General Staff, U.S. Army (OPD). Additional materials on strategic planning are located in the central decimal files of OPD; in the Chief of Staff's Log, filed in the Staff Communications Branch, Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; and in the files of General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area (GHQ SWPA). Some of the GHQ SWPA records are in the custody of the NARS.

The records of the Combined and Joint Chiefs of Staff contain invaluable material upon the background of major strategic decisions relevant to the campaigns that led to the triumph in the Philippines. The OPD files contain important supplementary material on OPD planning and proposals regarding the conduct of the war in the Pacific and provide information concerning the Army's point of view on plans thrashed out at the joint and combined levels. The Chief of Staff's log includes such items as JCS messages to General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz; records of radio-telephone conversations between officers at GHQ SWPA and in Washington; and radios between Generals Marshall and MacArthur.

Strategic planning materials in GHQ SWPA files duplicate to some extent that available in the collections of Washington agencies, but also include additional materials setting forth the theater's point of view on various problems and such items as the theater's plans for its campaigns. Unfortunately, some GHQ SWPA records collections that existed

during the war have not as yet been located. These include the files of the Chief of Staff's Office, the G–3 Planning Division, and part of the G–3 Historical Division materials. There is reason to believe that part of the G–3 Planning Division files were lost in an airplane crash in the Pacific during 1947. Diligent search and extensive correspondence have failed to disclose the location of other missing files of GHQ SWPA, although it appears that some important bodies of papers are still in the hands of former ranking officers at GHQ SWPA.

The most fruitful sources of information concerning the tactical plans for the campaigns in the Philippines are the records of the G–3 Section of GHQ SWPA and of U.S. Sixth Army. The most valuable GHQ SWPA collections in this category are the decimal files of the G–3 Administration Office and the G–3 Daily Journal File. The Sixth Army's G–3 records are particularly valuable in that they contain much important planning information that is not to be located in other available collections, and include many documents that would normally be found in the missing GHQ SWPA files. Important material on naval planning, including many planning papers of the Allied Naval Forces, SWPA, and the III and VII Amphibious Forces as well, are also to be found in the Sixth Army collection. In general, most of the important planning papers in the Sixth Army collection are located in the Sixth Army G–3 Journal Files for the Mindoro and Luzon operations. Some of the Luzon G–3 Journal Files are in the custody of the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri. A valuable supplementary source of Sixth Army planning information, and for certain operational information as well, was the file maintained by Brig. Gen. George H. Decker, Chief of Staff, Sixth Army. The material, comprising eleven folders of letters, memorandums, and special reports at various echelons of the commands in the Southwest Pacific Area, was loaned to the Office of the Chief of Military History (OCMH) by General Decker, but has been returned to him. The collection is cited in the footnotes of this volume as Decker Papers.

Valuable planning materials concerning the U.S. Eighth Army's participation in the campaigns described in this volume are to be found in Eighth Army G–3 Journal Files. Additional planning material at all levels is located in the after action reports* of the various units involved in the operations on Luzon and in the southern Philippines, while more information on naval planning can be found in the reports of the naval commands participating in the campaigns. Logistical planning material can be found in all the foregoing sources as well as in the reports of such agencies as the Army Service Command on Luzon and in the files of the U.S. Army Services of Supply (USASOS), SWPA, the latter in the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri. Air planning information in this volume has been derived principally from materials in GHQ SWPA and Sixth Army files and

* The term *After Action Report*, as used in this note, refers to the narrative portions of reports of Army units, in accordance with regulations, submitted following the operations described in the volume. The title *After Action Report* was not employed with consistency, and various units used variations such as Report, Operations Report, Action Report, and Report After Action. Most naval units employed the term *Action Report* or *Report on Participation*.

from the Air Forces' official history of World War II (see below, *Published Works*).

The problem of Army ground forces operational records for the preparation of *Triumph in the Philippines* was one of plethora. The Sixth and Eighth Armies, the I, X, XI, and XIV Corps, the divisions, engineer special brigades, separate regimental combat teams, and all other units involved generally maintained excellent records for the operations. Most of the units submitted good narrative after action reports which, with supporting documents such as journals and journal files, provided more than ample information upon which to base the contents of the volume. The end of Japanese resistance in August 1945 gave most units time to assemble better and more complete reports and supporting documents than had been possible under earlier conditions of almost constant combat, training, or movement.

There are, unfortunately, a few outstanding exceptions to these generalizations. The most intensive efforts failed to locate the I Corps' G–3 Journal Files or other I Corps G–3 Section materials except for an incomplete and abbreviated G–3 Journal. The 40th Infantry Division's G–3 Journal Files are incomplete for the early days of operations on Luzon, and virtually no records for the division's 108th and 160th Infantry Regiments can be located for the period 9–11 January, the critical days of the invasion. The most frustrating case concerns the records of the 11th Airborne Division. That unit lost virtually its entire collection for the Luzon Campaign in a disastrous fire at its headquarters building while on occupation duty in Japan. The author managed to assemble less than a file drawer of 11th Airborne Division records, including a short after action report, from Army depositories and the division's home station at Camp Campbell, Kentucky. Additional materials are to be found in the records of adjacent units and higher headquarters. Upon occasion — as, for instance, in the case of the entire collection of XIV Corps G–3 Journal Files— operational material is to be found in Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri, where most of the administrative files (used only sparingly in this volume) for all units are also located.

Generally, but by no means always, the lower the echelon the more accurate and complete are the narrative after action reports. The Sixth Army's narrative stands head and shoulders above almost all the others for reliability and coverage. I and XI Corps narratives leave much to be desired; the XIV Corps narrative, prepared largely by the Corps' chief of staff, Col. Hugh M. Milton, is by contrast a very good piece of work. Some division reports, like that of the 40th, are quite poor. Regimental reports attain every conceivable degree of quality and quantity. There is often, but not always, an apparent if not real relationship between the quality of a unit's report and records and its performance in the field.

Useful as the after action reports are, they do not provide the basis for complete and accurate coverage of operations. For this it is essential to rely upon the supporting documents such as journals, journal files, message files, daily operational and intelligence reports, overlays, sketches, and special reports, of the various echelons of the commands

engaged. For this volume the normal level of such source material for combat coverage is that of the infantry regiment.

Despite the almost embarrassing abundance of records, there are still gaps. It is seldom possible to correlate infantry and artillery action — reports and records of artillery units do not contain sufficient detail for that. Detailed information on air support operations is also difficult to come by. The infantry units made few systematic attempts to record the time, target, and results of air strikes, although they almost invariably recorded the fact that an air strike was late or misplaced. Details of tank-infantry operations are equally difficult to assemble. The tank battalions did not have the records-keeping facilities of larger units and they normally fought broken down to companies or platoons, far from their parent battalion headquarters. Details of supply operations within divisions and regiments are also usually impossible to ascertain—the problems are set forth "by the numbers" but the solutions are at best generalized. In a few cases G–4 or S–4 staff section reports and journal files provide good and interesting coverage of tactical supply operations.

Detailed information on the activities of regimental cannon companies is another common gap, and it is usually impossible to obtain any meaningful data on the operations of divisional Quartermaster, Ordnance, and Signal units. On the other hand, most divisional Engineer battalions submitted valuable after action reports with supporting documents. A most baffling and frustrating gap in the information is that pertaining to the activities of divisional reconnaissance troops and regimental intelligence and reconnaissance platoons. Almost never is material on these units included among the records, and even when some data are available they are all too seldom related to division or regimental plans and operations.

Naval operational records employed in the preparation of this volume are limited for the most part to action reports of the various task forces, task groups, and task units involved in the operations described. Some of these reports have abbreviated war diaries or logs (corresponding roughly to an Army unit's G–3 Journal) attached. Material on Third Fleet supporting operations for the Mindoro and Luzon invasions comes mainly from Admiral Nimitz' monthly operations reports (CINCPAC–CINCPOA, Operations in the Pacific Ocean Areas, December 1944 and January 1945). Copies of such naval reports as are not to be found in Army depositories are located in the Classified Operational Archives, Naval History Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Department of the Navy. The requirements of this volume did not make it necessary to consult naval unit war diaries or individual ship's logs, which are also filed in the Classified Operational Archives.

This volume being primarily the story of U.S. Army ground combat operations, no requirement existed for extensive research into Air Force sources and detailed coverage of air operations has been left to the U.S. Army Air Forces' official history. Some information on air operations is to be found in ground force records already described; the rest, including that on Marine Corps aviation, derives from secondary sources. The principal collection of Air Force unit reports and supporting documents

is located at the Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Original records on Marine Corps aviation in the Philippines are filed in the Records and Research Section, Historical Branch, G–3 Section, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

The main body of relevant Army Service Forces unit records are located in the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri, but for the most part the volume makes little use of service forces records and leaves the details of supply operations to the historians of logistics. The principal sources of information on supply matters are the records of USASOS and its subordinate echelons. Some of the records of the Army Service Command on Luzon (the Sixth Army's ASCOM) are also in the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri. The ASCOM report for the period before the headquarters passed to USASOS was adequate for the purposes of this volume. Records of service units organic to divisions, already mentioned, are to be found in division files.

Reports of Philippine Civil Affairs Units (PCAU's) are sometimes filed as attachments to the reports of the commands with which the PCAU's worked; other PCAU records are scattered between the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri, and NARS. The PCAU records are generally disappointing in both quality and quantity, being usually limited to statistical data with little meaningful discussion of problems and their solutions. More materials on civil affairs, re-establishment of civilian government, and civil relief are to be found in the records of the Civil Affairs Sections of various headquarters. Usually classed as administrative records, the materials of such sections are often to be found in the Federal Records Center Annex, GSA, Kansas City, Missouri.

A major deficiency in the records of the campaigns described in this volume is the absence of material on guerrilla units. The best guerrilla report is that of the U.S. Army Forces in the Philippines (Northern Luzon), which includes not only a good narrative not unlike the after action report of a regular division but also supporting documents such as biweekly intelligence and operations reports. The only other formal guerrilla report is the Historical Record, Mindanao Guerrilla Resistance Movement, Tenth Military District, 16 September 1942 to 30 June 1945. A copy of this document, which is weak on operational material for the period after the X Corps' landing on Mindanao, was borrowed from Colonel Fertig.

No report can be found for the Marking Guerrillas, which operated with the XI and XIV Corps on the *Shimbu* front; for the Anderson Battalion, on the *Shimbu Group*'s rear; for the Buena Vista Regiment, which fought well with the 32d Division; nor for many other guerrilla units which played significant parts in the campaigns. For the most part, accordingly, guerrilla information has been derived from relatively scanty materials in U.S. Army records. The Historical Section, Philippine Army, maintains a collection of documents concerning guerrilla operations, but this collection, some of which is not in English, could not be exploited for this volume. In brief, a great deal of work remains to be done in assembling, correlating, and exploiting the sources on

guerrilla operations to give the guerrillas proper coverage in the campaigns for the reconquest of the Philippines.

Sources of Japanese Information

The most comprehensive available accounts of Japanese operations described in this volume are to be found in the series Japanese Studies in World War II, compiled after the war by former Japanese Army and Navy officers in Tokyo under the direction of the Historical Division, G–2 GHQ FEC. Translation of these studies—which total almost 150 separate reports—was accomplished by the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service (ATIS), Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). (This ATIS was a lineal descendant of ATIS GHQ SWPA, a subordinate agency of G–2 GHQ SWPA.) Dubious parts of a few translations were checked by Japanese language experts formerly with the Pacific Section, OCMH, while some of the earliest studies came out in revised versions during the preparation of this volume. The Japanese who prepared the studies relied upon available official documents, on personal diaries, on their own memories, and on the memories of other Japanese officers participating in the events described. Checking of these studies against other sources of information, such as captured Japanese records and U.S. Army materials, indicates that the studies are remarkably accurate at their level of treatment. Their major deficiencies involve lack of information on command decisions at division and regimental levels, together with a paucity of data concerning exact strengths and dispositions of units.

The series provides invaluable information concerning Japanese high-level command decisions, planning, orders, personnel, order of battle, and movements that cannot be found in other records. For Japanese strategic planning the most valuable single study is the History of the *Army Section, Imperial GHQ*, 1941–1945. Other especially valuable studies for this volume are: *14th Area Army* Operations on Luzon, *14th Area Army* Plans, 1944, Operations of the *Kembu Group*, Luzon Operations of the *Shimbu Group*, and Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part IV.

Copies of both the translated and Japanese versions of the studies are in the files of the OCMH. Since there were many changes in the numbering and titling systems of the series during the early stages of its preparation, the OCMH copies have different numbers than those assigned by G–2 GHQ FEC. The numbers employed in the footnotes of this volume are those of the OCMH collection.

Another extremely important source of Japanese information comprises a four-volume series entitled Statements of Japanese Officials on World War II, also prepared in Tokyo under the direction of the Historical Division of G–2 GHQ FEC. These statements comprise narratives of Japanese officials ranging from cabinet ministers to infantry company commanders, and contain invaluable information on every phase of Japan's conduct of the war. Indeed, without these statements, taken in conjunction with the studies described above, it is difficult to see how the tactical information on Japanese units contained in *Triumph in the Philippines* could have been produced.

Supplementing the foregoing statements to some extent is a two-volume series entitled Personal History Statements, which comprise brief biographies of the officials contributing to the four-volume series. Also prepared in Japan under the direction of the Historical Division, G–2 GHQ FEC, this two-volume series is on file in the OCMH with the four-volume series.

After the war the 10th Information and Historical Service (10th I&H) of Headquarters, Eighth Army, produced in Japan a series of works entitled Staff Studies covering, from the Japanese side, many phases of the campaigns described in this volume. These Staff Studies contain both narratives and interrogations of various Japanese commanders in the Philippines and are supplemented by maps produced by the Japanese. To some extent the Staff Studies duplicate information to be found in the Studies and Statements described above, but in many instances they provide considerably more tactical detail. The 10th I&H series includes Staff Studies entitled Japanese Operations on Luzon, the Batangas Area, Mindanao Island, Zamboanga, Panay, Negros Island, Jolo Island, and the *102d Division* on Leyte and Cebu.

Translations of Japanese documents have also proved a valuable source of information. The most important wartime translations are those of ATIS G–2 GHQ SWPA, broken down for the most part into two series entitled Current Translations and Enemy Publications. ATIS had small advance detachments with combat units on Luzon and the southern Philippines. The detachments' translations are normally to be found in the unit G–2 or S–2 files, and Sixth Army G–2 weekly reports also contain some valuable translations. For the most part these wartime translations are of value primarily for order of battle information, although the ATIS G–2 GHQ SWPA series is useful in helping to trace the development of Allied intelligence estimates.

The largest and most valuable single body of postwar translations is a four-volume series entitled Translations of Japanese Documents, prepared under the direction of the Historical Division, G–2 GHQ FEC. This series contains mostly translations of documents confiscated in Japan, and includes such valuable items as the memoirs of Lt. Gen. Akira Muto (the *14th Area Army*'s chief of staff), as well as a series of *14th Area Army* plans, orders, and situation reports.

Wartime interrogations of Japanese prisoners fall into two categories: the preliminary "tactical" interrogations made at the front by ATIS language experts attached to combat units; and more extended interrogations by ATIS at prisoner of war compounds in rear areas. The "tactical" interrogations are useful for order of battle information. Many of the more extended interrogations add little to the ground combat story but are valuable for tracing the development of Allied intelligence information.

An important group of postwar interrogations comprises two volumes entitled Interrogations of Japanese Officials on World War II, produced in Tokyo under the direction of the Historical Division, G–2 GHQ FEC. Most of these supplement information in the series Statements of Japanese Officials and are quite brief. In addition to this group, ATIS conducted many special interrogations in Japan after the war, most of which

are on file in OCMH. An equally important series of postwar interrogations are those of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS), some of which have been published (see below, *Published Works*). Some unpublished USSBS interrogations used for this volume are on file in OCMH. Occasionally the USSBS interrogations were influenced by the branch of service and rank of the interrogator. Finally, the reports of some of the combat units on Luzon contain interrogations of high-ranking Japanese commanders obtained immediately after the surrender.

"Before the Military Commission Convened by the United States Army Forces Western Pacific, United States of America *versus* Tomoyuki Yamashita, Public Trial," is the full title of the complete transcript of the famous Yamashita trial. The testimony of various defense witnesses, including General Yamashita, together with sundry attached exhibits of every conceivable nature, provide invaluable information on Japanese plans and policies in regard to the conduct of operations in the Philippines, and supply data on defensive dispositions and operations supplementing that to be located in other sources of Japanese information. The testimony and the exhibits are absolute "musts" for any study of Japanese operations on Luzon, and are especially valuable in that they bring to light disagreements between Japanese Army and Navy forces and contain much material on operations at Manila.

A valuable narrative source for Japanese operations in the southern Philippines is a booklet entitled The True Facts of the Leyte Operation by Maj. Gen. Yoshiharu Tomochika, the chief of staff of the *35th Army*. Originally published in Japan by Keisuke Sata, the volume was translated by the 166th Language Detachment, G–2 Eighth Army, and distributed by the 10th I&H. Tomochika's work is valuable for *Triumph in the Philippines* in that it describes the attempted evacuation of the *35th Army* from Leyte, the command arrangements on Cebu, plans for the defense of eastern Mindanao, and operations along the northwestern section of the Kibawe-Talomo trail. A copy is in OCMH files.

A valuable source for Japanese order of battle in the Philippines is the *14th Area Army* Troop Organization List, a booklet originally published in Japan by the *14th Area Army* Home Organization Board, a sort of veterans' organization. Going as far as the level of infantry battalions, the order of battle is good for infantry units. Generally accurate as far as it goes, the list does not cover the later phases of the campaigns and is not complete for provisional units, miscellaneous combat organizations, or service units. A translated copy is in OCMH files.

Used in conjunction with the foregoing list, an ATIS G–2 GHQ SWPA publication providing a translated list of Japanese Army officers, giving rank and position as of September 1942, proved a valuable source. A copy is in OCMH files. The Naval History Division, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), maintains a more up-to-date and complete roster of Japanese Navy officers.

Miscellaneous Japanese information is to be found in the serial publication, Military Reports, of the Military Intelligence Division (G–2), War Department General Staff, for the last months of the war. Additional sources of information

on the Japanese can be found in the G–2 library, G–2 GHQ SWPA, in NARS.

The list of Japanese source material would not be complete without mention of a review of the draft manuscript of this volume that a group of former Japanese Army and Navy officers undertook in 1957. The draft was sent to Japan, where the Foreign Histories Division, Office of the Military History Officer, Headquarters U.S. Army Japan, translated pertinent sections of the manuscript and submitted them, together with some 250 questions on specific points, to the Japanese study group, which Col. Susumu Nishiura (in 1957 chief of the Japanese Self Defense Force Historical Records Section) directed. The principal Japanese officers (with wartime rank and position) who contributed to the review were:

Lt. Gen. Shizuo Yokoyama, Commanding General, *41st Army*
Maj. Gen. Haruo Konuma, Chief of Staff, *14th Area Army*
Col. Takushiro Hattori, Chief, *Army Operations Section, Imperial GHQ*
Lt. Col. Shigeo Kawai, Staff, *2d Tank Division*
Maj. Katsumi Hirabayashi, Staff, *10th Division*
Maj. Chuji Kaneko, *102d Division*
Capt. Toshikazu Ohmae, IJN, Chief, *Navy Operations Section, Imperial GHQ*
Capt. Masataka Nagaishi, IJN, *Navy Aeronautical Department*
Comdr. Tadao Kusumi, IJN, Staff, *Southwest Area Fleet*

The review, filed with other external reviews of the draft manuscript in the OCMH, was valuable in clearing up some misty points such as unit designations and strengths, and in providing background on various Japanese tactical decisions.

Unfortunately, financial limitations left unexploited a major mine of untranslated Japanese source materials, a collection of Japanese documents turned over to the National Archives by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). This collection, which contained, *inter alia*, records of the Japanese Army and Navy ministries dating back to the days of the Meiji Restoration, was confiscated by U.S. agencies in Japan after the war. Amounting to about 7,000 linear feet the collection, while in American hands, was never properly organized or catalogued. A partial description of its contents appears in an article by James W. Morley, "Check List of Seized Japanese Records in the National Archives," in *Far Eastern Quarterly*, IX, No. 3 (May, 1950). A grant from the Ford Foundation permitted microfilming of a portion of the collection under the direction of Dr. Chitoshi Yanaga of the Department of Political Science, Yale University, while the Naval History Division, CNO, undertook to microfilm certain records of the Naval Ministry as well as a large body of material concerning Japanese naval operations. No provision was made to microfilm the large quantity of Japanese unit operational records or the records of the Army Ministry—in fact, no complete list of the Army operational records exists. The CIA and G–2, General Staff, U.S. Army, translated or microfilmed some small groups of records, but this work, together with that of Yale University and the Naval History Division, probably represents less than a quarter of the total bulk of

the collection. The entire collection was returned to Japan in the fall of 1958.

Maps

Considering the forty-odd years United States military forces had spent in the Philippines before America's entry into World War II, the state of mapping of the islands was nothing short of lamentable. As a result, the only reasonably accurate tactical maps available before the war covered only the Manila Bay area and portions of the Central Plains of Luzon.

The basic tactical map with which forces of the Southwest Pacific entered upon the reconquest of Luzon was the 1:50,000 scale Army Map Service Series S712, published in 1944. This map was based mainly upon a 1:250,000 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey series produced in 1933; upon very restricted coverage of Luzon at scale 1:31,680, published by the Engineer, Philippine Department, in 1939; and upon a topographical map at scale 1:63,360 of extremely limited coverage and based upon military surveys of the period 1911–14.*

The AMS S712 series left much to be desired. Hopelessly out of date even before it was published, it contained many glaring inaccuracies even for the Central Plains–Manila Bay area. The coverage was virtually nil for large portions of Luzon's mountainous regions. The series included no panels at all for some mountain areas, while on other panels only a road or two showed—the rest of the panel would be blank.

Recognizing the need for better maps even before the Luzon Campaign began, GHQ SWPA had instituted a program of aerial photography of Luzon (and the central and southern islands as well) late in 1944. The remapping program for Luzon continued as the troops moved out of the Central Plains into the mountains, until some panels of the 1:50,000 coverage had gone through as many as five editions before the war ended. Most of the map revision work was accomplished under the direction of the Engineer, Sixth Army, and the maps were produced by the 671st Engineer Topographic Battalion, attached to Sixth Army headquarters. Other panels were revised by the 650th Engineer Topographic Battalion, GHQ SWPA. Based as they were upon aerial photography with little or no ground control, even these later editions did not approach the optimum in accuracy and coverage. In many areas of Luzon the troops fought to the end of the war supplementing their map coverage with aerial photography, usually at scale 1:10,000, and with sketches produced in the field.

After World War II a co-operative effort of the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Army led toward the production of another 1:50,000 series, compiled by photogrammetric (multiplex) methods with close ground control. With the series number S711, this map started coming out in 1956, but publication is not complete at this writing. The map was prepared by the 29th Engineer Battalion (Base Topographic) under the direction of the Engineer, U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) /Eighth Army. Comparison of this new coverage with that of the wartime AMS S712 series and its revisions brings home vividly the handicaps under which the troops on Luzon operated in 1945.

* See Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, pages 597–99, for additional information on these prewar maps.

For the central islands and Mindanao no coverage existed that approached even the AMS S712 series for Luzon in accuracy and coverage. As a result, the production of tactical maps for these islands was undertaken in the theater in 1944 and 1945, mainly upon the basis of aerial photography, with scant ground control, and upon incomplete prewar U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey maps. Map production for Mindanao was primarily an Australian effort and was accomplished principally by Nos. 2/1 and 6 Australian Army Topographic Survey Companies and the LHQ Cartographic Company, Australian Survey Corps. The U.S. Army's 648th Engineer Topographic Battalion, GHQ SWPA, had a hand in some of the compilation, and certain revisions of the first-published 1:50,000 panels were made in the field by the 67th Engineer Topographic Company, X Corps.

U.S. Army Air Forces and U.S. Navy aerial photography, together with prewar U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey maps, scale 1:200,000, provided most of the information for 1:50,000 tactical maps troops employed in the central islands. The Base Map Plant, U.S. Army, GHQ SWPA, prepared most of this coverage, which was not completed during the war and which left much to be desired by way of accuracy.

The Japanese labored under even worse handicaps than did the American forces. The Japanese made no systematic attempt to map the islands during the occupation and for the most part depended upon prewar American coverage. American forces captured few good Japanese maps for any region in the Philippines, and indications are that the Japanese restricted their mapping activities mainly to production of rough, unsatisfactory sketch maps of specific, limited localities.

The story of terrain information available to the combat forces in the Philippines would not be complete without mention of the work of the Allied Geographic Section, SWPA, a subordinate agency of G–2 GHQ SWPA. Directed by an Australian, Col. W. V. Jardine-Blake, AIF, the AGS SWPA was organized late in the summer of 1942 and immediately set to work to produce and disseminate a series of Terrain Studies, Terrain Handbooks, and Special Reports, all invaluable for both planning and tactical purposes. AGS SWPA assembled its information from prewar sources, aerial photography, and interrogations of ex-residents, travelers, missionaries, and government officials who had intimate knowledge of the Japanese-occupied areas. Its publications contained such vital information as road and trail description, data on towns and cities, water sources, sketch maps of various localities, transportation facilities, airfields, flora and fauna, and prewar pictures. Placed in the hands of both planners and tactical units, the AGS SWPA publications proved of inestimable value as guidebooks to the areas involved.

Interviews, Correspondence, and Comments

Unlike many other theaters during World War II, no teams of historians were available in the Southwest Pacific Area to conduct combat interviews on the battlegrounds, to take contemporary notes on actions, or to prepare preliminary studies. Interviews were used rather

sparingly during the preparation of this volume and, postwar in nature, were confined to a few specific points. Dr. Stanley L. Falk, research assistant on much of the volume, conducted interviews with Brig. Gen. John A. Elmore, who had been the chief of staff of the XI Corps, and with Lt. Col. David J. Wilson, formerly the S–3 of the 152d Infantry, 38th Infantry Division. The author interviewed Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid (Ret.), formerly the commander of the Allied Naval Forces, SWPA, and the U.S. Seventh Fleet, and Col. Wendell W. Fertig, a guerrilla leader on Mindanao, in a joint interview with some of his guerrilla subordinates. Copies of the interview notes (the Fertig Interviews are on tape) are on file in the OCMH.

In addition to the forgoing more or less formal interviews, the author had opportunity to talk informally to additional officers who visited the OCMH during the course of the preparation of the volume. These included General Elmore; General Walter Krueger, Commanding General, Sixth Army, during the Luzon Campaign; Maj. Gen. Richard J. Marshall, who was deputy chief of staff, GHQ SWPA; and Brig. Gen. Hanford MacNider, formerly commanding general, 158th RCT. No notes were made during these discussions, which proved valuable mainly for background information.

As in the case of interviews, the author conducted a certain amount of correspondence for the purpose of seeking information on a few specific points. Principal correspondents were: Lt. Gen. Stephen J. Chamberlin, Assistant Chief of Staff, G–3, GHQ SWPA; Lt. Gen. Charles P. Hall, Commanding General, XI Corps; Col. Frank J. Sackton, Assistant Chief of Staff, G–3, 33d Infantry Division; Col. Harry A. Skerry, USA (Ret.), formerly Chief Engineer, North Luzon Forces and I Philippine Corps, 1942; Colonel Fertig; Lt. Col. Don R. Pepke, Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 63d Infantry, 6th Infantry Division; and Maj. Gen. Clovis E. Byers, Chief of Staff, Eighth Army.

Before publication of *Triumph in the Philippines* seventy-five U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force officers (or former officers now civilians) who participated in the events described or who otherwise had some intimate knowledge of either planning or operations, read and commented upon all or parts of the manuscript. These officers often supplied valuable additional information, especially upon the reasoning behind command decisions; they offered suggestions on coverage; and in some cases, taking issue with statements in the text, they stimulated revisions. Few officers who reviewed any part of the manuscript had an ax to grind; rather, the vast majority brought to their task a refreshingly objective and helpful point of view. The reviewing group included army, corps, and division commanders, former members of the Operations Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, or the Joint Chiefs of Staff and subordinate committees, fleet commanders, task force commanders, and staff officers from various headquarters. A list of the officers commenting, together with their remarks, is on file in the OCMH with the drafts and notes for the volume.

Valuable comments on terrain, road conditions, and the status of bridges throughout Luzon were obtained from Mr. James J. Halsema of the U.S. Infor-

mation Service, a prewar and postwar resident of the Philippines and a civilian internee of the Japanese on Luzon during World War II. Mr. Clarke Kawakami, formerly with the Historical Division of G–2 GHQ FEC, supplied additional information on Japanese plans for the defense of the Philippines. Both sets of comments are in OCMH files.

Manuscript Sources

A usable and useful outline, high-level treatment of both Allied and Japanese planning and operations is contained in the so-called MacArthur History. This two-volume work, entitled Southwest Pacific Area Series, was prepared in Japan after the war under the direction and editorship of Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby, MacArthur's Assistant Chief of Staff, G–2. Ostensibly the after action report of GHQ SWPA and successor commands, the final version of this work is printed on glossy paper and is replete with color reproductions of maps, photographs, and paintings. The volumes were printed in Japan by the Dai Nippon Printing Company, Tokyo, but have never been published. A bound copy of the entire work, together with footlockers full of supporting documents upon which it is based, is in the custody of the World War II Records Division, NARS.

Volume I bears the title The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific and covers the war in the Southwest Pacific Area from the opening of the Japanese offensive through the surrender of Japan. Volume I, Supplement, has the self-explanatory title MacArthur in Japan, The Occupation: Military Phase. Volume II is entitled Japanese Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area, and summarizes the Japanese side of the story. Volume I, excluding the supplement, is largely based upon an earlier historical series entitled Studies in the History of the Southwest Pacific Area, originally produced in the G–3 Historical Division of GHQ SWPA and GHQ U.S. Army Forces, Pacific (AFPAC), by the present author, Lt. Robert A. Gardner, Jr., Lt. Thomas P. Govan, and the late Lt. Jeter A. Isely, USNR. Their work, and other materials assembled by the G–3 Historical Division, was taken over by the newly formed G–2 Historical Division in Tokyo late in 1946. Volume II of the MacArthur History was prepared by a small group of Japanese officers whose principal sources were the Japanese Studies in World War II, the Statements of Japanese Officials on World War II, and other Japanese materials described above under Japanese Sources.

Volume I, not entirely objective, is most valuable for setting forth the MacArthur and GHQ SWPA points of view on various problems and for providing a summary history of the Southwest Pacific Area. Volume II brings together in a single, coherent narrative Japanese information from a multitude of sources. It contains some data on Japanese operations not easily found elsewhere, but neither volume contains any startling revelations or important new information.

A second important unpublished source is a series entitled Operational Monographs, produced by the 10th I&H after the war and covering the Eighth Army's operations in the Philippines. The series consists of detailed narratives based for the most part on unit records

and occasionally containing additional material secured from interviews and special reports of various types. All treat the operations in a considerably more complete fashion than the Eighth Army's official after action reports for the same undertakings. The monographs useful for *Triumph in the Philippines* are: The Luzon Mop-Up Operation, The Cebu–Bohol–Negros Oriental Operation, The Panay–Negros Occidental Operation, The Zamboanga–Sulu Archipelago Operation, and the Mindanao Operation.

Invaluable information upon the workings of the various intelligence agencies in the Southwest Pacific Area is to be obtained from a group of studies entitled The Intelligence Series, G–2 USAFFE–SWPA–AFPAC–FEC–SCAP, prepared in Japan after the war by G–2 GHQ FEC. General Willoughby, MacArthur's G–2, closely supervised the preparation of the manuscripts and undertook a thorough editing task before their final reproduction; the volumes contain some ax grinding. There are some gaps in the coverage, mainly because of security problems, and it furthermore appears that the series is chary about giving credit to guerrilla sources of information in the Philippines. The separate volumes are:

Introduction	A Brief History of the G–2 Section, GHQ, SWPA, and Affiliated Units
I	The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines
II	Intelligence Activities in the Philippines During the Japanese Occupation
III	Operations of the Military Intelligence Section, GHQ SWPA
IV	Operations of the Allied Intelligence Bureau, GHQ SWPA
V	Operations of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service, GHQ SWPA
VI	Operations of the Allied Geographic Section, GHQ SWPA
VII	Operations of the Technical Intelligence Unit in the SWPA
VIII	Operations of the Counter Intelligence Corps in the SWPA
IX	Operations of the Civil Intelligence Section, SCAP

Some of the volumes touch upon the activities of intelligence agencies not listed in the titles, and several have illustrative documentary appendixes. The volume on the guerrilla movement in the Philippines contains mainly reprints of materials distributed by G–2 GHQ SWPA in late 1944 and early 1945 and covers only the development and organization of the major guerrilla units up until the time American troops landed on each of the islands.

Two manuscripts provide extremely

valuable and interesting material on the Corregidor Island operation. The first, anonymously written, is entitled Combat Over Corregidor, 16 February 1945, Carried Out by the 503d Parachute Combat Team. A photostat copy is available in OCMH files. A personalized account, this narrative was apparently written by one of the 503d's medical officers. It is overemotional but is nevertheless valuable for personal reactions to the action and it paints a graphic picture of some of the most striking horrors of the affray. The second Corregidor manuscript, reproduced at Headquarters, United States Army Forces in the Far East, bears the title USAFFE Board Report No. 308, 16 May 45, Corregidor Island Operation, 503d Parachute RCT, 16 Feb–8 Mar 45. Similar to an after action report, but containing some analytical material, this manuscript comprises a sober, factual, and detailed narrative account, accompanied by maps, overlays, and photographs.

Published Works

While not all the published works listed below have been cited in *Triumph in the Philippines,* they all furnish, at the very least, important background information bearing upon the planning and execution of the operations described. The listings are not an all-inclusive bibliography of the campaigns in the Philippines, nor are they intended as such.

Official Publications

Appleman, Roy E., James M. Burns, Russell A. Gugeler, and John Stevens. *Okinawa: The Last Battle.* UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. Washington, 1948.

Boggs, Maj. Charles W., Jr., USMC. *Marine Aviation in the Philippines.* Washington: Historical Division, Hq U.S. Marine Corps, 1951. A good monograph on the subject but unfortunately light on the details of air support operations.

Cannon, M. Hamlin. *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines.* UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. Washington, 1954.

Craven, Wesley Frank, and James Lea Cate, eds. *The Pacific: MATTERHORN to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945.* Vol. V, "The Army Air Forces in World War II." Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. A volume in the Air Forces' official history of World War II, this work provides valuable information on air planning and operations. Insofar as the Philippines are concerned, the volume seldom comes to grips with the problems of air support tactics and doctrine.

Crowl, Philip A., and Edmund G. Love. *Seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls.* UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. Washington, 1955.

Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, The. *Japanese Naval and Merchant Shipping Losses During World War II By All Causes.* Washington: Navy Department, 1947. A detailed listing based upon official Allied and Japanese records. Information obtained since publication discloses some errors in the listings.

Miller, John, jr. *CARTWHEEL: The Reduction of Rabaul.* UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. Washington, 1959.

Milner, Samuel. *Victory in Papua.*

UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. Washington, 1957.

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Willoughby, Maj. Gen. Charles A., and John Chamberlin. *MacArthur: 1941–1951.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1954. An attempt to produce a simultaneous apologia for both MacArthur and Willoughby.

Unit Histories

After the war many units published their own accounts, most of them prepared by and for the World War II veterans. Many verge on being public relations blurbs, others are quite well done and reflect sound scholarship and extensive research. Almost all contain interesting sidelights on personalities and on small unit operations that do not appear in official records. The following works were consulted during the preparation of *Triumph in the Philippines.*

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Anonymous. *History of the 31st Infantry Division in Training and Combat, 1940–1945.* Baton Rouge: The Army & Navy Publishing Co., 1946.

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Cronin, Capt. Francis D. *Under the Southern Cross: The Saga of The Americal Division.* Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1951. A good, detailed volume based on extensive research.

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Karolevitz, Capt. Robert R., ed. *The 25th Division and World War 2.* Baton Rouge: Army & Navy Publishing Co., 1946.

Lancaster, Roy. *The Story of the Bushmasters.* Detroit: Lancaster Publi-

cations. A brief but informative account of 158th RCT operations.

McCartney, 1st Lt. William F. *The Jungleers: A History of the 41st Infantry Division.* Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948. Fair.

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Zimmer, Col. Joseph E. *The History of the 43d Infantry Division, 1941–1945.* Baton Rouge: Army & Navy Publishing Co.

Glossary

AAF	Allied Air Forces
A/B	Airborne
ACofS	Assistant Chief of Staff
Admin	Administrative
AE	Ammunition ship
AFD	Mobile floating drydock
AFPAC	U.S. Army Forces, Pacific
AGC	General communications vessel
AGF	Army Ground Forces
AGO	Adjutant General's Office
AGP	Motor torpedo boat tender
AGS	Allied Geographic Section
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
AK	Cargo ship
AKA	Cargo ship, attack
AKD	Deep hold cargo ship
AKE	Ammunition transport
AKF	Refrigerated cargo ship (1943)
AKN	Net cargo ship
ALAMO	Code for U.S. Sixth Army while operating as a special ground task force headquarters directly under GHP SWPA
AM	Mine sweeper
Amphib	Amphibious
AMS	Army Map Service
AN	Net laying ship
ANF	Allied Naval Forces
AO	Oiler, or fuel oil tanker
AOG	Gasoline tanker
AP	Transport
APA	Transport, attack
APD	Transport (high speed)
APH	Transport, hospital
AR	Repair ship
ARD	Auxiliary repair dock (floating drydock)
ARG	Repair ship, internal combustion engine
ARL	Repair ship, landing craft
Armd	Armored
ARS	Salvage vessel

Arty	Artillery
ASCOM	Army Service Command
Asst	Assistant
Atchd	Attached
ATF	Ocean tug, fleet
ATIS	Allied Translator and Interpreter Service
ATO	Ocean tug, old
AVP	Seaplane tender, small
AW	Distilling ship
Bd	Board
BLT	Battalion landing team
Bn	Battalion
Brig	Brigade
Btry	Battery
CA	Heavy cruiser
Cav	Cavalry
CB	Naval construction battalion
CenPac	Central Pacific
CG	Commanding general
Chron	Chronological
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet
CINCPOA	Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas
CINCSWPA	Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area
CL	Light cruiser
CM	Mine layer
CM–IN	Classified message, incoming
CM–OUT	Classified message, outgoing
Co	Company
CO	Commanding officer
Comdr	Commander
COMGENPOA	Commanding General, Pacific Ocean Areas
COMINCH	Commander in Chief, U.S. Navy
Conf	Conference
Cons	Construction
CORONET	Invasion of the island of Honshu at the Tokyo plain
CP	Command post
CTF	Commander, Task Force
CTG	Commander, Task Group
CTU	Commander, Task Unit
CV	Aircraft carrier
CVE	Aircraft carrier, escort
DA	Department of the Army
DCofS	Deputy Chief of Staff

DD	Destroyer
DE	Destroyer escort
Dept	Department
Div	Division
DM	Light mine layer
DMS	Mine sweeper (converted DD)
DSEI	Daily Summary of Enemy Intelligence
Dukw	Amphibian, 2½-ton, 6x6 truck
EB&SR	Engineer boat and shore regiment
Engr	Engineer
ESB	Engineer special brigade
ExecO	Executive officer
FA	Field artillery
FEC	Far East Command
FIVESOME	Agreement involving co-ordination of operations in the Southwest Pacific
FM	Field manual
FO	Field order
G–2	Intelligence Division
G–3	Operations Division
GHQ	General headquarters
Gli	Glider
Gp	Group
GPF	*Grande Puissance Filloux*
Hist	Historical, history
How	Howitzer
Hq	Headquarters
I&H	Information and Historical
IIB	Independent infantry battalion
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
IMB	Independent mixed brigade
Inf	Infantry
Info	Information
Insp	Inspection
Instr	Instruction
Intel	Intelligence
Interrog	Interrogation
Interv	Interview
Is	Island
IX	Miscellaneous unclassified (for any unclassified ships in the Navy)

JANAC	Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
Jnl	Journal
JPS	Joint Staff Planners
KP	Kilometer post
LCI(G)	Landing craft, infantry, gunboat
LCI(L)	Landing craft, infantry, large
LCI(M)	Landing craft, infantry (mortar ship)
LCI(R)	Landing craft, infantry (rocket ship)
LCM	Landing craft, mechanized
LCPR	Landing craft, personnel, ramp
LCT	Landing craft, tank
LCVP	Landing craft, vehicle and personnel
LI	Logistics instructions
LofC	Line of communications
LOVE III	Plan for invasion of Mindoro
LSD	Landing ship, dock
LSI	Landing ship, infantry
LSM	Landing ship, medium
LST	Landing ship, tank
LSV	Landing ship, vehicle
Ltr	Letter
LUBSEC	Luzon Base Section
LVT	Landing vehicle, tracked
LVT(A)	Landing vehicle, tracked (armored)
MAG	Marine Air Group
MIKE I	Plan for invasion of Lingayen Gulf
MIKE II	Plan for invasion of Dingalan Bay
MIKE III	Plan for invasion of Vigan
MIKE IV	Plan for invasion of Nasugbu and Balayan Bays
MIKE VI	Plan for invasion of Batangas and Tayabas Bays
MIKE VII	Plan for invasion of Zambales coast
Min	Minutes
MLR	Main line of resistance
MONTCLAIR	Redesignation of PRINCETON
MTB	Motor torpedo boat
Mtg	Meeting
MUSKETEER	Basic outline plans for Philippine operations
NARS	National Archives and Records Service
NCO	Noncommissioned officer
NEI	Netherlands East Indies

O/B	Order of Battle
OBB	Old battleship
Obsn	Observation
Obsr	Observer
Off	Officer
OI	Operations instructions
OLYMPIC	Plan for March 1946 invasion of Kyushu, Japan
OPD	Operations Division
OPLR	Outpost line of resistance
Opnl	Operational
Opns	Operations
Org	Organization
PA	Philippine Army
Para	Parachute
PC	Patrol vessel, submarine chaser
PCAU	Philippine Civil Affairs Unit
PCE(R)	Patrol craft, escort (rescue)
PD	Ponton dock
Per	Periodic
PF	Patrol vessel, frigate
Plt	Platoon
POA	Pacific Ocean Areas
POW	Prisoner of war
Prcht	Parachute
PRINCETON	Basic outline plan for reoccupation of the Visayas–Mindanao–Borneo–Netherlands East Indies area
PT	Patrol vessel, motor torpedo boat
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
Rad	Radiogram
RAGC	Relief general communications vessel
Rcd	Record
Rcn	Reconnaissance
RCT	Regimental combat team
Regtl	Regimental
RENO	SWPA plans for operations in the Bismarck Archipelago, along northern coast of New Guinea and thence to Mindanao, P.I.
Rpt	Report
S–1	Personnel section of a unit not having a general staff; officer in charge of the section
S–2	Military intelligence section of a unit not having a general staff; officer in charge of the section
S–3	Operations and training section of a unit not having a general staff; officer in charge of the section

SBD	Douglas dive bombers
SC	Submarine chaser
SCAP	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
SCR	Signal Corps radio
Sec.	Section
Serv	Service
SHOBU	Northern groupment of Japanese forces in Luzon; code name for *14th Area Army*
Sp	Special
SPM	Self-propelled mount
SWPA	Southwest Pacific Area
TD	Tank destroyer
Tech	Technical
Tele	Telephone
Telecon	Telephone conference
TF	Task force
TG	Task group
TM	Technical manual
Tng	Training
TO	Transportation Officer, Table of Organization
Tr	Troop
Trans	Translations
TU	Task unit
USAFFE	United States Army Forces in the Far East
USAFIP(NL)	U.S. Army Forces in the Philippines (Northern Luzon)
USASOS	United States Army Services of Supply, SWPA
USFIP	United States Forces in the Philippines
USSBS	United States Strategic Bombing Survey
VICTOR I	Panay and Negros Occidental operation
WD	War Department
Wkly	Weekly
WO	Warning order
WVTF	Western Visayan Task Force
XAK	Cargo ship, merchant marine manned
YD	District derrick, floating
YMS	District motor mine sweeper
YW	District barge, water (self-propelled)

Basic Military Map Symbols*

Symbols within a rectangle indicate a military unit, within a triangle an observation post, and within a circle a supply point.

Military Units—Identification

Antiaircraft Artillery ..... 

Armored Command ..... 

Army Air Forces ..... 

Artillery, except Antiaircraft and Coast Artillery ..... 

Cavalry, Horse ..... 

Cavalry, Mechanized ..... 

Chemical Warfare Service ..... 

Coast Artillery ..... 

Engineers ..... 

Infantry ..... 

Medical Corps ..... 

Ordnance Department ..... 

Quartermaster Corps ..... 

Signal Corps ..... 

Tank Destroyer ..... 

Transportation Corps ..... 

Veterinary Corps ..... 

Airborne units are designated by combining a gull wing symbol with the arm or service symbol:

Airborne Artillery ..... 

Airborne Infantry .....

*For complete listing of symbols in use during the World War II period, see FM 21-30, dated October 1943, from which these are taken.

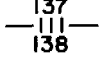
Size Symbols

The following symbols placed either in boundary lines or above the rectangle, triangle, or circle inclosing the identifying arm or service symbol indicate the size of military organization:

Squad	•
Section	••
Platoon	•••
Company, troop, battery, Air Force flight	I
Battalion, cavalry squadron, or Air Force squadron	II
Regiment or group; combat team (with abbreviation CT following identifying numeral)	III
Brigade, Combat Command of Armored Division, or Air Force Wing	X
Division or Command of an Air Force	XX
Corps or Air Force	XXX
Army	XXXX
Group of Armies	XXXXX

EXAMPLES

The letter or number to the left of the symbol indicates the unit designation; that to the right, the designation of the parent unit to which it belongs. Letters or numbers above or below boundary lines designate the units separated by the lines:

Company A, 137th Infantry	
8th Field Artillery Battalion	
Combat Command A, 1st Armored Division	
Observation Post, 23d Infantry	
Command Post, 5th Infantry Division	
Boundary between 137th and 138th Infantry	

Weapons

Machine gun	
Gun	
Gun battery	
Howitzer or Mortar	
Tank	
Self-propelled gun	

UNITED STATES ARMY IN WORLD WAR II

The following volumes have been published or are in press:

The War Department
- *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations*
- *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division*
- *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1941–1942*
- *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943–1944*
- *Global Logistics and Strategy: 1940–1943*
- *Global Logistics and Strategy: 1943–1945*
- *The Army and Economic Mobilization*
- *The Army and Industrial Manpower*

The Army Ground Forces
- *The Organization of Ground Combat Troops*
- *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops*

The Army Service Forces
- *The Organization and Role of the Army Service Forces*

The Western Hemisphere
- *The Framework of Hemisphere Defense*
- *Guarding the United States and Its Outposts*

The War in the Pacific
- *The Fall of the Philippines*
- *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive*
- *Victory in Papua*
- *CARTWHEEL: The Reduction of Rabaul*
- *Seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls*
- *Campaign in the Marianas*
- *The Approach to the Philippines*
- *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines*
- *Triumph in the Philippines*
- *Okinawa: The Last Battle*
- *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*

The Mediterranean Theater of Operations
- *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West*
- *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*
- *Salerno to Cassino*
- *Cassino to the Alps*

The European Theater of Operations
- *Cross-Channel Attack*
- *Breakout and Pursuit*
- *The Lorraine Campaign*
- *The Siegfried Line Campaign*
- *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge*
- *The Last Offensive*
- *The Supreme Command*

Logistical Support of the Armies, Volume I
Logistical Support of the Armies, Volume II
The Middle East Theater
The Persian Corridor and Aid to Russia
The China-Burma-India Theater
Stilwell's Mission to China
Stilwell's Command Problems
Time Runs Out in CBI
The Technical Services
The Chemical Warfare Service: Organizing for War
The Chemical Warfare Service: From Laboratory to Field
The Chemical Warfare Service: Chemicals in Combat
The Corps of Engineers: Troops and Equipment
The Corps of Engineers: The War Against Japan
The Corps of Engineers: The War Against Germany
The Corps of Engineers: Military Construction in the United States
The Medical Department: Hospitalization and Evacuation; Zone of Interior
The Medical Department: Medical Service in the Mediterranean and Minor Theaters
The Medical Department: Medical Service in the European Theater of Operations
The Ordnance Department: Planning Munitions for War
The Ordnance Department: Procurement and Supply
The Ordnance Department: On Beachhead and Battlefront
The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services, Volume I
The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services, Volume II
The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War Against Japan
The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War Against Germany
The Signal Corps: The Emergency
The Signal Corps: The Test
The Signal Corps: The Outcome
The Transportation Corps: Responsibilities, Organization, and Operations
The Transportation Corps: Movements, Training, and Supply
The Transportation Corps: Operations Overseas
Special Studies
Chronology: 1941–1945
Military Relations Between the United States and Canada: 1939–1945
Rearming the French
Three Battles: Arnaville, Altuzzo, and Schmidt
The Women's Army Corps
Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors
Buying Aircraft: Materiel Procurement for the Army Air Forces
The Employment of Negro Troops
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THE LINGAYEN ASSAULT

9-11 January 1945

U.S. POSITIONS, EVENING, 9 JAN

U.S. POSITIONS, EVENING, 11 JAN

JAPANESE DEFENSES, EVENING, 11 JAN

ELEVATIONS IN METERS

0 100 300 500 900 1300 AND ABOVE

0 2 3 MILES

0 1 2 3 KILOMETERS

LINGAYEN GULF

BOLINAO PENINSULA

Cabalitan I

Cabalitan Bay

Port Sual

Sual

TO ALAMINOS

40th Rcn Troop 9 JAN

C/185

1/185 (-)

1/185

2/185

2/185

Elms/2/108

Bugallon

Dumloc

1/108

2/108 (-)

2/160

1/160

Aguilar

L/160

E/148

Bacnar

3/148

Dumpay

3/129

Don Pedro

2/145

2/129 (-)

San Carlos

2/148 (-)

1/148

Malasiqui

1/129

Calasiao

1/148

Dagupan

2/148

3/148

3/129

145TH INF (-) 11 JAN DIV RES

3/160

2/160

Lingayen

AIRFIELD

40 x 37

Dagupan R

Calmay R

Agno R

Pantal R

Mayruso R

Agno R

1/20

2/20

Mangaldan

3/1

2/1

Santa Barbara

2/20 (-)

F/20

Sinocolan R

Pantalan R

Mapandan

3/1

Manaoag

2/103

Pantalan R

Agno R

Balingueo

1/20

CABARUAN

2 71 (+) (OMORI DET)

BEACHHEAD HILLS

ARMY LINE

Villasis

Carmen

Rosales

Alcala

Agno R

TO URBIZTONDO

TO BAYAMBANG

XIV x1

185 INF ORANGE

160 INF GREEN

148 INF YELLOW

129 INF CRIMSON

XX 40 9 JAN

XX 37 9 JAN

XX 6 9 JAN

6 Rn 10 JAN

XX 25 11 JAN

13 11 JAN

158 11 JAN

XX 43 9 JAN

172 INF

169 INF

103 INF

1 INF

20 INF

WHITE 1

WHITE 2

WHITE 3

BLUE 1

BLUE 2

2/158

3/158

1/158

1/172

2/172

3/172

Alacan

Mabilao

HILL 247

HILL 385

HILL 351

HILL 580

HILL 470

HILL 355

HILL 318

1/169

2/169

3/169

Binday

63D INF 11 JAN CORPS RES

1/103

3/103

2/103

1/103

San Fabian

Agoo

Pugo

Santo Tomas

Damortis

Rabon

Rosario

Sison

MT ALAVA

Pozorrubio

SHIGEMI

San Manuel

San Jacinto

Binalonan

Asingan

Urdaneta

Tagumising R

Inmandoyan R

Agno R

Aroayat R

Poo R

Bued R

Apanyat R

Bued R

58 IMB (-)

1 71 DIV RES

3 71

2 72

3 72 (-)

3 64

1 64

2 64

1 71

Ilog R

ZAMBALES MOUNTAINS

F. Temple

MAP I

SEIZING THE ROUTES 3-11 JUNCTION

43D INFANTRY DIVISION

12-31 January 1945

U.S. FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING, 11 JAN

U.S. FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING, 31 JAN

U.S. AXIS OF ADVANCE, DATES INDICATED

Elevations in meters

0 2 MILES

0 2 KILOMETERS

ARMY BEACHHEAD LINE

58TH INDEPENDENT MIXED BRIGADE

43D INFANTRY DIVISION

ELMS, 23D

VALLEY

PUGO

TO BAGUIO

Cupang R

Bued R

Apangat R

Caurngan R

Aradoyat R

Pantalan R

LINGAYEN GULF

2/158

Damortis

Amlang

3 158 7-26 JAN

1/158

F/121

600

172 18-30 JAN

Rosario

E 606

A/172

1/172 (-)

900

C/121

Cataguintingan

172 III 63 (25 JAN)

3/172 (-)

1500

2/172

172 III 169 (31 JAN)

63 (-) 25-30 JAN

BENCHMARK HILL 1800

2/169

3 63 25-27 JAN

QUESTION MARK HILL

3/169

169 III 103 (31 JAN)

GUERRILLA BN.

800

169 25-27 JAN

1/103 (-)

2/103 (-)

700

450

F/103

600

GUERRILLA CO.

Sison

63 III 169 (25 JAN)

158

158 III 63

63 III 172

363

665

565

63 (-) 13-23 JAN

247

580

172

172 12-15 JAN

Mabilao

MT. ALAVA

175

169 (-) 20-24 JAN

169 (25 JAN) III 103

172 (17 JAN) III 169

169

15 JAN

355

318

14-15 JAN

169 (-) 15-16 JAN

Palacpalac

103 (-) 25-28 JAN

San Fabian

63 11 JAN

Pozorrubio

3 103

43 XX 32 (30 JAN)

169 III 103 (17 JAN)

43 XX 25 (17 JAN)

6 XX 43

San Jacinto

103

200

103 12-17 JAN

Pantalan R

Manaoag

Binalonan

Potpot

D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP II

SIXTH ARMY'S ADVANCE

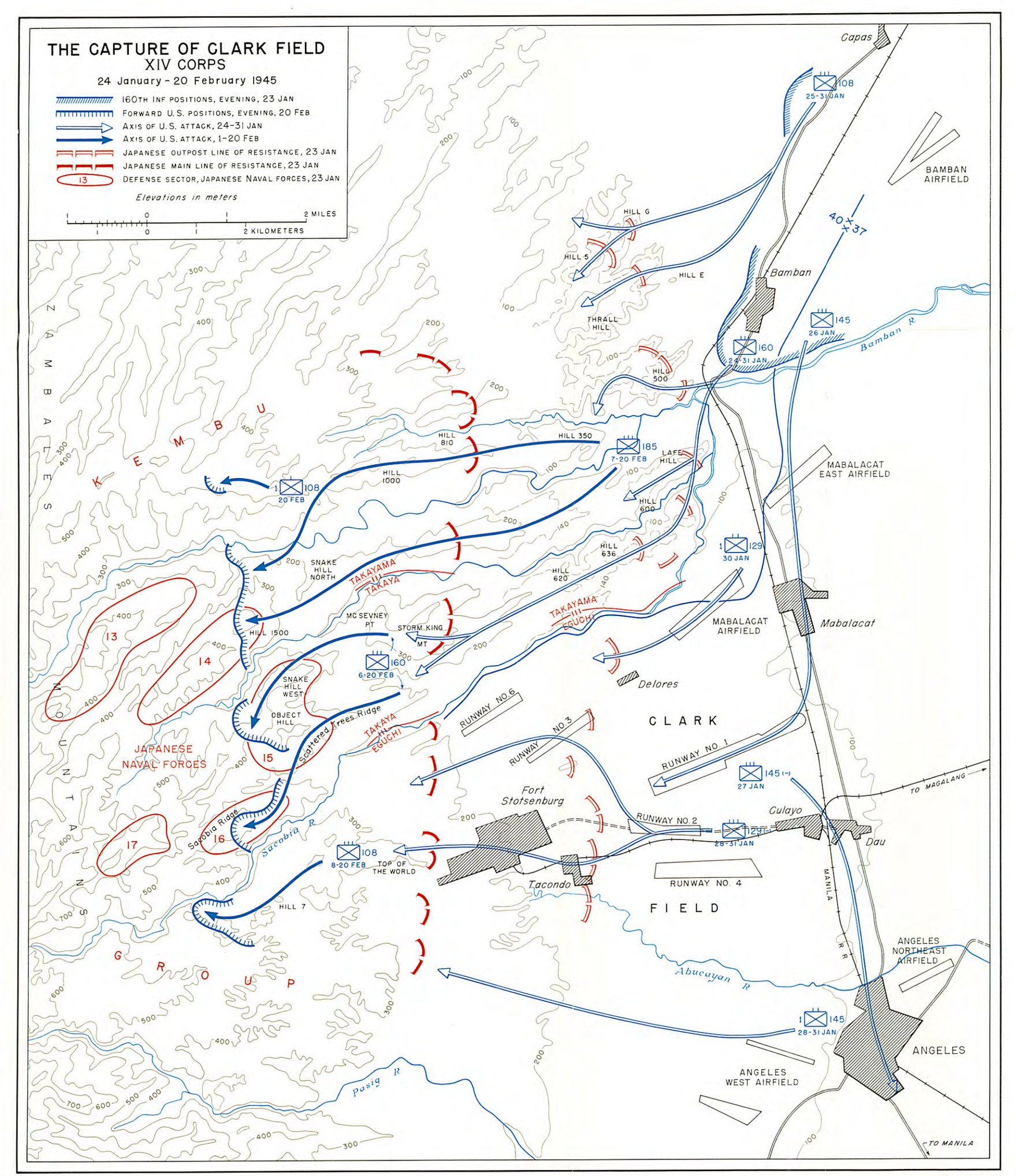
18-31 January 1945

SIXTH ARMY FRONT LINE, EVENING, 17 JAN
SIXTH ARMY FRONT LINE, EVENING, 31 JAN
SIXTH ARMY PATROLLED AREA, 31 JAN
FORWARD JAPANESE DEFENSES, 31 JAN

ELEVATIONS IN METERS
0 100 500 900 AND ABOVE

5 0 5 10 MILES
5 0 5 10 KILOMETERS

58TH IMB
23D DIV (-)
ELMS, 10TH DIV
ELMS, 105TH DIV
2D TANK DIV (-)
43 XX 32 (AS OF 30 JAN)
43 XX 25
32 XX 25 (AS OF 30 JAN)
I XXX XIV (AS OF 30 JAN)
XIV XXX I (AS OF 26 JAN)
XXX XI 29 JAN
31 JAN
KEMBU GROUP
SHOBU GROUP
TAKAYAMA DETACHMENT
TAKAYA DETACHMENT
EGUCHI DETACHMENT
NAGAYOSHI DETACHMENT
LINGAYEN GULF
SUBIC BAY
BATAAN PENINSULA
ZAMBALES MOUNTAINS
CABUSILAN MTS
CABARUAN HILLS
CLARK FIELD
MT ARAYAT
CANDABA SWAMP
MANILA R.R.
VILLA VERDE TRAIL
SAN MARCELINO AIRFIELD
ZIGZAG PASS
TO MANILA
Agno R
Tagumising R
Aborecdo R
Bamban R
Pampanga R
Sacobia R
Abucayan R
Rio Chico de la Pampanga
San Fabian
Sual
Dagupan
Manaoag
San Felipe
San Manuel
San Nicolas
Binalonan
Tayug
Asingan
Bactad
Urdaneta
Lunec
Cabaruan
Malisiqui
Villasis
Rosales
Balungao
Carmen
Gonzales
Pemienta
Umingan
Lupao
San Jose
Muñoz
Guimba
Baloc
Talavera
Licab
Cabanatuan
Urbiztondo
Bayambang
Camiling
Anao
Moncada
Paniqui
Cuyapo
Pura
Gerona
Victoria
Tarlac
San Miguel
La Paz
Gapan
Camp O'Donnell
Capas
Bamban
Mabalacat
Magalang
Dau
Culayo
Angeles
San Fernando
Calumpit
Plaridel
San Miguel
San Felipe
San Narciso
San Marcelino
San Antonio
Castillejos
Olongapo
Dinalupihan
149TH INF
152D INF
151ST INF
34TH INF (+)
1588
2037
1670
1745



F. Temple

MAP IV

THE APPROACH TO MANILA

1-4 February 1945

U.S. FRONT LINE, EVENING, 31 JAN

AXIS OF U.S. ADVANCE, DATES INDICATED

FORWARD JAPANESE POSITIONS, EVENING, 4 FEB

ELEVATIONS IN METERS

0 100 500 900 AND ABOVE

5 0 5 10 MILES

5 0 5 10 KILOMETERS

XX 1 FEB (From Guimba) 5

I XXX XIV

Tarlac

Cabanatuan

37 XI CAV

Bamban R

peñaranda R

Gapan

2 5 (+)

2 8 (+)

2 FEB

KEMBU GROUP

XXX XIV

TAKAYAMA III

TAKAYA III

EGUCHI III

40 XX 37

CLARK FIELD

Mt Arayat

GANDABA SWAMP

San Miguel

Angeles

3

MANILA R R

40 XX 37

San Fernando R

San Fernando

G 185

Sabang

Baliuag

Angat R

2 5 (+) 65

3 FEB

Norzagaray

SULIPAN CANAL

Calumpit

148

Bigaa R

Plaridel

2 8 (+)

IPO DAM

SHIMBU

7

4 FEB

Dinalupihan

3-4 FEB

(Moving)

149

152D INF

NAGAYOSHI DETACHMENT

Pampanga R

Quingua R

2 FEB

Tabang

Malolos

Santa Maria

Santa Maria R

3-4 FEB

64

SUBIC BAY

Olongapo

Grande I

KAWASHIMA X KOBAYASHI

Marilao

Meycauyan

Novaliches

145

4 FEB

52

Mt Oro

Montalban

WAWA DAM

Mt Pacawagan

Novaliches Reservoir

Talipapa

Marikina R

KOBAYASHI X NOGUCHI

Mt Natib

Bataan Peak

BATAAN

Balanga

MANILA BAY

New Bosoboso

GROUP

Bosoboso R

Antipolo

PENINSULA

MANILA

MANILA NAVAL DEFENSE FORCE

Pasig R

TO PILILLA

Parañaque R

Tagig

NICHOLS FIELD

MARIVELES MOUNTAIN

Parañaque

Las Piñas

Cavite

Zapote

HAGONOY ISTHMUS

Zapote R

Las Piñas R

LAGUNA DE BAY

Imus

1

CORREGIDOR ISLAND

SOUTH CHINA SEA

4 FEB

Imus R

Biñan

Naic

25

17

511 Prcht

3 FEB

511 Prcht Ridge

Mt Carilao

Mt Aiming

2 FEB

Tagaytay

3 FEB

NASUGBU BAY

XX 11 (-)

31 JAN

Nasugbu

31 JAN - 1 FEB

Palico R

Aga

3-4 FEB

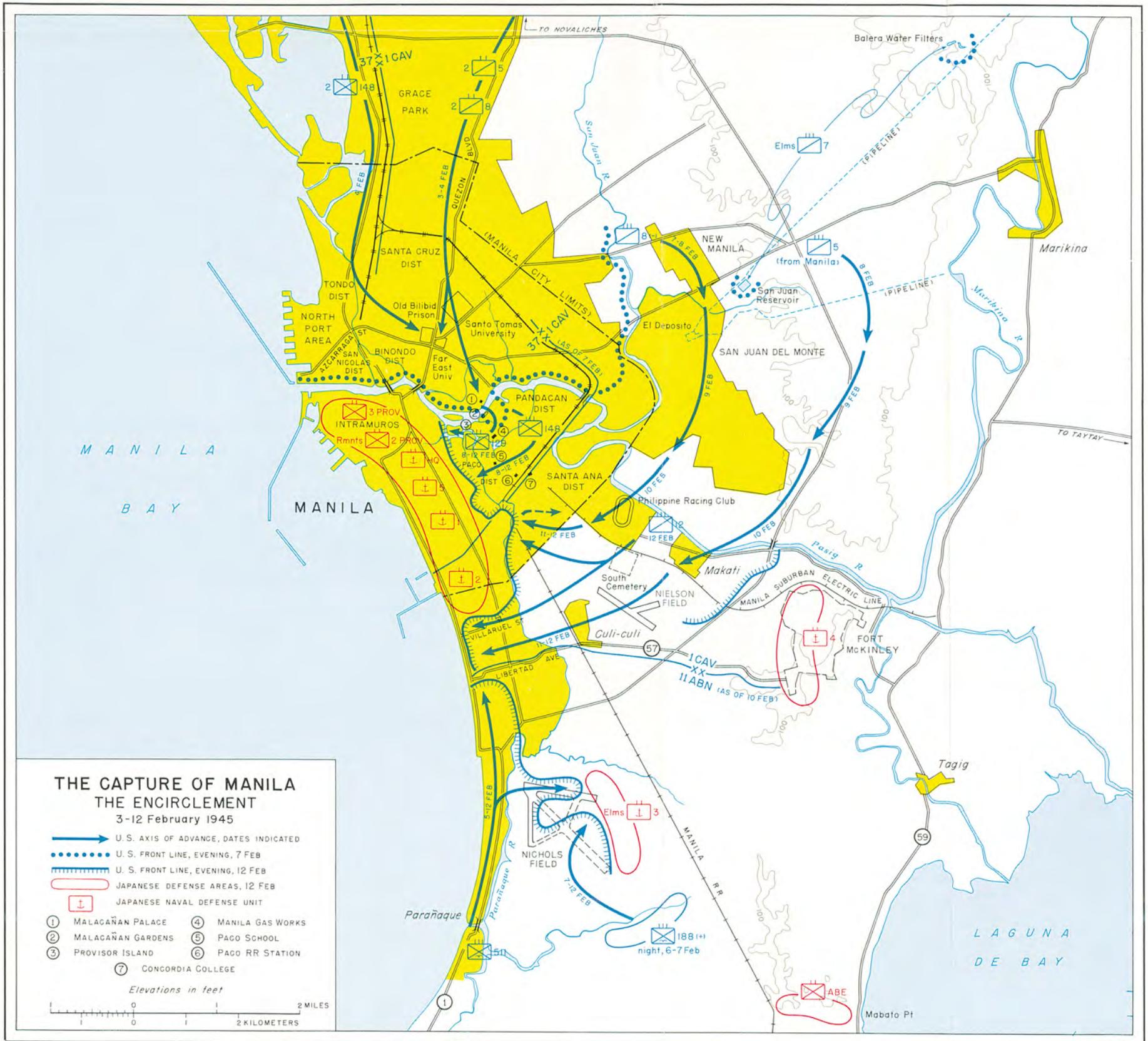
Mt Batulao

TAAL LAKE

VOLCANO I

F. Temple

MAP V



F. Temple

MAP VI

Morrison Pt
Battery Pt
Infantry Pt
Cavalry Pt
North Pt
Engineer Pt
KINDLEY LANDING FIELD
James Ravine
Rock Pt
NORTH DOCK
Malinta Hill
Morrison Hill
CS
PP
Monkey Pt
San Jose
WR
HOSP
San Jose Pt
Ramsay Ravine
SOUTH DOCK
Cheney Ravine
TOPSIDE BARRACKS
WR
PARADE GROUND
GOLF COURSE
Wheeler Pt
Breakwater Pt
Geary Pt

CORREGIDOR ISLAND

Roads — CS Cold Storage
WR Water Reservoir — PP Power Plant
Barracks and Quarters

Elevations in Feet
0 100 250 500 and above

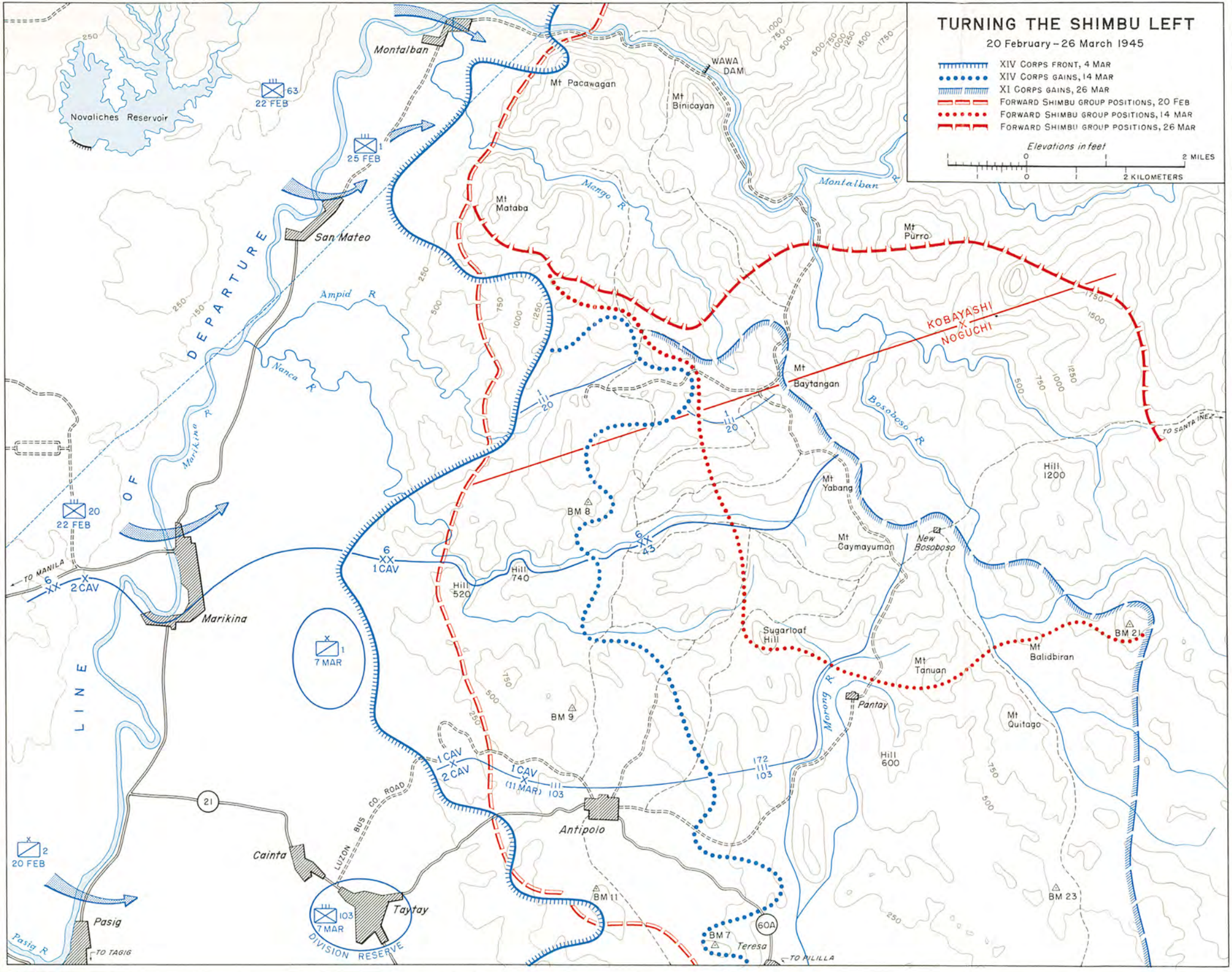
0 500 1000 Yards

BATAAN
MANILA BAY
Cavite
Mariveles
Mariveles Harbor
NORTH CHANNEL
Corregidor I
Caballo I
SOUTH CHINA SEA
SOUTH CHANNEL
El Fraile I (Ft Drum)
Ternate
Carabao I

5 0 5 Miles
5 0 5 Kilometers

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MAP VII



D. Holmes, Jr

MAP VIII

CLEARING SOUTHERN LUZON
XIV CORPS
4 March – 11 April 1945

UNIT LOCATIONS PRIOR TO ATTACK
INITIAL U.S. ATTACKS, DATES INDICATED
XIV CORPS FRONT, 22-23 MAR
AXIS OF U.S. ATTACK, 24 MAR – 11 APR
FUJI FORCE CONCENTRATIONS, 11 APR

ELEVATIONS IN METERS
0 300 600 900 1200 1500 1800 AND ABOVE

5 0 5 10 MILES
5 0 5 10 KILOMETERS

LAGUNA DE BAY
LAMON BAY
TAAL LAKE
BALAYAN BAY
BATANGAS BAY
TAYABAS BAY
CALUMPAN PENINSULA
VERDE ISLAND PASSAGE
BONDOC ISTHMUS
BATANGAS MTS

Biñan
Santa Cruz
Pagsanjan
Cabalete I
Mauban
Real
Mt Bijiang
Mt Maquiling
Santo Tomas
Calauan
San Pablo
Mt Banahao
Lucban
Tayabas
Antimonan
Tanauan
Volcano I
Mt Malepunyo
Tiaong
Candelaria
Lucena
San Juan
Abung
Nasugbu
Tagaytay Ridge
Balayan
Lemery
Mt Macolod
Lipa
Batangas
Maricaban I

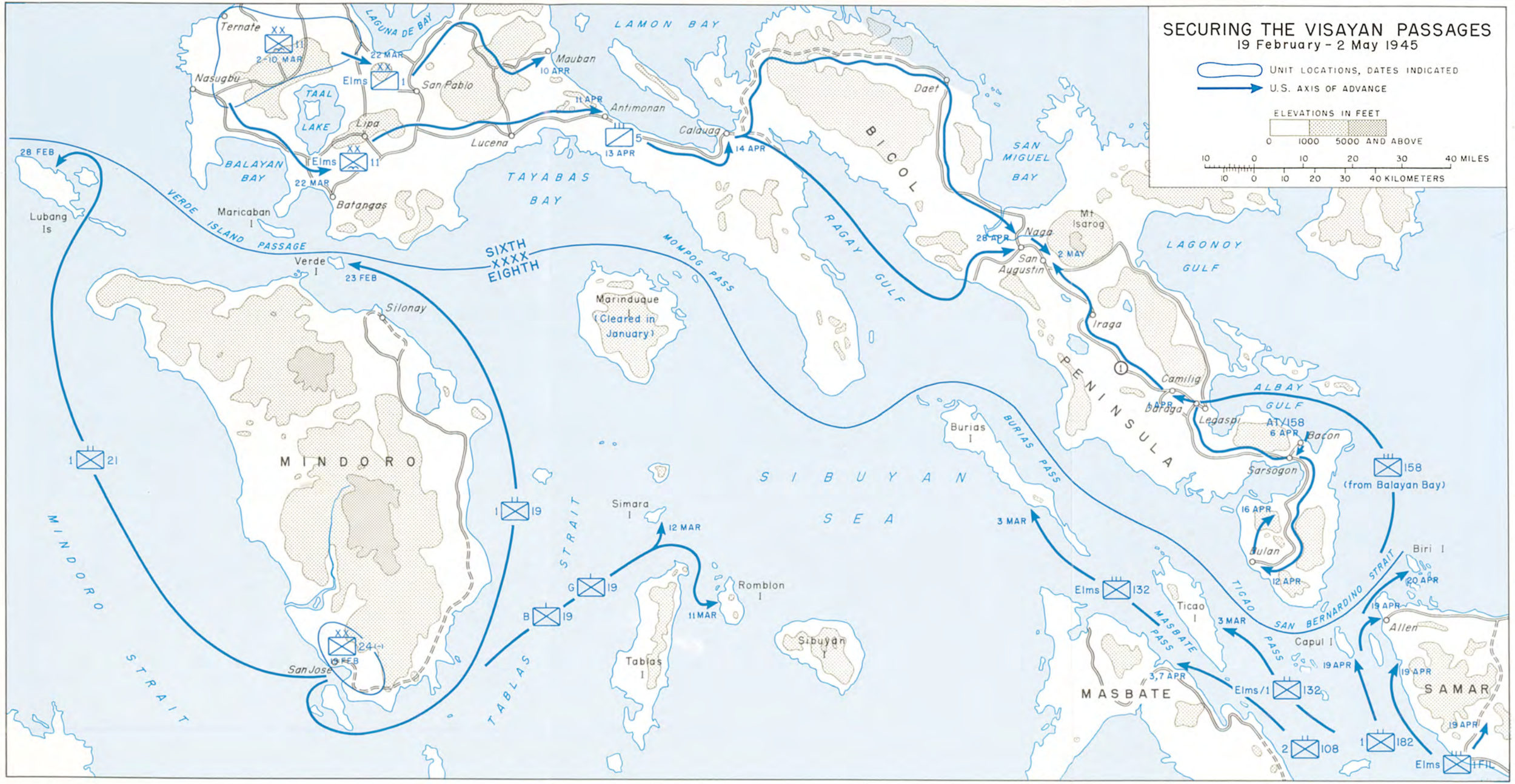
XI
XXX
XIV

511th INF
10 MAR
187 = 511
187th INF
7 MAR
158th INF
4 MAR
187
158
1 CAV
XX
11 ABN
12th CAV
29 MAR
5th CAV
29 MAR
7th CAV
8th CAV
29 MAR
5 APR
2 APR
5th CAV
103d INF
6 APR
10 APR
10 APR
11 APR
11 APR
4 APR
3 APR
2/188 (–)
1/188
6 APR
11 APR
3 APR
187th INF (–)
29 MAR
188th INF (–)
Elms, 188th INF
188th INF
4 APR

17
25
1
19
417

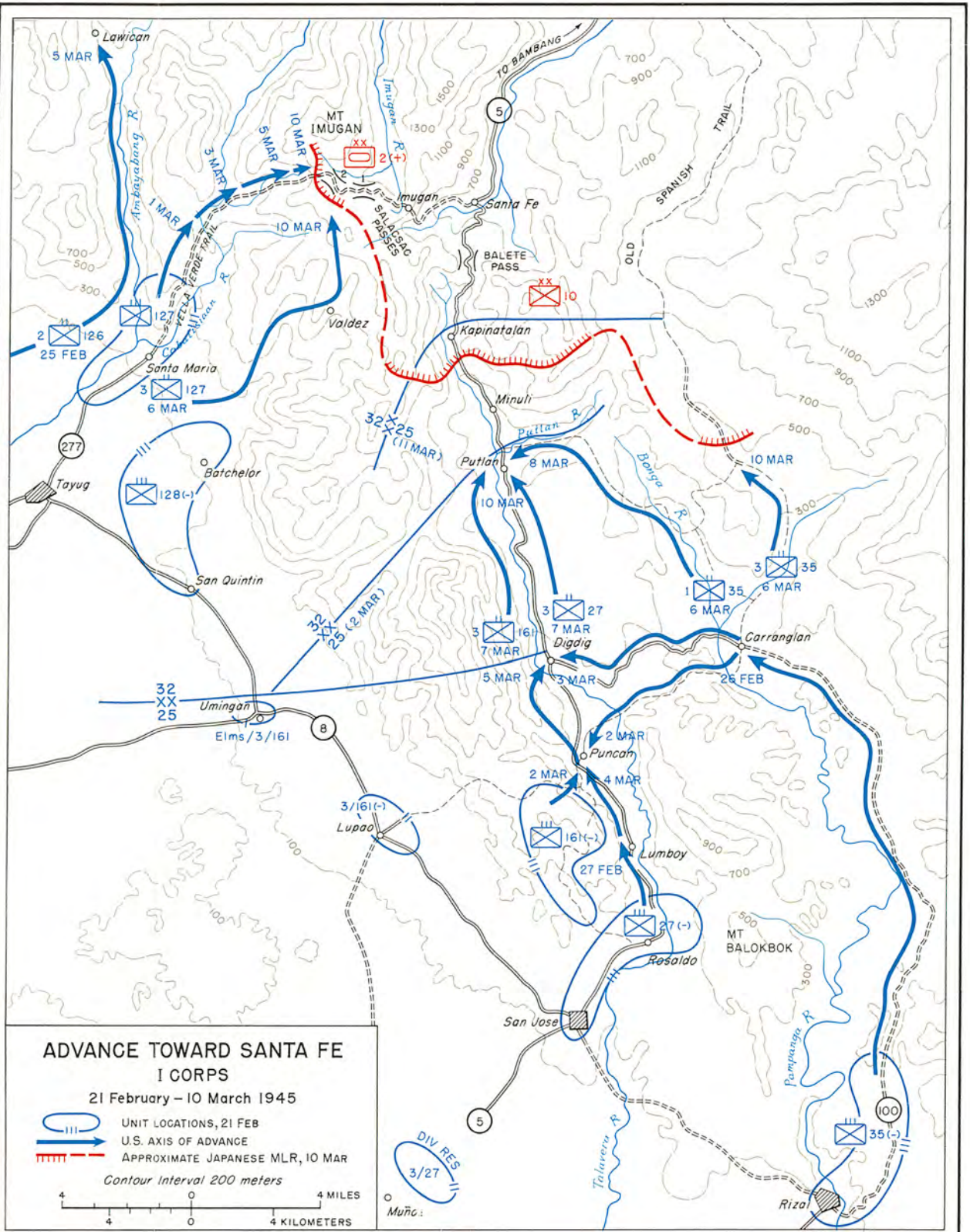
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MAP IX



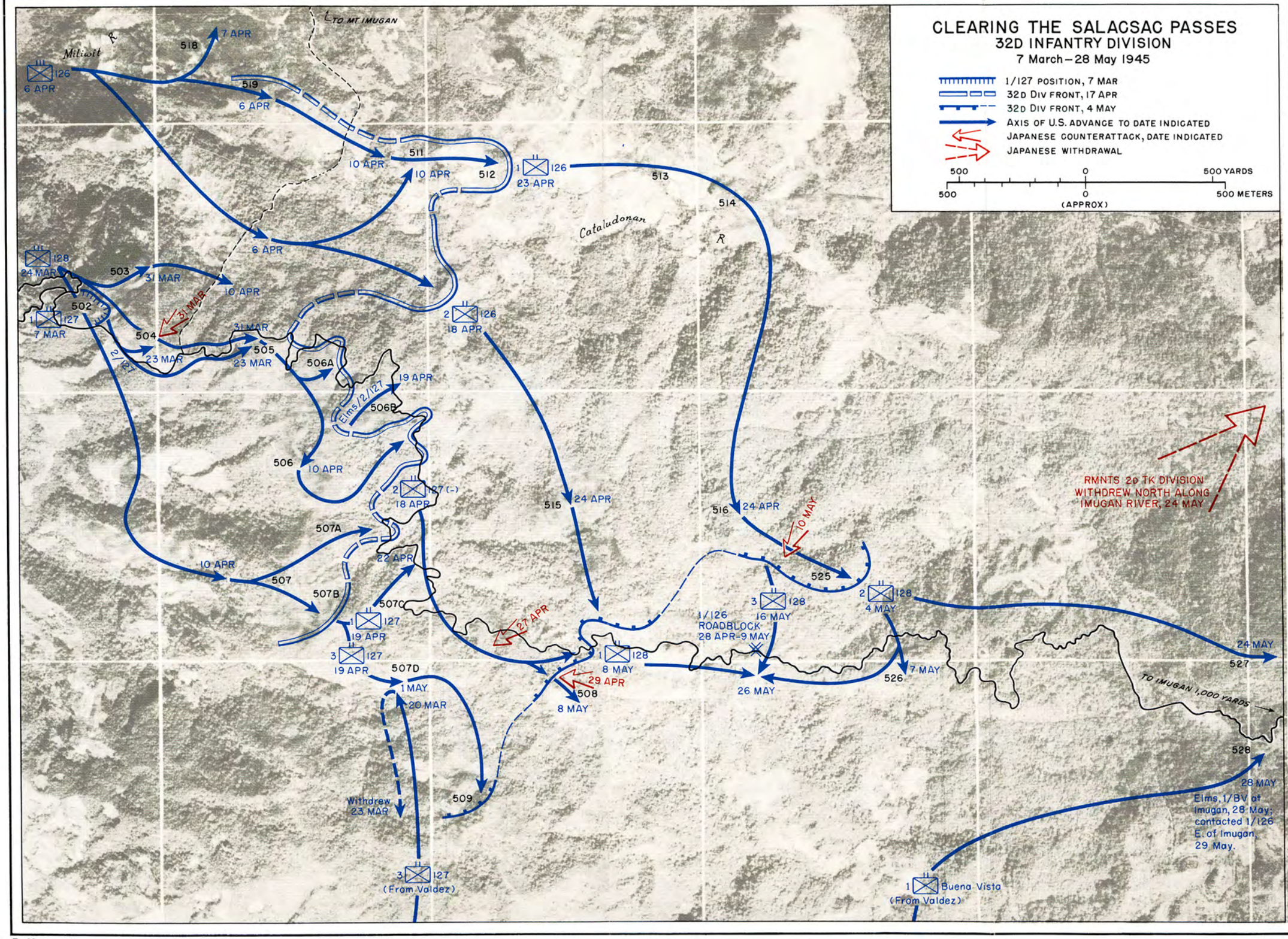
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MAP X



D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP XI



D. Holmes, Jr.

MAP XII