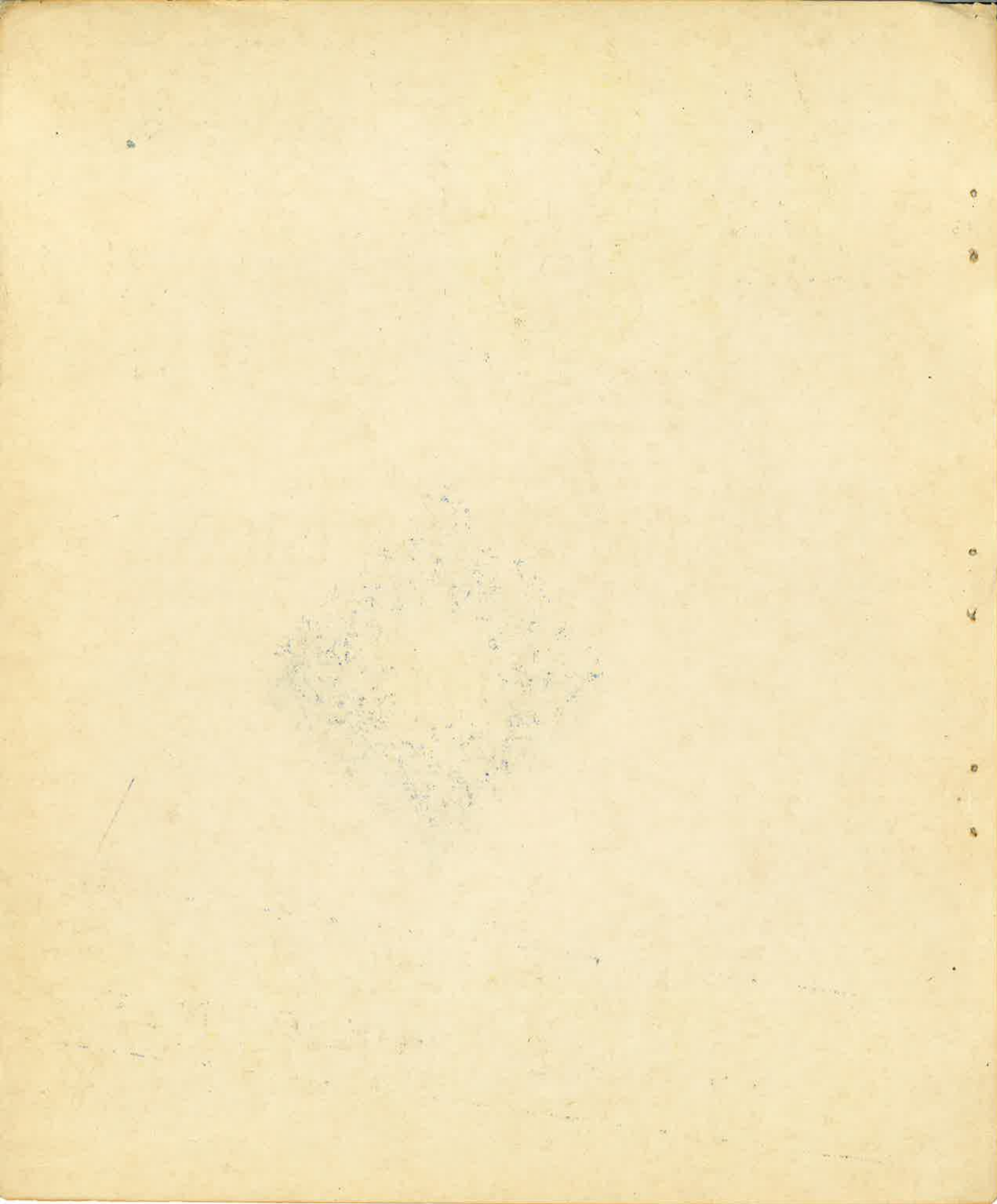


# 40TH infantry division



IN THE PHILIPPINES







HISTORY OF THE  
40<sup>th</sup> INF. DIVISION  
*in the*  
*Philippines*



NO. 1 THE DIVISION  
HISTORY OF THE

*Phillips*  
1892



This is the story of the 40th Infantry Division in operations against the Imperial Japanese Army in the Philippine Islands. It is a straightforward, concise narrative, but necessarily incomplete. The weariness of long marches under the tropical sun - the dirt and grime of unchanged clothing - the maddening hordes of flies swarming over the battlefield - the loneliness of nights in a foxhole rendered sleepless by repeated enemy attacks - the casualness with which individual deeds of heroism were accomplished - these things cannot be described in printed words nor caught in a camera lens. They can be known only to those who were there.



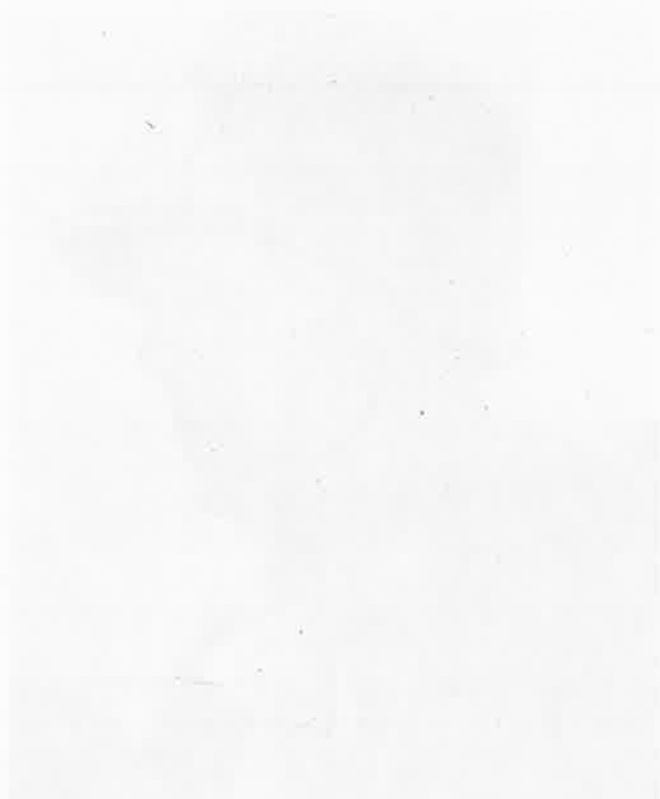






**RAPP BRUSH**  
**MAJOR GENERAL USA**  
**COMMANDING**





HALP BRUSH  
HARD GROUND  
COLORED





**HARCOURT HERVEY**  
BRIGADIER GENERAL U S A  
ARTILLERY COMMANDER

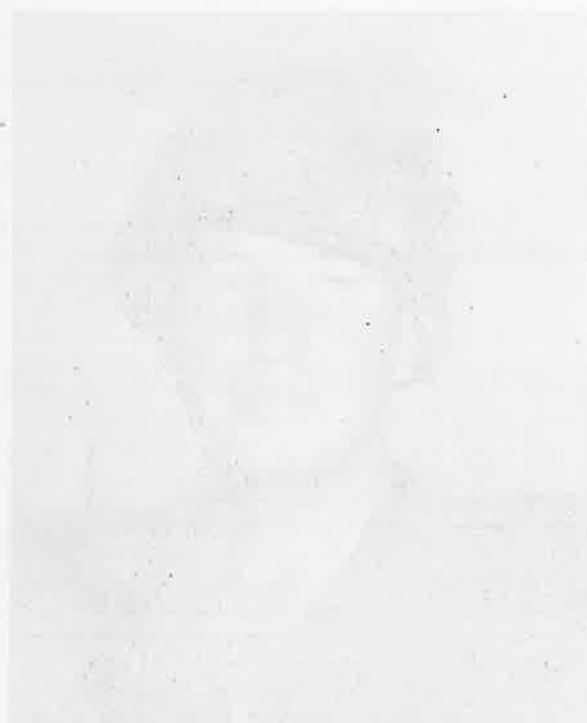


**ROBERT O. SHOE**  
BRIGADIER GENERAL USA  
ASST. DIVISION COMMANDER





HARCOURT HERVEY  
BRIGADIER GENERAL, USA  
ARTILLERY COMMANDER



ROBERT O. SHOF  
BRIGADIER GENERAL, USA  
ASST DIVISION COMMANDER



# The LUZON OPERATION

## CONCEPT and PLANNING-

The liberation of the people of the Philippine Islands was designed in a series of operations, the first being centered on Leyte and Samar. Following the Leyte operation, and subsequent seizure of Mindoro, American forces constructed airfields and bases where bombers and long-range fighters could be based to support the invasion of Luzon, largest island of the Philippine group.

The basic plan for the Luzon operation had as its major objectives the prompt seizure of the Central Luzon Plains to destroy the principal garrisons, command organizations and logistical installations of hostile defense forces in the Philippines; denial to the enemy of the northern entrances to the South China Sea; and provision of bases for the support of further operations against the Japanese.

In the initial consideration of the attack on Luzon, Commander Seventh Fleet expressed concern over the exposure of the attack force to enemy air and surface attack en route to an objective beyond ready coverage from our existing bases. The possibility of attacking in Southern or Eastern Luzon was therefore considered, but because of military reasons with respect to the suitability of terrain for overland operations, Lingayen was selected as the objective area most suitable for the initial assault.

Preliminary operations were to be limited to the establishment of the minimum essential land-based air forces required for support of the overland operation, and to the opening of a line of seaborne communications to the western coast of Luzon via the Central Philippines. After reoccupation of the Central Plains-Manila area and coincident with the establishment in the Manila area of base facilities, the remainder of Luzon was to be consolidated, normal

government reconstituted, and forces provided as necessary to assist concurrent liberation of the Visayans and Southern Philippines.

The plan as finally established contemplated a major amphibious assault with support by the full resources of the U. S. Pacific Fleet to establish a lodgement in the Lingayen Gulf area, followed by a coordinated drive down the Central Plains to seize Clark Field and finally Manila. The 13th and 15th Air Forces in the Southwest Pacific and the 20th Air Force in China, the 14th, 21st and 7th Air Forces in the Marianas, plus all naval task forces in the Pacific including carriers and submersibles, were coordinated in strategic moves to neutralize enemy airpower within effective range of the operation, and to intercept and destroy the Jap fleet if it attempted intervention.

The Luzon Attack Force, commanded by Vice Admiral Kinkaid, was to make the assault in the Lingayen-Damortis-San Fernando (La Union) area of Lingayen Gulf. The U.S. Sixth Army, under command of Lieutenant General Walter J. Kreuger, comprised of the I Army Corps, the XIV Army Corps and the Sixth Army Reserve (25th Infantry Division, 158th Regimental Combat Team, 13th Armored Group and Sixth Ranger Battalion), formed the ground attack force. The assault troops of the Lingayen Attack Force were the XIV Army Corps, commanded by Major General Oscar W. Griswold, consisting of the 40th Infantry Division (reinforced), under Major General Rapp Brush, and the 37th Infantry Division (reinforced), under Major General Robert S. Beightler. The 32nd Infantry Division, the First Cavalry Division, and the 112th Regimental Combat Team comprised the reinforcements which would land eighteen days later.

Strategy to be employed during the Luzon operation was announced to the Divisions by Major General Griswold, Commanding General of the XIV Corps, at



a special conference held on Bougainville, October 23, 1944. In attendance were Major General Brush and members of his staff, as well as representatives of the Division Artillery. Similar representatives of the 37th Division were also present.

General Griswold presented in outline form the initial phases of the operation, the Army and Corps plan, and the part each division would play in its execution. He emphasized the importance of coordination between divisions and with supporting air and naval forces in establishing beachheads at Lingayen Gulf. The Corps staff officers discussed the details of the tactical and administrative phases.

The enemy situation, as estimated from information received from guerrilla and other sources, was given at this conference. The capabilities of enemy ground, naval and air forces were also considered. The Corps maneuver was briefly summarized and the mission of each division assigned. Detailed instructions relative to logistics of loading and transporting personnel and equipment were also reviewed. Following this meeting the division staff officers conferred individually with the Corps staff members regarding their respective sectional problems.

Upon return from the conference at XIV Corps, Major General Brush announced the purpose and concept of the Luzon operation to the regimental commanders and their staffs at a special meeting held in the planning building at 40th Division Headquarters, Cape Gloucester, New Britain. A tentative field order issued at that time provided the basis for regimental planning.

Primary study of terrain, climatic and hydrographic conditions centered on Lingayen Gulf, later evolving into a study of the Central Plain, area of operations during the advance southward from the Lingayen beachhead.

Maps for the operation consisted of a 1/250,000 map of the island of Luzon; sheets of the 1/50,000 scale covering the area from the beach inland

through the Central Plain to Manila; and three sheets, 1/25,000 scale, covering the immediate area of the landing beaches to a depth of 4000 to 6000 yards. Maps were originally compiled by the Army Map Service in May 1944. Some of the maps had been reprinted in Australia and then shipped to Hollandia where the latest available topographical data and corrections were overprinted. Maps were made available to each regiment and battalion for staff planning as they were received; general distribution was made aboard ship after embarkation.

All Army photographic coverage furnished was essentially for mapping purposes, being at a scale of 1/30,000 or smaller. Coverage inland from the beach extended a scant 4000 yards. Copies of photo runs were limited and permitted distribution only to battalion and higher headquarters. Terrain information of the beachhead area was obtained mainly from these photographs. Receipt on January 2, 1945, while en route to the objective, of large scale oblique photographs taken December 15-16 were the first photos to show details of the beach and shore conditions.

Terrain models of the Lingayen beaches were built by each regiment as well as by the Division Engineers. Later the Navy provided five rubber models, which were utilized for orientation aboard ship.

Hydrographic information of conditions to be encountered at the objective area in Lingayen Gulf indicated difficulties in landing over extremely shallow beaches would cause landing craft and even small boats to ground at considerable distances from the high water mark. Beach profiles were prepared which indicated that at best landing craft would have a difficult time beaching properly, and in most cases would ground stern first, requiring from 150 to 300 feet of causeway to permit unloading of LST's. Immediately behind the beach the Agno River delta, studded with rice paddies and fish ponds and intersected by two wide rivers - the Agno and Calmay - flowing parallel to and immediately behind the landing beach, would complicate the movement from the





**MAJOR GENERAL OSCAR W. GRISWOLD ARRIVES AT CAPE GLOUCESTER TO CONFER WITH MAJOR GENERAL RAPP BRUSH ON PLANS FOR THE COMING OPERATION**

beach inland.

To overcome these obstacles, provisions were made for the construction and mounting of pontoon causeways and barges on LST's. Detailed plans were also drawn to the end that additional causeways and barges would be used to expedite the crossing of troops and equipment over the Calmay River.

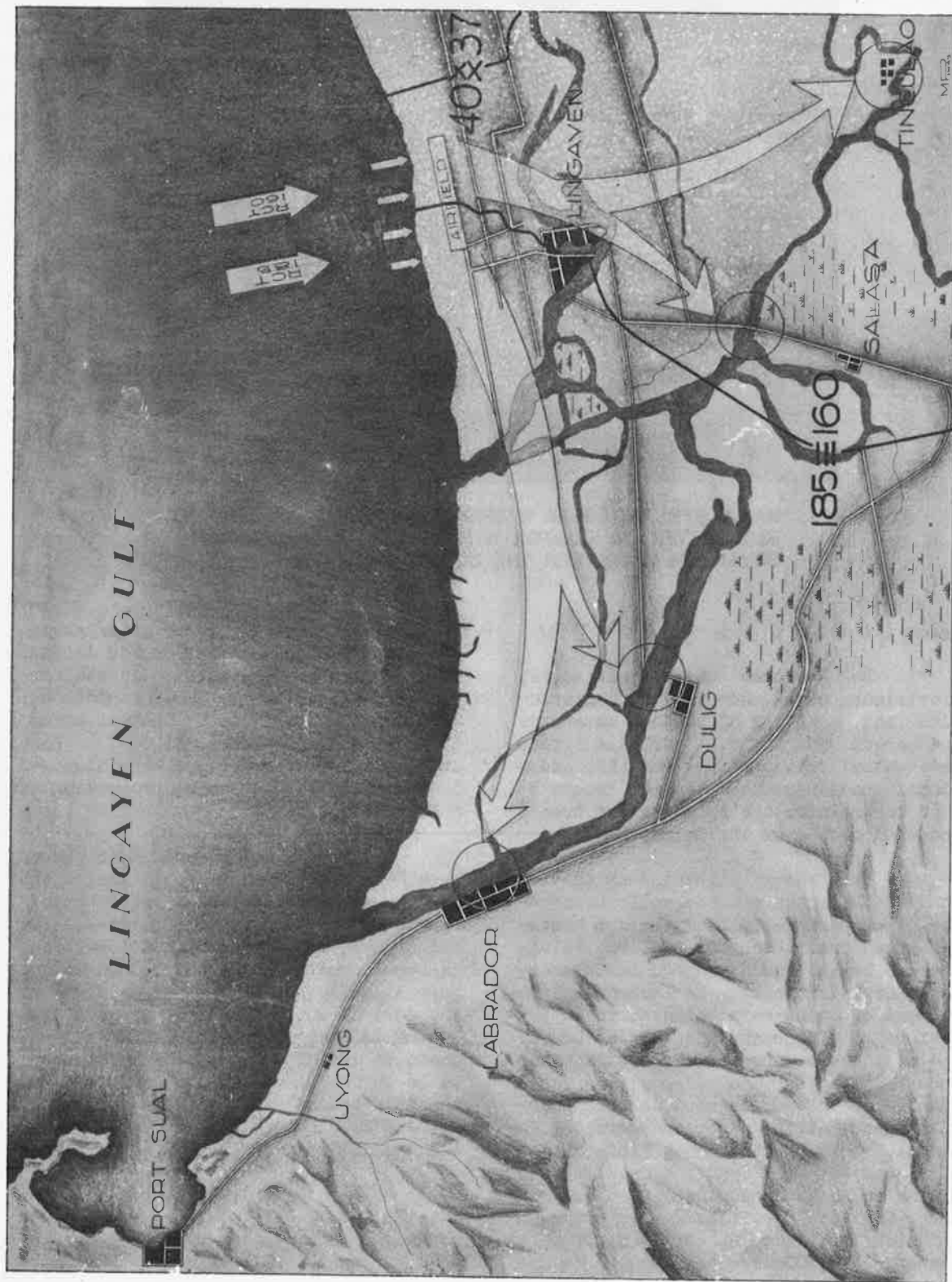
The enemy situation on the island of Luzon was not too well known before the operation. Enemy troops hastily sent from Luzon to reinforce beleaguered Leyte had disrupted Luzon's defense organization. Replacements from Formosa or China were believed to be arriving at frequent intervals on Luzon. As of December 29, 1944, estimates of enemy strength and disposition were founded on unverified reports from guerrilla and allied sources operating on Luzon. By compilation of information thus secured, and from the data on file of the organizations identified as present, the total estimated enemy strength on Luzon was placed at 234,500. Of this number, 107,000 were believed to be mo-

bile combat units able to offer resistance at various points on the island. The approximate disposition of the combat elements was reported as follows: Northern Luzon, 15,000; Central Luzon, 51,000; Southern Luzon, 41,000. Base defense and service troops were disposed in relatively the same proportion as combat troops.

In the immediate Lingayen beach area the enemy that would resist the landing was thought to be the 58th and/or 61st Independent Mixed Brigades. The 2nd Armored Division had been identified in the Central Plains near Cabanatuan, approximately 60 miles from Lingayen. The 23rd Infantry Division was indicated on the island, but the location was unknown. Total enemy strength estimated to be in the immediate vicinity of the landing beach was approximately 1500. No exact dispositions of enemy troops was known.

Photo Interpretation and other intelligence agencies revealed no fixed positions or organized defenses near the landing beach. However in the foot-







hills and high ground west of the Agno River defensive installations were noted. Reports indicated that Jap coastal artillery was emplaced in the high ground near Port Sual. One source of information stated that the Lingayen beach was mined and that routes leading from the beach were defended by pillboxes spaced at frequent intervals on either side of the main roads.

Although the enemy was capable of offering resistance at the beach, it seemed probable that the threat of our naval bombardment would cause him to withdraw further inland. Excellent defense lines were offered by the Calmay and Agno Rivers. By defending along the south banks of either river and interdicting the roads by fire, the enemy could seriously delay our advance. No major counterattack was expected north of the Agno because of the nature of the terrain. Mobile units including armor probably would not be employed in counterattacks until our forces reached firm ground south of the Agno River.

The mission assigned the division was to:

- (1) Defeat and destroy all enemy forces encountered in its zone of advance.
- (2) Secure Lingayen airfield on S-Day.
- (3) On S-Day, seize and secure the Agno River crossing on the Baay-Salasa Road and Baay-Dulig Road.
- (4) Seize and secure the Labangan-Labrador ferry on the Agno River.
- (5) Protect the Corps west (right) flank.
- (6) Establish and maintain contact with 37th Infantry Division on its east (left) flank.
- (7) Seize that portion of Corps beachhead line within zone of advance.
- (8) Defend all occupied areas.
- (9) Be prepared on Corps order to continue offensive action to the south and west to seize that portion of Army beachhead line within its zone of advance.

Obviously the river crossings would have to be secured before our troops could expand to the Corps or Army

beachhead line. Rapid seizure of the crossings before the enemy would have time to destroy the bridges or to reorganize his forces, determine our intentions and execute plans to prevent our carrying them out, was imperative.

The plan as evolved contemplated the landing of two Battalion Landing Teams of the 185th Regimental Combat Team abreast on Orange Beach, and two BLT's of the 160th RCT on Green Beach. Assault waves would be boated in LVT's and personnel would remain loaded until the rivers had been crossed unless enemy action forced them to dismount. One BLT from each regiment would push on immediately to the crossings in the respective zones of action and establish roadblocks to secure same. In the interest of speed, small groups of enemy were to be bypassed by these battalions. One platoon of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop loaded in LVTA-4's would be attached to each battalion to perform local reconnaissance. Artillery battalions loaded in ducks were to move rapidly to predetermined positions and be ready to support their respective RCT's as early as possible. Engineer troops were directed to assist units in crossing the Calmay by means of assault boats and pontoon ferries.

RCT 108, less the 2nd Battalion in division reserve, was placed in Corps reserve afloat and were to be prepared to make an assault landing on Corps order.

## **PREPARATION and MOVEMENT**

The assemblage of the huge quantity of equipment and supplies required to support the Lingayen landing, complicated by the simultaneous staging of the entire division plus numerous attached troops, was a challenge to the administrative agencies of the division.

From bases in the Solomons and New Guinea, ships loaded with implements necessary to conduct the campaign began arriving at Borgen Bay, New Britain, late in November. Plans for unloading, distribution and reloading combat ves-





**LST'S LOADING VEHICLES AND PERSONNEL AT BORGEN BAY**

sels had to be established with meticulous care to avoid unnecessary delays in the completion of preparations and to insure efficient unloading by scheduled priorities in the target area.

As in all amphibious operations, the weight, dimensions and unloading priority of each item of equipment had to be carefully considered with respect to the type, capacity and tonnage of each vessel before final loading plans could be completed.

Logistical planning was accomplished by the division and regimental staff officers concerned. Most of the ships' Transport Quartermasters arrived at Cape Gloucester November 26th to consult on the loading plans prior to the arrival of their ships.

The transports arrived at Borgen Bay on the 28th, and the tremendous task of combat loading began the following day. Beaches had been assigned and the embarkation points for each ship had been marked. Some material had been spotted at embarkation points prior to the arrival of the ships; however, much projected material, especially ammunition and petroleum, was in Liberty ships waiting to be unloaded, resulting in simultaneous unloading and reloading entirely by lighterage.

The loading progressed well the first three days, but on the 1st of December difficulties began to arise. No

dock facilities or piers were available for loading, and beach conditions were considered only fair. A shortage of LCM's and the inability to operate them at night because of damage incurred slowed down the loading considerably. Subsequently, however, six LCT's and several LSM's were made available to relieve the situation.

Despite these handicaps, all ships were loaded fully and ready to sail on the scheduled date, December 8th.

With Major General Rapp Brush, Brigadier General Harcourt Hervey, Commander of the 40th Division Artillery, and certain staff members aboard, the flag and command ship, U.S.S. Rocky Mount, departed from Cape Gloucester the night of December 8, 1944, for Manus. The transport group of the task force departed the following day. The voyage from Cape Gloucester to Manus was uneventful.

For strategic reasons the target date for the Luzon landings was delayed approximately twenty days. Taking advantage of the additional time available and to test unloading plans, a rehearsal was conducted at Huon Gulf, New Guinea. The exercise consisted of debarking boat teams and forming and landing assault and support waves according to S-Day schedule. Artillery pieces, mobile-



loaded in ducks, were unloaded from parent LST's. Command post personnel and communication vehicles were put ashore, and all communication nets, including the air support channels, were tested.

Repetitions were conducted of those parts of the operation where difficulties were encountered or timing and coordination required adjustment.

Upon completion of the training, the task force returned to Manus, where it was decided by the Corps Commander that one LST and one APA should be completely unloaded. LST-267 was beached at Los Negros Island on December 23rd and was completely unloaded; the U.S.S. Galvert was unloaded in a full-dress ship-to-shore exercise on the 26th. In each case, reloading was commenced as soon as unloading had been completed.

Departing from Manus December 31st, the convoy, following a course through Surigao Straits, thence along the western shore of Panay and Mindoro, headed toward Luzon.

Meanwhile, preparations were being made by the Navy to insure the safe landing of troops on Lingayen beach.

Advance intelligence indicated that Lingayen Gulf was heavily mined. Marine minefields were reported as extending across the gulf. It was suspected that the beaches were also mined with underwater charges that could be detonated beneath the assault waves from inland control stations. Although these dangers eventually proved non-existent, the suspense created by the devastating possibilities of such mines was not fully abated until the assault waves were safely ashore on S-Day.

The Naval Minesweeping Units, Underwater Demolition Team, and Bombardment Group arrived at the objective at dawn on S-3 Day. The Bombardment Group blasted enemy shore installations on the San Fernando-Cape Bolinao area, and pro-

vided gunfire cover for the minesweepers working in the suspected areas of Lingayen Gulf. Some shore batteries attempted futile and ineffective fire, but were soon silenced by counter-battery fire.

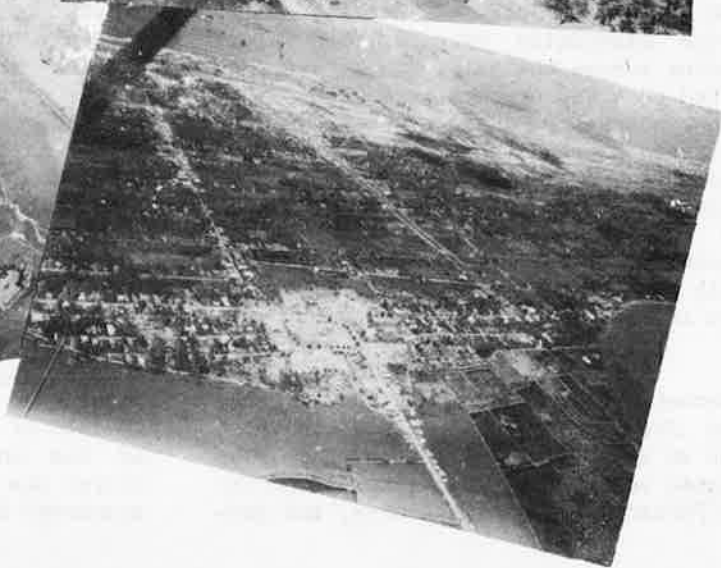
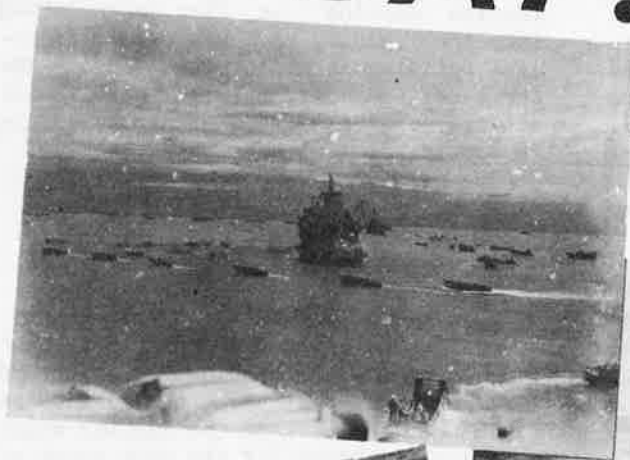
As areas were swept, bombardment progressed down the gulf, and on the afternoon of S-2 the Underwater Demolition Teams made a hydrographic reconnaissance of the landing beaches under close cover of LCI gunboats and destroyers. Ineffective machine gun fire was received from the vicinity of the provincial capital building at Lingayen. During the three-day period, several hostile air attacks were received, with some damage to battleships and carriers resulting.

Uneventful for the first eight days, the daily routine of shipboard life was suddenly brought to a tense pitch on the eve of the landing while cruising northward off the west coast of Mindoro. At this time six Jap planes launched an attack. Four were shot down by our combat air patrol and a fifth narrowly missed H.M.A.S. Westralia. One plane succeeded in getting through our outer defenses. Anti-aircraft gunners, called to station by general quarters, sighted the single Jap fighter plane overhead. Avoiding dense anti-aircraft bursts by evasive tactics, the plane suddenly dove directly at the escort carrier Kitkun Bay. Amid a hail of tracer fire the plane deliberately crashed on the flight deck and disintegrated in a splattering of flame. Serious damage suffered by the carrier forced its withdrawal from the convoy.

Similar convoys carrying troops who were to land on adjacent beaches were also approaching Lingayen. The cruiser Boise, carrying General of the Army Douglas MacArthur (CinC SWPA), joined the convoy at dusk on S-1. Prior to dawn of the following day, rendezvous of the entire force was completed, the course was changed, and the ships headed southward into Lingayen Gulf.



# S-DAY!





## LANDING and SEIZURE OF THE BEACHHEAD

J-hour was set for 0900, January 9, 1945. At 0600, the order, "Form the Approach," was given.

Naval gunfire, continuing the bombardment which had begun on S-3, was intensified at 0845, when heavy bombardment was concentrated on the landing beaches. As the tempo of the bombardment beat faster, a curtain of smoke blanketed the shoreline.

No enemy fire came from the Lingayen beaches. Instead, at J-30 Hour, Filipino guerrillas, who had come down to the beach carrying American and Filipino flags, were picked up by a destroyer and delivered to Headquarters of XIV Corps aboard the Mount Olympus. They reported that the Japs had completely evacuated the Lingayen area on January 6th, the first day of naval bombardment, and before leaving had systematically destroyed all supplies and equipment they could not carry with them. On the basis of this report, naval gunfire was lifted from the Lingayen town area.

In the War Command Room aboard the Rocky Mount at J-Hour, commanders watched teletype screens for flashes from air observers hovering over the beaches. At 0928 the teletypes began to clack these words:

"First wave 800 yards from Orange Beach; fourth wave crossing line of departure."

A slight pause, and then:

"Troops standing up on Orange and Green Beaches; not under fire."

"LVT's have crossed airfield; advancing beyond."

"Troops crossing Lingayen airfield standing up."

The landing had been made as scheduled. The assault waves, boated in

LVT's, reached shore at 0936 and 0939 for the first and second waves respectively. Stopping only to reconnoiter the few prepared positions hidden in the dunes, the vehicles moved inland, securing the first objective, Lingayen airfield, against nil opposition. Troops of the 185th RCT immediately began expanding to the right (west) flank, while the 160th moved to make contact with the 37th Division on the left.

In less than 45 minutes, 160th LVT's had passed through Lingayen town and were crossing the Calmay River near the destroyed bridge south of town. At 1127 elements of the 185th were crossing the Calmay at its mouth.

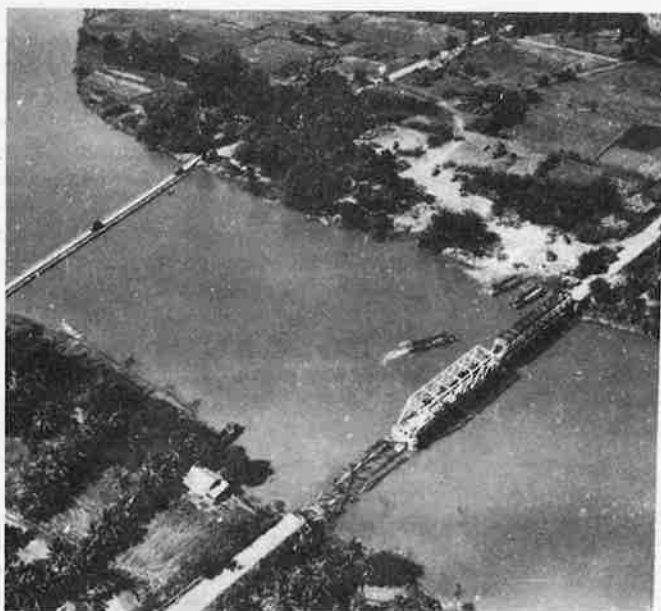
Air support was being provided by carrier planes neutralizing predetermined targets and remaining on station to attack any force the enemy might attempt to concentrate for counterattack on the beaches. Reconnoitering inland areas along roads and trails, they reported no "live" targets. However, they successfully attacked a few dump and supply areas which they were able to locate.

Lone Japanese suicide planes were active during this period in the immediate vicinity of the transport area. Despite our heavy anti-aircraft fire, several warships were damaged. Bombs were dropped near the transport Monrovia with no damage; one plane hovered over the Rocky Mount briefly, but was driven off by fire without attacking; and one plane made a successful suicide attack on the cruiser Columbia, which, however, was not damaged to the extent where it could not continue firing shortly thereafter.

At 1600, troops of the 160th, finding the Salasa bridge destroyed, crossed the Agno River by LVT's, and two hours later had seized its S-Day objective, the road junction at Salasa. From there a patrol to the west made the first contact, killing seven Japs and capturing one Formosan and three Chinese who had been acting as laborers for the Jap army.

At the same time, the 185th had





**SALASA BRIDGE - AFTER PONTON BRIDGE  
HAD BEEN INSTALLED BY ENGINEERS**

reached its objective, the Agno crossing at Dulig, 5000 yards west-southwest of Lingayen. Other elements were on the east bank of the Agno across from Labrador. Crossing at Dulig and bypassing Labrador, a reconnaissance was made to Uyong, three miles southeast of Port Sual, where a roadblock was established. Although civilians reported "many" Japs in the high ground to the southwest, no contacts were made. Thus, by the end of S-Day, the Division Beachhead Line was secured at all points except the river crossing at Tinculao, three miles southwest of Lingayen, where the 3rd Battalion, 160th, was stopped less than 1000 yards short of its objective by extensive swamps.

Back at the beach, shore parties had been landed early and general unloading was commenced about 1100, the transports having moved into an inner area to minimize turn-around time of boats. Fortunately, the surf had moderated from the height of six to eight feet reported the day previously, and at a height of only four feet was not sufficient to interfere with employment of boats or the installation of pontoon causeways. Pontoons were launched promptly, and by early afternoon unload-

ing slots for LST's were in operation.

Unloading operations were uninterrupted except for a short Red alert at about 1300 when a single enemy plane penetrated the anti-aircraft screen and dived on the battleship Colorado, lying near the transport area in readiness for support fire missions. By 1740 on S-Day, 4235 tons of impedimenta and supplies had been discharged across the Division beaches.

During the early morning our aircraft had reported thirty-six vessels at Santiago Island. Three or four of these vessels, which appeared to be the size of medium landing craft, were left a-fire by our air attack. Possibly from this group small suicide boats infiltrated and attacked the convoy in Lingayen Gulf the night of January 9-10. They succeeded in damaging the Lst's 610 and 1028 and the transport Warhawk. Some of the division personnel aboard the Warhawk were included in the dead, wounded and missing.

The battleship Maryland, the cruiser St. Louis, and destroyers Leutze and Newcomb were assigned night support duties. One ship was assigned each assault battalion for direct support - the battleship Maryland in support of BLT-1/160, the cruiser St. Louis in support of BLT-3/160, the destroyer Newcomb in support of BLT-2/185, and the destroyer Leutze in support of BLT-1/185 - and three additional ships were stationed to deliver harassing fires. The only called fires delivered during the night were a limited amount of illumination by the Leutze for the 1st Battalion of the 185th Regiment.

The advance continued the next morning. In three hours the 1st Battalion, 160th, had advanced 3000 yards south of Salasa against slight opposition which resulted in one Jap killed and one captured. Bugallon, five and one-half miles inland, was reached and passed with slight contacts until four enemy tankettes were encountered 2000 yards south of the town. After a brief



firefight the tankettes were destroyed and four Japs killed. Moving on, the 1st Battalion engaged a group of enemy at Umanday, killing twenty. As subsequently proven, this enemy group represented the reconnaissance element of the Jap 23rd Division, left behind to delay our advance by destroying bridges and delivering light harassing fire.

On the morning of January 10th the destroyer Leutze and six LCI(M)'s and thirteen LCI(G)'s fired a mission for the 1st Battalion of the 185th Regiment in the Labrador area. Target was an enemy observation post and reported troop concentration. Troops along the Dulig-Uyong road, assisted by fire from elements on the east bank of the Agno, then moved into bypassed Labrador. Enemy opposition consisted of moderate fire from the hills to the southwest, and the town was occupied at 1500.

At the beginning of the day, the 108th RCT less one battalion had been released from Corps Reserve and was completely ashore by 0945. At the end of the day, the 1st and 2nd Battalions were across the Agno and moving toward the front along the Aguilar road. The 3rd Battalion was initially retained in Corps Reserve.

All operations of this and succeeding days were hampered by the lack of suitable crossings of the rivers. The 115th Engineer Battalion, in preparation for this difficulty, had transported to the landing area two pontoon barges and two causeways which were intended to be floated up the Calmay River for use as a floating bridge. Unfortunately, bad surf at the landing beaches washed the barges ashore. Not until 1700 on the 11th was it possible to re-float one causeway and place it at the proper point on the river. In the meantime, LCM and assault boat ferries had been installed on both the Calmay and the Agno, and troops, vehicles, armor, artillery, supplies and equipment had been moved across with all possible speed. By January 12th the bulk of the division was across both rivers. Other smaller stream crossings in the beach-head area were also built. Construction of bridges, fills, approaches and by-

passes was advanced as rapidly as the assault troops moved inland, both by the Engineer Battalion and by pioneer units of the forward elements.

Civilian and guerrilla reports and air observation indicated the Japs were moving to the south ahead of our thrust, burning and blowing bridges as they withdrew. The advance rolled on with little or no contact. By midafternoon on the third day, Aguilar, a little over ten miles inland and on the Army Beachhead Line, was reached against nil opposition. The same day, armored reconnaissance of the 640th Tank Destroyer Battalion in advance of the forward elements, reached Bocaclio, 5000 yards further south. The next day, the 12th, while the infantry conducted local patrolling and waited for their supplies and heavy supporting weapons to be brought forward, reconnaissance was pushed on to Mangatarem, recently occupied by the guerrillas. Infantry patrols to the east, west and south of Aguilar made no contacts. During the 12th, the 108th RCT moved abreast and to the right of the 160th, and on the 12th and 13th both regiments consolidated their positions along the Army Beachhead Line.

On the 14th, Company "F" of the 160th occupied Mangatarem, where they repulsed a small group of Japs who had returned to try to burn the bridge to the south of town. Armored reconnaissance extended three and one-half miles further south toward San Clemente.

Meanwhile, the push west and north to the China Sea coast was being carried on by the 185th RCT and the 40th Reconnaissance Troop. Having secured the Lingayen Gulf coast as far as Uyong, our positions were nightly subjected to small attacks and attempted infiltrations by groups of enemy from the hills and mountains to the southwest. None of these enemy actions met with any degree of success. Moving along the Lingayen Gulf coast on the 12th, the 1st Battalion, 185th, entered and secured Port Sual. The following day, patrols to Cabalitian Bay, which the Navy intended using as a seaplane base, found the area unoccupied.



On the 13th, armored reconnaissance of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop pushed west in the direction of the China sea coast. On reaching Alaminos, nine miles northwest of Sual, they engaged and dispersed a small group of enemy in the town, continuing on their mission the following day. On the 15th, the Dasol River on the west coast was reached and crossed after a short firefight, after which the enemy fled to the hills. Also on the 15th, the 185th I & R Platoon reconnoitered to the northern tip of Bolinao Peninsula, returning without making contact. Twenty-three Formosans who had been captured by civilians were brought to Sual by the Platoon. An additional 154 Formosans held by the guerrillas were also secured by our forces.

Guerrilla and civilian sources consistently reported approximately 1000 Japs in the mountains to the south of Alaminos and southwest of Sual. Patrolling throughout the area, several small detachments were contacted and dispersed after brief firefights. Later it was determined the greater portion of enemy troops stranded on the peninsula when the small coastal crafts in which they had been sailing toward Baguio from Manila were sunk by our air. Primarily interested in rejoining the main Jap forces to the south, they sought to a-

void contact with U.S. forces.

All bridges south of the Agno River from Sual to Aguilar were completed to carry division loads on the 14th, and the division resumed the advance toward Tarlac. San Clemente was occupied after killing ten Japs and destroying a 37mm gun just north of the town. A short distance ahead, elements of the 37th Division, which had been advancing down a parallel road, entered Camiling, a road junction town lying in the route of advance of both divisions. Troops of the 37th became engaged in a firefight on the north side of town astride the road from San Clemente, and the 160th was ordered by Corps to halt its advance so that any possible confusion in the Camiling area would be avoided. The 2nd Battalion, 160th, moved to Camiling the next morning, the 16th, without further contact.

During the first days of the second week, extensive patrolling was conducted of the Northern Zambales Mountains south and west of Sual, resulting in scattered contacts with stragglers in groups varying from several to as high as sixty. Elements of the 185th, using guerrilla guides, pushed beyond Dasol on the China Sea coast to Agno on Agno Bay, where sixteen Japs were killed.



**ENGINEER ASSAULT FERRY  
CARRYING VEHICLES AND  
PERSONNEL ACROSS THE  
CALMAY RIVER**



Thus, at the end of its first week ashore, despite the many transportation difficulties, which included not only innumerable stream crossings but also a shortage of vehicles due to shipping restrictions and unloading complications, the division had:

- Seized Lingayen Airfield;
- Advanced 21 miles south from the beaches;
- Occupied the Bolinao Peninsula, including Port Sual and Cabilitian Bay;
- Extended reconnaissance down the China Sea coast as far south as Infanta;
- Counted 94 enemy dead;
- Captured eight Japs, 174 Formosans and 27 Chinese.

In the Bolinao Peninsula area, patrols continued to contact scattered Japs and Formosans. Elements of the 185th continually pushed southward on the west coast, reaching Infanta on the 19th and Santa Cruz on January 23rd. Nowhere was organized resistance encountered. RCT 185 continued patrolling on

the peninsula as well as along the eastern foothills of the Zambales as far south as Camiling to protect against any possible enemy threat from that flank.

On January 25th, a Mr. Shaner, who had been living in hiding with his wife and four-year-old daughter since the Japanese occupation in the Zambales Mountains, contacted the division with a request for troops to evacuate his family. The I & R Platoon of the 185th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant James M. Flinchum, was assigned the mission on January 28th. The platoon, accompanied by Mr. Shaner, proceeded to his hideout on foot through areas still held by the Japanese. Within a matter of hours, the family was reached and evacuated to safety.

On January 19th, the 160th Infantry occupied Santa Ignacia, six miles below Camiling, and elements pushed on another two miles, which brought them within eleven miles of Tarlac, provincial capital of Tarlac Province. Late the next day the Reconnaissance Company, 640th Tank Destroyer Battalion, closely followed by infantry, reached within two miles of Tarlac without contact. How-



TARLAC, CAPITAL OF TARLAC PROVINCE





#### 40TH RECONNAISSANCE TROOP CONDUCTING RECONNAISSANCE OF CAMP O'DONNELL AREA

ever, a few hours earlier an infantry patrol from 2nd Battalion, 160th, at Gerona, was fired on approximately a mile north of Tarlac by rifles and automatic weapons. Smoke from burning buildings in the city was visible to both of these reconnaissance parties. Jap demolition squads, the only enemy left in the town, remained until the last possible moment to complete their work of destruction. Our leading elements entered the remains of the burning town at 0920 on the 21st and immediately pushed south, sending patrols west and east. No enemy resistance was encountered, and San Miguel, three miles to the south, was occupied by 1700 the same day.

Immediately following the occupation of Tarlac and San Miguel, the division pushed on toward Capas and Bamban. Guerrilla reports from the south stated that the enemy was in force in the Bamban area, and apparently prepared to defend there. On January 22nd, the Division reconnaissance troop, having completed its mission on the China Sea coast, reconnoitered without contact ten miles southwest of Tarlac to O'Donnell, final destination of American prisoners during the infamous "March of Death"

from Bataan. Civilians reported that the enemy had been there the preceding night. The barrio, partially burned, contained a sizeable fuel and supply dump. The same day, tank destroyer and infantry reconnaissance, moving down the road through Capas, made only one contact. Six hundred yards south of Capas a group of five or six Japs had fired on an infantry patrol. Return fire from a nearby M-8 killed one Jap. The balance fled.

Although no substantial enemy opposition had been met in the drive from Lingayen to Capas, all information derived from civilian and guerrilla reports and from our own aerial reconnaissance indicated that the division would encounter a defensive line along the Bamban River between Mount Arayat and the hills west of Bamban. Defensive positions, consisting of pillboxes and trenchworks at intervals along the river stemming from a complex system of large caves blasted into the steep slopes of the Bamban Hills, had been observed. Later ground reconnaissance proved the trenchworks along the river were lightly held and in some places entirely abandoned in favor of the stronger hill positions.



Capas, from which Fort Stotsenburg and the town of Bamban were observed to be burning, was occupied January 22nd. During the night the enemy made small attacks on engineer and infantry perimeters. Extensive motorized reconnaissance to the south, east and southeast made numerous contacts with small enemy groups which were apparently withdrawing southward.

On the 23rd, Bamban Airfield was secured by 1st Battalion, 160th, without opposition, and by 1300 the same day cub planes were using the strip. Two 120mm AA gun batteries near the strip were captured intact, complete with fire control equipment and ammunition. A thousand yards to the south the 40th Reconnaissance Troop received enemy fire, but moved on to reconnoiter the Mabalacat East Airfield. In the latter area, at 1600, the troop observed at a distance about 100 enemy with four to six tanks moving south.

Reconnoitering east and then south through Concepcion, the 640th Tank Destroyer Reconnaissance Company engaged approximately fifty enemy at Magalang, approximately 15,000 yards southeast of Bamban. An unestimated number were killed in the ensuing firefight, and the remainder withdrew during late afternoon.

Meanwhile, the 108th RCT, which had been moving in column along the same route, was directed to occupy the Concepcion area and to maintain contact with the 37th Division on the left.

Smoke from the burning town of Bamban was still rising when elements of the 160th Infantry entered January 23rd. Fire from scattered Jap snipers continued, and 120mm fire from Stotsenburg fell sporadically in the town. The 40th Reconnaissance Troop to the east met light sniper fire south of Bamban airfield, but indications were that the enemy was effecting a withdrawal southwest into the Clark Field-Stotsenburg area. Between Mabalacat to the south and Magalang to the southeast no further contacts were made.

In Sixteen days, against rear-



**LEADING ELEMENTS OF THE 160TH INF SEARCHING OUT SNIPERS AS THE REGIMENT ENTERS BAMBAN**

guard delaying forces, the division had advanced seventy miles down the highway to Manila to the crossing of the Bamban River. South of the river and west of the highway the large flat plain of Clark Field extends westward several thousand yards to Fort Stotsenburg. North of the river and west of the main highway a series of east-west ridges emanating from the Zambales end abruptly in sharp cliffs overlooking the town of Bamban and the highway. Near the base of these cliffs a series of huge supply tunnels dug deep into the rocky sides and connected by a vehicular road faced to the east. In these jagged Bamban Hills - some barren, some matted with jungle thicket, and all bristling with fortified tunnels or caves - the enemy was found and fixed on ground of his own choosing. Accordingly, the direction of attack was changed to the west, with the mission of capturing and securing Clark Field and rendering the routes to Manila free from enemy infiltration and harassing artillery fire.

It was the eve of the bitter battle of the Zambales Mountains.



po, began its move into the hills on the right of the 160th. Troops moving up the high ground west of Hill 5, 3500 yards northwest of Bamban, received intense machine gun and rifle fire in the beginning of a vicious four-day fight to take this and Thrall Hill, 1000 yards to the south, named in tribute to Major Norman E. Thrall, battalion commander, who was killed during the action.

From the bushy crevices and reverse slopes of the hills the enemy delivered short range fire against our infantry clinging to the barren precipitous slopes. So close were the opposing forces that on some instances hand grenades were traded by tossing them over the pointed crests of hills. Heavy mortar concentrations from unknown positions were laid on our perimeters during the night.

Concurrent with the above operations, mechanized reconnaissance continued to the south and east in the direction of Mount Arayat and into the outskirts of Angeles, which was found lightly held.

On the 26th the reconnaissance company of the 640th Tank Destroyer Battalion, with one platoon of tanks and one platoon of M-10 tank destroyers attached, conducted a reconnaissance in force of Clark Field. Heavy enemy fire disclosed the location of his well concealed artillery positions, enabling our artillery to execute effective counter-battery fire. Several pillboxes and machine gun positions were destroyed. The reconnaissance confirmed the presence of minefields, and determined the type and strength of the enemy defenses in that area.

By the close of the 26th, both regiments were in position to begin the final assaults. On the 27th, the 160th reached the crest of Stratta Hill in the face of artillery, mortar and small arms fire.

The following day, the 108th Infantry secured Hill 5 after overcoming

three days of desperate enemy resistance from positions on Thrall Hill, 1000 yards south. After another day's reduction of caves and gun positions there, our troops gained possession.

During the struggle for Hill 5 and Thrall Hill, the Japanese Kamii Butai had been destroyed as an effective unit and its remnants driven into the mountains. The 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Mobile Infantry Regiment, major element of the butai, had been destroyed completely and its threat and mission buried in the numerous caves and tunnels in and about the hills.

With the annihilation of this battalion began the slow swinging back of the enemy's left flank to an eventual dissolution in the suicidal defenses of Hills 1500 and 1700, 12,000 yards southwest.

Meanwhile, the 129th Infantry from the 37th Division, then attached to the 40th Division, had overrun Clark Field and Fort Stotsenburg and were on the way up the slopes of Top of the World in the face of heavy artillery, mortar, machine gun and rifle fire.

Mute testimony to the effectiveness of the airforce's all-out effort to neutralize enemy air bases prior to the landing on Luzon were the hundreds of destroyed enemy aircraft which littered the Clark Field area.

On February 1st the division was directed to establish a small garrison at Guagua, 20 miles to the south, reconnoiter the Guagua-Dinalupihan road, and establish contact with the XI Corps, which had landed at Mariveles on the west coast and was then moving across the neck of Bataan Peninsula.

Elements of the 135th and one platoon of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop were ordered to Guagua, and patrolling of the area commenced without delay. Contact with elements of the XI Corps was made on February 5th at Dinalupihan.



## **SEIZURE of STORM KING MOUNTAIN - SNAKE HILL - SCATTERED TREES RIDGE**

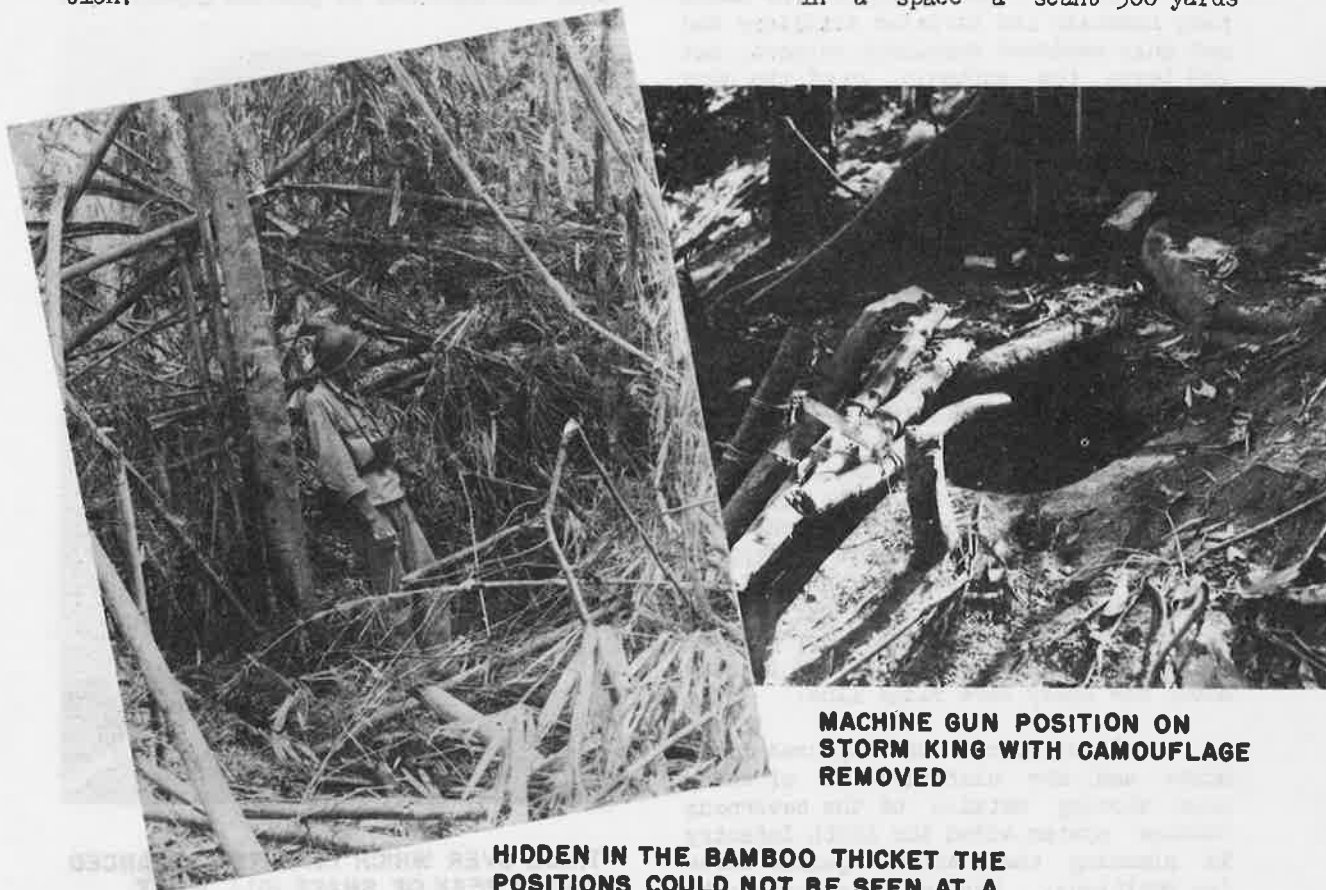
On January 28th, from Hill 620, halfway up the long, razor-backed Murray Ridge leading from Stratta Hill to Storm King Mountain, the 160th Infantry began its battle for that well defended ground.

The first of the repeatedly futile banzai counterattacks launched against our troops during the course of the Bamban-Stotsenburg campaign, in which the Japs, after their piecemeal fashion, dissipated their forces to the point of exhaustion, came in the late afternoon of the 29th. Elements of the Okamoto Butai, seeking to thwart the 160th advance, five times charged our lines and five times were repulsed with a known 53 Japs killed in the hour's action.

Ahead lay the densely wooded Storm King Mountain, occupied by the Jap 2nd Glider-Borne Infantry. Advancing with two battalions and pounding the target with heavy artillery concentrations, the mountain finally fell to our forces. The only enemy remaining on the ridge were isolated on a narrow promontory, since named McSevney Point in memory of Major John D. McSevney, battalion commander, killed in action while reconnoitering the hill prior to the attack.

The only suitable avenue of approach to the promontory of the glider-borne troops was from the east along the narrow neck of ground connecting the main mass of Storm King Mountain and this last out-jutting promontory overlooking the reverse slope of the mountain. Forced to advance along this slender, jungle-covered corridor, our troops received concentrated crossfires from all weapons.

In a space a scant 300 yards



**MACHINE GUN POSITION ON STORM KING WITH CAMOUFLAGE REMOVED**

**HIDDEN IN THE BAMBOO THICKET THE POSITIONS COULD NOT BE SEEN AT A DISTANCE OF MORE THAN A FEW FEET**



long and 75 yards at the widest point, our troops ran up against a 70mm field piece, three 90mm mortars, ten knee mortars, ten heavy machine guns, 17 light machine guns and 150 rifle pits. The positions had been well prepared, some being formed by digging the earth from under the roots of large trees. Each was provided with an underground recess for protection against artillery fire. All had been covered with logs and earth and concealed by fresh and growing bamboo. Being almost impossible to locate until fire was delivered, their destruction was costly. There the 2nd Company of the 2nd Glider-Borne Infantry Regiment reinforced was able to hold up our advance during ten days of bitter fighting, and inflict greater casualties upon us than had the entire reinforced Okamoto Butai in its defense of the lower Stratta, Stout and Ruckle Hills and Hill 620. All resistance was overcome and the hill occupied on February 6th.

During the struggle for Storm King Mountain the Division Artillery had not only rendered excellent support, but had begun the softening up of the next objective as well. On the Clark Field plains a battery of 120mm dual-purpose guns had been captured in perfect firing condition. Gun characteristics and range charts were developed by test firing the guns; then, manned by a selected crew, the guns were used against long range targets in the hills. Over 1200 rounds were fired from these guns during the period.

Patrols probing the wooded draws and slopes at the base of Scattered Trees Ridge and Snake Hill West, the next defensive position to be attacked, had suffered casualties from intense machine gun and rifle fire. It was apparent that the enemy had based his defense plan on the assumption that our advance would be along the valleys. Our plan of attack, therefore, called for an advance along the steep bare ridge line.

Translations of captured documents and the clarification of enemy maps showing details of the cavernous defense system aided the 160th Infantry in planning their attack against these Jap positions. Here on these two lofty

1200-foot ridges the Japs had constructed a defensive system of interconnected tunnels and caves hewn in the solid rock which were both mutually supporting and self-sufficient. Defense of this vital area had been entrusted to the Takaya Shitai, composed principally of elements of the 2nd Glider-Borne Infantry Regiment along with naval units (SNLF), headquarters of which were shown on a captured map to be on Object Hill, 1500 yards southwest of Snake Hill West. From the beginning of the action, it was apparent that the enemy had placed some of his best troops in this sector. All evidences pointed to well equipped, well fed fighting units, imbued with the Bushido doctrine of suicidal defense.

A forward regimental OP-CP was installed on Storm King Mountain, providing excellent observation to the front. Single 155 guns from the 222nd Field Artillery Battalion, and later a single 90mm gun, were towed up the mountain and emplaced to provide direct fire



**TRAIL OVER WHICH INFANTRY ADVANCED  
TO THE PEAK OF SNAKE HILL WEST**



on suitable targets. The combination provided the regimental commander with an unusually rapid means of bringing accurate direct fire from heavy weapons on any enemy which could be detected.

On February 11th, the 1st Battalion jumped off to attack Scattered Trees Ridge, and the 2nd Battalion opened its drive up Snake Hill West. Both battalions encountered heavy, short range fire from emplaced weapons in this assault on the most complex and elaborate sector of the remarkable defense system encountered in the Bamban-Stotsenburg operation. As our troops advanced, thrusting demolitions in successive tunnels and caves, they were under fire from all calibers of automatic weapons.

By dark on February 12th, 160th troops had fought to the top of both Scattered Trees Hill and Snake Hill West. But the task of routing the remaining enemy resistance from strongholds in the hillsides was far from completed.

From the summits of the two hills the advance was south and west, on to Object Hill, another caved and tunneled bulwark of enemy defense lying across the western end of the draw, around and over Tit Hill, where from large caves, heavy mortar and machine gun fire was again received by our advancing troops. Here, within a roughly triangular area formed by Snake Hill West and Scattered Trees Hill constituting the base angles and Object Hill the apex, a four-day battle was waged that ended with the final breaking of all organized resistance in that area and opened the door for the long swing southwest to Sacobia Ridge.

Third Battalion elements had penetrated to forward positions on Object Hill, when they were pinned down by withering fire from three directions. Isolated for two days from their rear units, "I" and "F" Companies could be supplied with ammunition and water only by cub plane drops. Flanking move-

ments by supporting elements around the northern side of the hill and south around Tit Hill eventually effected the release of the beleaguered 3rd Battalion troops; but only after continued bitter fighting were our positions secured.

Throughout this action the 135th Infantry from positions on Hill 1500 placed M-7 and M-10 direct fire on caves along the reverse slope of Snake Hill West and on enemy entrenchments on the reverse slopes of Object Hill. Toward the end of the operation, on February 27th, four large caves estimated at a 50-man capacity were taken under artillery and mortar fire from the 135th sector and destroyed with an estimated 100 Japs killed and a Jap ammunition dump blown up.

Losses suffered in defending these positions destroyed the combat effectiveness of the Takaya Shitai. Accumulating evidence from documents, prisoners of war, and civilian reports indicated a general withdrawal southwest toward Sacobia Ridge of at least the navy personnel after our troops had occupied



**TYPICAL CAVE ON  
SNAKE HILL  
WEST**



tact. The next step was the reduction of Hill 7, 1000 yards to the west, last strongpoint on the enemy right flank.

A short, stubby knob on a broad, gently rising base, Hill 7 became the focal point for the enemy's fanatical last-ditch stand. The 108th I & R Platoon, patrolling around the enemy's right flank, had failed to find a route suitable for movement of a battalion to a point from which an attack could be launched against the flank or rear. The attack therefore had to be made frontally by crossing an open flat leading to the base of the hill.

Two battalions struck. Jap machine guns and mortars rendered the approach a deadly inferno. Throughout the 13th, 14th and 15th, the 108th struggled for possession of this hill. Having once gained the crest, supplies could not be replenished because of the exposure of carrying parties to intense enemy fire. Repeated counterattacks finally exhausted the supply of small arms ammunition within the perimeter, and the troops were forced to withdraw for the night.

On the 16th, the advance was re-



A FEW OF THE MANY MACHINE GUNS CAPTURED BY 108TH INF IN THE STOTSSENBERG AREA

sumed and by late afternoon the attack succeeded. The 3rd Battalion secured the hill and the 1st Battalion, 300 yards to the south, was still advancing. In the succeeding two days, troops of the 108th continued 2000 yards west, wiping out the diminishing resistance on our left flank and firmly establishing control over the extensive supply area along the south fork of the Sacobia River.

It will not be amiss to describe here the huge supply installation which fell into our hands after the enemy's rout. Beginning at a point some 1500 yards southwest of Top of the World and extending west for over 3000 yards, this supply area apparently had been designed to serve the entire Stotsenburg area.

Though an uncounted number of supply caves were sealed during the process of eliminating enemy resistance and an unknown quantity of Jap supplies lost thereby, the following partial list of captured items serves to give some idea of the type and extent of the dumps:

- 210 vehicles (military and civilian), including tracked personnel carriers and bulldozers;
- 167 machine guns, light and heavy;
- 63 - 20mm guns (German make);
- 51 - 13mm guns (German make);
- 2 - 75mm field guns;
- Uncounted quantities of radios, telephone equipment, tires, transmitters, generators, wire, tools, miscellaneous equipment, and food.

In addition to the above, two 15cm self-propelled guns were found, one completely destroyed and the other burned. These guns had delivered fire upon our troops in Top of the World and Snake Hill West areas, and at the time were believed to be Jap medium tanks mounting 70mm guns and employed as artillery. The capture of these guns was the first indication that weapons of this type were in use by the Japanese army.

Interesting because of the implications to the enemy's situation were the Jap planes which had been sighted on three occasions over enemy positions on



our front. On both February 9th and 13th, two planes circled positions west of Top of the World and were observed to drop several bundles by parachute. On the 15th, an artillery forward observer discovered one of the parachutes. Attached was a container holding blasting caps, detonators and ready-made booby traps.

Four days later, on the 19th, two more planes circled the same general area. Subsequently, three groups of parachutes were observed northwest of Snake Hill West. A note found later in the vicinity of the parachutes was addressed to a Vice Admiral Kondo, and informed him that a drop was being made for him of whiskey and cigarettes from Singapore.

The purpose of these air drops may never be known, outside, of course, of the understandable drop of whiskey and cigarettes for the Admiral's sinking spirits. The enemy could hardly have expected these few bundles to alleviate his supply situation which, aggravated by the loss of his main supply dump, had become critical.

On the 19th of February, leaving one battalion to hold the Division left flank, the 108th Infantry was moved from the Stotsenburg area to the north in the vicinity of Hill 29, on the right of the 185th Infantry.



**BARREN HILL 1500 CAVES MAY BE IDENTIFIED BY WHITE SPOIL ON SLOPES**

Concurrent with the Storm King and Top of the World operations, Snake Hill North and Hill 1000 on our north flank had been occupied by the 185th after rifle, mortar and machine gun fire, scattered at times but intense during certain periods, had been met. On February 15th two companies of the regiment advanced under fire to the summit of Hill 1500, while one company slowly made its way up around the northwest slope. Artillery and direct fire weapons again were used to blast the Japs from their caves and keep them under cover until the infantry was able to reach them with demolition charges. Once the peak was reached, numerous caves and dug-in positions remained on the west and northwest slope to be wiped out before the hill would be free of resistance. In order to reduce caves on the reverse slopes, frontal assault against which would have been costly, drums of gas were lowered from above the cave openings and electrically detonated. For the next seven days troops continued the destruction by demolitions and fire. On the west slope of the hill, during the initial advance, six Japs, acknowledging the futility of their situation, had committed suicide by holding hand grenades to their chests. An additional six Japs followed this pattern of self-destruction during the mopping up operations.



## FINAL PHASE

With three regiments in line, the division was now confronted by a concentrated area of resistance bedded in rock and stretching 6000 yards from mountain top to mountain top. The north flank was based on Hills 1700 and 29. To the south, where the two forks of the Sacobia River cut their jagged way through rocky ground, the rugged and harsh terrain of Sacobia Ridge formed the southern anchor.

On February 23rd, a coordinated attack by the three regiments was launched against the remaining enemy positions.

On the right, the 108th Infantry advanced along the hill mass leading southwest toward Hill 29. Intense mortar and machine gun fire was encountered approximately 1200 yards northwest of the hill, where an enemy force was able to deliver direct fire from caves and flanking fire from positions cleverly concealed by cogon grass and brush in a small draw on the regiment's right. A Napalm air strike the following morning destroyed enemy positions in the draw, and the advance continued. The following day saw the 108th troops in control of Hill 29 and the high ground to the north and west, and an attack underway on a hill 2000 yards to the southwest, where Japs also occupied caves and dug-in positions. By February 26th this latter hill was in our possession and mopping up operations were being conducted to rout the remaining Japs from their strongholds.

Thus, in three days the 108th had rolled back the enemy left flank. The number of extensive positions found abandoned with ammunition and weapons left in place gave evidence that the enemy had intended to make a determined stand in and about Hill 29. Prevented from doing so by the weight of our ground attack and pounding of our artillery and air, the enemy was forced to withdraw behind Hills 1700 and 1400, his possession of which was then being hotly contested by the 185th.

Hill 1700, rocky and barren, is connected by a low saddle with Hill 1500, 1000 yards to the northeast. Three steep, converging knife-edged ridges offer the only approaches to its peak. Japs entrenched in deep caves midway up the precipitous sides and atop the pinpoint peak of the hill commanded all three approaches. Two thousand yards northwest of Hill 1700, Hill 1400, sloping upwards at the southwestern end, dominates the Malago and Marimla Rivers and the lower areas behind Hill 1700. Under cover of the thickly wooded river beds were several hundred enemy troops.

With Hill 1500 secured by 185th troops on February 15th, only Hills 1400 and 1700 in that sector remained in Jap hands. In coordination with the 108th and 160th Infantry, the 185th, led by its 2nd and 3rd Battalions, launched its attack. Progress against Hill 1700 was extremely slow because of the withering crossfire the enemy was able to direct at our troops scaling the precipitous approaches. To outflank the enemy and clear the area to the north, from which direction a second attack against Hill 1700 could be launched, the 3rd Battalion circled wide and advanced southwest onto Hill 1400, which was secured by the end of the day. Meanwhile, the 2nd Battalion reached a shelf-like position on the northeast slope of Hill 1700 and dug in for the night. The day's action had cost the enemy 140 dead.

During the next two days, the 2nd Battalion, with the 1st Battalion assisting and supported by direct fire from M-7's from Hill 1400 area, continued the attack on Hill 1700 by systematically exterminating the enemy defenders and demolishing the cave positions. At the end of the third day's fighting, Hill 1700 was in our possession. Despite the intensity of the action and the large number of enemy dead counted (343), our losses were small. Control of Hills 1400 and 1700 provided positions dominating the entire central division zone and made use of nearby hills by the enemy untenable. Movement along the Marimla, Cauayan and Malago Rivers was denied to the enemy, and areas to the southwest in front of the 160th Infantry were within range of our fire and







observation.

The enemy made one last attempt to loosen our hold of his former left flank when, in the early hours of the 28th, he attempted a night attack on the 3rd Battalion perimeter on the southwest end of Hill 1400. A body of Japs estimated to be about 75 advanced on the perimeter and began to dig in. Caught in position by illuminating flares, they were fired on at short range by our heavy machine gun and mortar fire. The next morning 47 were counted killed.

On our left flank, south and southwest of Snake Hill West, bypassed pockets of enemy resistance remained in caves and draws, and on Object Hill, Japs continued to hold reverse slope positions. But the general drift of the enemy, following his rout in the Snake Hill West-Scattered Trees Hill area, had been to the southwest, where another cave and trench system, previously prepared by impressed Filipino labor, awaited his last stand.

On the morning of February 24th, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 160th Infantry attacked Sacobia Ridge, with the 2nd Battalion approaching from the south side and the 3rd coming down from the north. Almost impassable terrain impeded the advance. Deep gullies and ravines had to be crossed under heavy Jap fire, and the steep, sheer cliffs bordering the Sacobia River made direct advance impossible and deployment slow and costly. Three enemy counterattacks launched against 3rd Battalion troops were repulsed with several casualties to our troops. Enemy action continued throughout the night, with our troops under constant mortar and machine gun fire. Carrying parties attempting to reach troops from the northeast were pelted with mortar fire, and the enemy repeatedly launched night infiltration attacks.

Heavy artillery concentration the following day preceded the 160th's renewed attack which was launched in the face of machine gun and mortar fire. Twelve hundred yards were gained in the day's action, and our troops occupied positions on Williams Ridge, overlooking

Ribble Ridge, named in memory of Major James A. Williams and Major Frank Ribble who were shot down while making a reconnaissance of that area in an artillery cub plane. In succeeding days, mopping up continued and by the 27th Sacobia Ridge was secured.

With capture of Sacobia and Williams Ridge, the enemy was deprived of use of the Sacobia River north and south fork valleys, and remaining elements around Snake Hill West and Object Hill were completely isolated.

Since the beginning of the Luzon campaign other divisional units had been busily engaged in insuring the uninterrupted advance of the regiments.

The 115th Engineer Battalion, having performed a remarkable job of bridge building and road repairing from Lingayen to Bamban, assumed additional and even more difficult duties during operations at Bamban. Early in the operation, work was begun on clearing the extensive minefields in the Clark Field area. Mines consisted of 100 to 550-pound aerial bombs buried fuze up, and numerous other improvised types. Before completion, over 550 mines were removed from the fields.

Following closely behind the advancing troops, engineer demolition crews sealed or destroyed the caves and pillboxes overrun by the infantry to destroy any small groups hiding within and to prevent reoccupancy by the enemy. Virtually a never-ending job, over 600 caves were closed up to the time of the division relief.

Roads capable of handling the heavy traffic of tanks, artillery pieces and supply trucks were constructed close behind each regiment as it advanced over terrain in which only foot paths had previously existed. Bulldozers, often subjected to enemy small arms fire, pushed the roads up steep rocky grades, along knife-edged ridges and through densely vegetated areas as far forward as the front lines. Despite the ruggedness of the terrain, the regiments were never without a means of bringing their heavy supporting weapons and supplies



forward.

Medical personnel performed outstanding service in the difficult and dangerous work of carrying wounded from forward areas down the precipitous slopes to collecting points. Frequently under fire, individual acts of heroism on the part of the litter bearers were recorded in numerous instances.

The reconnaissance troop continually patrolled the Capas-O'Donnell-Tiaong road, as well as roads on the division left flank. Several small contacts were made during the period, and an entrenched enemy outpost of approximately 100 was routed by fire from foothills south of O'Donnell.

Thus, by March 1st, after 53 days continuous fighting and 37 days after entering Bamban, the enemy had been driven into the mountains, 10,000 to 17,000 yards west of his first line of defense; his organized resistance had ceased to exist; huge quantities of supplies had been destroyed or captured; illness was making greater and greater inroads upon his dwindling strength;

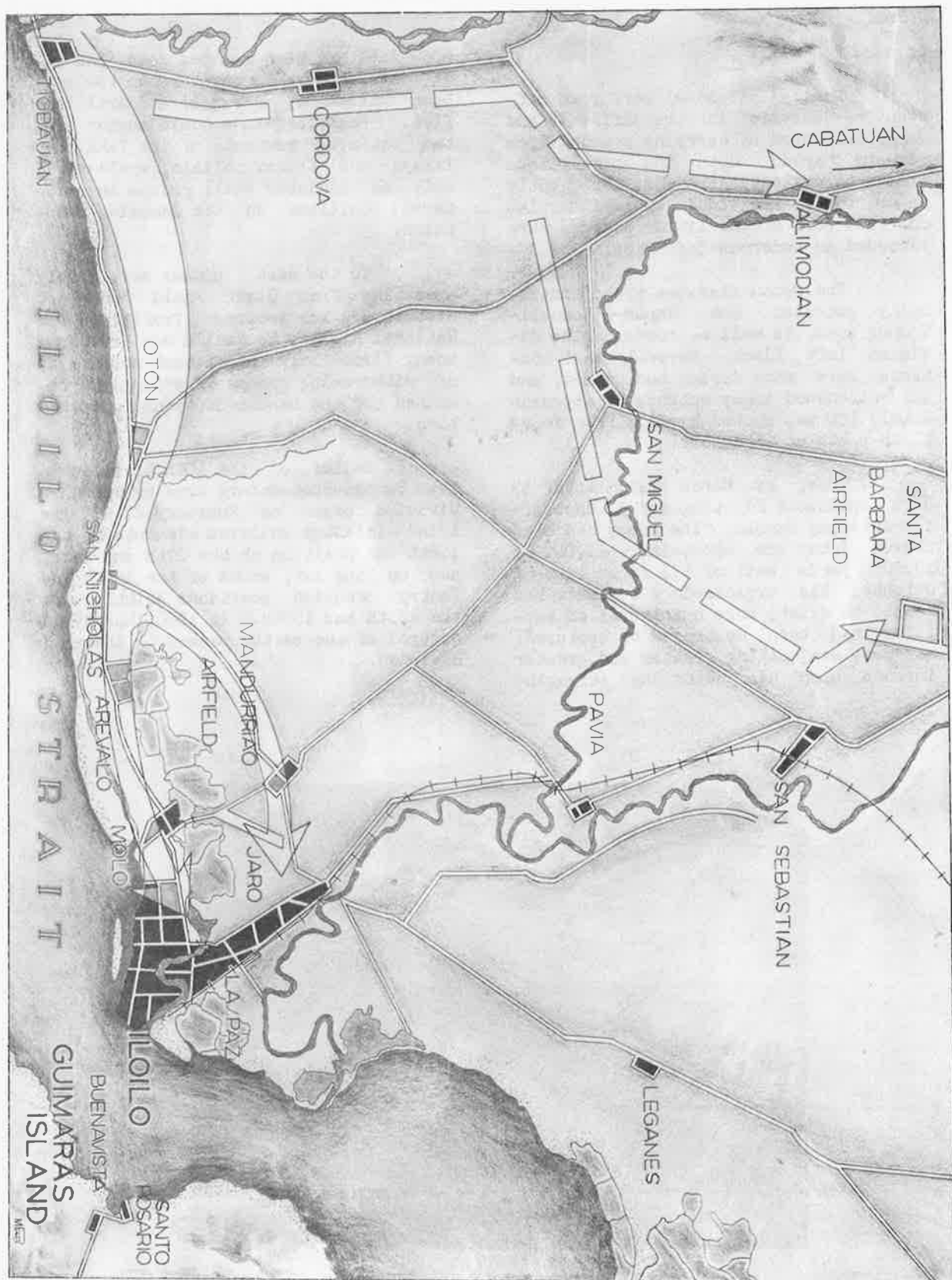
6087 Japs had been counted dead, and additional hundreds were known to have been killed by our air and artillery fire. What forces he could muster from the battered remnants of the Takayama, Takaya and Eguchi Shitais, would serve only as isolated small groups in scattered positions in the Zambales Mountains.

To the east, planes were safely operating from Clark Field and Fort Stotsenburg was secure. Traffic on the National Highway to Manila was free from enemy fire. Only the distant mopping up of withdrawing groups of stragglers remained of the Bamban-Stotsenburg operation.

Relief of the 40th Division in the Bamban-Stotsenburg area by the 43rd Division began on February 27th. The 172nd Infantry relieved elements of the 108th in position on the 27th and 28th, and on the 1st, units of the 169th Infantry occupied positions jointly with the 185th and 160th. At 1000, March 2nd control of the sector passed to the 43rd Division.









# The PANAY OPERATION

## PREPARATION

While the major elements of the Japanese forces in the Philippines had been engaged in the campaigns of Leyte and Luzon, the existence of enemy strong points athwart the main sea lanes of the archipelago could not be ignored. Occupation of Panay and Negros was, therefore, a necessary prerequisite for the successful conclusion of the Philippines campaign. Of the two islands, Panay because of its fine harbor at Iloilo and the protected shipping lanes of Guimaras Strait, was selected as the first objective, with subsequent landings to be made on Guimaras and Negros islands.

Upon relief of the 40th Infantry Division in the Bamban-Stotsenburg area by the 43rd Infantry Division, the 108th Infantry Combat Team passed to control of the Eighth Army Area Command and departed from San Fabian, Luzon, for combat duty on the island of Leyte. Orders were received placing the remainder of the division under the operational control of the Eighth Army for employment in the Panay-Negros operation. Following the movement to the San Fabian-San Jacinto-Manaoag area, in Pangasinan Province, preparations for the operation began. Naval units under command of Rear Admiral Strubel arrived in Lingayen Gulf to coordinate plans for the landings.

Panay was naturally suited for development as a strong land and air base. Extensive plains located on the south, west, north and northeast coasts of the island offered numerous airfield sites. Iloilo, largest and most important plain, had the added advantage of a good port with excellent harbor facilities. Communications were good. Hard-surfaced roads close to the shoreline circled the island. All important inland points were linked by all-weather roads, and a railway connected Iloilo with the north coast.

Through the efforts of the guerrilla organization on the island - the 6th Military District, numbering approximately 21,000 enlisted men and 1500 officers under the command of Colonel Peralta - the enemy situation on the island was relatively well known to our forces prior to landing. Although originally intended to be used as a major supply base by the Japanese forces, Panay had come to serve principally as a hospital and rehabilitation base for the enemy troops. Following our landings on Leyte and Luzon, many elements were shipped from Panay to reinforce the Leyte and Negros garrisons, leaving only a small force on the island for its defense. Because of our air and naval blockade, the enemy had for some time been dependent upon submarines for supply, and for his subsistence upon whatever products could be secured from local sources.

The major defenses of the island had apparently been entrusted to the 170th Independent Infantry Battalion, the Tozuka Butai, with elements of the 171st Independent Infantry Battalion augmented by the 354th Independent Infantry Battalion. Order of Battle estimates prior to our landing placed a total of 1831 combat troops on the island, with an additional 1625 base and service troops exclusive of Formosan and civilian laborers. The main portion of these troops were, according to guerrilla reports, garrisoned in the vicinity of Iloilo City. Smaller garrisons were known to exist at the Santa Barbara airfield, and at San Jose in Antique Province. A guard detachment of approximately 50 was stationed at Tigbauan, on the south coast near the mouth of the Sibalon River. Defenses on the island were believed to consist of trenches, pillboxes and scattered gun positions, with light antiaircraft weapons mounted in buildings and sighted for terrestrial targets. Bridges were believed to be mined and prepared for destruction. Extensive use of mines on road approaches to Iloilo City were also reported.



The west coast of Guimaras Island, opposite Iloilo City, had also been reported as being occupied. On Unisan and Inampulugan Islands, south and southeast of Guimaras, reports indicated defensive preparations guarding the narrow entrance to Guimaras Strait.

In the interest of surprise and rapid seizure of the initial objective, a landing beach as close to Iloilo City as possible was desired. Only a few beaches suitable for our landing craft existed on the southern coast, and on the basis of aerial photographs and naval reconnaissance the area in the vicinity of Tigbauan was chosen as the most suitable.

The small Jap force stationed at Tigbauan was not considered capable of any effective opposition to our landing. Because of the importance of Iloilo City and because of the enemy's defensive preparations in that area, it was believed probable that he would choose to defend by stubborn and fanatical resistance within the city environs. However to the north and west of Iloilo City, high ground rising to the Western Cordillera Range offered terrain ideally suited for typical Japanese defensive action if the forces in the city chose to withdraw.

The plan as finally established called for the main effort of the division to be made against Iloilo, with a secondary attack by one battalion in the direction of Jaro to block any movement from the city in that direction. The action was to be conducted by the 185th Regimental Combat Team. The 40th Reconnaissance Troop was to move north and in the direction of Santa Barbara airfield to interpose themselves between the Iloilo garrison and the mountains to which they might attempt to withdraw, and to detect and delay the consolidation or movement of any enemy forces along the roads. Combat aircraft were directed to strafe all serviceable barges in the harbor to prevent evacuation by water.

The 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, was to remain in reserve initially and defend the beachhead. Amphibious patrols of the 160th were to be prepared to land by rubber boat on the northwest and southeast coasts of Guimaras Island on S plus 1, to determine enemy strength and activity thereon and locate suitable landing beaches for the battalion in the event a landing became necessary.

The 160th Infantry (less 2nd Battalion) was to move from Luzon on the turnaround shipping, arriving in time to participate in the Negros operation.



**LST'S UNLOADING BLUE BEACH PANAY P.I.**



Taking advantage of the guerrilla airfields which had been built in the relatively secure northern end of the island, artillery and planes, transported in C-47's, were flown to Panay on 3-2. When assembled, the planes were test flown and held in readiness to provide aerial observation over the target area prior to and during the landing.

Departure from San Fabian, Luzon, was made in the early morning hours of March 15, 1945. The task force experienced an uneventful trip to the objective area.

## THE LANDING AND SEIZURE OF ILOILO

At 0930 on March 18th, after a short period of naval gunfire from escorting destroyers, two Battalion Landing Teams of the 185th RCT landed on Tigbauan beach. Only a few rounds of scattered rifle fire were received from the handful of Japs who had been left behind by the withdrawing garrison. Seven of these Japs were killed and two were captured. Identifications thus secured confirmed the presence of at least the 2nd Company 170th Independent Infantry Battalion. Immediately following the landing, one platoon of the 185th Infantry secured the important concrete bridge over the Sibalon River and the barrio of Tigbauan. By 1200, the reserve battalion was ashore and the assault units were advancing east toward the objective. At the close of the first day, the 1st Battalion, 185th Infantry, advanced ten miles to Arevalo, 5000 yards west of Iloilo, and the other two battalions were in position at Oton and San Nicholas. Only light opposition, consisting mostly of sniper rifle fire had been received.

The bulk of the Jap garrison at Tigbauan had withdrawn to the north. Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, using guerrilla guides, made several contacts with this group as it



## MACHINE GUNS SUPPORTING RIFLEMEN DURING ACTION AT MOLO

continued its retreat into the hills, while the 40th Reconnaissance Troop moved in two columns, one north toward Alimodian and the second toward San Miguel and Santa Barbara. A small group of enemy near Cordova, who withdrew when fired upon, was the only contact made.

On the second day, at Molo, western outskirts of the city, the 1st Battalion met their first resistance in the form of rifle and machine gun fire from positions built into and behind concrete walls. After a sharp engagement in which medium tanks were employed to blast the enemy machine gun positions the town was secured and approximately 500 civilians, temporarily imprisoned in the church, were released.

Branching off to the northeast at San Nicholas, the 3rd Battalion, 185th Infantry, attacked and secured Mandurriao airfield against only token resistance. By noon of the second day, elements of the 3rd Battalion had reached Carpenter Bridge, spanning the Iloilo River north of Molo. The bridge had been extensively mined with electrically controlled aerial bombs, but the suddenness of our approach had taken the small



Jap bridge guard by surprise and the pillbox from which the mines had been controlled was captured intact. Until late in the evening the enemy entrenched in pillboxes and foxholes just south of the bridge contested our possession with sporadic rifle, machine gun and knee mortar fire.

At Jaro, north of Iloilo City, a patrol received light mortar and small arms fire, and 300 yards southeast of the barrio the enemy destroyed the small bridge over the Tigon River, which had been mined after the fashion of Carpenter Bridge.

Elements of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop driving north to Maasin and northwest to Pototan and Janiway had established no enemy contact. Other elements were attacking enemy targets near Santa Barbara airfield, where guerrilla leaders reported that their forces had surrounded an estimated 125 Japs.

## CAPTURE OF ILOILO

The evening of the second day found the enemy in Iloilo under attack by our troops from the direction of Molo and Mandurriao, the western outskirts of

Jaro had been reached, and guerrilla forces were in defensive positions along a line straddling the Iloilo-Pavia road just north of Jaro. All effort was being directed toward the defeat of the enemy with a minimum of damage to the city, and at the same time preventing his escape into the western high ground.

During the night of the 19th, large fires were observed burning in Iloilo and Jaro. In the dark of the early morning hours virtually the entire enemy garrison of Iloilo began an orderly but hasty withdrawal northward from the city. Burning their vehicles along the road to delay our pursuit, the Japs attacked the guerrilla line in strength with a heavy concentration of mortar, machine gun and rifle fire. The Filipino forces, unable to offer sustained resistance, were forced to give way. It was later estimated that 1000 Japs, accompanied by approximately 200 Japanese and Filipino civilians, participated in the evacuation. At the same time, activity again flared up at Carpenter Bridge when a small enemy group in undisclosed positions on the southern side of the river suddenly opened up with mortar and machine gun fire. They were quickly silenced, and their positions subsequently destroyed. As a result of the enemy withdrawal our troops during the morning



FIRING POSITION ON THE GUERRILLA DEFENSE LINE NEAR JARO



of the 20th occupied Iloilo City as well as La Paz and Jaro.

Despite the acute food shortage, occasioned by the Jap-imposed restrictions of movement to and from the city, American liberating forces were warmly welcomed by the civilians with gifts of eggs, fruit, and candies made from the local comotes and coconuts. In the city which had been only partially destroyed by the retreating Jap forces, numerous barricaded buildings, pillboxes, and rifle pits were found abandoned. Fortunately, the dock and warehouse facilities suffered only minor damage. Some ineffective attempts had been made to mine the bridges and roads, but the demolitions were poorly installed and easily detected.

Having succeeded in passing through the guerrilla lines, the enemy hurried north along the road to Pavia. Elements of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop were directed to proceed toward Pavia from the north to intercept the force. Contact was made with the enemy on the northern outskirts of the barrio, and a fire fight ensued. As the enemy units were attempting to elude our forces by taking to the Tigon River valley, combat aircraft which had been ordered to attack strafed and bombed the

area. Meanwhile, 185th elements moving rapidly northward contacted groups of stragglers and rear elements of the column. Dispersed, disorganized and forced to leave behind all supplies other than those which could be hand-carried, the Jap forces quickly degenerated into small groups, avoiding contact with our troops whenever possible in their attempt to gain refuge in the mountains northwest of Cabatuan. At least 100 enemy were known to have been killed in the Pavia action and in scattered contacts along the evacuation routes.

Increasing evidence obtained from prisoners of war and captured documents indicated that the Japanese commander in Iloilo City had apparently until the very last moment intended to remain and defend the city. The final decision to abandon Iloilo City came as a distinct about-face, a last and desperate attempt to avoid inevitable annihilation at the hands of the American forces. The suddenness and power of our attack had created a strong element of panic. Fraught with indecision, and pressed for time, the enemy failed to execute the defensive measures he had so laboriously prepared. Bridges prepared for demolition were not destroyed; roadblocks were left undefended; mines in a position to offer considerable delay to



**COL MARCIA PERALTA GUERRILLA LEADER DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION IS AWARDED THE DSC BY LT GEN EICHELBURGER**





I LO I LO C I T Y

our mechanized elements were detonated long before our tanks and armored cars approached; the Iloilo City power plant had been extensively mined but suffered only minor damage from our own artillery fire.

The chaos in the enemy command was strikingly demonstrated late in the night of the 20th, when apparently unaware of the Jap retreat a 75-foot Jap motor launch confidently berthed at the dock near the Customs House. Two Japs, debarking to tie up the boat, were captured and the remaining five of the crew of seven attempted escape. One was killed and the other four were subsequently captured. The boat had, it was learned from interrogation of prisoners, been ordered to Guimaras to pick up enemy troops there and return them to the larger island. On reaching Guimaras, however, no contact had been made, and the boat returned to its dock.

On the 21st, combat patrols of the 185th Infantry reached Zarraga, seven miles east of Santa Barbara, and Pototan, eleven miles northeast of Santa Barbara, without enemy contact. North of San Miguel an unestimated number of enemy were contacted who fled before our fire. Fifteen of these Japs were killed. During the two preceding days,

elements of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop had been in contact with the Japs in the Santa Barbara area, leveling barracks, destroying supply and ammunition dumps and maintaining harassing fire upon the Jap garrison. As a result of the combined action of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop and the guerrilla forces, 54 Japs had been counted killed. By the morning of the 22nd of March, Santa Barbara airfield was secure and the routed Jap survivors had joined the groups of stragglers heading northwest. On the same day, northwest of Cabatuan a combat patrol from the 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, which had moved the day before to the barrio with the mission of intercepting any enemy forces attempting to reach high ground from the east, contacted an unestimated number of enemy in the vicinity of Jimanban.

In accordance with the original plan, an amphibious patrol from the 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, early on the 22nd of March landed by rubber boat on Guimaras Island, off the southeast coast of Panay. At Buenavista, on the west coast of the island, guerrillas reported they had recently wiped out the small garrison of approximately 20 Japs. In this barrio the bodies of 28 civilians, slaughtered by the Japs, were found, at least seven of them having been tied to-



gether and bayoneted. The only enemy remaining on the island were small groups which had long since taken to the hills.

On March 23rd a small combat patrol from the 185th Infantry landed on Inampulugan Island with the mission of rendering inoperative the mine control station reported to be there. Several bursts of rifle fire were received from the small garrison of 24 enlisted men and one officer of the Naval Guard Force as they fled into the central hill area, abandoning the mine control station, which proved to be one of the most elaborate and intricate mine control systems discovered up to that time in the Pacific. The station housed a complex electrical system which created a magnetic field in the straits. Three electric stylus recording instruments and three voltage boxes provided graphic warning of the entrance of any vessel into the magnetic fields set up about the mines. When a ship entered the magnetic field a current was established which activated the control box. If the instruments were set on automatic control, the light excited a photo-electric cell relay switch, which in turn would energize the mine control box, sending current out to detonate the mines. The entire installation could be prepared to function automatically and it was estimated that it would remain in operation about ninety days without attention or care.

Meanwhile, on the island of Panay, isolated contacts were continuing with small groups of stragglers in the general Alimodian-Cabatuan-Pototan area. Near Pandac, northwest of Mandurriao, one warrant officer and three ordnance enlisted men on March 24th surprised a group of 21 Japs eating lunch and killed all of them.

Prisoners and captured documents disclosed that the Japs' original intention had been to establish a second line of defense in the Cabatuan area, but the rapidity of our drive had frustrated that aim. The 1st Company of the 170th Independent Infantry Battalion stationed at Cabatuan at the time of our landing had never been contacted by our troops. It was believed that following the dis-

persal of the enemy forces in Iloilo, the company had withdrawn into the northwestern mountains.

Gruesome evidence of the hopeless situation into which the enemy had been forced after his evacuation of Iloilo was furnished by the account given by two Filipino women, who with four Jap babies were the only survivors of the mass suicide and murder of 62 Japanese civilians in the area south of Jimanban. A group of Jap soldiers, their flight apparently slowed by the civilians whom they had forced or persuaded to evacuate with them from the city, were overtaken by our troops. Driven to a final stand, they stabbed and bayoneted the women and children prior to their own destruction by our fire.

In La Paz, northern suburb of Iloilo, Jap prisoners were captured who testified further of the desperate measures taken by the Japs during their evacuation. In the La Paz hospital, on the night of the withdrawal, about fifty bed-ridden military patients were given an injection of a drug which rendered them unconscious. The hospital was then set afire. Only a few of the patients were able to escape cremation by crawling out of the burning building before the drug injection took effect.

By the 24th of March, it was estimated that 300 to 400 Japs remained in the areas north and northwest of Iloilo City. All were slowly making their way to the high ground west of Cabatuan, avoiding contact with our forces when possible. From numerous barrios in the path of these stragglers, civilians reported foraging parties murdering entire families after stealing their food. One American officer investigating these reports in the northern outskirts of San Miguel found one man and fourteen women and children, all Filipinos, who had been tied together by the Japs and then bayoneted in the stomach or stabbed in the neck.

After the Jimanban contacts, where our infantry and cannon company fire in scattered engagements had annihilated close to 200 Japs, few contacts were made in the lowland of the Iloilo



Plain. Later, elements of the 160th Infantry began establishing contact with hastily organized enemy positions in the Mount Tigbauan area, in the mountains northwest of Leon, and in the northern Sibalon River valley. Mechanized reconnaissance by the 40th Reconnaissance Troop had confirmed the report that the island's northern coastal regions were free of enemy, and only in San Jose, Antique Province, did an enemy unit exist that still maintained its tactical and organizational integrity.

Following the departure of the division elements from Panay for the Negros landing, guerrilla forces were employed for the destruction of the Jap force at San Jose. Repeated air strikes and strafing had rendered the airfield inoperative, and the long-continued guerrilla harassment and confinement had weakened somewhat the fighting effectiveness of the enemy garrison. On April 9th, the attack was made by elements of the 65th Infantry (Guerrilla Forces) and by the end of the 10th the town and airfield were secured by guerrilla troops. Remnants of the enemy garrison had withdrawn into the mountainous high ground

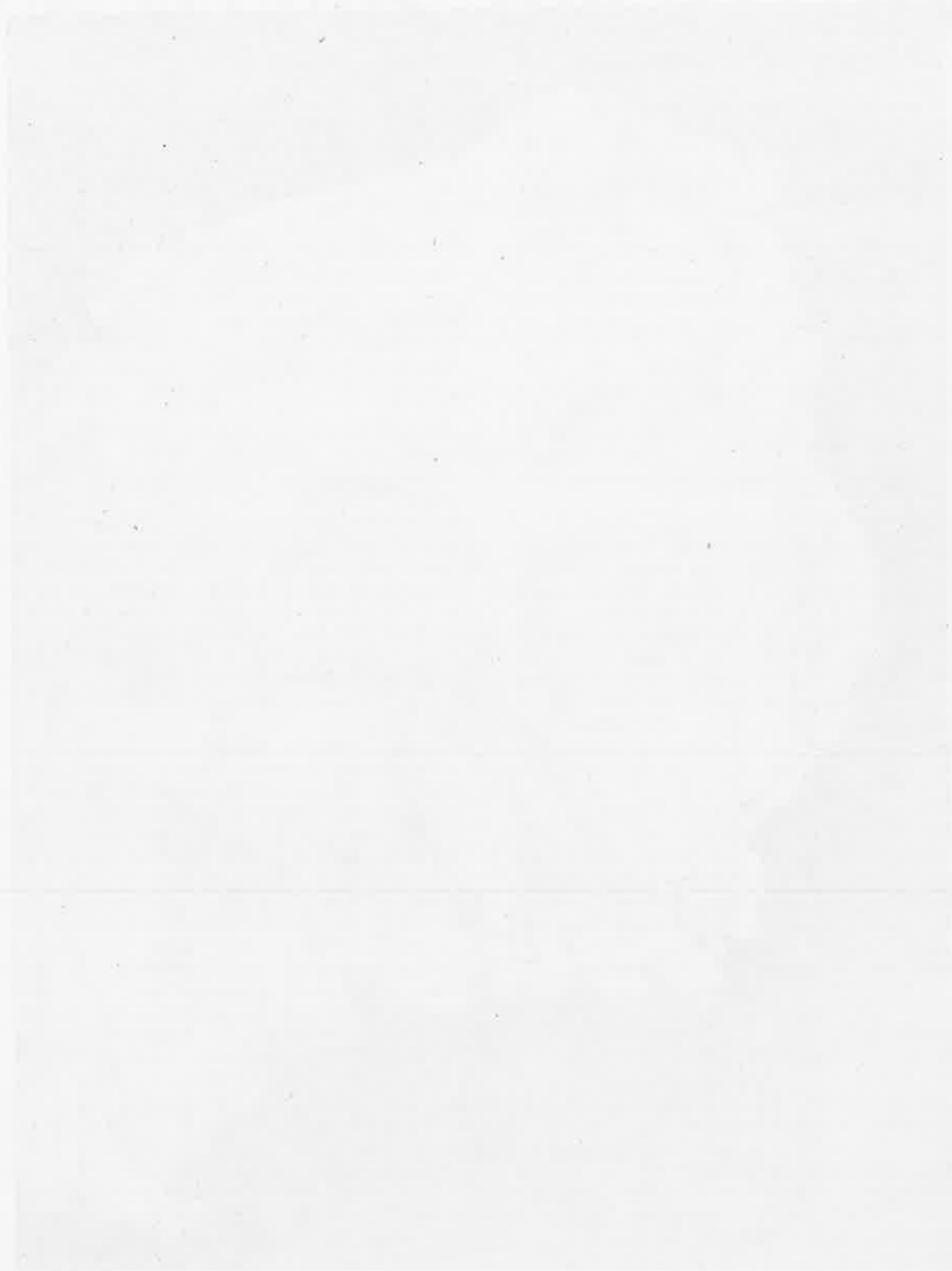
to the northwest. A total of 118 Japs were killed in this engagement.

Throughout the months of April and May, the 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, which had been left on Panay as garrison troops, made repeated contacts with enemy groups in the Cabatuan area. On the 7th of May, intense machine gun and rifle fire was received from an estimated 150 to 200 Japs in well dug-in positions in the mountains in the vicinity of Bucari, twelve miles northwest of Cabatuan, and one of our supply trains moving north in the Sibalon River valley 4000 yards northwest of Leon, was attacked by approximately fifteen Japs. On the 13th of May, eighteen B-24's bombed enemy positions in this area, destroying the fortifications and dispersing the enemy forces. Subsequent to this air strike, no major contacts were made with Jap troops and the elements of the 2nd Battalion, 160th Infantry, withdrew to the Iloilo Plain for garrison and training activities. Only patrol action was continued to investigate reports of Jap foraging parties and to destroy those groups which attempted to descend into the lower plain.

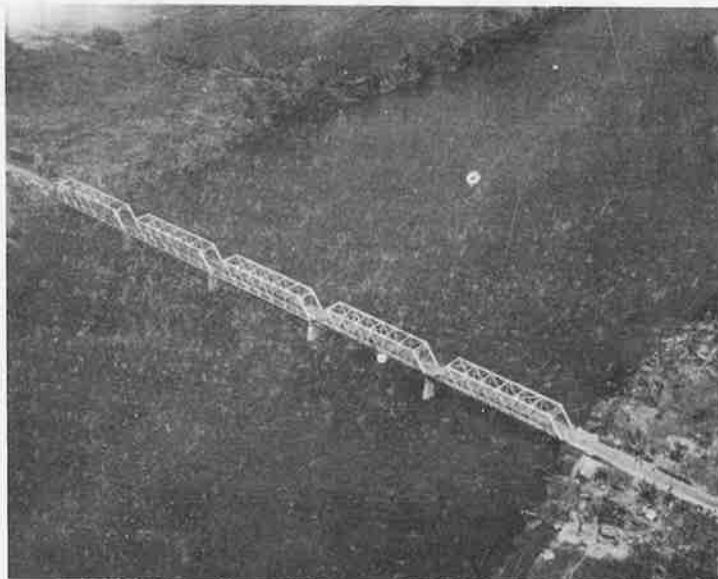


GUERRILLAS CELEBRATE THE LIBERATION OF ILOILO









**THE BAGO RIVER BRIDGE**

the north and east to destroy the enemy.

5. Destroy hostile forces remaining in Negros Occidental.

Y-Day was set for March 29th, H-Hour for 0800. The landing was to be made by RCT 185 in LVT's, followed by RCT 160 (less 2nd Battalion and Cannon Company). After seizing and securing the beachhead, the troops were to push rapidly northward to secure the towns of Bacolod, Talisay and Silay, as well as the adjacent airfields. The 503rd Parachute Combat Team, then on Mindoro, was to be prepared to make an air landing at a time and place to be designated by the Division Commander, at which time it would come under Division control.

Elements of the 40th Reconnaissance Troop were to land shortly after H-Hour and push reconnaissance immediately along the roads north and east to Cancilayan, Murcia and Concepcion to locate any enemy forces or enemy movement on that flank, with a secondary mission of intercepting and delaying the evacuation of enemy forces toward the mountains. At the same time, one platoon of the troop was to perform similar missions in the Maa Sugar Central-La Carlota-San Enrique-Valladolid area south and east of the beachhead.

Of considerable concern was the wide unfordable Bago River, across which our forces would have to move to reach their objective. The 600-foot steel and concrete bridge spanning the river near its mouth was known to be prepared for demolition. Pillboxes at the north end of the bridge housed controls for electrical detonation. If the bridge were destroyed, which seemed inevitable, our advance to the north would be seriously delayed and the shock of our attack mitigated. If the crossing was to be seized intact, the bridge guard and control operators would have to be completely surprised and quickly overcome. A plan to land a reinforced platoon under cover of darkness three hours prior to the assault landing to secure the crossing was therefore adopted.

The mission was assigned to Company F, 185th Infantry.

## **SEIZURE OF THE WEST COAST**

The Division embarked from Panay on March 28th, and the operation proceeded as planned. The reinforced platoon, totaling one officer and 64 men including three heavy weapons squads, a demolition squad and radio team, landed as scheduled at Pulpandan by LCM's. Its landing was undetected.

Moving inland it observed nine Japs driving carabao carts north along the highway from the town toward the bridge. To avoid disclosing their presence by firing at the Jap party, the platoon raced silently parallel to the highway and reached the bridge first. Had the platoon opened fire before reaching the objective, the bridge guards would have been forewarned, the element of surprise lost, and the mission a failure. Upon reaching the bank of the river, the platoon opened fire on the nine, as well as the startled bridge guard, while the demolition squad cut the control wires. All Japs were killed in the brief fight. The bridge was secured at the cost of one American life.



Twenty electrically controlled aerial bombs, ranging in size from ten 110-pounders to two of 1000 pounds, were found lashed to the bridge trusses or buried at the abutments.

The main landing three hours later was unopposed. RCT 185, landing battalions in column moved immediately across the secured bridge, passed through Bago town against minor opposition, and moved rapidly to the north. Slight contacts were made at several small bridges which had also been mined, but all crossings were secured intact. The first serious enemy resistance was not met until the Magsungay River, 1500 yards south of Bacolod, was reached at 1500. There intense small arms and some 90mm mortar fire was received before the enemy was routed from pillboxes and the crossing secured. It was subsequently determined that the Brigade Headquarters at Bacolod had no knowledge of our landing until our advance elements had reached that point. By dark on Y-Day, the Lupit River bridge at the south edge of Bacolod had also been crossed after flanking the defending enemy pocket.

That night the enemy attempted the first of a series of infiltration attacks on the principal bridges under our control. The Bago bridge guard was fired on by a small party in an unsuccessful attempt to recapture or destroy the crossing. Similar attacks made by small demolition parties continued during the first few weeks at various points on our line of communication, but were repulsed with most of the enemy involved killed.

With our forces at the outskirts of Bacolod prepared to launch an attack in the morning, the hostile garrison evacuated under cover of darkness, leaving only a token force to make our entry as costly as possible. Before leaving, the principal business district was set afire and several ammunition dumps destroyed. The town was secured by noon the following day after eliminating the snipers who had been left behind. Sev-



**185TH INF SEARCHING OUT SNIPERS  
IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF BACOLOD**

enty-five enemy dead were counted. Forward elements continued advancing north beyond the town, and by the end of the day had reached within 500 yards of Talisay without further contact.

To the south, the Reconnaissance Troop was carrying out its mission. No contacts developed along the roads in the San Enrique-La Carlota-Pontevedra sector, but civilians reported enemy groups totaling about 200-300 were making their way cross-country through swamps toward the northeast. On Y-plus-1, other elements of the Troop, operating in the Alimodian area northwest of Maa Sugar Central, intercepted approximately 125 of that number concealed in a bamboo thicket. Deploying armored cars on three sides of the thicket, the Troop opened fire. A heavy fire fight ensued, until with air support the Troop all but annihilated the enemy force. One hundred fourteen enemy dead were counted, and five Filipino collaborators were captured.

The following day a platoon from the Reconnaissance Troop reached Murcia and found it recently evacuated, while approximately 6000 yards east of Bacolod the I & R Platoon of the 185th Infantry observed an estimated 100 enemy moving east along the road toward Granada. The



most immediately encountered heavy resistance. The enemy positions were of the same type and arrangement as those and in the 503rd area, and their defenders used the same tactics. From numerous well constructed bunkers, pillboxes, trenches and foxholes came fire of calibers ranging from small arms to three-inch guns. A particularly strong-defended position was a tank trap entered 4000 yards west of San Juan. The trap, dug to a depth of eighteen feet at a point where the road narrowed to a bare ten feet by sheer cliffs on either side, was covered by enemy fire. Self-propelled weapons could not be brought forward to support the infantry until the high ground beyond was secured to permit bulldozers to fill the trap. Repeated attacks were launched against the hostile positions. Each time the attackers were subjected to heavy mortar concentrations and artillery fire. After two days of bitter fighting, the area was finally cleared, bulldozers had repaired the road, and tanks rumbled forward.

Debouching onto the wide, flat Lantawan Plateau, surrounded by growth-covered ridges and jungle-filled draws, the 1st Battalion deployed under heavy mortar and artillery fire. The 3rd Battalion on the left, pushing across deep mines, reached the north edge of the plateau on the same day. On April 24th, the battalions joined and supported by tanks fought to the eastern edge of the

plateau, where they began cleaning out caves, spider holes and pillboxes along the fringes of the deep Malisbog draw. The road having been secured and improved, 105mm howitzers, 40mm and 90mm AA guns, tanks and M-7's were moved forward and emplaced close to the front lines in position for direct fire.

To the east, high wooded Virgne Ridge, named in memory of 1st Lieutenant Sidney E. Virgne, who was killed during the attack, commanded both the Lantawan plain and the Patog area. Separating Virgne Ridge from our forward positions, the forbidding Malisbog draw, deep and dense with vegetation, concealed an unknown number of Japanese. Firing artillery point-blank from the brink of the gorge and pounding rear areas by successive air strikes, two days were again spent in softening up enemy positions. On May 1st, the attack began. Infantry, advancing across the draw attacking from two directions, reached the crest of Virgne Ridge against only light resistance. Several more days were spent in cleaning out bypassed enemy pockets and reaching the western edge of Patog. Patrols entering Patog made only minor enemy contacts before meeting patrols of the 503rd advancing south down Banana Ridge. Enemy positions were found abandoned, bivouac areas deserted. The remaining enemy had hastily withdrawn southward to the wooded ridges leading to Hills 4055 and 4500.



CANNON COMPANY OBSERVERS ADJUSTING  
FIRE OF M-7s NEAR VIRGNE RIDGE



## CONCEPCION TO DOLAN HILL

On Y-Day, the 160th Infantry, minus the 2nd Battalion and Cannon Company, which remained on Panay, constituted the Division Reserve afloat. On Y-plus-1, the RCT landed and took over the beachhead area. On Y-plus-2, one battalion moved down the Talisay-Concepcion road to engage the Jap force which reconnaissance had contacted the day before. Patrols preceding the battalion reconnoitered east from Granada to Concepcion, in which area civilians had reported several hundred Japs dug in along the road, but only minor contacts were made. The enemy apparently was continuing his withdrawal. Combat elements moving forward the following day, however, found Concepcion reoccupied by the enemy during the night. After a brief fire fight the barrio was finally secured on the same day the 185th occupied Guimbalacn. Moving approximately two miles farther east, the 160th encountered only moderate resistance.

The next regimental objective was the prominent terrain feature, Hill 3155, later named Dolan Hill in tribute to 1st Lieutenant John W. Dolan, first officer to be killed in the attack. This hill commanded the approaches to the Patog area from the west and was indicated as the left flank of the enemy's defensive line. During the approach it was believed that elements of Colonel Yamaguchi's 172nd Independent Infantry Battalion, and probably elements of the 102nd Division Transport Regiment, the 32nd Airfield Company, and the 61st Anchorage Unit were among the defending forces. However, nearly all the 172nd Independent Infantry Battalion (less the 3rd Company, destroyed at Alimodian by the Reconnaissance Troop) and elements of the 355th Independent Infantry Battalion were actually engaged before Dolan Hill was finally taken.

In this sector, too, the enemy fought a delaying action from prepared and temporary positions on the flat open terrain west of the hill, his resistance stiffening in measure as the battle neared the mountains. The Japs were

particularly active at night, using harassing fire freely against our perimeters in addition to frequent night infiltration attacks and diversionary raids.

As the advance elements drew within range, enemy positions on the forward slopes of the hill opened up with a heavy fire which they sporadically maintained throughout the ensuing weeks. Mortar and 20mm automatic fire was particularly heavy.

Patrols reconnoitering far out on the right flank made minor contacts and located enemy defensive positions near the base of Hill 4055, just southeast of Dolan Hill. One company was sent to the area to develop the situation on that flank. Separated from the battalion by deep ravines, the unit received its supplies by air drops from cub planes. It was during one such drop that Major Francis E. Tredget, regimental supply officer, lost his life when the plane was shot down by enemy fire.

The 3rd Battalion, working across draws on the northern slopes of Dolan Hill in an effort to support and establish contact with the 185th, then approaching Lantawan, met determined resistance from well entrenched enemy at several points. Impeded in their movement by the deeply cut, thickly vegetated draws, three days were spent in reducing the hostile positions and mopping up bypassed areas.

On April 17th, after two days of artillery and aerial preparation and one day of bad weather, elements of the 1st Battalion jumped off on an attack up the northwest slopes of Dolan Hill.

Opposition was light the first day, but the advance was slow. Climbing the steep slope by grasping branches and roots, successive enemy positions were reached and overcome by the infantry. Late the second day, forward elements were within 100 yards of the hill crest. There the battle of Dolan Hill began in earnest. Establishing a perimeter on the steep mountainside, the battalion dug in for the night, prepared to continue the attack the following day.



original defensive line was a small pocket on the north end of Dolan Hill and the Hill 4055 entrenchments. His division headquarters had been discovered and shelled by artillery and finally overrun by infantry. It was believed that the seizure of Hill 4055 would render his forces impotent and end the Negros operation.

By May 11th, the 185th Infantry was pushing south from Patog. The 3rd Battalion, 503rd, was meeting stubborn resistance along a line running west from the Malago and several hundred yards south of Patog astride the ridge which the Japs had named Terukuni. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 185th were engaged in cleaning out the deep ravine of the Malisbog on the right of the 503rd, while the 1st Battalion advanced up a ridge running south from Lantawan. This slope, actually the northern part of Hill 4055 mass, the Japanese had named Kasagi Ridge.

From the crest of Dolan Hill the 160th was in position to assist by fire and observation the advance of the 185th on Kasagi. Elements of the 185th advanced 500 yards the first day and 400 on the second. The ground had been well prepared by the enemy, with particular attention to sniper positions. Automatic weapons were numerous, and many heavy machine guns were encountered. Terukuni Ridge just to the east was also strongly fortified in the same manner. Its heavy rain forest was spotted with snipers both on the ground and in the trees, and on at least one occasion a machine gun was encountered mounted on a platform built in a tree. Also in this area was the enemy's last known 20mm guns.

Both Terukuni and Kasagi were subjected to bombardment by artillery, mortars and aircraft, as the 185th moved forward. Gains were still in hundreds of yards. Enemy positions were cleverly concealed, and the Japs were careful not to give them away unnecessarily. Patrols carried the burden of the operation, locating defense points and in most cases destroying them on the spot.

The 160th Infantry at this time

had consolidated its positions on the crest of Dolan Hill and was feeling out the enemy stronghold on the edge of the spur which ran north therefrom. This last stand position on the hill was a knot of strongly entrenched, well constructed pillboxes and interlacing trenches. In order to reduce this defense area it was necessary for one unit to encircle it by moving around the flanks along slopes verging on the vertical, while the other attacked frontally. Such movements were necessarily slow and subject to immediate and heavy enemy fire at any time they were observed. Having encircled the position, the assault units faced each other at a distance of 150 yards with the enemy position between. Artillery was registered on the enemy pocket. Precision adjustment was necessitated by the proximity of our troops. On the morning of May 23rd, a division concentration was laid on the area. When fire was lifted the infantry closed in and easily overran the position. One hundred twenty-nine enemy dead were counted in the area, 15 machine guns were captured, and 42 pillboxes destroyed. The last of the enemy's basic combat units, the 172nd Independent Infantry Battalion of the 77th Brigade, had been destroyed.

During the next few days several enemy stragglers were killed, but the battle for Dolan Hill, the core of the enemy defense on Negros, was over.

The occupation of Dolan Hill lent security to the 185th's right flank on Kasagi Ridge, but the problem of hunting down each separate enemy position continued there and on Terukuni. Most of these positions were small, but on the Malisbog side of Terukuni, approximately a mile south of Patog, a strong defense was encountered. In an area about 100 yards in depth, a series of pillboxes defended by heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire and by at least one 20mm gun extended across the ridge. Snipers hidden in trees and on the flanks made the development of this defense area difficult. When strongpoints were taken under artillery or mortar fire the enemy would either move to adjacent positions or forward toward our troops into the safety zone





**GENERAL MACARTHUR INSPECTS LANTAWAN AREA  
KASAGI RIDGE MAY BE SEEN IN BACKGROUND**

which had been left between them and the target area.

Gradually the enemy withdrew from both Terukuni and Kasagi. Rear guards maintained the stubborn resistance while hospitals, food stocks and other supplies were evacuated. Until May 29th, heavy fire was received from enemy on Kasagi, just below the crest of Hill 4055. That night, the enemy evacuated, and patrols and advance elements which reached the top of the hill the next day did so with only minor contact. On May 31st, the positions in the Malisbog area, described above, were strongly defended. On June 1st, they were found abandoned. Numerous prisoners of war reported that the enemy was making their withdrawal to the south and east toward Mount Mandalagan and Sulphur Springs.

However, from the Patog area some remnants retreated east across the deep Malago ravine. During the advance along Terukuni contacts were made on the left flank along the Malago River east and southeast of Patog. Moving across the river our forces destroyed the enemy they could contact and scattered the remainder until, except for a concentration of 100-200 in the vicinity of Mount Silay, only small groups and individuals with little or no arms or food remained.

### *HILLS 3355 AND 4055*

The disastrous defeats suffered by the enemy in the Patog area and on Dolan Hill had rendered the enemy force impotent. Less than 2000 effective combat troops remained and they, suffering from fatigue and hunger, exposed to sickness and disease, were incapable of any offensive action. Small arms ammunition was limited and food stocks were sufficient for not more than two months. Morale was extremely low and mutual disrespect between officers and enlisted men was rampant. To attack was impossible, to continue the defense in the forward areas meant annihilation, and to remain long in the mountains meant starvation. The only possible hope of survival was to disengage and seek sources of food in the cultivated areas along the coastal plain or in the valleys to the south and east.

As was subsequently determined, General Kono, the Japanese commander, ordered a withdrawal to Yamamoto Valley near Mount Mandalagan. The force was divided into four main groups. The first of these, including the division headquarters, was to bivouac in Yamamoto Valley; the second would forage north a-



long the Himugaan River to the Fabrica area; the third in the direction of San Carlos; and the fourth along the upper reaches of the Bago River. Rear guards consisting largely of personnel who were physically incapable of movement were left in position to delay our pursuit.

Routes to these areas passed southeast of Hill 4055 and over Hill 3355 and Hill 4500, known to the Japs as Tenshin Mountain. Sulphur Springs, near Hill 3355, became a temporary resupply point. The plan was learned from various sources almost as soon as it was contemplated, and moves were made to interfere with it. Immediately following the capture of Patog the 503rd Parachute Infantry had been moved to the division right flank near Murcia and was given the mission of cutting the withdrawal route by securing Hills 3355 and 4500.

Moving quickly through the wide draw which led to Hill 3355 from the west, the regiment encountered generally moderate resistance from small organized enemy groups in the area. A stiffer defense was met, however, when the top of Hill 3355 itself was reached. The main attack was up the northwest slope over a ridge running southeast from Hill 4055. Along this ridge ran one of the enemy's main evacuation routes. A secondary at-

tack was also made on the southwest slope of Hill 3355.

Both assaults met strong resistance. The enemy still had a number of automatic weapons and sufficient ammunition in this area to contest the severance of his routes of withdrawal. All advances against the hill met with heavy fire from prepared positions. Patrols searching in the direction of Hill 4055 encountered strong opposition both on and off the trail. In the draw along which the approach had been made both stragglers and small organized groups continued to be encountered and destroyed.

However, the enemy's plan did not contemplate defending Hill 3355 to the bitter end, and when our advance elements reached the top of the hill on May 27th they found the area evacuated.

Documents and prisoners indicated that Hill 4500, just to the north, had been an assembly area for the retreating enemy. Forces were immediately dispatched to clear that area and destroy such installations or supplies as might be found. Resistance was sporadic and whenever withdrawing Japs could be contacted a brisk fire fight generally ensued, but the enemy's desire to avoid



75MM MOUNTAIN GUN FIRING IN SUPPORT OF 503RD INF



our troops as much as possible and to complete his evacuation as planned was obvious.

The action resulted in the capture of many supplies which the Japs could ill afford to spare. Prisoners, who now began surrendering in increasing numbers, regularly reported extreme shortages of food, arms and ammunition. They confirmed reports that their field hospital, which had been forced to move time and again, was totally without medical supplies. Abandoning all hope for their sick and wounded, and unwilling to "waste" food on the dying, patients were put on half rations. When the hospitals were moved, patients who were not able to stand the long trek over the mountains were deserted and left to their fate. Their only hope of relief was the hand grenades they had been given with which to destroy themselves.

By June 1st, our patrols were operating east of Hill 4500 as well as beyond 3355. Few contacts were made. A reconnaissance patrol up the Bago River toward Mount Mandalagan made no contact, but guerrillas in the area reported frequent contacts with small foraging parties.

### *CLOSE OF THE OPERATION*

That the Japanese on Negros were now thoroughly beaten could not be doubted. Every terrain feature which in their original plans they had contemplated defending had been overrun and the survivors scattered.

From the beginning of the campaign in the hills, regular drops of surrender leaflets had been made on all enemy areas. Following the capture of Dolan Hill, the G-2 Language Section, with the voluntary help of a prisoner, delivered via public address system appeals for the enemy to surrender. Broadcasts were also conducted in the Patog and Hill 3355 areas. Results were not immediate, but propaganda coupled with the enemy's calamitous situation eventually brought daily surrenders of groups averaging from five to ten men.

In their statements these prisoners universally confirmed reports regarding the enemy's shortage of supplies and loss of personnel and acknowledged the hopelessness not only of their own situation but that of the Japanese nation as well.

Typical of the reports received are the following:

"The battalions (four combat battalions of the 6th Air Sector) contained about 250 men each on April 17th, but prisoner of war estimates the present total strength of the four as 200 to 300."

"The consensus of eleven prisoners today is that all enemy combat units have suffered severe losses in strength, but service units are still up to 75 to 80 percent of their original."

"The present strength of the 355th Independent Infantry Battalion is 50 men. My own unit suffered 'heavy' casualties from artillery bombardment in the vicinity of Hill 3155."

"On May 26th, the warehouse consisted of two tents containing enough unhulled rice to last the enemy forces one month."

Five Filipino collaborators, who had been with the Japs in the hills until June, reported the 172nd Independent Infantry Battalion with "50 rifles, improvised grenades, and machine guns. Naval units are not equipped with weapons. Very little machine gun ammunition. Rifle ammunition is scarce but there is some. Rice and salt are the only food. It is estimated that the supply will last about 15 days." Medical supplies they described as non-existent.

Prisoner from the 153rd Airfield Battalion stated, "The current rice supply for combat troops is about 200 grams per week, but sick and wounded personnel not capable of fighting receive only a handful during the same period." Two weeks prior to his capture this prisoner was in the enemy hospital. At that time medical supplies were non-existent, although there were approximately 1000



patients in the hospital.

Information was obtained which indicated a foraging party under Colonel Yamaguchi, nominally in command of the 77th Brigade, had crossed the Bago River and headed for Canlaon Volcano, twelve miles farther south. Some reports said that other units would follow. Minor groups were scattered elsewhere. Based on such reports, the estimate as of June 2nd placed 150 enemy troops in the Mount Silay area, 1000 in the vicinity of Mount Mandalagan, and 250 in the Canlaon Mountains. This represented a remaining total of 1400 out of the original 10,000 present on Y-Day. The portion of this loss which by July 1st had been actually counted dead was over 4000. Prisoners stated that although the Japanese commanders officially classed most of the remaining 1400 as effectives, actually they were little more than barely alive. Many were unable to move under their own power, and all were undernourished and sickly.

At the close of May, prisoners captured and surrendered in Negros Occidental totaled 90, of which 52 were Japs and 38 Formosans or Koreans. Of these, 35 had surrendered during the last half of May. Totals for June were almost one and a half times as many as had been obtained in the whole preceding two months of the campaign. Considering the enemy's well known fanaticism for resisting to the end and his extreme aversion to surrender, these figures are eloquent testimony of the complete hopelessness of his situation.

During June, the 503rd Parachute Combat Team, augmented by the 7th Military District, took over the sectors of the 185th and 160th Infantry Regiments.

Filipino forces moved into the line as follows: the 76th Infantry in the former 503rd area (Hills 3355-4500 and vicinity), the 7th Combat Battalion in the 160th area (Dolan Hill) and the 74th Infantry in the 185th area (Lantawan-Patog). The 503rd redispersed its troops placing one battalion in each of the above three sectors to exercise command supervision and control over the guerrilla forces. A company of Filipinos was based at Fabrica and a motorized platoon of the 503rd at Victorias to provide security for the north and east coasts, and one reinforced company of the 503rd relieved elements of the Americal Division at Dumaguete.

On the 1st of July, responsibility for all of Negros and operational control of the 7th Military District and certain non-divisional Army units passed to the Commanding Officer, 503rd Parachute Combat Team.

As 40th Division elements and certain attached units were relieved, they were moved to Iloilo, Panay, where the division was being concentrated. The 108th RCT, having successfully completed operations on Leyte, Masbate and Mindanao, was also moved to Panay where it rejoined the division.

After six months of continuous combat, broken only by fifteen days in which the division was busily engaged in preparation for the Visayan campaign, the division entered upon a well-earned period of rest and recreation. The division's part in the Philippine campaign was finished. All major islands of the group were once again in American hands, and battered remnants were all that remained of the once proud Imperial Japanese Army of the Philippines.





ABOVE: GENERAL EICHELBERGER AND  
GENERAL BRUSH AT GUERRILLA HQ  
BELOW: LEAVING HQ

BELOW: GUERRILLAS GIVE  
TACTICAL INFORMATION TO  
INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS



PILOTS SAVED BY GUERRILLAS  
REPORTS TO DIVISION G-2





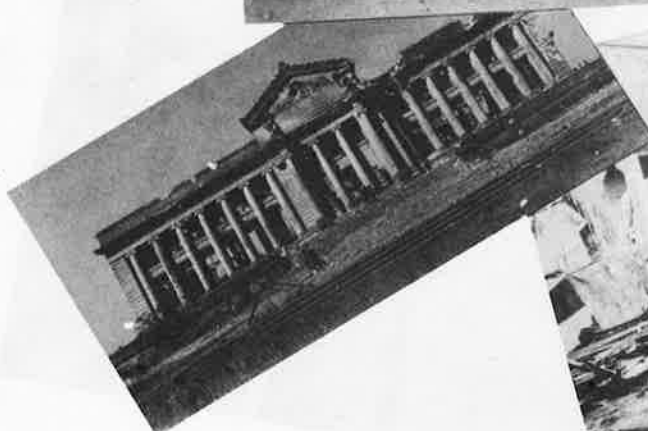
**LEFT: CHEERING NATIVES**



**ABOVE: MANY FAMILIES  
WERE LEFT HOMELESS**



**LEFT: FILIPPINOS READ  
PCAU INSTRUCTIONS**



**ABOVE: REMAINS OF LINGAYEN CAPITOL BUILDING**

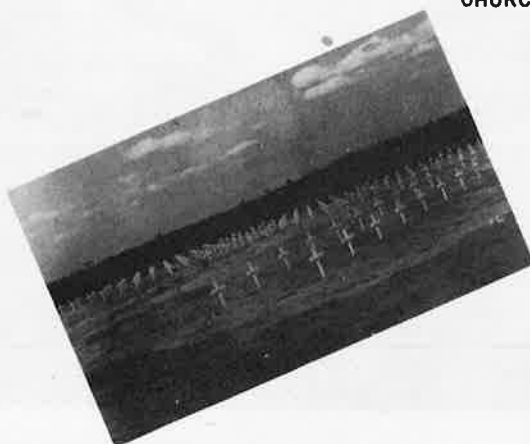


**ABOVE: CHILDREN BATHING AMIDST WRECKAGE**





CHURCH BECOMES SOLDIERS HOME



40TH DIV CEMETERY AT CLARK FIELD



RIGHT: MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES 1945



RELIGIOUS SERVICES CONDUCTED IN THE FIELD





**LEFT: GENERAL MACARTHUR  
ARRIVES BACOLOD PIER**

**RIGHT: GENERAL MACARTHUR ARRIVES  
AT GENERAL BRUSH'S QUARTERS**



**GENERAL STILWELL ARRIVES BACOLOD**



**RIGHT: JOE E. BROWN PERFORMS FOR G.I.'S**





**LEFT: TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF M-8'S**

**RIGHT: MOMENTS PAUSE  
TO SEARCH TERRAIN**



**LEFT: APPROACH FORMATION**





**FRONT LINE EVACUATION**



**BUDDY SUPPORT**

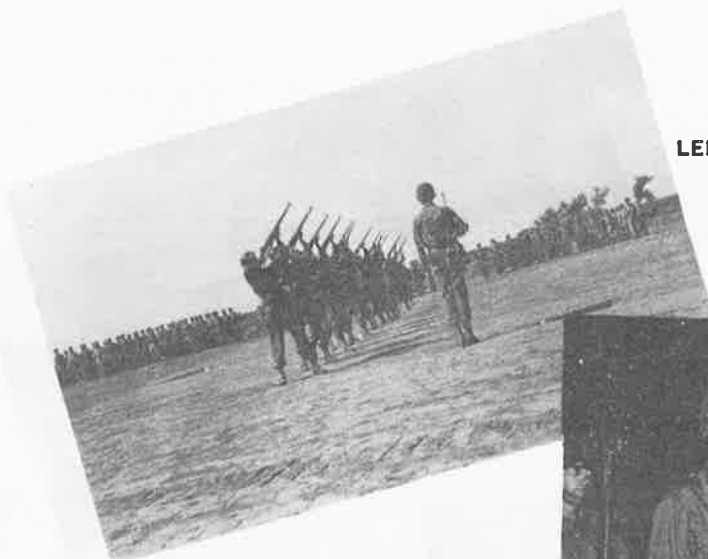


**FIELD HOSPITAL NEAR CLARK FIELD**



**CIVILIANS ASSIST MEDICAL CORP**





**LEFT: SALUTE IS FIRED HONORING  
DEAD ON LUZON**

**RIGHT: GENERAL BRUSH PRESENTS  
THREE SILVER STAR MEDALS**

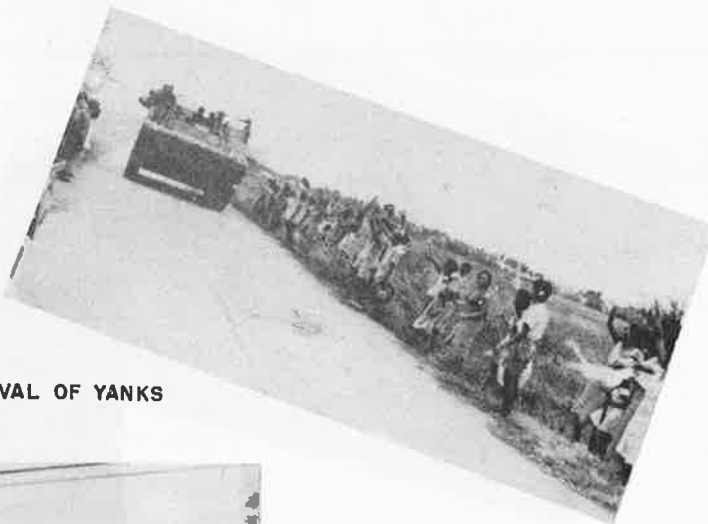


**ABOVE & RIGHT: GENERAL HERVEY  
MAKES AWARDS TO DIV ARTY**

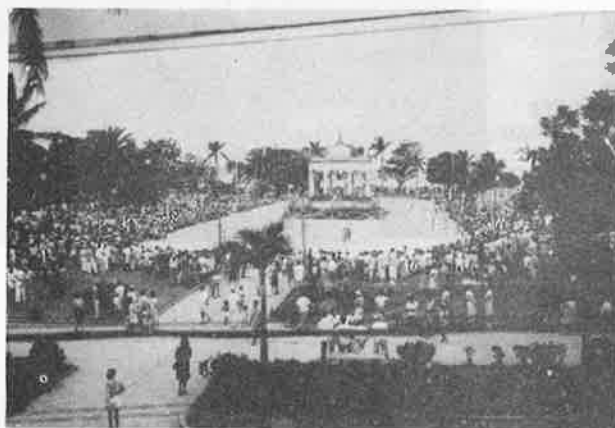


**LEFT: 108TH INF REGT HONORS  
THOSE WHO DIED ON LUZON**





**FILIPINOS CHEER ARRIVAL OF YANKS**



**LEFT: BACOLOD CITY PLAZA**



**RIGHT: CHINESE COMMITTEE PRESENTS  
TOKEN OF THANKS TO GENERAL BRUSH**





**LEFT: COLONEL MALONEY RECEIVES  
LEGION OF MERIT**



**MEMORIAL TO PFC THEODORE  
G. VINTHER KILLED WHILE  
PARTICIPATING IN SEIZURE OF  
VITAL BAGO RIVER BRIDGE**

**RIGHT: MAJOR GREET RECEIVES  
LEGION OF MERIT**







GENERAL BRUSH IS PRESENTED SILVER  
STAR BY GENERAL EICHELBERGER

RIGHT: GENERAL SHOE IS AWARDED  
BRONZE STAR BY GENERAL BRUSH



COLONEL LATIMER IS AWARDED  
LEGION OF MERIT BY GENERAL BRUSH





**LEFT: GENERAL MACARTHUR RECEIVES  
JAR OF FRUIT FROM NATIVE WOMAN**

**BELOW: GENERAL EICHELBERGER  
VISITS 40TH DIVISION**



**ABOVE: GENERAL BRUSH AND STAFF  
MEETS GENERAL MACARTHUR**

**RIGHT: GENERAL SOUTHERLAND  
VISITS 40TH DIV COMMAND POST**

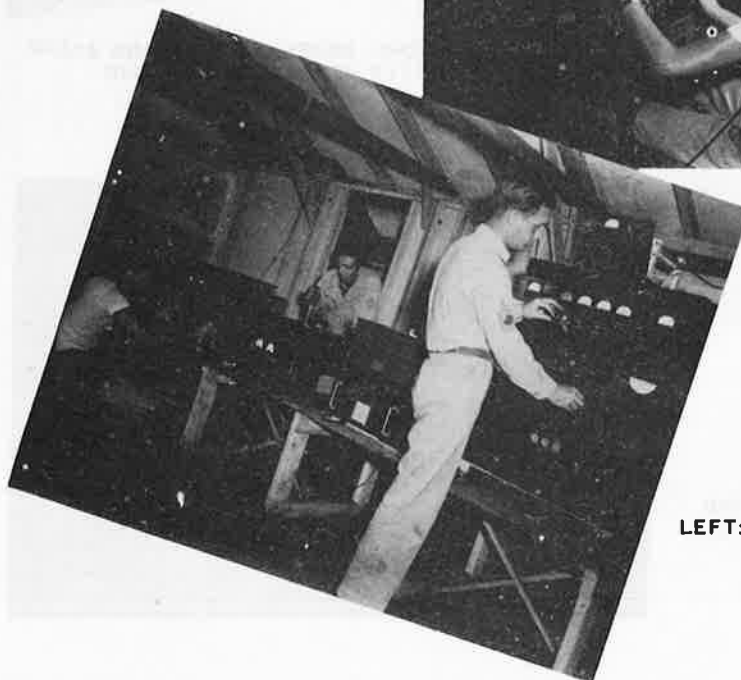
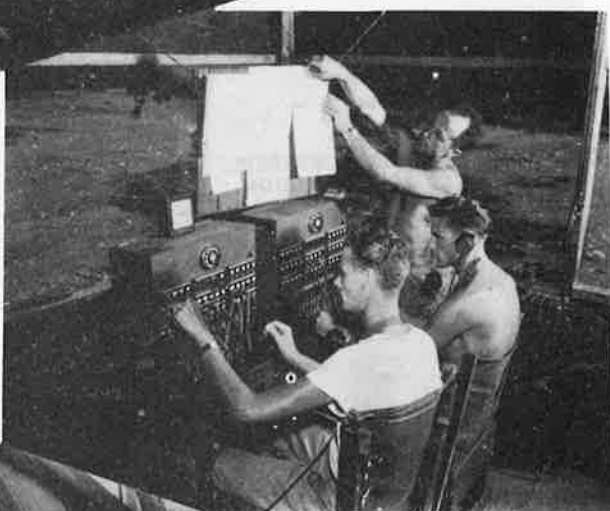






**CODE OPERATORS**

**RIGHT: SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS**



**LEFT: RADIO TECHNICIANS**



**MAJ GEN BRUSH AND LT COL BRAZE  
DISCUSS OPERATIONS WITH 160TH  
INFANTRY CO AND S-3**



**M-10'S SUPPORT GROUND  
TROOPS WITH ARTILLERY FIRE**



**BAMBAN RIVER VALLEY BURNS  
AS RESULT OF ARTILLERY FIRE**



**INTERIOR OF TYPICAL JAPANESE CAVE**





LEFT: CARRYING PARTY  
MOVING UP HILL 3155

BELOW: BAMBOO THICKETS ON  
STORM KING MOUNTAIN



TYPICAL JAP POSITION



RIFLEMAN MOVING TO OUTPOST POSITION





LEFT: TANKS FORD SMALL STREAM

BELOW: M7'S SUPPORT INF



LEFT: OUTSKIRTS OF BAGOLOD

RIGHT: BAGO RIVER BRIDGE







LEFT: OUTSKIRTS OF BACOLOD



RIGHT: ARTILLERY FIRE  
WEST OF BAMBAN



LEFT: COMBAT ROAD





**STORM KING MOUNTAIN LOOKING  
EAST FROM SNAKE HILL NORTH**



**BAMBAN DESTROYED BY  
RETREATING JAPANESE**



**ABOVE: TOP OF STORM KING MT**



**A BAMBOO THICKET ON  
STORM KING MOUNTAIN**





LEFT: MG SUPPORTING  
GROUND TROOPS



RIGHT: HAT TOP HILL - LUZON



LEFT: EASTERN APPROACH  
TO HILL 1500

RIGHT: "TAKING A BREAK"







LEFT: 40TH GAV RCN TR  
CROSS FABRICA RIVER

BELOW: COLLAPSED BRIDGE  
NORTH OF TALISAY



ABOVE: TEMPORARY BRIDGE  
ACROSS FABRICA RIVER



RIGHT: BRIDGE BUILT ON FOUND-  
ATION OF FORMER BRIDGE







ABOVE & BELOW: EMERGENCY ROADS



RIGHT: 55 GAL DRUMS  
USED AS CULVERTS



ABOVE: COMBAT ROADS  
FOLLOW ASSAULT - INF







105MM GUN IN FULL RECOIL



155MM GUN



155MM GUN IN FULL RECOIL



TYPICAL FIRE DIRECTION CENTER



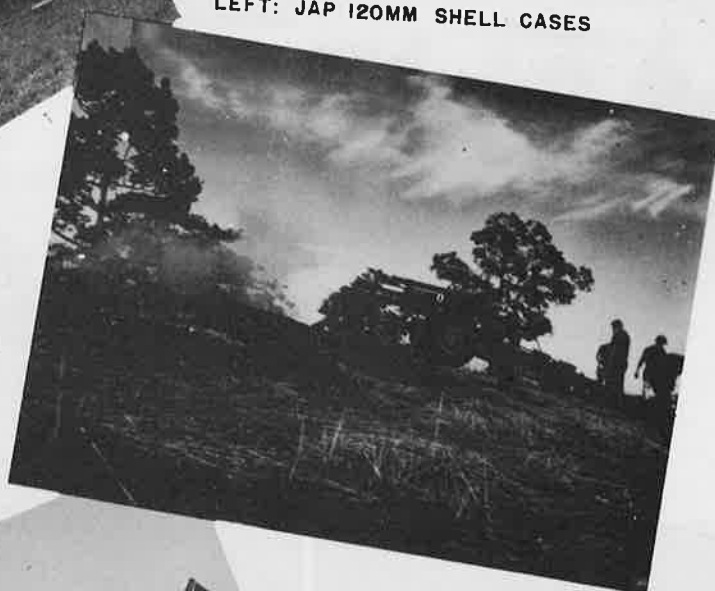


TOP: 105MM GUN BEING UNLOADED FROM DUKW

LEFT: JAP 120MM SHELL CASES



RIGHT: 155MM DIRECT FIRE



REMOVING TUBE FROM 105MM GUN



ARTILLERY LOADED DUKW HITS BEACH





COMMAND POST



GUARD POST ON PERIMETER



OBSERVER CONDUCTS FIRE



BULLDOZER TRAIL TO HILL 3155



WEST RIM HILL 3155





ANTI-TANK GUN CREW IN ACTION



ABOVE: "TOP OF THE WORLD"



ABOVE: REMNANTS OF JAP MOTOR POOL

RIGHT: ELEMENTS 108TH ADVANCING  
THROUGH SANTO DOMINGO







**ABOVE & LEFT: GUERRILLAS  
PARADE IN ILOILO CITY**



**RIGHT: GENERAL BRUSH  
SPEAKS TO GUERRILLAS  
AND CIVILIANS NEAR OTON**









**KILLED IN ACTION**

Major	Norman E. Thrall
Captain	William G. Crane
Captain	William K. Merrell
1st Lt	Peter W. Capp, Jr.
1st Lt	James M. Cummings
1st Lt	Carl J. Karlsson
2nd Lt	Russell A. Donogh
1st Sgt	Carl M. Nielsen
T/Sgt	Stanley P. Diak
T/Sgt	Mitchel J. Donaleski
T/Sgt	Benny P. Dyman
T/Sgt	Charles L. Nelson
T/Sgt	Merwin L. Sherman
S/Sgt	Walter E. Bowen
S/Sgt	Lester W. Caldwell
S/Sgt	Raymond J. Christensen
S/Sgt	Frank Dawson
S/Sgt	John L. Fischer
S/Sgt	Douglas C. Howard
S/Sgt	Louis R. Justino
S/Sgt	Elmer M. Kuntz
S/Sgt	James P. Lohr
S/Sgt	Edward J. Marchi
S/Sgt	John H. McConnel
S/Sgt	Raymond A. Schimmer
S/Sgt	Bert A. Smith, Jr.
S/Sgt	Verner M. Triplett
S/Sgt	John A. Watson
T/3	Richard T. Moore
Sgt	Samuel J. Ellis
Sgt	Walter W. Fahje
Sgt	Nicholas C. Fourtounis
Sgt	Edward C. Graff, Jr.
Sgt	Walter J. Gudenburr
Sgt	Victor Herbert
Sgt	James R. Johnston
Sgt	Carl A. Nelson
Sgt	Evan A. Nichols
Sgt	William A. Patterson
Sgt	Ernest A. Rodriguez
Sgt	Joseph Savula
Sgt	Elmer G. Tosta
T/4	Seward D. Saxton
T/4	Richard Schmill
Cpl	John R. Ackerman
Cpl	William L. Adams
Cpl	Billy V. Anderson
Cpl	William C. Anderson
Cpl	Hutchins C. Bennett
Cpl	Charles I. Hardesty
Cpl	Charles P. Klein

Albert L. Brown  
 Glen F. Moorehead  
 Howard W. Stearns  
 William M. Appledorn  
 Arthur D. Atkinson  
 Charles J. Beedy  
 Calloway Black  
 Claude F. Boughamer  
 James C. Bradshaw  
 Onie A. Briscoe  
 Eugene D. Brown, Jr.  
 Robert R. Brown  
 James Buntain  
 Isaac Z. Chang  
 George W. Cherney  
 William J. Chivers  
 Rob R. Coleman  
 Eugene H. Conrad  
 Thomas F. Cotrone  
 Lee A. Cramer  
 John W. Curd, Jr.  
 Garnett O. Dean  
 John J. DeSerio  
 Virgil H. English  
 George J. Fisher  
 Ray D. Gaudin  
 Lester B. Gearheart  
 Lloyd E. Gibson  
 Arnolando Gonzalez  
 Frederick P. Gow, Jr.  
 Virgil L. Gower  
 Lewis E. Grissom  
 Martin Gurgol  
 Alvin R. Hall  
 Louis H. Hefley  
 Kenneth L. Henderson  
 Howard M. Hext  
 Virgil D. Hill  
 Charles R. Hinton  
 Harold C. Hohlt  
 Paul T. Huber  
 Carl E. Human  
 Leroy Johnson  
 Oscar V. Johnson  
 Autie M. Jones  
 Wayne A. Jones  
 Charles Kaluger  
 Robert E. Kirtland  
 Wallace N. Lanz  
 Alfred O. Lawrence  
 Cecil D. Lemons  
 Ernest LePore  
 Eugene L. Lesoine  
 Clyde W. Linhard



