

# Sunburst Saga

## A Story of the 160<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (7<sup>th</sup> California) (Los Angeles' Own)

By William Ward McCreedy



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*A Story of the 160th Infantry Regiment*

By

WILLIAM WARD McCREEDY

The Bishop's Press

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The Bishop's Press  
Louisville, Kentucky

"Earth can never hold the Spirits of the Brave"

"Sunburst Saga" is humbly dedicated to the men of the 160th Infantry who, living with us and dying for us, have made the name of the regiment immortal. They lie peacefully in the soil they fought for and want no acclaim, as they were unassuming, simple Americans. We knew them, loved them and honor their valor. Their names are inscribed in our hearts, and are set forth here for all to read in the section "Gallant Men".

## Under Angel's Wings

We were Los Angeles' Own and Chicago's Own and Cleveland's Own. We wrote our mothers in Spanish and Polish. We cursed and griped in Basic American. If you like Pismo clams, Five Island gin, New Zealand lamb and Australian silver beet tops we had a romantic experience.

It began in the mud at San Luis Obispo, on the quietly freezing hills at Hunter Liggett Reservation and then progressed up that lava-damned Kalapana Trail, through Guadacanal's primordial thickets, into Cape Gloucester's dust and Arawe's despair.

Sweating out things meant nothing until we found that our particular brand of foot-soldier was condemned to the stinking holds of APA's for unending weeks. Our existence seemed eternally bound up with dry runs, cancelled furloughs, unloading cases of powdered eggs at Lunga Point and Borgen Bay, wondering who was more stupid, John L. Lewis or Dugout Doug, convinced that the Old Man couldn't lead us into a paper bag and out again, and always sure that we'd be the last ones home, if we lived so long.

It began to take on meaning, though, as we crossed the Calmay and the Agno. Before we got to Aguilar, First Batt knew the 160th was marching to her destiny. Our families back in Utah and Montana and South Carolina soon answered the door-bell with quick hearts for the War Department wire that spelled sorrow for their boy, the sorrow we'd known on the spot at Bambam or on Suicide Hill.

*I am greatly indebted to Dick Hartford and John Garland Smith for their tutoring, criticism and help while writing the original newspaper stories from which this book is written.*

*To my Mother and Father, Vane and Gayle Pickering, Jim and Rhea Bowden, Anna May Kaye, Fred Jensen and Chaplain Robert Clingman, my thanks, for without their constant encouragement, criticism and help the book would not have been completed.*

We may forget how a 25 ricochet sounds as it caroms past our ear, and the ear-splitting knee-mortar with its foul black burst may become a dim memory. It won't be long before the taste of atabrine will slide from our senses and Estrella's picture made at Iloilo is a faded blur.

But we lived too close to each other in the Shadow of the Valley to ever free ourselves from a fraternity that knows no by-laws or president or name. It exists in the recesses of our hearts, in the laughter of our dead brothers, in the lust and living of five years. Speak profanely of the Imperials, of the 160th Infantry, if you will, but speak softly, for the Regiment is part of us always.

--Robert Core Clingman

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## Chapter I

### They Led Us...



Sergeant Blue jerked to attention; his eyes riveted on the narrow, shadowy, gravel road. His heart was pounding so loud he could hardly hear the breathing of his buddy who slept in the same fox-hole. His eyes were straining almost to the point of blurring the entire dark scene into nothing.

His ears were throbbing as he listened. He knew he heard a soft, very soft, steady crunch... crunch...crunch...and then nothing. It started again and stopped. The moon was full and shown down on the otherwise silent night with an air of a Supreme Being. It was the first Philippine moonlight Sergeant Blue had ever seen and he was tremendously thankful it was so brilliant.

He heard it again; this time much more distinct and nearer. Crunch...crunch, pause --- crunch... crunch...crunch. "Someone is walking down the road. Somebody is coming," he told himself. "It sounds like he is coming kinda carefully and taking his time. Well, that's OK with me - I'm not going no place."

Then from the shadows he could see the figure slowly materialize; the figure was that of a man. He walked so slowly Blue wasn't sure if he was moving like a man or gliding like a ghost, despite the little noise of his feet. He kept coming and soon Blue could see a stick-like affair swinging from side to side in the moonlight.

His saber gave him away. It was a Japanese officer and he seemed to be all alone. He stopped every three or four paces and looked long and quietly into the dark bamboo thickets at the side of the road and then ahead before continuing. Now Blue could see he carried a pistol in his right hand. He was close -- so close nothing could miss.

Slowly he eased off the safety and steadied his sights on the stomach of the Japanese. He had had his rifle trained on him for nearly ten minutes. Taking a deep breath he slowly exhaled nearly all of it. The slack of the trigger disappeared and then.. ..CRACK. The rifle jumped slightly and came back into position. He was ready to fire again but the target was gone.

After thirteen hours ashore Sergeant Blue had killed the first Japanese in the Philippine Campaign for the 160th Infantry Regiment.

\* \* \*

By the end of June, 1944, one battalion had killed over 2,000 rats on New Britain by inventing various types of traps. Little did the men realize that in January, 1945, Blue would bring their total to 2,001.

\* \* \*

I wasn't able to shake the hand of Blue but always wanted to. When I passed his position there was a waiting line about a mile long. It was early

the following morning and the boys were making coffee over their small fires and slapping him on the back. Everyone was so happy about the event they didn't mind the "hurry up and march" order that had come down by a most unusual method about two hours before dawn.

When Colonel Edward Murray, our regimental commander returned from General Rapp Brush's headquarters at two A.M. with orders for the First Battalion to push on to Aguilar, about eight miles away, he found there wasn't any wire or radio communication. It was SNAFU from the word go.

Lieutenant Colonel Herman A. E. Jones, assistant regimental commander suggested he would walk down and tell them. It wasn't exactly the kind of a walk a man would take for his constitutional. The First Battalion was about three miles ahead of the Command Post, across two wide, bridgeless rivers. Sergeant Jim Smith of the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon volunteered to go along.

It was a long and eerie trek they took that night. Every once in a while they'd see someone moving along the road and they'd hold their breath waiting for the shot that was sure to come. Nothing happened, however, and the "march order" was delivered. It was while Colonel Jones and Smith were grabbing a couple of quick winks that Sergeant Blue knocked off his Jap.

The order to march brought the outfit into real contact with the Japanese. The advance patrols had not been out more than an hour when they ran smack

into concealed pillboxes along the road. The men, under command of Lieutenant Richard Cummings, were pinned down in a three hour battle that was their first real baptism of fire.

The Japanese were peppering rice paddies and cocoanut trees for hundreds of yards with their machine guns and our men were shot down like sitting ducks every time they moved. Three or four men were killed. One of the most distressing incidents to all of us centered around the Haynie brothers. They fought side by side. When the skirmish was over, Stuart was dying in his brother's arms.

When Cummings saw so many of his men going down in the path of the hidden machine guns with no one to call on for aid, he went into action. He must have had God on his side during his daring and bold maneuvers or he couldn't have come out alive. He left his cover and ran from man to man, telling them to stay fast and not move an inch; he dragged two wounded men out of danger. All during this time machine gun lead spat at his husky body.

Cummings, a six foot Pacific Fleet boxing champ who didn't believe in smoking or swearing, attempted to persuade an alligator driver to use his machine and armor to knock out the nest. The driver refused. "Godammit," exploded Cummings, "my boys are getting the hell shot out of them and you sit here like a bump on a log and play games. Get the hell out of that tank affair or I'll smear your yellow belly all over Luzon."

The driver sat tight and looked around with ter-

ror written all over his face. Cummings pushed him roughly aside and attempted to drive it himself, but couldn't. If a squad of men had not been able to out-flank the Jap machine guns and finish them off, I think he *would* have scattered him all "over Luzon".

Among the squad which sneaked around and wiped out the Japanese was Pfc. Emil Hoffman. He was credited with killing the officer in charge of the road blocks with his Browning Automatic Rifle. The volunteer band approached the target from a small, dried-up river bed the Japs had overlooked. It was a unique situation as the Yanks strutted right into the side door with blazing guns and the Japs never had a chance. Hoffman saw the position but rather than point it out to his fellow cohorts, he opened up with his BAR and ripped the face of a Jap to shreds.

Then everything went up in smoke and when it cleared there wasn't anything left but a lot of dead Nips...six to be exact. After the position was silenced, the men under Cummings got wearily to their feet and struggled back to camp. In the meantime other platoons pushed on down the road to engage more Japs if they could find them.

\* \* \*

There is no doubt that the moon in Hawaii is the most beautiful in all the Pacific. Ah! what beauty! Remember how we used to walk our girls beneath the full, round, pink moon on River Street?

\* \* \*



"Peter," hissed a voice from the level of the rocky ground. There was no answer. "PETER," came the challenge again. Still no answer or suggestion of recognition. The Yank who challenged the figure walking about not more than five yards away, adjusted his sweaty hands on his rifle. The guy--who ever he is, thought the Yank, should answer, "Rabbit." That was the sign and countersign for the night.

"PETER," yelled the taut-muscled youth.

No answer.

Three times he had called and the figure kept moving as if he hadn't heard him. Slowly the Yank raised his rifle and shot. The figure dropped noisily to the ground and didn't move.

"What the hell was that," yelled a voice from a foxhole. "What's the matter?" demanded another. "Who shot?" queried still another. "I just shot a Nip in the perimeter," answered the Yank to all questions. "Watch out--there will probably be some more. This joker didn't answer the sign."

The guards were doubled for the rest of the night. Twice as many eyes peered into the dark. Twice as many knives stood ready to deal with unexpected attacks.

Slowly the darkness faded away into brighter shadows and soon the men could see each other's dirt-surrounded positions. The sun was rapid in climbing over the horizon and searching out all night darkness. With the early morning sun, came the first patrol sent out to inspect the area to make sure

there weren't any Japanese ready to kill as the men climbed out of the holes.

The Yank sat in his hole smoking a cigaret with a far-away look in his eyes. He was thinking about war in general and looking at himself--asking how it felt to kill a man.

Hell, there wasn't anything to it. Like shooting ducks. Yes sir, just like shooting ducks. 'Course it was a Nip and we're supposed to kill them and besides, we don't know them so what the hell...The all clear word was passed interrupting the Yank's thoughts. He jumped to his feet and stretched. Others were doing the same and all talking at once. "Where's that Nip you got last night?" one of the boys asked.

His question was answered by another shout, "Look guys, we shot our own man--shot him through the head."

\* \* \*

It took a little time to master the art of modern warfare. Especially back in 1942 when some officer tried to shoot down airplanes from atop a building with mortars during the air-raid scare in Los Angeles

\* \* \*

The Filipinos of Aguilar always knew the Americans would return. Otherwise they wouldn't have buried a bottle of coca cola to give to the first American soldier they saw. Neither would they have

cut the American flag into strips and buried it in many places so it could be repaired and used when we arrived. The flag was floating in the breeze in the center of the Plaza when we entered.

Aguilar was the scene of some American marksmanship that was to be the talk of the town for some time to come. Everardo Lopez showed the people how to save the life of a Filipino and kill two Japs at the same time. He was sitting by his hole in a dry rice paddie when a small kid came running up--"Japanese, Japanese, Japanese," he shrieked and pointed a small brown finger in the direction of a river.

His jabbering was stopped by a sergeant and when hurriedly cross-examined he told of two Japanese fleeing south toward Manila. They were trying to cross a small river and had forced a thirteen year old Filipino to row them.

The sergeant bellowed, "Want five volunteers to go..." That was all that Lopez heard. Dropping his canteen from which he had been drinking and grabbing his rifle, Lopez started like a deer in that general direction. He didn't stop to put on his shirt or helmet.

It was a five minute dash from the camp for an average fellow, but long-legged, hundred and eighty-five pound Lopez must have zipped it off in much less time. As he neared the river, the kunai grass reached to his waist and the going got a little tough. The bank of the river formed a little knoll and as Lopez raced up the knoll he could see the boat in the middle--nearly fifty yards distant. Dropping to one

knee Lopez shouted, "Hey--where do ya think you're going?"

The Japanese officer who was watching the far bank, turned and stared at Lopez. His hand went rapidly across his body as he attempted to draw his pistol. Without bothering to figure distance, windage, or even assuming a better position, Lopez fired one shot from the hip with his rifle.

The officer rolled from the mahogany canoe. The little Filipino lad in the center looked in vain for protection as did the other Jap in the rear of the boat. No sooner had the echo of the first shot died away than a second one followed. The Filipino boy found himself alone and unharmed.

Lopez didn't know if he had killed both of the Japs or not and to be sure they were dead he used his favorite weapon. Dropping his rifle and taking his long-bladed Indian knife with the deer horn handle from its sheath, he plunged into the stream. As the other Yanks came racing up to the stream they could see his tan, wiry body disappearing into the depths.

Soon he returned to the top with the body of the Japanese officer. He swam with a slow, sure, powerful stroke to the shore and then without further ado, cut his throat. In he dived again and found the second Jap. He brought him to shore and with the same informal ceremony repeated his first performance. The men and the Filipino boy watched silently. Lopez didn't say anything either.

\* \* \*

Live and learn: On Guadacanal, the morning after our arrival, one Japanese-conscious lad came running back to camp with the news he had found a Japanese head. Excited men gathered around as he led them to a sign which said, "Head". He was then told with disgust that "head" was the marine term for latrine.

\* \* \*

It was around Aguilar that the Yanks were swamped with kindness by the Filipinos who were overjoyed at being freed. During the long marches on the hard pavement with full field equipment, barefooted Filipinos would lug any portion of a man's load and not ask for a thing except an occasional smoke. It was not unusual to see a husky, dark-skinned youth struggling beneath a heavy mortar which he would not allow anyone else to touch.

In some cases the Filipinos grew fond of the Yanks and wanted to continue on throughout the entire campaign for wages of food and smokes. At night when the troops would bed down and the tiresome task of digging a deep hole faced them, the Filipinos would grab the shovel and dig the foxhole. It amazed the Yanks at first to see a barefooted person dig a hole so fast. They showed the infantrymen how to keep warm and dry at night by placing banana leaves in the hole as a water repellent.

\* \* \*

On January 18, First Lieutenant Ray Ennis received orders to take his men and scour the Zambales Mountains on the right of National Highway for hundreds of Japanese that were trying to escape to Manila. Pounding their way through heavy underbrush up and down steep hills was a weary business at best.

With rifles slung over their sweaty shoulders and canteens banging up and down against their hips, the depressing load of ammunition and grenades leaning heavily on their stomachs, and the steel helmets reflecting the burning rays of the sun until their scalps were boiling, the Yanks slogged on and on.

"Hey, Phil, what time is it anyway?" asked Pfc. George Pickett. "I'm getting kinda hungry. Wish Ennis would hurry up and find those bastards or else let us eat." Philip F. Heil slowly raised his arm and looked at his watch. "'Bout eleven-thirty, I guess," he said. "Guess the 'old man' knows what he is doing--quit your moaning, will ya?"

Clare Green piped, "Yah, Pickett, is that all you can think about? Food and food and more food. Seems to me a guy like you should be able to get his mind on a higher plane and concentrate a little bit on something like women and women and more women."

"Shut up, youse guys," growled good natured Sergeant Wallace Barnes. "Where the hell do you think you are---Grand Central Station?" There was silence again as the men looked at each other and grinned. "The way you guys are hollering you would think there were no Nips within sixty miles of here."

Fidel, one of the two Filipino scouts with the patrol, was the first to sight the Japanese. He was about fifteen yards ahead of the men when he started across a narrow draw and was surprised to see a man sitting along the trail. Dropping lightly and silently to his stomach, he warned Lieutenant Ennis of danger.

"What do you see?" drawled Ennis softly in his slow, easy way. Fidel silently extended his arm and fingered the almost indistinguishable figure surrounded by green shrubbery. "And there's another one," whispered Fidel, changing the direction of his arm with a jerk. "And, another," continued Ennis, as he sighted still a third. "It looks as though they've taken time out for victuals. Well, by God, we'll feed 'em lead poison for dessert." Wiggling backwards on his belly until he was out of sight of the Japs, Ennis outlined his plan in his mind.

Barnes was waiting by the side of the trail at the bottom of the small hill. "There's about a dozen or so," breathed Ennis. "They are grubbin' now and haven't set out any watch or they'd have seen us sure as hell. We'll build up a line and open up on 'em all at once at my word. Take your men up that side of the trail and I'll move up this side."

Some ten minutes later, Arnold Alto and Jim Brawley were lying side by side in the jungle watching the Japanese. Still puffing a little from the long crawl into the 'blind', Alto asked objectively, "Do you think we'll be here long? I don't like these damned jungles. Wish the yellows were out in the open. It's a lot easier to get them."

"No," answered Brawley, "it won't take long. I figure the skipper will wait until they get into line and then we'll blast them apart. No use letting any of 'em get away."

"Sure would like a smoke," sighed Alto, taking for granted that what Brawley said was true and they would soon be in the open again. Both men were watching the Japanese as they ate their rice from their little tin, moon-shaped buckets.

Sitting on the ground cross-legged, and munching the rice they heaped in their mouths it was easy to see they had no knowledge of Death closing in on them. Soon they heard a small, shrill whistle that sounded almost like a wren. The Nip soldiers got slowly to their feet and drifted towards the path as they adjusted their equipment and finished putting away their mess gear.

Pfc. John Sheridan fingered his tommy gun in his concealed position as he watched the Japs line up in neat, apple-pie order. He wished the word would come soon to FIRE or he'd lose some fine chances to begin his collection of trophies. It came almost with his wish, Sheridan flipped off the safety and brought his tommy into play. It swept a clean path and before the surprised Japanese could melt into the ground to safety, two of them dropped for the count.

Alvin Mackey sat perched on a stone and squeezed his shot off with deadly accuracy, dropping one. Soon the firing was so heavy it was impossible to tell whose shots were hitting the mark. The terrific

racket lasted only a few minutes and when it stopped the world seemed empty and deserted.

The Yanks stayed concealed for a while and then stepped from their hiding to count the dead. Nineteen would never eat rice again, or take too long for dinner.

\* \* \*

Everyone had a bracelet or watch band made from a Jap Zero soon after we hit the "Japanese-infested zone of interior." Or at least we thought we did until we were informed the Zero was one of our own Hellcats, downed on Hell's Point.

\* \* \*

Marching into Camiling in the hot afternoon was sickening to everyone. We had to climb over a dozen or so bodies of some Japanese and Filipino collaborators who lay mangled and deformed in the middle of the highway. They had been killed with bolos, bullets and rifle butts in the morning before our arrival and left as symbols of liberation and how not to get along with the Filipinos.

There wasn't one whole body. Arms, legs, heads, and torsos were scattered in irregular patterns that made marching impossible. We had to break column and step from bare spot to bare spot.

All of the clothes had been stripped from the bodies by clothes-hungry Filipinos. It looked as if

a game had been played with some of the bodies. The ears, tongues, toes, fingers and genitals had been cut from the bodies and strung along the road. Some of them lay half-submerged in rice paddies and muck while others were left to rot and stink in the torrid sun.

We held our breaths so we wouldn't have to inhale the stench. Our eyes couldn't be good and stay glued to the blue sky above. They had to look and as we looked we got sicker and sicker until we had to look away. I think each man purposely took as much of it as he could so as to prove to himself he was tough and could take all war had to offer. In many respects it was a good thing, as it did make us a little tougher for the smells, sights, and other undefinable elements of war we were soon to encounter.

I guess the word must have been passed that General MacArthur was coming as there were three carabao carts hauling away four or five corpses at a time to a common grave in the schoolyard. The Filipinos were working nonchalantly and seemed as caloused as any professional morgue attendants.

Rigor mortis had set in and the bodies looked more like planks of lumber being tossed into holes. One man would take the feet and another the head. With a 'heave ho' on the count of three the stiff corpse would sail through the air and disappear from our sight into the ground.

When General MacArthur did arrive the following day to see how far we had gone and what things were like, none of the bodies was left and there was but

one stick in the ground to mark the burial plot.

He came in full regalia with the Military Police clearing the streets in front of him. His visit was unannounced for the most part and even the grapevine which furnished the Filipinos with their news failed.

With swagger stick in hand and dark glasses, plus his famous cap and pipe, he stood tall and majestic among those around him. Just before leaving to return to Lingayen--some forty miles away--he stepped forward and spoke to Major Lex Stout, now a Lieutenant Colonel. Stout was the Second Battalion commander and had led the spearhead of the attack for a good part of the way down the road toward Manila. General MacArthur told Stout that he was doing a "good job and to keep it up."

Tarlac, the biggest city between Lingayen and Manila was taken by the 160th without a shot. We marched in and out again all in a few hours. The Japanese left the downtown and railroad sections gutted as they retreated toward Clark Field.

In haste to continue on after the Japanese, few noticed a serious mistake on the part of some overly exuberant Filipino who had raised the American flag over the bank building. Evidently he hadn't seen an American flag for so long he had forgotten which went where for he had it upside down. Captain Guy Allen, Assistant Regimental Intelligence Officer, remedied the error, however, before pushing on through.

We didn't know it at the time, or I don't think we would have been able to look at the mountains

with the air of indifference that we did. Bambam, was in a sense, the beginning of our Waterloo. The division and the men were going to be lost to the eyes of millions of people, only to be replaced by their long time 'enemy', the First Cavalry.

Since the Japanese elected to turn into the high, rugged mountains and attempt to defend Clark Field, there was nothing for us of the right flank to do but chase them. We left the National Highway and built our own roads, while other units chased merrily into Manila.

It was at Bambam the Japanese finally stopped long enough for us to use more than one battalion at a time; it was here that the fight for control of the Zambales Mountains started. From the Third Battalion Command Post atop "Sugar King's Castle", Colonel "Whispering" Jim Ruckel directed his men on a right flank encirclement while men of the First and Second Battalions pushed straight in from the road. Using half tracks with ninety millimeter guns, Colonel Ruckel tried to pound the Japanese defenses into submission.

\* \* \*

The Lurline was a real ship with food beyond compare. If your strength lasted long enough to sweat out the line that wound eight decks down, you were sure of getting some good chow. It didn't always furnish enough power to climb back up again, but then, that was another thing.

Staff Sergeant William Scheske and Staff Sergeant Lynch stood chewing the fat under the overhanging trees. The huge stone mansion on their right seemed bleak and cold--the swimming pool in the rear with all its clinging roses over the top seemed alive and warm. The winding concrete driveway was crowded with trucks, jeeps and men. It looked as though no one knew exactly where they were going; yet everyone was rushing about at a furious pace.

"Wonder what in hell we're going to do?" asked Scheske. "We can see the Nips through our glasses now. I suppose we'll pull out of here before long and buzz into the hills after 'em."

"Suppose so," sighed Lynch as he stroked a cigarette, gently trying to smooth out the wrinkles and form it into something smokable. "Yah, it won't be long before we'll push on again. We've been here two days now."

"Hear they're going to bring up some half tracks with nineties to try and blow the bastards out of their caves. Think they'll be able to do it?"

"Suppose they will," grunted Lynch. "Those Nips have us chasing ourselves what with those portable guns they pull in and out of caves quick as you bat your eye."

It was nearly noon when two half tracks rumbled up the drive and slid into position by the well on top of the hill. Their targets were pointed out to them and a few rounds were fired. It was hard to hit the small holes on the sides of the big hills and

the results were poor.

The men were eating cold "C" rations when the first whine of Japanese ninety millimeter mortar was detected. "Duck for cover; here they come; hit it," were cries of warning that sounded from the lips of many at once.

Pfc. Jesse Ortega urged his two hundred and thirty pounds into his small hole. The half track stood just a few feet from him and it was the target of the Japanese.

All hell was breaking loose. The Nips were dropping them in on the positions in groups of fifty instead of one or two. At least it seemed that way to Ortega. "Wish the hell I wasn't so goddamned big." He grunted as one dropped closer.

He scratched the dirt trying to go deeper but it was useless. "Man," he sighed, "just let me out of this one and I'll dig my holes so deep they'll have to use sounding equipment to locate me." Another one plunged into the earth with a deafening roar.

"Ohhhhhh," screamed Ortega, "I'm hit. I'm HIT."

\* \* \*

The long marches over the flat ground and in the pine forest of Fort Lewis were good training for the hikes in jungles and mountains of the South Pacific.

\* \* \*

"Ohhhhhh, help me--help me. I'm hit," groaned handsome George Rose. He lay beside the road a little way from the jeep he had been driving. The Japanese had shelled the road and he was hit by a big piece of shell casing. Aid wasn't long in reaching the wounded driver as the medic's station was a few hundred feet away.

Gently his friends lifted him to the stretcher and with Japanese fire still aimed in their direction, cautiously edged down the small hill to the doctor. There was little anyone could do. Too much of Rose's back had been destroyed.

Doctor Levine hurriedly applied all possible aid. He gave Rose morphine and blood plasma while bandaging the wound. On the way to the hospital Rose passed away. The fight against the treacherous Japanese took on a more heart-breaking aspect as our wounded and dead were carried back.

\* \* \*

With stevedoring our prime occupation on New Britain, Capt. Thomas Leonard turned out the prize regimental training schedule, signing it "T. F. McGooch, Superior Private, Cracking".

All personnel were required to "bring their own sailor suits" and report to "Orgen Bay" for orientation in ship's language and naval terms.

Anti-pilferage schools were set up with Capt. "Harry Squelker" furnishing manuals. Identification

of local Marine units was essential, since some of them had made off with 3 trucks of our beer.

Stevedore's Union, New Britain Local 3468, was to hold a meeting for installing successful candidates.

The schedule first provided for a class in "ship-loading Marine Fightin' men" with all army troops wearing clean Marine uniforms for the benefit of newsreel cameramen.

Top priority on the mock schedule was given to "care and carrying of beef, corned, canned, M-6," "conserving rotten cargo nets", and ducking "falling cargo."

An examination either qualified the doughboy as a Stevedore (a) Superior (b) Average (c) Stinkeroo or made him ready for the 115th Medics Sec. VIII ward. Flash operators, "any old sailor" and "Major Thinner" were the qualified instructors.



## Chapter II

### Hurrah-Hurrah



Little by little the twenty-seven men gathered their helmets, rifle belts and packs together. They were tired and hungry and dirty. When they could not find some part of their equipment they thought they had placed in a certain spot, they gave it up as lost without further ado. Unless, of course, it was their weapon, and then they would cuss and storm until someone told them to shut up. Nerves were strained and much of the "kick the hell out of 'em." spirit was gone.

They had been fighting and marching for nearly three weeks and were tired of it. They wished they could look forward to the time when, whoever does those things, would call the "skirmish" off and they would be able to return to camp, wash up, hit the sack and have a good hot meal. But there wasn't any referee and they weren't getting ready to return to camp; they were going to hold a small mountain from the Japs for the night.

Just for the night. That was their order. It was a small hill, as hills go, but evidently a mighty important one. Whoever held the hill had the key to the gateway of the mountains. From it the Japanese could kill our men as they entered; or we could hold it and watch them as they passed through.

Second Lieutenant Charles Thalman, in command of the tired platoon, stood up from his resting place and adjusted his pack. He was not carrying much. Just a poncho, sweater, some socks and foot powder.

## Sunburst Saga

The men could see he was about ready to move out.

Leo Bonte drew heavily on his half-smoked cigarette and allowed the smoke to seep from his nose and the corners of his mouth. He partly stifled a yawn and while his hand was hovering near his mouth, glanced at the time. It was going on nine. The moon was climbing into the dark blue of the night. "It's a mighty nice night," he said half aloud. "Mighty nice."

Thalman's voice floated out into the still night, "OK, boys, let's go." The column moved ahead as each man automatically kept step with the man in front. It was much easier to march that way, and while they didn't have far to go, they needed every bit of energy. They marched across the wide dirt road and along the swift-moving river that started high in the mountains.

No one said anything; there was nothing important to say. It did not take long to hike to the hill where they were to spend the night. The moon was much brighter now and the men worried a little about their silhouettes being targets.

Francis Jewell and Donald Delgan teamed up for their foxhole. Jewell used his helmet to scoop out the loose dirt after Delgan hacked it into small chunks with his pick. Delgan stopped swinging his pick and looked up at Jewell sitting on the side of the hole, "Do you think we've dug far enough? There ain't going to be anything doing tonight."

Jewell glanced at the point where Delgan's calves were hidden from view by the ground. "Well, I don't know. It's awfully hard digging--this volcano slag

is tough--but if we can go a little farther, I guess we'd better."

Delgan grunted and continued his work. Soon he stepped from the oblong hole and watched as Jewell lifted his helmet and dumped it. Their V-shaped foxhole was just about complete. Some of the other fellows had already completed theirs, and it was evident they had not dug very deep.

Sergeant Everett McIntyre smeared his forehead with mud as he wiped it with a dirty hand. Fumbling around in the partial darkness he brought forth a can of chicken and noodles. The key was missing and he asked Martin Fitzpatrick for his. The chicken and noodles were cold and greasy. If he had not been so hungry he would have seen how far he could throw it into the valley.

Using his spoon, he dug quietly and rapidly into the can until it was empty. As he was about to toss it away, he decided to make it a warning bell. "When you guys are through with your cans," he suggested, "you'd better use them for 'warners'."

It was shortly after midnight that guards crouching low in their foxholes saw movement to their front. Eddie Slaughter, one of the guards, whispered, "Ssssst, out there, look! Do you see anything? Somebody is moving around. Looks like a lot of 'em."

A few feet away Theodore Reed answered, "Yeah, I see 'em all right. We'd better call the boys."

The first mortar shell dropped behind their semi-circle perimeter a little before one. Then a

couple more fell to the left and to the right. The Japanese had returned with more than a hundred men to retake the hill and were trying to find the location of the Yank defense.

Put--tut, tut, tut, tut, tut spoke the light Japanese machine gun.

"Duck," cried a voice, but everyone had already ducked. Put, tut, tut, tut, tut, tut it spat again. Then wham, wham, wham, wham as more mortar fell in the area. The quiet night was neither silent nor dark. The shelling stopped as suddenly as it started. The men rose slowly on their elbows and peered into the darkness. No one spoke. As they looked they could hear the rustling of bodies and equipment.

"Banzai, banzai--BANZAI for the Emperor!! Kill the bastard Yanks." Exotic, terrorizing cries in English broke the silence as the Japs made their first attack. Bayonets were fixed; it looked like a wall of steel to the Yanks who rose from their holes to fight for their lives against top-heavy odds.

Staff Sergeant Erwin J. Steffens watched with slitted eyes as a Japanese officer charged down the slight slope to his foxhole. The officer was brandishing his long saber in circles over his head; his mouth and eyes seemed to protrude until his nose receded. "He is enormous; probably nothing will stop him." Steffens lips moved slightly as he talked to himself. There seemed no escape from such a monster.

As the Jap came closer Steffens drew his bayoneted rifle to an on-guard position. He now thought clearly and rapidly--"there is no hope for a parry-

he will probably swing downward--I must..." and the Jap was two feet from his foxhole. Quickly Steffens leaped from his hole and whirled to the right on a forty-five degree turn for one long pace. With the same speed he crossed back to the left at ninety degrees, making a long thrust with his bayonet as the Jap flew past, his saber slashing the air.

Steffens felt hot and cold; his arms and shoulders ached with the sudden jolt when his bayonet pierced the Jap. His rifle butt went into the air as the bayonet went to the ground in the neck of the officer. Hurriedly he withdrew his steel and jumped back into his hole, kicking the Jap out of the way. He looked defiantly at the saber lying on the ground and noted the Jap's hand was tied to the long ivory carved handle.

Along the thin line, determination to live and to stop the Japanese was the same. After a few minutes of fierce fighting the Japs retreated, leaving the Yanks panting and gasping for breath behind them. Sergeant Ryal R. Rivers felt for his smokes as his eyes remained fastened on the place where the last Jap had disappeared.

His hand shook a little as he lit one and started to replace his lighter. "Hold it," said a voice softly. R. V. Thomas crawled over on his hands and knees, knocking a little dirt into Rivers' foxhole as he came.

"Watch what you're doing."

"Sorry".

"Think they'll come back?"

"Sure."

Thomas inhaled deeply and allowed the smoke to drift through his nose in a long, lazy trail that seemed to have no end. He started to sit down but suddenly thought better of it. "Well, see ya later. Thanks for the light," and he crawled back across the rocky ground to his own hole. Rivers grunted and reached for his canteen. It was nearly empty so he did not take a drink. "Better save it," he said to himself. "Lord only knows I'll probably need it for sulfa."

The second banzai attack was not long in coming. It was preceded again by wham, wham, wham; put, tut, tut, tutututut; the screaming of small bits of jagged steel whining through the stillness between bursts. There seemed to be twice as many this time.

The third attack came in the same way. Nothing seemed to be different except that the moon was getting a little lower and the men were growing more weary. It seemed as though they would never be able to hold their arms up to fight. Their throats were parched and even when the Japanese were not charging or throwing mortars their ears were ringing and buzzing.

Thalman crawled from his hole in the center, on his knees. He looked around and called off the names of the men to see if anyone was hurt. One didn't answer--another said he was hit in the leg. Jake Schwartz scrambled over to the wounded man's hole and plastered sulfa powder over the wound and bound

it up with a bandage. There was not much water between them, but what little there was helped the bitter sulfa pills slide down easily.

"Men," commanded Thalman, "listen to me and keep your eyes peeled at the same time. This is getting damned rough. You know as well as I do that our chances of getting out of here alive are slim. I don't know how long those bastards will keep coming at us, but I do know we haven't much ammo and we can't last much longer. The only thing we can do is to save what we've got and pray to God there is help coming. Keep low and wait for 'em to come to us. Don't fire those BARs so often," he paused, panting a little as he thought.

Staff Sergeant Robert Terheggen listened carefully to what Thalman said. Then he spoke, "Thalman, I'm going back for aid. I'll tell them we need ammo and men."

Thalman looked at him for a few minutes and nodded his head. "I doubt if you'll get through. The boys have heard all the rumpus and they'll be watching for trouble, but go ahead, and...good luck."

Terheggen rose swiftly to his feet and doubled over, the rifle in his right hand barely missing the ground as he ran back over the side of the hill. His empty canteen pounded lightly at his thigh.

Once out of sight of the Japanese he stopped to reset his bearings. He took off his steel helmet and placed it noiselessly on the ground. It was heavy and bounced as he ran, covering his eyes and blinding him. He could see the long, steel bridge that

once spanned Bambam river as it lay torn and twisted in the center of the swift-moving river. Next to it, in the sands of the shrunken river was part of his outfit. It wasn't too far. Just down a hill, across the river, and a road and he would be there.

Terheggen moved gingerly as if he wished to avoid awakening a sleeping woman. He stumbled occasionally over a shadowy rock unseen in the darkness, or tripped in a hidden hole. When he approached the wide, paved road, he stopped and yelled. "I'm Terheggen of Easy Company. I know the pass word--may I approach?" He waited for a few seconds and heard a voice call, "Who?"

He repeated the message. "Never heard of him," came the reply. The chances against going any nearer when he had received such a brief and formal answer were too great. Terheggen made the long trip back and reported that they would receive no aid nor ammunition.

The fourth attack came soon after; then a fifth. The handful of desperate Yanks continued to hold against the fanatical Japs. When the Japanese started to drag away their dead following the fifth attack, Thalman decided they could not hold out any longer. All men were out of ammunition and depending on their steel shovels and bayonets.

The completely exhausted men left all of their equipment and straggled slowly down the hill out of war into peace. With them they carried two wounded. They had buried their two dead in their holes, but returned later and moved the bodies to a cemetery.

Twenty-five were still alive. They did not know how or why.

In the morning they and another platoon returned to the hill. Expecting to fight to retake it, they found it vacant. Vacant, except for the sixty dead Japanese who littered the landscape along with sabers, machine guns, dozens of rifles, pole charges and cases of ammo.

\* \* \*

We have seen all types of roads in all kinds of weather but Randall's Folly on Guadacanal stands out as perhaps the most unusual of all. In dry weather it was as hard as concrete. Came the rains and a jeep would sink out of sight.

\* \* \*

I like to recall a story which typifies Colonel Murray. He was always there, very quiet, poised and efficient. One day while he was watching our big guns blasting three Jap naval guns near Bambam, it was evident the Nips could see us as they dropped a few rounds every once in a while just to keep us down and quiet. We could see flashes of the three guns when they fired and knew when to hit the dirt.

As they shelled his observation post, Murray climbed into an old Japanese pillbox. In the darkness he could see the outline of a bomb, but figured it for a dud and did not worry. When the shelling

ceased and he could examine it he found the "Jed" was a live six hundred twenty pound Japanese aerial bomb rigged up as a booby trap. A wire was attached to the fuse and it disappeared in the tall grass toward the enemy lines. After an examination, Murray called for a passing wireman and borrowed about two hundred feet of communication wire. Attaching this to the fuse, he called all the men from the hill. With everyone out of the way he pulled the wire and blew his Japanese foxhole into a huge crater.

\* \* \*

You never can tell what will happen in a conversation with a native. Bob Zaparty once asked a black-skinned lad in a village "What name belong you?" The native smiled a wide beetle-nut smile and replied, "You mean what am I ordinarily called, or what is my given name?"

\* \* \*

"Starnes, Starnes---Starnes," yelled a short, stocky lad, "did you know that one of the boys is still on the hill?"

"Hell, no," exclaimed tall, blond, blue-eyed Starnes. "Who saw him move? I thought he was dead."

"No, he's not. I saw him moving and groaning a little as we came by, but I couldn't catch up with you to tell you."

around him. They knew what he was thinking and were ready to go right back. They were thinking of the man on the hill with fire racing toward him, and of the pasting they had just taken.....

Marcus Tholl lay in his hole quivering and wondering if the next Jap shell was going to land on him. Sergeant J. W. Langston was doing the same. And so was Darwin Waning and Raymond Kountz. Each man could not help but feel that the next one might be his. They had been under fierce mortar, machine gun and artillery fire for many hours. The dry grass around their positions was a tinder box and each had had to leave his hole for a split second and smash out a small grass fire before it should spread.

Starnes yelled, "It's too hot here, boys, we're going back for a while until they can silence those guns. Hike it by spurts...you first, Langston."

One by one the men lugged their equipment and bodies down over the embankment, across lava rock and over boulders. Each one ran until he was down to the bottom of the hill and then collapsed to rest for a few moments until the rest arrived. Starnes arrived next to the last.

And now one of the men had not been able to run; had not been able to escape certain death.

"We'd better get started if we want to beat that fire," said Starnes. "If you find any poles along the way, pick them up as we'll need them."

Leaving their rifles and helmets and ammunition in a pile, the fighters started back up. Their guns

was rapid and they leaned forward to keep their balance as they climbed back over the treacherous boulders. It was mid-afternoon and the sun seemed determined to make things as hard for everyone as it could. It took nearly twice as long to climb back to the top of the six hundred foot hill as it did to race down.

"There he is," yelled Tholl, "over there by the fire." The men ran forward and arrived beside the still form at the same time. Starnes bent over him and felt his pulse. It was weak, but steady.

The wounded Yank opened his eyes and looked around. "Oh," was all he managed to say. Ripping open the pack of the wounded man, Starnes jerked out the rubber poncho and rapidly stretched it out on the ground. The men were quick to follow. They inserted the two stout poles in it and had a stretcher. Langston, Waning and Kountz kneeled on the right. Tholl and Starnes assisted from the left. Slowly they moved him over on the stretcher.

The trip back to safety and aid was very long. Three times the men carrying the home-made stretcher changed around to give each other a rest. They had given the wounded man all of their little water and he lay relaxed as they edged along over the bumpy ground.

"It's a good thing we got there when we did," one of the boys said, "the grass fire was only a few feet from his head."

"Goddamn this war," said someone.

\* \* \*

Major Chittick will always blush with embarrassment at the mention of a copper coil spring used in the making of jungle juice found beneath his floor when we moved from New Britain. Someone thought it would make a good hiding place and he was right.

\* \* \*

## Chapter III

### For Sale--One Horse-Shoe

Orville Foresman was a soft-spoken, big-hearted, good-natured guy. He would do anything to help someone out. Foresman did not like to swear and very seldom smoked. His life was tied to the little town of Guthrie Center, Iowa. The boys used to kid him about his hog calling.

Foresman had been thinking about mom and pa and etc that night when he first heard the voice. It was cold; the dew was heavy and his thin poncho seemed more like a sieve than a repellent. He couldn't sleep even though he was on the inside of the perimeter and he had been trying to for three hours.

The moon had come and gone; only the stars remained blinking continuously. He heard the loud snoring of a man next to him. It was about all he could hear except the voice. He pushed his head out of his poncho and turned over on his stomach, rising to his elbows.

Now the voice sounded strong and near. He had been on the point of dozing. Slowly his eyes adjusted to the darkness as Guthrie Center became the Philippines. "They need a litter up front," said the voice. "They need a litter up front."

Short, stocky Foresman drew on his shoes and tied them tight. He found his green fatigue hat and pulled it down over his head. His weapon was in the corner of his hole. Soon he stood by the dispensary looking at the litters. No one was around so he helped himself. There was only one path to the front





where aid was needed and it was easy to find. With the collapsible litter the supply sergeant walked out of the perimeter into the night.

It didn't seem so far in the daylight--only a few hundred feet. But the dark shadows of the huge rocks and black jungle growth made every inch seem like a mile. With his carbine in one hand and the litter in the other he stumbled along over the rocky trail. He had not gone far when the nightly mortar bombardment of the Yank position began. He fell to the ground and rolled into a gully. His carbine barrel was jammed with dirt and the litter pinched his fingers.

He could hear the heavy mortar shells whistling as they went over and then the loud bommb as they hit. They did not seem close tonight. WHAM-RUMPH, that one was. It seemed like he was bouncing around in a small sail boat. Screaming steel flew past as sweat formed great beads on his forehead. It was a little harder to breathe when he climbed to his feet and stumbled on after the shelling stopped.

"Oh, oh, there's a fork in the path--which one should I take--let's see now," he spoke to himself. Making a choice he moved on with his load. "Golly, but it is black--didn't seem like it was this far--wonder if I took the wrong fork--don't think I did--couldn't have or I'd be in Nip hands by now...". As he stood silently his thoughts were stopped by another voice saying a strange thing, "Sally."

"Sally," repeated the voice. "Yeh, Rand," said Foresman to himself as he suddenly knew someone, was

asking him the countersign. "I must have walked into our lines," and he did not move as his mouth opened and he almost shouted, "Rand."

"Advance and be recognized," came the order and Foresman went forward, knowing he was just about at journey's end.

"Where do they want this," as he pointed to the stretcher. The Yank motioned with his rifle and said, "Hurry." Foresman quickened his pace and soon found himself beside a medic administering plasma to a man on the ground. The tired corpsman spoke drowsily in the semi-darkness, "Glad you're here...where are the others?"

"Others?" repeated Foresman.

"Yeh, you can't carry him by yourself. We sent back for litter bearers."

"Oh, they just said you wanted a litter."

\* \* \*

Meatless Fridays failed to cause too big a problem in the tropics. A few grenades and some swimmers, with or without trunks, would always guarantee a delightful meal of salt water fish. One fellow let his imagination run away with him, however, when he returned to the top of the muddy water with a baby octopus.

\* \* \*

Paul Carroll and Max Foster had a little spare time and nothing to do. So they did what most everyone did during those days. They hunted for trophies.

The battle for Horse-Shoe was over and there was a lot of ground to explore. It promised rich hunting. Shouldering their rifles and filling canteens they took a 'postman's' holiday. Naturally, with all of the Japanese killed on Horse-Shoe there was no need for extra ammo so they did not burden themselves with their rifle belts.

After a long climb around and over the mountain they chanced on a darkened cave and noticed a pair of feet extending over the edge and out into the air. The cave was a little over their heads and just out of reach.

Paul jumped two or three times, trying to grab the dead Nip's feet to pull him to the ground, but he could not reach him. Max decided a piece of rope would do the trick and the two spread out to hunt for some. They found a long manila hemp rope attached to a Jap bulldozer and cut it off with a trench knife.

Making a lasso they hurried back to the cave. On the fourth try the large loop fell over the feet. They both took hold and gave a couple of tugs. The body moved a trifle. They wondered why it did not come out easily. They heaved and pulled and grunted until they were red in the face and hot. As they stopped to rest both thought they heard a groan, but it wasn't repeated so they decided they hadn't. After all they were used to hearing strange noises--and

certainly the Jap was dead. No one could stand that much pulling without some show of life.

They tugged again, a little more lightly though, just to make sure, then listened. Sure enough they heard a groan. Max and Paul dropped the rope like it was a live wire and reached for their rifles. Both seized the nearest one. Max hung on until Paul let go and ran around in circles looking for the other one. He finally stumbled over it. They fired four or five rounds, making good and sure the Nip was dead. Paul glanced at the hot rifle barrel and found he had been using Max's rifle after all. Taking the rope again they hauled the Nip down and Max found a watch. Paul found nothing.

\* \* \*

One of the most respected elements of the outfit was composed of the weaker sex who carried a heavy burden with great skill and determination--the Los Angeles Mother's Club.

\* \* \*

In one phase of the constant action around Horse-Shoe to keep the ground already taken, six infantrymen wrote an epic story with grit and determination. If they had not held on when the chips were down, many lives would have been lost. Sergeant Myles Ventling used his machine gun section of two guns to repel the attack of a battalion of Japanese. It was a masterpiece of technique in the use of machine guns...

A dirt-covered soldier crawled rapidly along the ground through the knee deep grass. He stopped periodically, looked around, listened and then proceeded. Finally he wiggled up to a machine gun and breathlessly asked, "Where's Ventling?" Douglas Murray flipped a cigaret in the same direction the soldier was traveling and answered, "Straight ahead about forty feet. Why, what's up?"

"Nothing," and he wiggled away as Murray looked after him and fingered the green ammunition box. "Bet you two to one," said Murray to Herman Honea, "That we gotta move again."

A few minutes later they heard Ventling, "OK, boys--lift 'em. We're shoving to the rear."

Jim Rutherford jumped to his feet....ran to the machine gun and lifting the ammunition box from the machine gun, closed it. He picked up the other two boxes and placed them beside the rifles which lay on the ground. It was but a matter of a few seconds before they had the gun stripped and ready to move.

"Hurry up," called Ventling from his position. The men picked up their helmets and packs and trotted down the partially beaten path to the other gun position.

"We're pulling back off the hill to the next ridge," Ventling said when all of the men were present. "It looks like the skipper doesn't think we can hold this portion of the hill any longer. We're to set up and cover the withdrawal of the boys if they run into any difficulty. It will have to be fast so

let's go."

Each man, with his section of the machine gun, followed Ventling, who led the way with a pistol in one hand and a bolo knife for cutting jungle and grass out of the way in the other. It did not take the men long to cover the hundred and fifty yards even though most of it was up hill.

"Look," said Ventling surprised, "here come the rest of the boys. Just made it in time. Both guns up?" Five heads nodded together.

Shortly the last man came over the top of the ridge and just then the Nips let go with mortars, followed by the Japanese themselves. Charles Devore sat behind his gun with a finger caressing the trigger, waiting for his first chance. It came as soon as five Japs appeared in a small ravine. He pressed the trigger lightly and expertly and the gun sputtered fast death to the five. An instant later four more heads appeared in the same place and Devore killed them.

Then the Japanese were all over the place and both machine gunners fired free traverse as they sprayed the hillside. They used four hundred rounds of ammunition in their six man stand and killed over forty Nips. They stopped the attack cold.

\* \* \*

Speaking of troop ships, wasn't the President Johnson one of those things you dream about? It rode so roughly that even the sailors were sick.

\* \* \*

It stuck out like a sore thumb, Horse-Shoe Ridge did. There was no doubt about that. There wasn't any way around it. Covered with dense jungles it was ugly, steep and full of Japs. No one was ever able to think of anything nice about Horse-Shoe Ridge. Its domineering, obstructive appearance convinced intelligent men it would be much wiser to seek another route. But Horse-Shoe was a Nip Clip Joint and it had to be cleared out.

When the fight for Horse-Shoe was over one marveled at the courage of the boys who had fought up the steep slopes. It was the highest, most deadly mountain yet encountered by the men up to that date. We were sure the Japs would never be able to construct another defense as tough as Horse-Shoe, but, of course, we were wrong. While not many Japs were killed on the ridge itself, a lot were accounted for in the approaches. Lt. Karl Lundeen and his section sergeant, Amador Diaz, reported some two hundred and twenty-five killed in one of their most spectacular concentrations of mortar and machine gun fire.

\* \* \*

The sun was bright and red when it first appeared over the hazy, blue-fringed mountains from the east. Its warm glow reached into the damp corners of the many foxholes; into the weary, chilled bones of the hungry soldiers. A tall lad jumped to his feet and hurriedly picked up a small shovel. He walked rapidly over the top of the hill and stopped beside the jungle and began to dig.

Another man strolled up as he was digging, followed by a third. "Who's got the paper?" asked the third with a sigh of relief. "Goddamn these GI's. This is the fourth time since last night. My fox-hole stinks worse than an outhouse." The other two boys laughed. "Yeah," said one. "Next war I'm gonna stay home and invent a portable crapper. That'll fix things."

"Next war, hell," chirped the other one, "what's the matter with this one?" There was silence again as the three squatted, each with his own problems. One of the boys took a cigaret from his shirt pocket. "Butts," yelled the one nearest.

"I hear we're gonna move this morning," casually remarked the smoker. "I hope to hell I move some right now," said another. "Yeah, me too. Here," he passed the cigaret to the man next to him and prepared to leave.

It was nearly eight when Captain Thomas Leonard gave the command for the company to march. The sun was hot and it was not long before the night's chills turned to sweat as the men walked over the grassy fields.

They were headed for battle; to relieve and pass through Stillwell's boys who had been beating their brains out for two days. They had come a long way in from National Highway since they started a few days ago. Over nine thousand yards so the map said, but to them it was foot-sore miles. Most of the time they would have felt picked on and bitchy because they had to go into action again, but this

time they did not as it meant they could move away from Dysentery Hill. It was true their problem of hurried movements wouldn't be solved, but they were getting away from the stink and that was something.

\* \* \*

Staff Sergeant Bill Isaacson crouched low behind a thick mass of vines and twisted green foliage. Beside him squatted John Estok who was vainly trying to point out what he thought was a Japanese pillbox. "Don't you see it? Right through there--straight ahead, next to the bright green leaf shaped like an elephant's ear. You see it?" he insisted. Isaacson continued to gaze intently into the maze of vegetation and slowly shook his head from side to side.

Then suddenly, he saw it. The jagged leaf shape was clear after looking closely for a long time. It was a masterpiece of camouflage cleverly melting into the jungle which surrounded it. "I got it," he said softly. "Are there any more?"

"I haven't seen anything else yet," answered Estok. Isaacson rose to his hands and knees and started to back down the steep embankment. He felt his way with his legs and feet so he could watch the pillbox from the front. "Keep your eyes open and I'll be right back. We can't take it with our rifles that's for sure," he added as he slipped away.

It took Isaacson quite some time to locate Lt. Leo McGarry who was well concealed in some bamboo. "We've spotted one of their boxes," said Isaacson in

an undertone, "and we'll never get by it. We can't hit it with our mortars and it's too tough for the bazooka." McGarry thought for a few minutes and then asked, "How far is it?"

"Just about a hundred yards--no, maybe not that far. Maybe fifty yards on a straight line."

"Tell you what I think we can do," decided little McGarry. "We'll use some rifle grenades and see what happens."

Nothing happened going up. We came down after meeting an impossible situation. There were some men on Storm King who live only because Marvin Kersten and James Bridger sacrificed their lives for them. The Japanese fire was too deadly and before we could withdraw, we had suffered heavy casualties. There was only one way to get the wounded out. Kersten and Bridger sensed this and jumping to their feet with their BARs they forced the Japanese to scattered firing. Standing in the open without any regard for their own safety, they died. Their heroism was typical of the men who took Horse-Shoe.

\* \* \*

It poured rain until the fish wouldn't have it. The mud was well over our ankles and it was impossible to see where we were going in the darkness.

When we got to the movies, we couldn't sit in this or that section as it was reserved for the Sea Bees and officers.

The seats were cocoanut logs and boxes-- someone nearly always saved a few seats for some friends who arrived late and yelling.

It rained all through the picture, during which time the film broke at least twice. Such were the movies on Guadalcanal until Atabrinarena was built.

\* \* \*

"Yes sir, there is no doubt about it," he declared. "I am one of the luckiest guys around here." The medium-built, brown-haired Irish youth placed his glass on the counter and beckoned to the bartender. "Another one." The man beside him held up a finger to indicate his wish also, not wanting to interrupt. "Yep," the Irishman continued, "if it hadn't been for a guy by the name of Baker I'd probably be a goner."

"I was hit pretty hard--right here in the groin," Irish touched his left leg. The aid man who fixed me up after I got it was plenty worried. I could see it in his face, but he wouldn't say a thing. That was the way those guys were. You'd be ninety per cent blown to bits and they'd start to patch you up as though you had a scratch, never letting on how bad you were.

"Well, when they strapped me on the meat board I knew I was in for a long haul. There were four guys carrying the litter--one on each handle so there wasn't too much bumping around. When we left Horse-

Shoe, the boys were expecting trouble with the Nips so they high-tailed it down.

"Luck was against us, though, and we were caught dead center in one of the Jap feelers. That's when they lay in a few rounds to see where you are. Yep, we were right in the middle of the trail when it started and there was nothing to do but get as close to the ground as possible and hope to hell none of 'em hit. They kept up the shelling until I thought I'd go nuts. I couldn't get up and try for my own cover. I knew the rest of the boys wanted to get out of there and that I was holding them back. God, it was hell! I wanted them to go and I wanted them to stay.

"It was evident the Nips were laying in on the trail that we were using to get out. I guess they thought a supply party was using it or something. But then this guy Baker..."

The listener interrupted him, "What was his first name, do you know?"

The Irishman thought for a minute and tried to recall. "It was a strange name. I thought about it at the time...had something to do with walking... let's see. Oh yes, I remember. Miles, that's it. Miles."

The listener nodded his head and motioned the bartender for two more drinks.

"Well, when Baker found that we weren't going to get out on that trail, he told all of us to lay low and he'd find another. Some of the boys said he

was crazy as a bedbug to go wandering around in the jungles. They figured he'd either get lost or shot and it was a sure case of suicide. I thought so too, but felt so damned bad I couldn't tell him not to go. If there was any chance of getting out of there I wanted to do it.

"I reckon he was gone about half an hour. The Nips had not stopped for a second. When I heard him say he'd found another way out, I thought I would burst with joy. I don't ever expect to be able to explain the feeling I had that day. I don't think I cried, but it wouldn't surprise me if I had. I know that when they picked that litter up again and started out through the new path trampled down by Baker, I passed out and didn't come to for some time afterwards.

It wasn't until we reached the aid station that I found out there were four of us wounded in that group he brought out. He kept us so strung out I hadn't seen the others."

Irish paused to sip his whiskey and his listener drew his briar pipe from his coat pocket. Both of the men were silent for a few minutes. The busy street sounds of New York drifted in the door as customers passed in and out.

"You said the man's name was Miles Baker," said the listener smilingly breaking the silence between the two. "Well, there is little you can tell me about him or that trip, my friend. I was on the third litter back."

\* \* \*

It is funny how the natives of New Britain named some of their villages. Take Sag Sag, for instance. One look at their women and you knew why it was so named.

\* \* \*

## Chapter III

### Snake

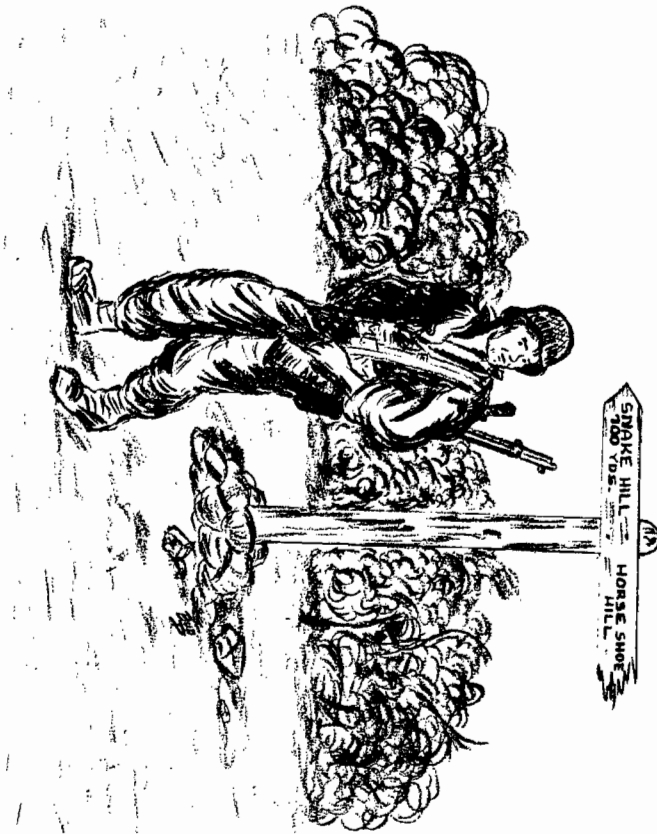
The fighting and killing stopped once in a while, but never for very long. It couldn't stop. There was always another mountain to fight for; more Japanese to kill. Killing was all life became for the men buried in the Zambales Mountains. The difference between night and day became negligible. They ate when there was food and drank when they had water. They cat-napped when they had the chance and cleaned their rifles, machine guns, or mortars the rest of the time. The pattern of life, the routine, became unchanging.

Yet there were occasions when a day did mean something. February 18, 1945 was such a day for the fighters on Snake Hill. It was the day they came off of the bloody hill for the second hot meal in thirty seven days.

They took their first bath in more than ten days. They threw water on one another, yelled, frolicked and lay submerged beneath the cool, fast-rushing mountain stream as the accumulation of dirt, mud, sweat and even blood was rinsed from their strong but weary bodies. They washed their only pair of pants and shirts and laid them in the sun to dry while they sat nude in the sun and read their first mail from home in days.

And, they slept. They slept without fear of sudden and horrible death; awakened feeling rested and content.

The "Snake" men felt they could take it easy for a while as they had been through literal hell, wrest-





ing the cone-shaped mountain that rose fifteen hundred feet above the Sacobia River, from the Japs.

It seemed to the men that General MacArthur was partially to blame for their pain, misery and strife because of the foolishness of ordering a Victory Parade in Manila. He ordered men from the front lines to be sent to Fort Stotsenburg where they stayed a day while waiting to be transported to Manila. At that time Manila was still, for the most part, in the hands of the Japanese and it was impossible to have a parade. While the soldiers sat around waiting for the parade, the men fighting for Snake Hill nearly lost all of the ground they had taken, in the face of continued Jap attacks

It must be remembered that many of our companies were below half strength from casualties and when this handful was further depleted for the proposed parade, there were comparably few left.

Technical Sergeant Frank Rutledge propped a small mirror up on a rock near the stream and lathered his week-old beard. He was using the same water to shave with that Bill Rollka was washing his dirty socks in, but Frank made the best of it. His mirror was cracked and he had to bend low to see his face clearly. After carefully dipping his razor in the mucky water after each stroke, he finished his left cheek. As he poised his razor about to start his right side he turned to Bill.

"Say, do you know who it was that had to use his bayonet the other day? I've tried to remember, but I can't, for the life of me."

Bill paused in his labors to make the socks look clean and removed the cigaret that drooped from his mouth, "Sure," he exclaimed, "that was little Avila. Israel Avila, I think his full name is."

"Yeah, that's him. Say, he was right in there pitching that day. I didn't think he was fast enough to dodge a Jap's thrust. But, I guess everyone can move pretty fast when they have to."

"Well, I guess I could move all right," laughed Bill, "but I don't think it would be the way he did. I think I would have frozen to the spot when I saw that Nip's steel at my throat. Not him, though. He just politely side steps and lets go with his own bayonet right smack in the Jap's gizzard.

"Sure was a nice piece of foot work. Then did you know how he plugged the guy twice to get his bayonet out? That's the part I like. He didn't waste a second's time on the fellow. He got that damned thing out as fast as he could and moved the hell out of there." Both men laughed as they pictured Avila trying to pull his bayonet out of the dead Japanese so he could get away from more danger.

Harry Leach stepped out from behind a clump of thick bamboo and waded across the shallow creek. He slumped to the ground and dug the dried mud off of his shoes which he carried. "Can I use your soap, Bill?" asked Leach as he stripped off his dirty pants. Bill picked up the small bar of white soap and tossed it to Leach who missed it. The soap fell in the water and sank to the bottom while the naked soldier

searched rapidly.

He lifted it from the water and began to rub it across his body, then stopped. Holding the small piece of soap to the light he yelled, "What the hell is this? A piece of soap or a piece of window-pane? You can see daylight through it."

"If you don't want it," answered Bill, "just bust your arm and throw it back. I'll rent it to someone else."

"Rent it?" replied Leach. "What do you mean, rent? This is GI soap, ain't it?"

Bill smiled as he continued to rub his socks, "Well, Leachy, ol' boy, if you don't want to pay rent, just trot down to the Red Cross and maybe they'll give you a hunk of soap."

"I've been there and they haven't got any. I also went to see the Chaplain and he punched my T.S. card, so don't tell me to go there." Frank, Bill and Leach laughed together at their own satire of army life. "Say", continued Leach more seriously, "I heard you got a Nip at four hundred yards, Rut."

"No kiddin'," exclaimed Bill. "Is that right, Frank?"

"Yeah, I was lucky. Who told you?"

"Oh, one of the boys," said Leach. "I don't remember who it was. But he also knew about the two you got with grenades and the five with your M1."

"Whew," sighed Bill. "Eight Nips on Snake Hill. That's not bad at all. Hell, you'd do all right if

you had a machine gun."

Frank blushed deeply as the two men praised his shooting. "Oh, I was just lucky, that's all. Just lucky."

The three men continued with their work. Bill finished his socks and picking up his wet pants and shirt, prepared to leave as Ray White dropped his clothes in a heap and waded into the center of the ever-darkening water. "Happy birthday, Bill," he said.

"How did you know it was my birthday?" demanded Bill, eyeing him carefully, knowing that his secret was out. "Oh, I saw one of the birthday cards you got in the mail. You left one of them where we ate."

"Oh, well I thought I had lost one of the cards, but I wasn't sure. Thanks for telling me where. Is it still there?"

"I guess so, unless someone has picked it up for something."

Leach sat up in the water. "When was your birthday, Bill? How come you didn't say anything about it?"

"It was nearly a week ago and you know we were busy. As a matter of fact, I'd forgotten all about it until mail call today. Seemed funny to get birthday cards way over here." He turned slowly around and headed up the trail to the open field.

"Say," exclaimed Ray, "that chow sure did taste good. I never thought I'd see the day when baked Spam would taste soooooo good. I went back for sec-

onds, but they wouldn't give me any more."

"Seconds," laughed Frank. "More like fifths."

"Yeah," chimed in Leach. "When did you go on a diet? I'd like to see the day when you stop at seconds."

"All right," frowned Ray. "Maybe I was a little bit hungry. Since when is that any sin? And I suppose you were holding out your mortar top for 'em to pour champagne in, huh?"

"Who m?" asked Frank with a hurt look, "Why, you nasty man. You know better than to say a thing like that. I was only asking for the scraps left from the biscuit box. They always have plenty of biscuits. They follow us from hill to hill collecting them. I thought they could certainly spare a couple of extras."

"Sure--sure," quipped Ray. "I understand. Except for one thing. These were fresh, nice hot fresh ones! Right straight from the baker's oven."

A few hundred feet away from the "bathroom" creek was the "lounge", decorated with large shade trees and plenty of soft grass. Men were sprawled out in odd positions as they slept or read their mail.

There were no card games. The only amusement they wanted was rest. Beneath one of the smaller trees, beside their foxholes, Pat Scetta and Roy Swanson reread their precious thumb-worn mail for the third time. The old envelopes were dirty from their finger prints and smudge marks, but they still

protected the letters from harm.

"It says here," said Pat, "that they're having a hard time getting meat back home."

"That's too bad, isn't it? One of my old girl friends got married last month. Had a big wedding with all the trimmings. She said she wished I could have been there, too. Ain't that something?"

"Things are sure changing back there. Wonder if they'll be different when we get back?"

"Sure things are bound to change a little, but it won't be hard to get back in the groove." The men sat silent for a few minutes as thoughts of home ran swiftly through their minds. They wondered what was going on, and what day it was. It didn't seem possible that they were almost a day ahead of the people at home. Or was it behind? They could not remember for sure.

"Say, Roy," asked Pat hesitantly, "what did it feel like when you ran that Nip through the other day? Is it the same as shooting them?"

"Oh, I don't know for sure. I haven't shot too many. As far as I can remember there wasn't much feeling at all. I knew the Nip wasn't dead after the two grenades went off and so I just stuck him. I guess it was something like you'd stick a hotdog that fell into the fire. What was it like to kill the five you did?"

"Guess I'm about the same as you," said Pat sitting up and taking a cigaret from his container. "There wasn't any feeling particularly. I guess

it's because you know you aren't going to die from the trigger you're pulling. To me, it's just as if I were countin' bulls on the range. Every time I see one of them fall I just say, that's one more, to myself and start waiting for the next shot."

"Well, it's just about the same with a bayonet. Only, you worry a little bit about having to fight it out with him while you're charging. But, after it's all over, it's just the same as you said...it's just one more." He was thoughtful for a moment and then continued, "You know, it's not the killing of people, one way or another right now, that bothers me. I worry more about how I'll feel after it's over. You know what I mean, don't you."

"Yes," replied Pat with a nod of his head, "Yeah, I know what you mean all right and that kind of bothers me too. And, you know what I think?" He continued without waiting for an answer. "I think it is a good thing we don't have time to think much right now. And, after a while even though we do get a few funny ideas we will be all right."

"Do you think the war will ever end?"

"Oh, sure, someday. There's gotta be an end sometime."

\* \* \*

It was maddening for a time to be surrounded with pineapples and have to pay a \$50.00 fine for biting into one. But, there came a time when we would gladly pay

the \$50 to have a pineapple, a good 2,000 miles to our west.

\* \* \*

Charles W. Edmunds -

### A Fightin' Medic

There will always be untold stories about our friends who did not have to do something, but did. And because they did, in many instances, they were killed. Sometimes they knew they were going to die and sometimes they didn't. Yet, at the time, the decision of life or death wasn't the all-important one to them. It was always a case of what was the vital thing to do at that particular moment.

Yet they acted in every instance with forethought. They thought of doing a deed which would save the lives of others. The spirit of sacrifice on the front line is told in blood and memories. I have in mind one story which is typical of many.

There wasn't room in the crowded jeep for the medic who wished to go on the emergency call. He stood by the small carrier as the motor idled smoothly, waiting to be called. But all of the men in the jeep were busy arranging their rifles, aid pouches and litters.

As the driver shifted gears into low, the small-boned, thin-faced, spectacled medic spoke, asking again if he could go. After a few seconds of confer-

ence, the men in the crowded jeep decided there was room for one more and the medic climbed in.

As they drove along over a rutty road at the front, a Jap threw a hand grenade into the jeep. It fell in the lap of the small medic and rolled to the floor before he could retrieve it. He was sitting in the middle of the front seat and when the jeep stopped so everyone could jump out the small medic was busy trying to locate the dangerous grenade.

It exploded as he and another man were attempting to get out. Fragments sprayed their legs and bodies. Even though he was wounded, the medic gave first aid to the other man before the others from the jeep could return. The tiny medic was bleeding profusely, but he didn't think about himself until the rest arrived to help him.

When he was taken to the hospital it was necessary to amputate both legs below the knees. It took the doctors hours to remove the hundreds of pieces of jagged steel that had pierced his face, chest, stomach and groin. In two days, the weak, courageous man needed eighteen pints of blood plasma to keep his heart beating its slow, but steady beat.

In a week he was strong enough to be evacuated to Leyte. He clutched his Purple Heart in his small white hands as he was lifted into the plane. There were tears in his eyes as he said to me, "Say hello to mom and pop for me, won't you?" He smiled a little at their names and closed his eyes as they carried him through the door of the plane. On Leyte, he died.

Pfc. Charles Edmunds did not have to go in the jeep to the aid of the men. And he didn't have to treat the second wounded man before he treated himself, but he did. Edmunds, simply did what he thought was his duty.

\* \* \*

The regimental maneuver for the Hilo airstrip on Hawaii was climaxed with astute finesse. The infiltrating "enemy" was under "Monsieur" Norman. He hid his troops beneath the sugar cane loaded in box cars, and taking his place as assistant engineer they steamed past patrols without discovery.

On their second infiltration mission, the "Brain Trust" stripped the tires from a command car and drove down the railroad tracks at ten miles an hour in a driving rain.

\* \* \*

Hugo Filizetti was a big man, and he was also a handsome man. But his looks have no part in this story--only his muscular hundred and eighty pound body. Luck, too, plays an important role, and of course wits and courage. I know of only three situations where a Yank had to rely on his fists in a clash with the Japanese and Hugo's fight is one.

It was five in the cool morning when Hugo first saw the Jap walking without caution down the path.

There was a light Japanese machine gun by Hugo's foxhole which had been captured the previous afternoon in the fight for the hill.

The Japanese was talking out loud, thinking as he saw the machine gun that his friends still held the hill. The path was narrow that this unsuspecting fellow walked and was bounded on both sides by dense jungle. It was very dark--like it always is just before dawn. The intruder was only a few feet from Hugo's foxhole when Hugo spotted him.

Bending low and almost motionless over the Jap machine gun, Filizetti pulled the trigger, but the gun did not fire. Something was wrong and he didn't have time to find out what.

He swiftly scooped up his tommy gun as the Jap moved closer--still entirely unaware of what was happening ahead of him. The clip release which discharges the magazine from the chamber, and the safety of a tommy gun are side by side. In the heated excitement, Hugo's finger slipped and pushed the wrong catch. The valuable ammunition dropped to the ground with a soft 'plunk' and he held a useless weapon.

That is, almost useless. When he saw his mistake, he stepped boldly forward and threw the tommy gun with all his might. It connected squarely with the Jap's chest and sent him staggering: as he struggled to keep his feet, he reached for his pistol, but it was evidently stuck and he couldn't get it out.

Both men were, by now, within spitting distance of each other and wrestling with their respective weapons. Hugo threw a grenade at the Jap's head but the Nip ducked. Hugo hadn't pulled the pin as he did not want to hurt his friends in the surrounding foxholes.

The Jap stood over the foxhole--swinging his rice bucket--hitting Hugo in the face. Blindly, Hugo reached out and grabbed the Nip by his clothes with his left hand, using his right to pound his opponent's face.

Hugo yelled and yelled for help, until he thought his lungs would burst. His nose was bloody and one eye closing. He did not know just what he was doing to the Japanese, but he was connecting and that counted.

Ketterling slept soundly in the same foxhole with Hugo. From afar he heard Hugo's yells for help. It seemed as if he travelled hundreds of miles as he slowly became conscious. Springing to his feet, he snatched a rifle from the ground.

His wide eyes narrowed on one point--the Jap's chest. Rapidly he shoved the rifle under Hugo's right arm and into the stomach of the Japanese. When he felt it thump against him, he pulled the trigger.

It all happened so quickly that Hugo found himself pounding a dead Jap minus most of his chest. He dropped the corpse and turned slowly around to face Ketterling. His left eye was closed and his mouth puffed. His muffled whisper was faint but audible, "Thanks, you sure saved me."

## Chapter V

### Storm King

Technical Sergeant Jim Hill was sitting on the edge of his foxhole on the side of Storm King making a telephone call to Third Battalion Headquarters. Another Yank, four feet away was shaving when they heard the crack of a sniper's rifle. The Yank shaving, dropped, wounded through the chest.

"I always shake at the thought of it," Jim said. "That sniper was a long way off and his shots couldn't have been too accurate. He was probably aiming between us and hoping to hit one. It could have been me, just as well."

Chuck Dahlberg has no trouble recalling the grenade that landed on his stomach in the middle of the night. "I was half awake and half asleep when it happened," he once related. "I was out of that hole though in a split second...long before it went off. I hate to think what would have happened if I'd been dreaming of my girl."

Frank Merger was feeling as snug as a bug in a rug in his shallow foxhole when the Nips started their nightly barrage. One of the shells dropped about twelve feet from his hole as he was lighting a smoke to cool his frayed nerves. "I never did find the smoke. When that fourth one dropped so close I mashed it, live coal and all, burying my face into the hard dirt. After the shelling was over I couldn't stand up for nearly ten minutes and then I hurriedly dug my hole much deeper."



Technical Sergeant John Poppe also had a few more gray hairs, as a result of Japanese shelling. One of the heavies ploughed a deep furrow directly in front of his foxhole covering him with debris from head to foot.

Harry Mockbee will always thank Lady Luck for her kind attention while he was lugging seventy-five badly needed hand grenades up one of the steeper sides of Storm King. A fragment of Japanese shell whizzed through his fatigue cap without touching a hair on his head. "I remember turning slightly green, reaching down to pick up my hat, and moving quietly over the hill in a swishing movement. Why I ever stopped for that darned hat is something I'll never know."

John Cambra was with him carrying more grenades in his steel helmet and he nearly fell down from laughing when he saw Harry disappear. He didn't waste too much time laughing, though, and soon tied Mockbee for first place in their dash. "I know it wasn't the least bit funny at the time, but Harry looked so silly when he picked his hat up. I guess we sometimes do crazy things when our neck is out a mile."

Not everything is close though. There are a few lucky people who never seem to have anything happen to them. They are neither fired on nor see a Nip. Take Pio Chiesa, for instance. He carried his bazooka with ammunition, two grenades, his Garand rifle with seventy-two rounds of ammunition for over thirty-seven days and never fired a shot. It seems some

people catch all the hell; others all the luck.

\* \* \*

He bought a "genuine" Japanese flag from a Marine. When he had it deciphered, he found it said among other things, "To hell with the Navy. Oh, my aching back!! Be a 4-F, Join the Infantry."

\* \* \*

In many places the yellow flames snapped and jumped fifteen feet into the smoke-covered sky as the kunai grass burned savagely. The dense, yellowish smoke burned your eyes and made you cough, almost choke. Elsewhere it was midafternoon and the sun still shown brightly in the heavens, but in your fiery kingdom where life was fighting wildly for survival, it was almost as black as night.

For the first time in your life you did not want to feel the gentle caress of soft winds, and the thought of a possible cyclone drove you frantic. Your face was streaked with sweat, tears and blackish grime. Your throat was parched; your tongue seemed like a log--something that would gag you.

Art Eloge and Roman Gaul squatted beneath a tree and scanned the fiery wall in hope of seeing a hole. They had their handkerchiefs tied tightly over their mouths. Art tipped his canteen slightly and cupped his hand to catch the water. He rescrewed the



cap before dipping his covered mouth into the water.

"See anyway to get out of here?" asked Roman. "With those Nips peppering us from the front and right, it's going to be a tough baby."

"Sure is," sighed Art. "I guess the only thing we can do is to try and get through the fire. How far back does it go, do you know?"

"No! I sent Frank and Dick the other way to see what they could find. We were to meet them here. They should be back soon." He drew a cigaret from his shirt pocket, "Do you think this little fire will add to the heat any?" He laughed mockingly.

Frank Rabovsky and Dick Vox soon stumbled through the thickening smoke with the news that there was no way out. "Hell," exclaimed Frank. "This is one sweet mess. I'd give anything to have a good big hose right now." Dick muttered something under his breath and then out loud, "Well! Let's do something! I don't want to roast to death sitting down."

"Where is what's his name?" asked Art suddenly as they shifted their light combat packs on their backs. "I saw him a few minutes ago."

"I guess the smoke got him," answered Dick. "I saw Bob Hohenstein working over him a little while ago. Bob's been busy as the devil. This is the fifth one he has had to take care of. Three got burned pretty badly and he gave blood plasma to another."

"Yeah, he sure is doing good work," agreed Roman. "I don't think he needs any help from us or he'd ask.

Our best bet is to get out of here so he doesn't have to treat us."

Slinging their rifles the four men crawled low, running through the fire, until they came to a charred clump of grass a few feet away.

"Look," cried Frank, "the wind's changing a little. If we keep going straight ahead we can make it."

\* \* \*

Volunteers for night loading details were not hard to find. They knew their efforts would generally be rewarded with an extra can of fruit juice or some new clothes.

\* \* \*

Sometimes a man seems to know when "his" is coming. It is an indescribable feeling. Generally speaking the man doesn't feel sorry for himself, but is always more concerned about his wife, sweetheart, or mother.

There was one lieutenant who suddenly got the feeling. The night before he went to join his new company, he wrote a long letter to his wife. He gave it to one of his closest friends, along with his watch and wallet, asking him to see that his wife received them. His friend thought it was rather foolish, but accepted them.

The lieutenant took his place shortly after

sunrise with the men as they began their day's operation. He was careful and thoughtful as he fought his way along. However, all of this proved useless. He was shot by a sniper.

Then there are some men who feel that nothing will ever harm them and they do not worry about being killed. Such a person was Claude Boody. Under a very fierce Japanese counter attack, he pulled two wounded men out to safety, ran four hundred yards through enemy fire for grenades and ammunition, and organized the frightened men into a solid line that held against tremendous odds.

All of the time he was exposed. Many of the shells and bullets were close and probably if he had stopped to reason about his chances, he would have been hit. Instead, something inside told him that he wasn't going to get hurt and he wasn't.

\* \* \*

It was a little hard to understand at the time, and more thought and time still furnish no answer. Why did the call come a day after the New Ireland dress rehearsal for men to fall out for short-arm inspection?

\* \* \*

"Lomblad -- LOMBLAD!"

"Lomblad -- LOMBLAD!" roared Captain Hopkins,

"Come here." Art grinned at George Lanfear who was busily wrapping Art's jungle rotted, red, swollen hands.

"Wonder what he wants now?" smiled Lomblad, his eyes dancing like a small kid who had just raided the cookie jar. Lanfear just shrugged his shoulders. "You know as well as I do. If you kept your nose in your business here at supply instead of wandering all over hell he probably wouldn't want you."

"Think he wants some pistol cleaner? I just got some of the best cleaner. Can't rust--guaranteed not to shrink the barrel and increases the number of shots three times every time it's fired."

"The hell you say."

"Ya, but don't tell a soul, will ya?" He put his finger to his lips and looked cautiously around before whispering in George's ear. "I'm gonna get it patented. I was gonna sell it to the Nips, but last nite when I talked it over with them they wouldn't pay enough." Lomblad grinned at George when he heard another roar... "Lomblad -- LOMBLAAAAD--REPORT!"

"Sounds mad, don't he?"

"You standin' here chewin' the fat isn't going to make him any happier."

"Think I'd better go?"

"You can't 'til I finish this."

"Did I tell you about my new beer bottle top I'm gonna manufacture when this is over? Can't tell

you much, but---well, it's my 'psyc ift bottle top'. All you have to do is think about drinking a bottle and the top pops right off! But, ya know, there's a hitch. I'd start making it right now if it wasn't for one thing. Just think what it would mean to the war. Why, we'd lose it. Suppose now all the guys started thinking about a nice, cold swig. What would happen to all the beer in the officer's quarters? Why the tops would blow off and kill all our wonderful leaders and then where would we be?"

"Lomblad. Any one seen LOMBLAD? Tell him, I want him...LOMBLAD."

"You'd better go before Hoppie blows a valve," warned Lanfear.

"I think I'll wander out to the latrine for a smoke. If he comes in here tell him you think I might be there. If he doesn't come I'll show up after he cools down."

As Art slouched off through the dense Jungle trail he ran head-long into Captain Hopkins. "Lomblad, didn't you hear me calling you? Where have you been?"

"I was just comin' sir. I was having my hands bandaged." He held them up as proof.

"Look, Lomblad. I've had enough trouble with you. Everytime I turn around and want you, you're gone. What do you think this is? A circus? What were you doing over at "F" Company--way up at the front, two miles from here?"

"Nothing, Sir. I just heard they were short of atabrine and I took it over to 'em."

*The Truth of the Matter:* "F" Company had been under mortar fire for three straight nights. Art knew the men were short of hand grenades and morale. When nobody was looking he paddled quietly away loaded down with the grenades and his rare humor. The boys were not short of atabrine. Far from it. On seeing their skins turned so yellow many of the boys decided they would just sort of save their atabrine for future reference and filed it in "Z" file.

"I heard you stayed with some kid all night. Is that so?"

"Just a rumor, Sir."

*The Truth Of The Matter:* Art encountered one fellow with whom he used to play poker. The boy was feeling under the weather. C rations didn't agree with him, he had diarrhea, he detested his own stink and sweat. He hadn't received any mail from home for three weeks: the last letter described his father's serious operation. And the terrifying scream of shell fragments in the nightly Japanese bombardments was the straw that broke his back. The fellow needed company and assurance. He wasn't yellow--just disgusted and sick of the whole business. Lomblad had camped with him for the night, giving him a little priceless company and assurance.

"What about your trip last week over to "G" Company--I suppose that was to see how the cook was feeling."

"Oh, no, Sir. I just wanted to run over some magazines for the boys."

*The Truth of the Matter:* Roaming Art suddenly felt dissatisfied with the inactivity in Battalion Headquarters and decided to go sniper hunting. He had telescopic sights on his M1 rifle and it was not unusual for him to lie for hours sniping. He made no boasts of the number killed or the distances he fired. When Art found the sun going down he decided he had better find some of the gang to sleep with for the night. He meandered about until he found "G" Company, where he settled down.

"Lomblad, you're not a newsboy. You're a supply corporal. This Company's supply corporal. My supply corporal. I want you here. Not all over these damned hills."

"Yes, Sir."

"One more thing. S-2 reports that you were seen coming out of Jap territory yesterday--walking down a hill--the same hill our men were trying to take. What in hell were you doing? Trying to get killed. You know better than to stick your neck out."

"Yes, Sir."

*The Truth of the Matter:* While he was out souvenir hunting one morning, Lomblad wandered into the Japanese zone. After a fruitless search for souvenirs he turned to sniper hunting. Discouraged by the lack of targets, Art, slung his rifle and headed back home. With his fatigue cap in one hand and a cigaret in the other, Lomblad finally reached the

bottom of the high hill he had been wandering around on all morning. At the bottom he encountered an American lieutenant in command of a platoon. The dough boys were in skirmish formation ready to start the fight for that unconquered hill. Always obliging, Lomblad gaily announced to the grim and determined lieutenant, "It's all right, boys, go on up. There is nobody there."

"Don't stand there and 'yes, sir' me all day. What were you doing?"

"Just lookin', Captain."

"Just looking! LOMBLAD, if you don't quit this damned running around I'm going to throw the book at you. I'll have you court-martialed for desertion. I'll bust you to a private. I'll take away your combat infantry badge."

Art stood silent with his eyes on the ground and fumbled his new badge.

It was a half hour later when Captain Hopkins half galloped from one foxhole to another hollering. "Lomblad, oh Lomblad. Any one seen Lomblad?"

One helmetless, sweaty mortarman, eating his chow, nodded in reply.

"Well, where is he?"

"Oh, I don't know for sure. He said something about taking some Red Cross smokes to the boys in "E" Company."

\* \* \*

Writing by Coleman lantern in July, 1944, one man included this masterpiece in a letter to his stateside friends:

#### YE OLDE HEADE

The "L" Company "Club La Trine" has been re-named the "Hot Squat" due to the misadventure of a well-meaning but misguided latrine orderly. The story as we get it mentions the orderly dropping a trifle of diesel oil and a match down one side of the affair, with the resultant blowing up of three seats and two Privates First Class who were moodily occupying other seats. This may of course be strictly a rumor as doubtless is the case of three Corporals who were awarded the Purple Heart for receiving splinters in the pratt before Headquarters, Second Battalion put plush upholstery in their outhouse.

We haven't verified this, but we understand the Cannon Company's latrine is more popular than Sergeant Merritt's bunk now that lights, newspapers and unexpurgated Esquires are to be found there.

One common complaint is the distance of latrines from a guy's tent. For an average individual, the urge is lost long before a fellow covers the distance. For the weak-kidney lad, the three A.M. trek is a terrific strain on his plumbing and will power. For the diarrhea patient, the ground to be covered is fraught with many perils and demands more physical control and speed than most normal persons possess.

This brings us to the torture chamber of med-

ieval design, known in GI parlance as the straddle trench. It is conceived in extremity and it is our bare extremity which gets exposed to the meandering mosquito and prowling Blue-Bottle Fly. Not even a trained Apache dancer can enjoy the spread-eagle necessary to successfully use one of the contraptions, especially with a chill wind blowing up one's rear. The long lengths of ineptly cut grass add to the consternation of someone in real need, as he balances precariously above the pit. Naturally the paper is just beyond reach and is invariably wet when you do find it.

Straddle trenches are at their vicious worst after dark, when the easiest way to find one is to wander about and fall into it. There is also the unfortunate Joe who mistakes it for a foxhole and is quite saddened by the result.

Quartermaster boxes are instruments of the devil if left exposed to the sun, as they guarantee to sear off the skin where it is tenderest. Any cover put over the box will definitely send a steady trickle of water down an unwary user's neck at the first rain. Where the roof sags there's a puddle of water which hits your helmet on leaving the place, loosing a fetid shower on clean HBTS.

The best way to ruin a day completely is to drop the collar and both sleeves of your coveralls in the hole just as you sit down. This act is calculated to sour you on life in general and on QM boxes in particular. All things considered, until we get back to the chrome and enamel plumbing at

home we're envious of the guy in our company who lost his ass in a poker game.

\* \* \*

Al Villalobos had been lying in the grass, looking straight ahead at a small hole in the hill, for a long time. He had his faithful BAR over his left forearm; his right hand on the stock. There wasn't any sun, but the day was clear and visibility excellent.

The hole he was studying so closely was a Jap tunnel and Al's buddies were approaching it from the small valley below. He had been left there to support his pals in case there was too much for them to handle. He had not seen them since they entered a small jungle river bed. Then he saw them wriggling on their bellies in the grass, snaking up towards the black-mouthed tunnel with care and accuracy. Villalobos grasped the stock of his BAR a little tighter and shut his left eye, focusing his right eye over his sights and on the target. It was all just in case. Probably no one was in there, but one could never tell. And, if there was, he did not want to be caught napping.

The men were close enough now to lob in a couple of grenades. Al relaxed a second or so and watched one of them pull the pin and toss it loopingly over his head. It sailed lazily into the cavern and shortly after there was a soft umppphhh explosion. All of the men lay and watched. Nothing happened so they tossed another grenade. After the short silence following the explosion a Japanese appeared at the open-

ing and broke into a dead run for some trees about ten feet from the cave. Al pressed the trigger and killed him before he had moved three feet.

He wondered why it was so easy to see him as he shot, but he did not realize until later that he had shot a *NUDE* Jap.

\* \* \*

Each island added something unusual to our everyday life. In Hawaii, it was fresh pineapple, in the Philippines, Japs; Korea it was saki; Guadacanal, cocoanuts; and on New Britain it was just plain, simple misery.

\* \* \*

Halfway up the steepest side of Storm King, some men were pinned flat to the ground by deadly Japanese machine gun fire. For over ninety minutes they attempted to melt into small crevices in the ground to escape what appeared to be almost certain death. They were in the open with no protection. As Bill Williams commented, "That fight up the side of Storm King, with both flanks covered by enemy fire, was one of the toughest assignments I've ever had in my life. We were tired and hadn't had a hot meal in three weeks when the order came to jump off. I hadn't been able to patch up a big hole in the seat of my pants and that made me mad before we ever ran into trouble."

"We couldn't do anything, but just lie there and hope we wouldn't get it," Hubert White added with a shake of his head. "It was murder. I thought the Japs would never let up. If it hadn't been for our mortars I think we would still be there."

When the Japs had been pounded into silence, the men scampered to the top and there captured a light Japanese machine gun and some grenades. Incidentally, they killed twenty odd Nips while scampering.

\* \* \*

Christmas, 1942, was spent on the Big Island; 1943, on the Lurline enroute to the Canal; and 1944, anchored in the Admiralties, thinking of January 9, 1945,--D-Day.

\* \* \*

Captain Ed Stillwell looked the bad situation over very carefully before making his decision. He had been ordered to hold the small knoll on the mountain, but the odds were too great. If they stayed, most of them would probably get shot up, many of them killed.

He gave the order to pull off the hill and checked his carbine. Next to him was a tommy gun and a Garand rifle. He watched his company slowly leave. On his front he inspected the Japanese as they prepared to attack. One of his men stopped when he reached Ed. "Come on," he said, "Aren't you going?"

"Sure--sure," replied husky Ed, "but there is plenty of time. You boys get the hell out of here. When the Nips come they'll come by the hundreds."

It wasn't long before Ed's prediction was fulfilled by a battalion of yellow-skinned fighters who stormed the defenses. Ed pulled the trigger of his carbine until it was empty. From his little niche in the small rocks he was a poor target. He emptied his rifle, keeping the Nips pinned down.

He glanced to his rear while firing and saw that most of his company was out of danger. He could leave, but with a full tommy gun he decided to spray the infested area once again. When the last bullet was gone and the last American was safe, Ed slipped quietly away from his position--leaving a suspicious and wounded Japanese battalion lurking a few feet away.

His men waited at the bottom of the hill. One thought was in all their minds---is Ed here yet, is he safe? When he finally arrived, sweaty, dirty and tired, every man silently paid tribute to their leader...a man who risked his life for his company....a man who would not allow anyone else to do the same.

\* \* \*

Without reefers in the tropics it was either a feast or a famine. No beef for a month and then steak, hamburgers and roast for seven meals straight in order to eat it before the stuff spoiled.

\* \* \*

We had reached the stage where some of us were going crazy. It was a slow craziness--just about like cancer. It grew on you until you exploded. We called it "psycho". It sounded a little better, but we were really a little nuts and we knew it. Often we did not know it at the time but after a while, when we were a little more normal, we did.

"Psycho" was a funny thing as it appeared in so many different ways. Some were quietly "psycho" and others were noisy. Some of us went to the hospital for a rest and some of us didn't.

I remember watching one fellow at the front lines, just after he jumped out of an ambulance that had brought him back from the hospital. He looked around and picked out a rock to sit on. He sat there and simply stared ahead as he played with his pipe. He did not say anything to anyone and no one could get him to budge.

Finally one of the man's older buddies happened along and saw what he was doing. He motioned the driver and doctor aside and told them he was acting just the same as when he "went" before. It was too much for him, so they took him back to the hospital.

Another fellow broke up when he saw one of his friends killed by a freak mortar shell. He had asked this man to get something for him that was about seventy feet away. As the fellow reached the spot, one of our own phosphorescent mortar shells fell short, landing directly on the man. He was burned before their eyes, and died screaming. The fellow

who had made the request went completely berserk and his friends had to knock him out to keep him from killing himself as he thought he was responsible for his friend's death. Yet, his request was a simple, everyday request that hundreds of us make.

Storm King was tough, but it will be remembered for a deeper reason than because it was tough. It was about that time that we began to realize we would go completely crazy unless there was some relief. The single thought in everyone's mind, the one question was...when will we be relieved? When will we be reprieved from insanity?



## Chapter VI

### It Was Suicide

Captain Richard McDowell led the fight for Suicide Nob--one thousand feet of an almost perpendicular mountain. There he and his men wrote a story of heroism and suffering that is tops. Gilbert Coggin was one of the men who made the assault at three in the morning which caught the Japanese unaware. He crawled on hands and knees up the steep, rocky sides and once on top started shooting with his BAR for all he was worth. The Japanese were entrenched in "Spider" holes that protected them from the hips down. The only way to stay alive on top of Suicide Nob was to kill a Jap and use his hole.

"I think we killed one hundred and eighty-two during the three days," sighed Coggin. "We got most of them during the first half hour. I've never seen so many Japs in all of my life...in fact, it was the first time I had been able to see the bastards at all.

"When I hit the top, I spotted a dead Nip in a 'Spider' hole over on the left flank and made for it on the triple. I had to snake the Jap out, but when I was settled I had one of the best fighting positions on the ridge."

McDowell was never quite sure what the end results would be. He knew his men were good--but he also knew this fight was their toughest.

\* \* \*



## Sunburst Saga

Lt. Floyd Hileman crawled swiftly on his hands and knees towards the two shadowy figures he could see near the top of the ridge. The soft moonlight gave the ground a milky color and the deep shadows were perfect patterns of the rocks.

A few feet away he dropped to his stomach and cupped his mouth with his hands... "Sissssst," he hissed. The two men engrossed in their own thoughts and conversation paid no attention... "Ssssssst," Hileman drew it out making it loud and sharp. It sounded almost like a steam engine. The heads of the dark figures turned in his direction and he knew he had their attention. "You two fellows dig in here." Those words barely escaped his lips when he saw his mistake. He was talking to the enemy.

Hileman disappeared into the darkness racing over the ridge and out of sight as the Jap tapped a grenade to his steel helmet. A few minutes later he crept slowly back to the same place, followed by three men. This time he was armed but the Japanese had departed.

"You know," laughed Hileman, "maybe it's a good thing I left my pistol by my pack when I came up here the first time. If I had had it I would have tried to shoot it out with them and would probably have got that grenade right in the kisser."

\* \* \*

Digging a latrine was actually an art we did not learn until our army careers were just about over. In the early days

it required a six man detail four days to dig a hole and cover it correctly. After some experience we found a small hunk of "Composition C" would blow a hole in a few seconds.

\* \* \*

"He waved at me and I waved at him. Then he took a shot at me, so I shot him." That in a nutshell, is Jim Hoyle's story. He was busily engaged in digging his foxhole deeper, when around dusk he saw someone walking up the path towards him. "I thought he was one of the boys, but a few minutes later I knew I was wrong. He took a shot at me from about thirty feet away. Why he missed, I don't know, unless he was scared. Anyway he did, so I let him have a full clip from Mabel...." and he patted his RAR.

Homer Sutton sat on the back of the maggoty Japanese who was lying face down in the small hole. It was the second night he had sat there and the maggots were wriggling all over his hands and body. He was almost as covered with maggots as the dead Japanese. However, there was nothing he could do about it. The live Nips were keeping him pinned down and he could not move around to free himself. He had tried to lift and pull the stomachless, decaying body from the hole for two nights but could not.

Cramped and filthy with dirt and dried blood, Sutton emerged from his dungeon-like hole only in the black night to brush the tiny, white maggots

from his blouse and pants. Then lying on his stomach he would tug vainly at the arms and feet of his dead roommate. Getting into the hole he would lift and push, but the Nip was too heavy for him to move alone. Sutton had no choice; if he wanted to stay alive he had to remain and keep the rapidly multiplying maggots company.

Tony Segovia also sat on the lifeless corpse of a maggot-infested Nip for two days and nights. Over his head Japanese bullets whined and beneath him squirmed millions of larvae. When he was able to sneak from his hole to an unoccupied one he sat and wept. He said it was the fresh air that made him cry.

\* \* \*

The Easter Sunrise Service on Guadalcanal was a long-discussed one. Many hundred attended to see the Nurses who sat on the stage. They were the first white women they had seen in many months. Few knew who spoke or what was said.

\* \* \*

A ragged, thin-faced soldier watched with his field glasses. "Those crazy fools," he sighed with desperation, "they'll both be killed." The Piper Cubs had come and gone, dropping their precious cargo over the banana-shaped hill where scores of hun-

worth while hit the target and the disappointed men sank disgustedly into their foxholes cussing loudly. Some cried; a few prayed. Watching the long awaited air drop, Ted Sandness and Tony Marcesca saw a bundle hit the valley a few hundred yards below them. As the Yank with the field glasses watched, Tony and Ted fell, skidded and ran down the steep side to their goal.

The wounded were a short distance behind the Yank who was watching and he could hear their delirious cries--"Water---water...water." He knew there was no water for them or for anyone else. There had not been any for the past two days, and from the gloomy outlook after the unsuccessful air drop, there wouldn't be for a long time. He did not know how the wounded could stay alive, lying in the torturing sun by day and freezing in the chilling dew by night. The sulfa they had to take made their already parched tongues even drier until they were stiff, cracked and bleeding. They had lost all track of time and their fractured bones, torn skin and pierced tissues had become numb with pain.

He could see Ted and Tony sprawled behind a big rock far below. They were dodging from boulder to boulder, escaping the bullets of snipers. A white puff of smoke spurted into the air as an artillery smoke shell landed near them. He wondered if they would stay there or try to get back to the top before an artillery barrage started. The tiny figures below disappeared and reappeared from time to time and soon headed back up, crawling on their hands and knees.

It took almost an hour for Ted and Tony to reach the top again. In their arms they carried five price-less canteens of water. Panting and gasping for breath, they collapsed weakly to the ground and looked about them, half expecting to be mobbed. Many eyes were watching them, but no one moved. Ted and Tony hadn't touched a drop of the water in their long climb and as they sat there the urge to take one small swallow became almost overpowering. After resting a few minutes they struggled to their feet and walked toward the sounds that haunted everyone, "Water...water...water."

\* \* \*

A freakish windstorm on New Britain roared up to more than fifty-five miles an hour. Tents were lifted off the ground and trees uprooted. Ken Few had the closest call when a hundred and fifty foot tree fell on his jeep trailer as he was driving along.

\* \* \*

There was no moon and the path was slippery with reddish mud. Tony Dilemma was standing outside his foxhole fixing his poncho over the half water-filled hole, when he saw a figure slinking slowly along the path. He saw him through the mist and rain and hollered, "Stop!" As he yelled he could see he was a Nip and that he was reaching across his body

for a grenade attached to his belt. Tony frantically snatched his rifle from beneath the poncho and brought it to his hip. The Jap had the grenade just about to his head when Tony aimed and fired. The empty clip was ejected from the M1 and sang as it flew through the air and dropped into the mud. The Jap fell, shot through the heart. Oh, by the way, did I tell you? It was the last round Tony had.

\* \* \*

Keeping clothes clean was a major problem until we mastered the trick of making washing machines out of oil drums and jeep motors. Many pants were pressed by sleeping on them a week, and shirts by hanging from homemade coat hangers of bailing wire.

\* \* \*

On Suicide Nob our supply lines were stretched to the point that they broke. The Japanese held the bottom of the hill, cutting those supply lines. We had the top. If we had not been in so deep that even our modern bulldozers and engineers could not forge a path, it is doubtful if the Japanese would have been so successful in the strangulation maneuver.

What Longfellow said of the Village Blacksmith applies equally well to Lt. Jake Finger, the six foot, two hundred and twenty pound engineer who directed the road building for our trucks to pass over.

Finger is a "mighty man...with strong and sinewy hands."

In the drive down National Highway, his platoon built fifteen bridges in five days. When they reached the Zambales, his "cats" and pick-and-shovel men labored from dawn to dusk digging roads out of the mountain sides and sealing hundreds of Japanese caves.

The stories of Suicide Nob would not be complete unless Demetrio Cannizaro's wild fall down the almost perpendicular side was included. He had been making good headway in the assault, even on his hands and knees with six rounds of heavy mortar ammunition around his shoulders, until he grabbed a loose clump of grass that did not hold. As he rolled head over heels down the hill past some of his buddies who were going up, he kept yelling, "Stop me, boys, stop me." It took three men to stop his rolling and his yelling which awoke many Jap sleepers.

Sergeant Paul Walter went the other way. While lugging a hundred and thirty pound radio on his back and crawling up to the summit he was caught in a burst of machine gun fire. He knew the few men at the top needed the radio in order to stay in contact with the rest of their company and the battalion. Rather than drop to the ground, he dashed fifty feet through open terrain to the top. Bullets danced near his feet but he never knew it. He says he was too concerned with NOT falling on his stomach with the heavy radio. In fact, the real reason he decided to

Building the wall of China was a small task compared to the important stone wall Neble Sears constructed while hugging the ground fully exposed to machine guns. It was death if he so much as moved his head for the bullets were striking a few inches from him. With his ear pressing the ground, he carefully gathered all the small stones within arm's length and piled them in front of his head. It took hours to stack them without looking at what he was doing. Many times his growing pile would crumble and he would have to start over. When he had completed a wall high enough to hide him, and partially protect him, he started to dig in the almost concrete ground, still lying on his side. When the sun sank behind the high mountain tops, Sears had dug enough rock out of his way to get most of his body below ground. Of course, he did not know how long he was going to have to stay there, and as luck would have it, he did not stay long.

\* \* \*

Victory Gardens reached a height of something or other on New Britain when Delbert Moore planted watermelon seeds in a small wooden box, so that he could carry them when he moved.

\* \* \*

Black Eyes and Tiny Joe were in the foxhole they had occupied for nearly three days. The day was

the same as all other days in their small world... the sun was so hot that canned butter slowly melted ...the air was heavy with strange odors...their low water supply, a constant source of griping...and relief was the major topic of conversation and hope.

Black Eyes lazily played with a small red ant that wandered up and down his rifle evidently looking for a way to get off. And Tiny Joe contented himself with catching a few quick, and much needed, winks. The dull chatter of their light machine gun located forty yards ahead was submerged by other physical things more soothing. They did not notice, until the unusual stillness wore heavily on Tiny Joe's conscience, that their machine gun had stopped firing. "Say, what's happened?" he exclaimed, sitting up to look around. Black Eyes glanced up from the ant and shook his head. "Nothing that I know of. Everything is hunky dory with us," he answered as he returned to the ant.

"Listen," demanded Joe, "our 'light' is out. I can't hear it any more. Do you suppose the Nips got it? If they did, we are sure gonna catch hell from the other hills now." Tiny Joe and Black Eyes jumped to their feet and rapidly searched for the partially hidden gun.

"Looks like the gunner's been hit."

"Yeah, I guess he got it, the poor bastard. I hope it ain't bad. Let's go up."

"Naw, there's no sense to that," said Black Eyes. "We'll just be that much more of a target. Stay here." The renewal of the steady spattering

told them that someone else was firing the gun and they sat down on the edge of the foxhole. They were immersed in their own thoughts when they noticed the machine gun had stopped again.

"Another guy has been hit," exploded Black Eyes. "My God! Those Nips must have zeroed in. Come on, let's go. They'll be short of gunners."

The two men started on the run but they had not gone far when Black Eyes grabbed Tiny Joe's arm. "Look," he shouted, pointing. "Hit the dirt."

As they watched they saw another member of the machine gun section standing over the two bodies of his companions, holding the light machine gun in his arms and firing it into the far off hills where the Japanese snipers were located.

"Well, I'll be damned," exclaimed Tiny Joe-- "just like the movies. Come on, let's help him. He can't carry that whole gun alone."

"The hell he can't. Look at him. He is running backwards and firing it at the same time...he's jumping over those rocks and heading this way."

"Who is he, can you see?"

"No, but he sure has guts." The soldier with the machine gun, tripod and ammunition belt ran a long way through open ground before he found another position which was better protected. There he unwound the machine gun ammunition belt from around his neck and continued to fire at the hill. The two men waited no longer. They raced breathlessly across to the position. "Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle..."

it's Jim Evans!"

"Ya awright?" asked Tiny Joe, grabbing his almost empty canteen and offering it to Jim.

"Thanks just the same. Sure, I'm O.K."

"What about the other two?...Should we go up and bring them down here before getting a medic?"

"No. There's no need. They both got it in the head. Sniper."

\* \* \*

Driving on the left side on New Britain had its complications. It just didn't seem the proper thing to do. A jeep driver saw a weapons carrier bearing down on him, on the right side of the road, and yelled, as he swerved around him, "Get over on the wrong side, you dope!"

\* \* \*

That long-anticipated hour had finally arrived shortly after the hard fought battle for Suicide. It arrived late in the afternoon amidst wild and joyous cheers as man after man heard they were relieved and were going back for a rest. However, there was the typical army SNAFUING.

When the 43rd Division arrived, or didn't arrive as the case was, we pulled off the hills and

out there had been a mistake. Yes, indeed, a mistake. We weren't supposed to come off the hills right then....it was supposed to happen the next morning--or sometime. Our morale was slapped soundly in the vital spot when this news reached us and we were piled back into what few trucks there were and driven right back up to the front. There have been few cases when griping reached the high tide it did then.

When we were relieved and taken away from the Zambales, we were sent to a nice brown, dry, hot rice paddie to pitch pup tents and relax. That was a disappointment to everyone. The only creek where one could wash was nearly a half mile away. Many of the B bags containing changes in clothing and other prized personal possessions were lost. Our pup tents were small and totally inadequate. And to top it all off, we moved into the bombing zone where the few remaining Japanese Betties sneaked down for midnight raids. A week or so after our arrival we were furnished large tents and the wonderfully soft, luxurious army cots.

The Second Battalion did not have a very long rest. They, no sooner were nicely settled, than they were told they were going to Panay. The First and Third Battalions smiled silently up their sleeves at Second's misfortune, not knowing that Negros was scheduled for them. The men also heard of their new regimental commander, Colonel Raymond Stanton, who arrived to replace Lieutenant Colonel Mucci. Colonel Stanton was a West Pointer and the men knew there would be a lot of "shaping up" in the future.

## Chapter VII

### The Third Star



"Words are not strong enough to tell how hard the fighting is here," John Regan remarked one day outside of Leon. "We are miles beyond the place where most people would have stopped and considered, before going any farther. The hardest fight is against the natural obstacles. Mountains are always measured in feet. Looking at a map, this terrain doesn't look too bad. But the map doesn't show the ridges and valleys, the ups and downs, that a fellow has to travel before he gets to the top of a mountain.

"The Nips have always taken to the hills whenever we landed. I guess they figure we aren't tough enough to make the top, or else that we will be so tired by the time we do, that we won't be able to fight. They are just about right. We are tough enough to get there all right, but fighting afterward is rough. There is ankle deep mud most of the time and that makes the problem bigger. Not only does it make it tough to reach the Nips, but getting supplies through the mud and up the steep, slippery hills is almost impossible.

"When it rains you get all wet and don't dry out for days at a time. Your foxhole is full of water and you can't sleep. The wood is wet and it is impossible to make a fire. It's just damned rough."

Regan was talking about the fighting on Panay where he landed with the rest of the Second Battalion on March 18, 1945.

\* \* \*



"Yipeeeeee," shrieked Eli Johnson, "look at them apples, will ya?" And he pointed excitedly toward a small fruit-bearing tree a little distance away in a valley. "Just look at them apples!" His mouth was watering with anticipation as he rose from his steel helmet on which he had been sitting. "I'm gonna get me some of those."

"Apples, hell," snorted one of the boys with disgust. "They're not even good crab apples where I come from. Besides, they are apt to be poison. Leave 'em alone and park it will ya?"

The men were taking their second break after landing on Panay. But Johnson felt a greater need for the bright red apples than the others so, picking up his rifle, he started out.

The nearer he got the nicer they looked and he almost ran right into the arms of the Jap heading up the narrow path toward him. Both the Nip and Johnson were equally surprised. No one knows what the Jap hollered, but Johnson yelled lustily for immediate aid. At the same time he fired eight shots into the Jap who fell with the first shot. He did not stop to see how many went true as the Jap wasn't kicking and that was all he was worried about. Wheeling around he charged back up the path where he met Sergeant Abel Olazabal and Virgil Chandler.

"For Christ's sake," shouted Olazabal, "Can't you even pick apples without shootin' up the place?"

"Apples hell," retorted Johnson. "I been tangling with a Nip. Why didn't you fellows get here sooner?"

"But you just yelled two seconds ago," laughed Chandler.

"Yeah, I know, but you were still too long!"

"Well," said Olazabal, "this isn't getting any more of them. Which way were you heading?" Johnson pointed and the trio spread out in a single line. They had not gone far when Chandler spotted a "Son of Heaven" in some bamboo thickets. He raised his rifle and fired. The Japanese rose from the bushes and fled down the path like a streak of wind, until another of Chandler's shots overtook him. Simultaneously Olazabal had noted another Nip sprouting wings and trying for better cover. He was so close, having appeared from nowhere, that Abel missed. As the Nip ran, lead spattered the ground around him until he stopped behind a banana plant. "The man is a fool," muttered Abel as he raised his rifle for a final shot and sent a bullet through the thin stalk.

"Well, let's go get those nice apples you start-out for," said Chandler.

"Not me," Johnson answered in triumph. "I found a couple of bananas."

\* \* \*

Swindling reached its peak on New Britain when some Aussie traded Hill 660 to a native for a carved comb. The proud native stood atop his newly acquired land and proclaimed to all who toured the famous Marine landmark, "Dis pella kanaka

catchum plenty good walk-walk. Number one Aussie pella, he give em por comb. Him plenty good pella."

\* \* \*

Since the Japanese had evacuated Iloilo the day before we landed and had started the long forced march to the mountains, the boys of the 160th were assigned (naturally) to chase them and eventually root them out. While the 185th Infantry Regiment dashed madly into the city and were wildly received amidst flowing liquors and fresh eggs, Second Battalion boys made a midnight, mechanized flanking movement into Cabatuan, a small village in the foothills. From there our patrols began chasing the Japs in all directions, whenever they were reported by overwrought Filipinos who claimed to be guerrillas.

Cabatuan was a typical, out-of-the-way Filipino village with its nipa huts, city hall and market place all located within a stone's throw of the green-grassed Plaza. Overlooking the Plaza was a very large, stone church with high bell tower and green vines crawling over the edifice. In the cold, musty interior hundreds of townspeople hovered in terror of the Japanese who had raided and killed enroute to their retreat. The air of jubilation in the streets gave way to thankfulness and prayer inside.

The morning after our arrival, the Plaza, where some of the men had bunked down, was crammed with sight-seeing Filipinos as well as demonstrating guerrillas. The spontaneous parade by the guerrillas was

perhaps the weirdest and most gruesome we witnessed. Carrying their long, razor-sharp bolos at their waists, Filipinos carried Japanese heads by the hair. Some had three or four tied to a bamboo pole. Others carried the whole headless, bloated and badly mangled body of a Jap they had killed after torturing. It was an eye-opening sight into the tremendous hatred of the Filipinos for the Japanese.

Twice during the first morning the soldiers dived for cover and adjusted themselves for a fight, but both alarms were false. In one instance the hysterical cry passed in Visayan and English, "Japanese coming--Japs coming." The doughboys seeking to get together had to fight their way through thundering crowds of Filipinos running for safety in the church. There was a Jap, but he was a beaten, bloody prisoner of some guerrillas who were bringing him to our headquarters.

\* \* \*

#### A Short, Short Story -- *"Oh The Pity of It All"*

A hushed atmosphere has spread like gossamer over the Third Platoon area. Men speak in whispers, a solemn look on their faces. You look around uneasily, expecting to see a body lying in state.

Neparty and Gilbertson stand by, trying to suppress their emotions. Mike Nader has taken his place at the side, where he watches silently. Suddenly a cry of mortal anguish rips itself from the lips of Rich Foege. Then an answering sob from Merlin Miller. Regal and Estock sit with heads bowed. Esper and

Wells are seen walking away, tears streaming from their eyes. The nightly pinochle game is in session and Merlin Miller has just failed to pull two counters, taking another set.

His dreams of a little home in Ohio shattered once again.

--Jim Roers.

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It was over before you could count ten. Karl Lundeen, known as Moose because he's so big, was the first one to see the danger as the insane carabao bull pawed and rooted the ground a few feet away. Moose had been enjoying his morning can of C ration by the side of his hole, but he did not let that stop him. He threw the half emptied can in one direction and went the other as the bull charged. Moving with a quick two-step to the left, he found the animal altering his course, so he nimbly leaped back several feet to the right just as the bull zipped past--the long pointed horn barely missing him.

A few feet behind Moose Lundeen, George Vandiver was cleaning his rifle. He had it stripped down and laid out on his shelter half. Since there was no hope of getting out of the way, he jerked the shelter half from the ground and flung it over the bull's head just as the horns reached out for him. With rapid and careful calculation, George jumped head first into the only available foxhole.

Glenn Hoskins had his Garand in action in a few seconds of the bull's wild plunge and as he ploughed

past George with his head covered, Hoskins began firing. He shot four fast ones into the huge beast with no visible results. Aiming very carefully at the lowered head he shot four more, the remainder of his clip. Just as Hoskins was ready to dive for cover, the bull dropped--only two feet away.

The whole incident would almost seem to have been planned as Frank Garcia pulled up a few seconds later with his jeep to haul the dead carabao off of our doorstep. He towed it into the street by the Plaza and left it. By night the entire carcass had been stripped by hungry Filipinos; even the majority of the bones were gone.

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The movie situation was soon so bad that we didn't ask what "stinkeroo" was playing. We only wanted to know what girl was in it.

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Hampton Wilson and his squad were pinned down by fierce Japanese fire in dense undergrowth on the side of a sloping hill. His few men were no match for the great odds and had to withdraw. Before the order came, two men had been hit. One was able to walk but the other had been hit twice in the side, exposing his broken ribs; once in the shoulder and

twenty feet away from the Japanese. When Art Schmall heard of the man, he asked Wilson about it and the two decided to go back for him. They requested fire support, left their steel helmets and canteens and started running. The wounded man was two hundred yards up a hill beyond a freshly plowed field. The men slipped and stumbled, but luck held and they did not fall.

It was hard running in the soft dirt and when they reached the wounded man they were dead tired. Their legs were watery and they could not catch their breath. Wilson had been ill for days with malaria and dysentery, but would not go to the hospital.

"When we got there," said lean Schmall, "I thought he was dead. He was lying on his stomach and did not seem to be breathing. I grabbed one of his legs and he groaned. I guess he thought we were Japs, but I was just going to get his dog tags if he was dead."

"We will have to hurt you to get you out of here," grunted Wilson.

The wounded man smiled faintly and replied, "I'll do anything to repay you if you can get me out of here alive." His eyes flickered shut and Wilson slung him over his shoulder like a bag of potatoes. He hunched off through the soft dirt and Schmall followed five feet behind, running backwards and firing his carbine where the Japanese were thought to be. They had to stop four times to trade places. Each time the sniper tried to pick them off. The Japs were using tracers and it was easy to see how close death was. The entire trip took a little more

than a half hour. When the badly wounded soldier was transferred to a stretcher, he looked up and said, "How are you?"

The two could only smile in return.

"Don't forget," he whispered while he puffed hungrily on a cigaret, "there are five packs of smokes back at camp. They are for you. I want you to have them,-----and thanks."

\* \* \*

When the Japanese soldiers evacuated Iloilo, they forced some four hundred Japanese civilians to accompany them. Since we couldn't locate the soldiers, we did not know this until March 23. Nine of seventy-one Japanese civilians who escaped a massacre by their own troops told their story when they were treated by our medics. Two of the survivors, both middle-aged women, who had been bayoneted testified that they were stabbed in their sleep. They had not been allowed to sleep for three nights and were kept marching all of the time. On the fourth night when they were allowed to lie down, the Japanese soldiers killed sixty-two men, women and children. They were discovered the next morning by one of our patrols who sent word for the medics.

Harry Robinson, Milton Ketchum and Ray Brown, a chaplain's assistant, journied six miles over the narrow carabao trail into the mountains to their aid. Half-naked bodies of men, women and children of all ages were sprawled over the grassy knoll. An expectant mother was slashed from her throat down

and her unborn infant was on the ground beside her. A father, who had apparently tried to shield his son lay lifeless over the dead child. A middle-aged man had six half-smoked cigarets sticking out of his mouth, while another still clung to his broken clay pipe. Near one woman's hand was a small wooden grave marker with the date, May 8, 1942 inscribed on one side.

There was no order to the scene--except perhaps the systematic way they had been killed. Small bits of cloth and other personal articles and worthless Japanese yen were strung around the dead. Posted on a tree and signed by a Japanese official were these words in Japanese, "Fifty people will die here under this tree."

"That place will always stick with me, no matter what," said Ketchum, when he had returned with the wounded to the market place where Doctor Wesley Logan, Fred Jensen and R. C. Hall waited to treat them.

Lt. Colonel Stout received reports that the Japanese were on the hill and had sent out two platoons the night before the civilians were found. "At that time," he said, "we did not know there were any civilians with them. I decided to throw in an artillery barrage and hold off an attack until morning."

Rev. Zacarias Dayot, a Filipino Baptist minister, reported the American artillery killed twenty-six Japanese soldiers and one carabao, but no civilians. He also related how the Japanese killed twenty-two Filipinos in front of their own people. He told

it with deep emotion as his wife and daughter were among those killed.

"Early on the morning of March 23," he said, "I saw the Jap soldiers running around the hills near my home. I had moved into the mountains when the Japs first came to the island. I took my girls and wife into a tunnel that we had dug, along with eleven others.

"At noon my youngest baby, who was three, cried and my wife took her outside for a breath of air. A Jap soldier saw her and grabbed her. He took her to a bamboo thicket a little way off and bayoneted her and the child to death. I came out of the tunnel to see what was keeping her, and ran into the Jap who was returning to the tunnel. He took me to another spot and was going to kill me as he had killed my wife. I said some foolish thing to him and looked in another direction and when he looked, I ran. He shot at me three times and hit me once in the leg, but I escaped. My remaining daughter found her way to a friend's house two days later and we were reunited there."

\* \* \*

Added polite insult: A visiting Aussie on New Britain remarked before we were assigned a mission, "Is this outfit well-seasoned or just over-ripe?" Wish we could find that fellow now.

The Chinese "Three Finger Bible" furnished Chaplain Clingman with one of his most unusual experiences. While he was on Panay, he was asked by the National Chinese Association to offer Protestant Church services and readily accepted even though he could not speak a word of their language. When he arrived at their church, he found the Chinese dressed in their traditional long-sleeved robes. The minister, Dr. Chin, said they would sing some songs and from their long sleeves they extracted their song books. "Of course," chuckled Chaplain Clingman, "they opened their books from the back, but their singing was beautiful and most of the songs were familiar." After the service Dr. Chin explained the strange and unique history of the Bible that most of the Christian Chinese use.

About a hundred and thirty years ago, Bishop Schereschewsky left America and went to China. While there he was stricken by illness and was completely paralyzed--except for the three fingers of his right hand. This great handicap did not stop him from carrying on his missionary work. Using a Chinese type-cast and the hunt-and-peck system with his three good fingers, he translated the entire King James version of the Bible into Chinese.

"It was a strange feeling to take part in such a worship," sighed Clingman. "There I was in a Chinese Church in a Filipino city using a text typed by a man who could use only three fingers."

\* \* \*

A tall, dark-haired youth strolled into a liv-

ing room in Iloilo and looked around casually. A frail, blue-eyed woman walking slowly down the stairs, stopped half way to steady herself. Gasping, she screamed, "Raymond."

That is how Ray Filmore found his aunt, Mrs. Louise Blancaflor, in the Philippines. They had not seen each other for twenty-two years, back in 1923 when Ray was very small. She had married Dr. Corbelio Blancaflor and moved with him to Iloilo where they made their home and raised their family of four children.

Raymond did not have a picture of Louise and she had only a high school picture of him, but they knew each other instantly. As he stood in the center of her home with his heavy steel helmet in his hand and his carbine over his shoulder, her eyes swept his face rapidly searching out the family's straight nose, high forehead and dimpled chin. Louise was frail and thin from her three year game of hide-and-seek with the Japanese and she leaned heavily on his strong arms as they silently embraced.

Louise wasted no time in making Ray feel that he was at home. She called in their Filipino male servant and laid plans for a big feast. For dinner that night they had roast chicken, camotes, tomatoes, rice and lots of fresh, cold milk. While they ate, she told him of her three years of war.

She and her family had had to move nineteen times in the three years and had traveled more than three hundred miles to escape the Japanese who were constantly searching for her because she was Ameri-

can. They crossed mountains, muddy rice paddies, deep fish ponds and rivers. They traveled by carabao cart, by a bamboo sled drawn by an Indian cow, by a broken-down truck, by sail boat and on foot.

They slept in caves, on cold bamboo floors of nipa huts, in a monastery, on the ground and in the Japanese jail when they could not produce passports. Her caravan was a strange sight. Besides her husband and the four children, there was another couple, Dr. Bernes and his American wife, Dorothy, formerly of Oakland, California.

They carried with them three angora cats, three dogs, a parrot and a tame blackbird, a cow and a calf. When they finally returned home they had four cats, one dog, two birds and one cow and three calves. Louise had buried all of her china and pottery in a deep hole surrounded with sawdust and to her amazement, most of the things were not broken or cracked.

\* \* \*

The Tower of Jaro has stood in the Plaza for nearly four hundred years. The mossy, stone walls are more than twelve feet thick and are gray from winds and rain. High in the tower are many bells which peal out their call to Sunday Mass in the Cathedral across the street.

When the Americans invaded Leyte, the Japanese officials decreed that it was unlawful to ring any bells or make any loud noise. They construed such acts to be warnings. Thus the Jaro bells became silent.

One day a little, old man wanted to hear the bells again. He had stood in the street below and looked longingly up at the tower for hours, hoping against hope that they would ring. Finally, the desire could be rejected no longer. Slowly and laboriously, he climbed to the top and once again the Jaro bells rang out over the town.

For this "crime", he was arrested and spent four days in the Iloilo Prison while the Japanese waited for his relatives to appear. But no one came for he had no relatives. His friends, if he had any, stayed away.

On the fourth day, at a time when the streets were crowded with people, he was taken from his dark cell with his hands tied behind him and was marched through the streets. At high noon, surrounded by many onlookers, the old man knelt to a command and lowered his head. A Japanese officer raised his saber and with a sure, swift stroke, cut off his head. They wouldn't allow anyone to bury him. For three days he lay in the street where all passersby had to detour.

Finally, a friend was allowed to dig a grave and his burial was permitted. After he was buried and the friend was ready to return to his home, a Japanese officer stepped up and before all who had gathered for the silent service, slapped the man three times with his fine white glove, calling him a pig.



## Chapter VIII

### The Last Beachhead

We landed at Pulapondon on Negros amidst cheering Filipinos who clamored for cigarets and candy as if they thought we were vendors instead of fighters. Of course there was no enemy and we were whisked away to Bacolod, the capital of Occidental Negros. The Japanese had gutted the city before retreating the day before, and it was still smoking. All of the main buildings were burned to the ground, but they had not bothered the civilians who had gathered in the church.

Later, when the war was over and I had a chance to talk with Colonel Yamaguchi who was in command of the Bacolod defenses, he expressed surprise at our rapid advance into Bacolod and wanted to know if we captured the Bago Bridge intact.

He said he had planned to defend the city until he saw how many tanks we had and then decided the only thing he could do was go into the mountains. Thus, on the second day of fighting on Negros, the American newspapers said that we had captured one airport, liberated some twenty odd miles of coastline and seized the important city of Bacolod. After that bold statement they forgot all about Negros until an airplane crashed there a year later, killing a few U.S.O. troopers.

Nick Antos was one of many boys from headquarters who responded to fire call the third day in Bacolod. A Japanese sympathizer had thrown a hand grenade into an ammunition truck carrying twenty



thousand pounds of high explosives, blowing it up. The fire spread rapidly through a hundred yards of nipa huts along the water front while Antos and other infantrymen turned firemen and did their best to control it.

\* \* \*

We had Red Beach, Blue Beach, Yellow Beach and Officer's Beach--or God's Country. It was so nicknamed on New Britain because some nurses laid around in lucky officer's arms while enlisted men sat and hungrily watched.

\* \* \*

Sergeant John Coots, Sergeant Joe Karfman, Sergeant Aaron Potter, Cammon Ayers, and Lieutenant Dick Zacher lay near a thick bamboo grove. Sweat was running down their faces as they peered into the dark foliage. They had been fighting hard for over thirty minutes. "I thought," snarled Karfman, "that damned Flip said there were four Japs asleep in that hut. Hell, I've counted twenty myself and they haven't been asleep."

"Do you think he was trying to get us into a trap?" asked Ayers. "Wait until I see that guy again. He took off right after the fireworks, but if I ever see him I'll rip him to shreds."

"It doesn't matter much what he was trying to do," Zacher vouched. "We're in one helluva spot and unless we use our heads and keep cool, we ain't go-

ing to live to talk about it."

"How long do you think they'll keep it up?" asked Coots. "We've scattered our boys around enough so they may think they're surrounded."

"I doubt it," answered Ayers. "You know those guys would rather die than surrender. We'll never convince them."

"You're right," agreed Karfman. "We might just as well continue as long as we can and then think of something else that will finish them off. If we withdraw now they'll be set for us. I think we had better keep them busy for a while."

"You know, when I get out of here," exclaimed Zacher, "I'm going to trade in this pistol for the largest weapon I can find. Did you see how I missed that damned Nip with eight shots a few minutes ago? Why, I was within spitting distance of him and pumped eight rounds right at him. I know he had some lead in him, but I'll be darned if he'd drop." He stopped and wiped a little oil over the barrel of the discussed pistol and made sure it was cocked.

"Say, Potter," he continued, "that was a good job you did on that guy over on the left. What was he aiming to do?"

"Speaking of doin' a job," added Karfman, "did you know, Lieutenant, that Ayers finished off three men in a machine gun nest while they were setting it up?"

"Is that right, Ayers?"

"Yeah, I guess so. Boy, were those guys stupid."

They could see where I was, but they just kept musing around trying to get the gun going instead of taking a crack at me or moving some place I couldn't hit 'em."

"Look," warned Coots, "they're setting up another gun over on our flank. We'd better get the hell out of here or our names will be mud."

"You ain't just awoofin'," quipped Karfman. "I've had enough of this three to three hundred stuff. Let's haul freight."

In pairs they ran across the open kunai grass field, then down into a small ravine and on to the railroad track where they opened their throttles to full speed. Gasping for breath they staggered into another clump of bushes behind a nipa hut and flopped on the ground. Zacher was the last to arrive.

"See any of the other boys around?" he demanded. "We've got to send for mortar support or we'll be here for the rest of our short lives."

A few hours later the Japanese were subjected to intense mortar fire and when it subsided there were many Nips who did not need to worry about their Emperor's wrath.

\* \* \*

Sunday was always the nicest day of the week, except when we were on maneuvers. We slept in until seven if we wanted breakfast, or until noon if we didn't. Then

there was always a quiet afternoon of nothing to do except slowly go crazy or wish you weren't where you were.

\* \* \*

"He is one of the coolest men I've ever treated," said Chuck Gardner of Sergeant Earl Rapp, when he told the story of Rapp's hand-to-hand struggle with a Jap near Conception. Gardner, a medic, gave him aid shortly after he had received a bayonet wound in the cheek and lay exhausted in the ditch.

"When I arrived he was lying on his side, holding his cheek and staring down the road where the Nip had disappeared. The first thing he told me to do was to fix his tommy gun which had jammed on him three times while the Jap charged him with fixed bayonet. He did not worry about his wound. He just wanted to be ready to fight if any more came back to finish him off.

"His cheek was pretty bad, but his thumb was in worse shape as the Jap had bitten it to the bone," continued Gardner. "He related what had happened as I fixed him up. He and the Nip had had a regular barroom brawl. They had thrashed around in a deep, stony ditch in hand-to-hand fighting, each knowing it was to end in death for one or the other. They used all of the dirty fighting they knew. The Jap chewed Rapp's thumb until it hung by shreds, but he went the Nip one better and chewed all four of his fingers. The Nip dropped his bayonet when he stumbled and both men struggled for Rapp's trench knife.

"In the crucial moment of the fight, Rapp was on the bottom of the heap and had a strangle hold on the Nip. The Nip broke it when he kned Rapp in the groin. While Rapp writhed in pain the Jap got a strangle hold on him. At the same time he found Rapp's trench knife which had twisted around on his belt, and tried to stab Rapp. But Rapp caught his arm and with his free hand poked the Jap in the eye which broke the strangle hold.

"Then he grabbed the blade of the knife with his bare hand and twisted it away from the Nip. Hugging the Jap close to his body he put his arm around his waist and drove the blade of the knife into the Jap's back all of the way in to the handle. He saw the look of surprised pain and terror as the Nip jumped to his feet and ran screaming down the road, hollering in Japanese.

"Yes, sir," Gardner said slowly, "Rapp is one of the coolest men I've ever treated."

\* \* \*

Funny how white the skins of native Hawaiians, Filipinos and even Japanese or Koreans, seemed to the eyes of romancing soldiers. Perhaps if these same eyes were to look in the same way on some of our racial problems, answers could be found.

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"I look at my watch. It getting late. I go home." That is how Yow Wong described his closing

shop on the day he escaped death after being trapped alone for more than eight hours. Wong, an American citizen of three years before the war, was born and raised in China where his parents still live. He was determined to fight his way back there as "there are many things I do."

He was the last man in a small patrol that entered the destroyed town of Conception. In the few remaining homes people dressed in straw hats and ragged clothes leaned out of the windows and hollered, "Mabuhay, American, Mabuhay." When the patrol was about twenty-five feet from the people, they dropped their native garb and became armed Japanese soldiers. A stiff fight started and the Yanks took to the cocoanut groves. Wong, making a wild dash for cover, neglected to notice that his friends had gone to the left of the path--and he went to the right. He lay in the grass for quite a few minutes before he saw some Japanese soldiers coming his way. He waited until the range was good and then hollered, "Fire." But no one fired and when he looked around he found he was alone.

For the following seven hours, Wong lay behind a cocoanut log and fired his rifle at the Japs who kept charging him. In twos and threes they assaulted three times, crawling on their hands and knees; wriggling on their stomachs until they were within ten yards. Then they charged, slashing the air with their bayonets and screaming like mad men. Wong thought he might get wounded and so before the fight got too warm he removed his first aid kit from his belt and placed it within easy reach.

He explained the unusual preparations in his slow English, "Nobody there to fix me. I know I have to fix myself."

During the siege, Wong used a hundred and sixty-eight rounds of ammunition as he kept the Nips pinned down so that they could not charge him in large groups, and killed seven. Failing to get Wong with rifles and bayonets, the Nips sprayed him with a machine gun on his right flank and three hand grenades from a window forty yards to his front. The machine gun bullets, said Wong, went, "fung, fung, fung, so fast I couldn't count."

As the tropical sun disappeared behind the tall cocoanut trees, and a lull occurred in the battle, Wong took out his pocket watch. It was twenty minutes to five. "I look at my watch. It getting late. I go home." He knew that he could not hold out through the night without ammunition.

"I picked up my first aid kit and see if anything fall out of my pockets. Nothing did. I button them up and run like hell." Wong ran one hundred and fifty yards and then fell to the ground expecting more shots. They did not shoot at him again and he ran some more. As he left the small town on the double, the American artillery began to pound the Japanese defenses.

During his long return trip to the American camp, he asked some Filipinos for water. They regarded him with much uncertainty. He took out his

hair they would know that he was a Chinese and not a Japanese. He raised his steel helmet and the Filipinos took one brief look before fleeing over the hill.

"I was so thirsty and tired I want to cry when they run."

\* \* \*

The 160th is known in the Pacific and on the west coast as the Imperial Guard. Few people, however, really know how the infantrymen came into possession of a cognomen which apparently is more befitting soldiers of the British Empire.

It began in 1926 in Los Angeles at Dress Parade after Colonel W. Short had decreed that all officers provide themselves with blue and gold uniforms. Members of another regiment who happened to be present gazed enviously. "Who do they think they are," one of the soldiers sarcastically remarked, "the Imperial Guard?" That unknown soldier's words have lived to this day.

\* \* \*

Dawn was always the hour of mixed emotions. Darkness meant cover for sneaky attacks and infiltration, but with the light came the business of pushing farther ahead and that meant more killing.

No matter how long we were in combat, or how many dawns we saw, each one was received with a question to ourselves--will we see another one? Dawns were always a little different. Sometimes we had rested during the night and the cold, hard ground made our muscles yell for relief and exercise. Other times turbulent events would not let us escape in the peaceful slumber which made us wake feeling somewhat refreshed and willing to live.

As dawn came some of us opened one eye just a little bit and looked optimistically around hoping we would find ourselves anywhere but where we were. But finding that we weren't, would sink back to sleep catching the last few minutes of that almost divine pleasure before it was so bright we had to get up. Others would wake up from a sound sleep not knowing exactly where they were for a few seconds and upon finding out would feel their stomachs sink a few inches lower.

The real test came though when we washed our faces off a little--if we had the water--and started giving serious thought to our morning meal. Often a comparative mood would creep in and we would find ourselves thinking about what we would have had for breakfast had we been at home.

"Let's see," we would muse as we carefully drew a mental picture of the dining room or breakfast nook. "This is Tuesday morning and we would probably be having hot buttered toast, some prepared cereal, maybe some grapefruit and lots of hot coffee." Then our mouths would water but good, until we came back

to the desolate surroundings and saw our blackened cup and grimy spoon, one or two cans of C rations and nothing else.

Such were the probable dreams of Joe Wardlaw as he bent over to make his morning fire. Then he saw the Nips hidden in the bushes a few yards away. Wardlaw was a member of a machine gun section and as he screamed a warning he leaped back in his foxhole and gave directions to the gunner. Pointing the barrel in the direction of the bushes the gunner fired about five hundred rounds before the Japanese snipers sent their bullets through the water jacket and silenced it.

By now the air was a mass of steel and it sounded as though it whimpered and cried. The Yanks were pinned flat in their holes by the surprise dawn attack. At the other end of that thin line of men facing the Nips, Ignacio Perez and Sergeant Brunero lay behind their machine gun and without looking at the enemy they sprayed back and forth until some Jap slugs went through their water cooler and tripod.

The Nips were crawling forward under the screening fire and one was within thirty feet of Herold Kiener when he stuck his head up rapidly for a quick peep. A Nip was trying to set up a light machine gun. Pulling the pin of his only hand grenade, Kiener made sure his aim was accurate before hurling it. It was--thus saving him and his five buddies.

Alfredo Garza, Edward Labrador and Sergeant Joe Chomas hunched low on their heels in their foxholes as they talked with their lieutenant about their

machine gun which had also been knocked out of commission. The wall of fire to protect the riflemen had died to practically nothing. The lieutenant chuckled as he said he guessed there was nothing they could do about it at the time. As he laughed he was hit in the head with a bullet. His face changed only its color as he weaved back and forth before crumpling on the parapet.

Joe Chomas jumped from his hole and wiggled over to the officer's side. He gave him some sulfa and put his own bandage on the wound. But nothing could help or save him. He died in Chomas' arms. Garza went wild with anger, then realizing his total helplessness, sank into his foxhole shaking with heartbreaking sobs.

\* \* \*

Breakfast: Stewed prunes, dehydrated eggs, dehydrated hashed brown potatoes, one slice of bread, jam or Navy spread, coffee that walks and talks, with sugar and canned cow.

Dinner: Baked Spam, noodle soup, noodles and cheese, hard tack with jam or Navy spread, ice water without the ice.

Supper: Canned beef stew with canned carrots and peas, dehydrated potatoes mashed to a soupy slop with canned cream, cake and plenty of hot coffee.

\* \* \*

Sergeant Sylvester Lee and a lieutenant were pinned down by machine gun fire as they approached the high mountains. Two bullets ripped through the lieutenant's arms, breaking them. He rolled into a nearby foxhole and lay helpless as he lost blood. The bone in his right arm gleamed hideously in the sunlight.

Knowing that the lieutenant had been hit pretty bad, Lee left his foxhole twenty-five yards away and sped over the open ground through a hail of bullets, to his aid. There wasn't room in the foxhole for two men so Lee lay on top of the ground while he treated the wounds. Lying on his stomach he administered sulfa and finding no rope for a tourniquet he stripped the sling from the officer's carbine and cut it in two. To twist the tourniquet tight he used the barrel in one end and his knife in the other. Then he ran back through the Japanese machine gun fire to his own hole.

Every twenty minutes for two and a half hours Lee sprinted through the danger zone to loosen the tourniquet--and thus saved the lieutenant's life.

\* \* \*

There is keen delight and satisfaction in watching someone who does not know he is being watched, and having the power to stop him whenever you get the urge. Sergeant Ray Boss had that feeling about five minutes before he was to go off watch on his midnight perimeter duty. He saw a sneaker-shod Nip walking cautiously up a sandy road, with his rifle

and bayonet ready for instant action. When he reached a thin wire strung there by the Yank to act as a warning he stopped and examined it for a long time. Then he stepped over it and took a few steps before returning to the wire for further study. Satisfied with his information the Nip started to steal away. Hidden in deep shadows some thirty feet away, Boss had been watching every movement with his rifle aimed at his heart. As he pulled the trigger, the tree toads ceased their incessant song. The sharp crack pierced the still night air. As the body hit the ground with a thud, the tree toads resumed their weary tune. They had to sing--a man had to die.

\* \* \*

All the war was not fought by riflemen and machine gunners. Many times a fellow doesn't stop to think of the others in his own outfit who are not riflemen but just as necessary to the success of any operation.

Take for instance Dick Hanks and Bob Dela Rosa. Hank is the message center driver for the regiment and Dela Rosa is a wireman. Without either, the fight would be almost impossible as one is the ears and the other the tongue.

Then there is George Keyes, a driver who keeps going day and night, along front roads and back roads. On his jeep is a fifty caliber machine gun which has accounted for at least four Nips in some fancy long distance shooting. Keyes found it necessary

to use field glasses and guess work, but he brought them down at five hundred yards.

\* \* \*

Mail call was always the pinnacle of a day. As the letters, two months old newspapers and boxes from home were tossed out, each man felt a gnawing inside as he wondered how much he would get and who it would be from. There was always some Joe who didn't get anything and as he strolled unhappily back to his bunk, his buddies would chortle; "What's a matter, dontcha know anyone who can write?" This was always the nadir of disappointment and the cover up of our unspoken sympathy.

\* \* \*

Sergeant Howard Kopp and his seven men had dug their foxholes in a semi-circle facing the high mountain where the Japanese were making a stand after withdrawing eight miles into the mountains. They had been sent out on advance patrol but when they encountered multiple odds they dug in.

It was on the second morning that the fifty Japanese began their banzai charge. Kopp, who was on one end, was one of two men who were able to see. The remaining five couldn't because of the dense foliage. In five minutes he had let loose with nine clips keeping the Nips more than busy while his men

tried to get into action.

"Whispering" George Sesplankis suffered serious trouble with his BAR just as the attack began. He pulled the trigger and it wouldn't fire. Field stripping it while lying on his stomach, he found a faulty firing pin and replaced it. Soon after he fired his first burst, a mortar shell landed near him and threw mud down the bore. He stripped it again and fired only two shots when a broken cartridge stopped the works for the third time.

Tall, thin-faced Wilfred Halter made his first patrol with the men that morning and saved their lives when he stopped the Japanese attack. He doesn't recall too much about it, but the men do and they will tell his story whenever bravery is discussed. Ken Hughes had a first hand picture of the action as he was Halter's ammunition carrier. A BAR can burn up a lot of ammo and according to Hughes they really let things go that day.

"I was never so scared for anyone in all my life as I was for Halter. But, I was never so glad to see him in action. When Halter saw the Nips charging us he stood up in his hole and started firing for all he was worth. Bullets were whizzing all around him but he didn't seem to give a damn. I hollered for him to get down but all he would do was fall to his knees and reload after he had shot the twenty rounds. I didn't know a man could load a BAR so fast. He would jump to his feet and start hollering and shooting like a mad man. The fight didn't last very

long, even though it seemed like years at the time. I gave him four hundred and fifty rounds and three grenades which he sent into the Japs. He does not remember throwing two of the grenades and we had a hard time convincing him that he killed fifteen sures and probably twenty-five."

The gritty fighters were subjected to continuous mortar and machine gun fire after the banzai attack failed to eliminate them. Blond Thurlow Marshall lay in his hole near the end of the thirty-two hour siege and prayed.

"I prayed for darkness to come and cover us and when it did come I prayed for light again so I could see the Nips. I don't think I'm a sissy, but dammit--all a fellow doesn't like to lie in a hole totally defenseless and wonder if he is going to be killed or not. Hell, I'd rather be in a field with a hundred Nips than in a hole with a mortar pounding me."

The food and water Marshall carried with him was outside of his foxhole--just out of reach. He couldn't get it or the snipers would finish him. He didn't know it at the time, but three men were killed trying to reach their water. He lay on his stomach so he couldn't see the tracer bullets race by on their death mission, and so the sight of water wouldn't plague his parched mouth.

His cigarets had been gone for twenty-eight hours. There was nothing to do but wait. Wait for help. Wait for the attack. Wait for death. Marshall didn't know which he was waiting for, but he waited. As darkness crept in the second night he knew that



waiting had been the thing to do. He realized the cramped position had been profitable. He realized the value of prayer and hope.

The word was hissed from mouth to mouth that the boys were going to dig from one hole to the next one behind until they were out of range of the Japanese. Lying on his side Marshall dug until he ached all over and when he was dead tired he dug some more. When he thought that his throbbing arm would not move he made it move, he made it dig. In the darkness his shovel inched its way to safety..the answer to his prayer.

\* \* \*

Dear Joe:

A few nights ago a couple of us went on a pass and had one of the best times that I can recall. We were very fortunate in being invited to the home of Fernando Lopez, one of the few millionaires on Panay. One of his homes was destroyed by the Japanese but the other wasn't and so the party was held there. It is the most modern one that I have seen since I left Hawaii and the soft, comfy sofas and chairs were a real treat after sitting on benches and jeep seats so long.

For entertainment we danced outside in the garden--you know, one of those flashy Garden Parties? Among the entertainers was a little ten-year-old girl who astounded the American guests with her phenomenal piano playing. Her name is Nena Del Rosario.

Remember the name as she will be in the States pretty soon and I wouldn't be at all surprised if she scored as one of the world's best. Without the slightest tremor she played flawlessly Chopin's Etudes 8 and 11, then continued with Liszt's Campanella. The applause was so thunderous she offered Grieg's Concerto in A Minor. I hasten to add that she has memorized all of these difficult works.

I was so intrigued by her darling smile and wonderful playing, that I talked with her and her mother. Her mother has taught her all she knows. She is considered the outstanding piano teacher on Panay.

Nena has what musicians call perfect pitch as well as timing. Her repertoire is breath-taking and makes one realize how little he actually does know.

Her ability to memorize is even more astounding. For one of her concerts she had to learn Mozart's Concerto in A Major and the conductor of the orchestra gave her two weeks in which to memorize it. Four days later she returned with it mastered. The Concerto is fifty-one pages long. I could go on about her but I won't as you will probably be able to see for yourself what a master she is.

Your Friend,

Bill



## Chapter IX

Dear Mother

Dear Mother and all.

It will soon be June and from the looks of things the war will go on and on and on. I am sorry that I haven't been able to write as much this month as I wanted to, but we've been rather busy. There is a little lull now and so I am going to write some of the things I should have written previously. But before I get started let me remind you that you are my favorite Mother and I love all of you very much. I miss you like the very devil.

There wasn't much doing in April as I told you. The rest of the boys and the 185th jumped over to Negros and we stayed here to garrison Panay. They say there is only a handful of Japs, maybe five hundred left, but I have my doubts. At any rate we're not looking for them too hard and fight them only when we run into them with our patrols. Recently they started coming down from the hills and raiding little barrios for food and clothing, killing the Filipinos and we had to chase them back. That has cost us a lot of men.

On May 5, one of the companies ran into a Banzai attack early in the morning. I think they said it was about three o'clock when the first of the estimated hundred Nips started up toward our boys. Luckily, we held the highest ground and they had to fight uphill or I think things wouldn't have been much worse.

Before the attack they let loose with their

heavy mortars and tore up most of the small hill. In fact nearly all of the men killed then were hit with flying steel fragments. One of our machine gunners, who saw the Nips first, died squeezing his trigger as they were trying to silence our machine guns first. They used to say that an automatic weapon position was one of the most dangerous places and I know now that it is so. Two boys armed with Browning Automatic Rifles stood up in the face of everything the Nips had and practically stopped the attack. I used to play poker with one of them, Leo Bonte, but I've never met the other one, Don Volgan.

I guess the actual attack didn't last more than forty-five minutes, but let me tell you that we counted it by years. I was talking with Majil Smith, one of the medics who was in it, the other day and he says that if he ever has to go through another one like that he'll probably go completely nuts. I wouldn't blame him. He saw one fellow get hit by a 90 millimeter shell just about eight feet away. The poor fellow had been trying to move to a bigger hole when he was hit. The force of the explosion smothered Smitty with dirt and when he started up to help the fellow he could see he was dead. He said it sounded more like a clap of thunder than anything he could think of. Smitty did a bang-up job that morning and really deserves the thanks of many men. He gave aid to six men during the attack and cried over the body of another who died in his arms.

Death under fire is more dramatic than any other place and more awful. This one man knew he was going to die and wouldn't let Smitty do much for him. He

kept mumbling for him to go and help someone who had a chance to live.

Herman Satory had his third close call when a mortar shell landed between his legs. It was a dud and he was able to tell about it. I told you once about the time he had a 25 caliber bullet go through his helmet and another time when one just skinned his shoulder. Funny thing about freakish luck like his.

I went to Leon the morning after the attack to bring back the dead to Iloilo and had to wait quite a-while. They had set up headquarters in the cement market place and while I waited I talked with some of the boys. We started a small pool on when the war would be over in Europe.

Nine were killed in that fight and they had to be carried back down the mountain and across country for fourteen miles to the trucks which couldn't get any closer. I guess every Filipino for miles around had heard of the fight, for the small town was jammed. There was a lot of talking and jabbering until the first of the dead were brought in and then it was quiet. They paid respect with their silence and for that I admired them. As they brought in the bodies and laid them on the floor the medics began to tag them for identification at the cemetery. One of the fellows was in pretty bad shape and Andy Williams was asked if he knew who it was. Williams had been up at the front and was dirty, bearded and dead tired. He lifted the shelter half from the dead man's face and slowly studied it before the light of recognition

flooded his dark eyes. When he told them who it was, as he carefully covered the man and straightened up, his dirty hand moved across his nose and misty eyes.

It took a lot out of me and as we drove back I looked at the men whom we were about to bury. It made me realize again how fast life can run out and made me wonder what is worth while in the world. I'm not going to turn philosopher on you, but nevertheless such things do alter one's attitude in many respects and I find myself re-examining myself and the world we live in.

Well, I guess that is about all for tonight. In a few minutes there is going to be a movie and I hear there may be a dance. Here in Iloilo where there is no more fighting, night life is coming back into its own. But more about that and other things tomorrow.

Love,

Son

\* \* \*

Jack "Buck" Benny, Larry Adler, Carol Landis, Martha Tilden, June Bruen and Lanny Ross stopped off at New Britain on their 63,000 mile trek for two days. Two wild scenes still recalled are Landis turning on the heat when she kissed Benny, and his violin duet with Adler where Adler did all the work and Benny took all the bows.

\* \* \*

Dear Mother:

I rushed off last night leaving you wondering if I knew what I was talking about. I suppose you wondered where in the world there would be a place to dance, didn't you? Well, last night we had a nice little rug cutting episode at an old night club called the Lido. As I understand it a fellow by the name of Johnny Withrow wanted to learn how to do some of the local steps and started a dance. It turned out to be a pretty big affair what with hundreds of gate crashers, so the next week, which was last night, he rented a band, had some sandwiches made and really opened the doors. I had a good time and plan on going again if they have any more.

I don't think I told you an interesting little anecdote about the Japanese commander who went to see the Puppet Governor here in March, 1942. It seems that the Filipinos were pretty unhappy with the Japanese occupation and insisted on lopping off the soldier's heads when they were on patrol in the country.

He said to Governor Caram at his home that night, "We are no fools. You can't deceive us. We know that your people are praying for the Americans to return. But, please tell them to wait until the Americans do return, for it is possible that they will. Don't try to kill our soldiers now for it will only bring suffering. Wait until the Americans return and then you will join them to fight us."

There were very few Japanese who admitted in 1942 that the Americans would return to the Philip-

piners. In fact, most of their propaganda at that time had us completely defeated. Needless to say, the Filipinos didn't take his advice and they continued to collect Japanese heads and get punished for it.

Last night at the dance I met an old friend whom I hadn't seen since we were on New Britain. It's funny how long you go at times without seeing some of your closest friends even though you are only a little way apart. Well Joe, Joe Grammatico is his full name, and I had quite a little bull session and he told me that he and eight others were just about finished on May 8. In fact one of them was killed.

Joe, Earl Scherrer, Joe Krumpack, Stanley Novak, David G. Frank, Walter Wojtasik and Marvin Lawrence were sent out on a patrol to see what the Nips were up to. They were traveling light and didn't carry much ammo since they weren't supposed to fight. One of the men had only one clip--that's eight rounds.

Lawrence was the lead scout and he was as surprised as the Nips when he walked out from some jungle near the top of a hill and saw a whole mess of them sitting in their holes eating rice cakes. Can you imagine eating rice cakes? We fired a few shots and then dived for cover as all of the Nips were getting ready to pour on the works.

The rest of the patrol followed suit finding that they were outnumbered five to one. In the brief skirmish one of the men was hit. The Japs were firing machine guns from both flanks and the nine men

were catching too much on the chin to stay. They ran back down the hill and stopped at the bottom where they tried to save their comrade, but it was too late. I guess the Nips thought they would be able to kill them all as they followed and kept shooting until the men had found cover on the far side of the hill.

That is one of the things that always makes us so mad. Every time we go out in small groups we run into a solid wall of Nips. And, if you take a large patrol it seems like we never find a thing.

There was another case that was just about the same. One of our biggest problems is keeping food, water, ammo, and other necessities on the front line. In some places a group of men are isolated from everyone and are dependent on supply trains for their stuff. Bill King, Jim Waltz and Lieutenant Michael Cerrone volunteered to lead a thirty-five man Filipino carrying party fourteen miles through no man's land to one of our outposts. Keeping the Filipinos going is a full time job and when you have to do that and watch out for trouble you are more than busy.

Trouble hit the men when snipers started shooting at them from three hundred and fifty yards. It was a mad house. The Filipinos, who were easily convinced that that wasn't the job for them, dropped their goods, lock, stock and barrel and left for home on the double. None of them was hit as they left, but it was a miracle that they weren't.

Since Bill, Jim and Lieutenant Cerrone didn't know how many Nips there were, and since they still wanted to get through with the food and ammo if they

could, they settled down to fight their way through. Everything was under control until Lieutenant Joe Kelly, who was flying above them in a Piper Cub spotted three Nips sneaking around to the men's rear with a machine gun. He passed the word over the two-way radio and when Cerrone received it, he did not waste time. He and the other two quit the hopeless fight and sped away.

They couldn't go back the way they had come and before they returned to camp that night they had walked some twenty-four miles. One of the things that made them the hottest was the knowledge that our men were going hungry and were low on ammunition while the Japanese were eating chicken and had more ammo than they knew how to use.

Last night I lingered over my pint of coffee with a most unusual person. I say pint of coffee as our cups hold that much. Frank Eldred, one of the boys who recently joined our company, ran onto an unarmed Nip in the street the other day. He trapped the Nip in a small room after he had tried to escape and started pounding him for all he was worth with sledge-hammer rights. As they fought he grabbed the Nip by the throat with one hand and hit him with the other. He said he was so mad he saw blue and would have killed the fellow if someone hadn't come along and stopped him. We think that he probably saw the Nip's face when he said he saw blue.

Just goes to show you that you can't pick your places for a fight and that you always have to be ready for anything that comes along. And speaking of anything that comes along, I am reminded of Bill

Hardman's little yarn of Filipino women versus American girls. He confesses a few struggles in trying to make headway here and lays the blame on some of the local customs. He can't get used to being chaperoned all of the time.

He took a pretty girl to a dance and had to dance with her mother twice. He says, though, that if a fellow plays it smart he'll look for a girl with older sisters and when it comes to having a chaperon you will get two or three girls for the cost of one. I'm inclined to agree with him. However, I think I'll go him one better. If I had two or three nice-looking dresses, some lipstick, powder and other girlish things for gifts, I could bribe my way with the better looking girls and maybe with the chaperon, too. I suppose others think of that too--but--well--it shows you I'm on my toes.

It is getting late and the show will be starting pretty soon. I never like to miss them as they are about the only good entertainment that we have and coming out of a day's work where death is still on the program, I want all of it I can get.

Tomorrow is Sunday and I don't think we'll have to go any place unless the Nips act up. If not I'll stay at home--I should say on my bunk--and write another long letter. I want to get caught up.

Love and kisses,

Your son.

Dear Family:

Went to church this morning and then had a nice roast beef dinner. It sure is good to get away from those "C" rations once in a while.

I wanted to be sure and tell you about one of our last fights. I think it took place on May 16 as that was the day I received the last letter I had from you in more than ten days. Something must have happened to the boats coming this way since they started fighting up north.

I know that you must think by now that all we do is get trapped by the Japanese, and I guess it's just about the truth. They keep telling us that there are only a few hundred left, but we know better as they are in too many places at once in too great numbers. However, you just can't tell higher-headquarters any thing once they've made up their mind--or before for that matter--and so we'll just have to stick it out. That's what these guys were doing on Twin Nob Hill when they got shot up...just trying to stick it out against something they couldn't control. These men were in the middle of a well organized sniper party of at least thirty Japanese.

Bill Roberts, Gayle Hillkirk and Al Stout were some of the men subjected to the mental torture of sweating out the next shot coming from 'nowhere'. The Nips had allowed them to get up between two ridges before they started to pick off anyone who stopped moving. That was one of the strange things. The "good book" says to stop and find concealment and cover when under fire. But, this time, there was

only one salvation and that was to keep moving as fast as you could. Three men were wounded. They stopped one second too long. Another man was killed when he stopped two seconds too long.

The men knew they couldn't fight the hidden snipers and tried to get out with their lives. It took them nearly an hour to escape from the valley by dodging from tree to tree. They had to make sure their next stop would be behind a tree thick enough for protection. And, of course, the Nips used all kinds of ruses to trick them. One of the medics, George Meinders, was struggling to keep himself alive as well as the wounded when he heard a voice calling, "Hey Joe--Joe, hey, Joe." It sounded like a wounded American and he stopped to look around. Not being able to locate the caller, he started to run again and slipped in the mud. His head jerked forward as he nearly went to the ground, and a Japanese sniper's bullet whistled past and thudded into a tree where his head had been.

If you will excuse your lazy son for a few hours, he'll join the boys outside for a quick game of basket ball. We have a nice cement court a little way from here and I'd like to send a few middle court shots, if my eye is still good. My wind seems to be all right.

Few hours later....

Pull up the floor and have a sit, companion, for I am going to tell what little I've learned about a strange people--the Filipinos. I said, "Pull up the floor and have a sit," as the average Fili-

pino has nothing else to sit on but the floor and he generally says 'sit' for 'seat'.

In order to understand the people of these seven thousand islands, it is necessary to examine many things with high sounding names, like sociological aspects. However, I am not going to classify things. Rather, I am going to roam around through a typical city, looking at the people like they were so many ants, and tell what occurs to me as suggestive of their traits.

Early in the morning, long before the American milkman is at the door, the Filipinos are moving about the streets, gathering some food for the table in the market, beating the rice with their clubs, or washing clothes by the street wells. Their woven mats used for beds are stacked in one corner and their children are out playing with some kind of homemade toy.

Beating the husks off the rice is a daily task that takes about an hour for each meal. The rice is placed in a deep hollowed-out log that stands about a foot high. The women, for they always have to do it, use a heavy wooden pole rounded at both ends to pound the rice. She holds it over her head and drops it on the rice until it is shucked. Then, she sifts it like we do gravel until all of the shucks are off. One of the early morning sounds that awakens us is thump...thump...thump.

The women also earn most of the keep for the family by washing our clothes. This is an arduous task that would tax anyone's sanity and back. Using

a flat board they squat by the water and beat the clothes until they are clean. Every day is wash day and every day we hear the familiar splat-splat-splat.

The men seem to do very little. Perhaps it is the heat, but their attitude seems to be to do as little as possible. Rather than work they sit around on their haunches in the shade and chew the fat. One of the things that makes me the maddest is to see men just sitting while the women are "bearing and going barefoot". That old saying is really lived here. The families are all big and for the most part very closely knit. They are very religious and follow the age-old customs closely.

Sunday is the biggest day of the week as it is Church and Market day. In the morning they dress in their only good clothes and go to church. In the afternoon they try to cheat each other in the market. Generally a person only owns one good set of clothes and these are saved for special occasions.

The children here are the same as children anywhere except there seem to be more of them, they are in worse health, and poorer, but happier with nothing. It is very seldom that you see a child fully clothed. Most of the small boys are minus pants and sometimes the shirt too. Little girls are modestly covered with any available cloth, oftentimes a sugar sack or burlap bag.

They make toys out of tin cans, cardboard and other things we wouldn't bother with. War has eliminated nice toys, thus the spoiled attitude of "I want dat," is nonexistent. If a kid wants something



to play with he either makes it or steals it, whichever is easier. The frail, paunched-stomach children do most of their playing in the early morning or late evening when the sun isn't so hot. They play group games just like we did when we were little and it is easy to recognize such games as Red Light-Green Light, Hide-and-Seek and others.

I have told you something about the families but have neglected their homes. At least it is home to them. Looking up and down the street I can see three types of houses. The least common and more elaborate is copied after the old Spanish mansion.

The middle class house is like the one we are living in. It is a two story frame house made of Philippine mahogany and has about eight rooms. However, there are many families living in such a house. Often times as many as seventeen or twenty people will live in the same house.

The third type is what I call a House of Stilts. It is generally a rickety shack built on poles to keep the rain and flood waters out. Or, maybe, it is built on stilts so the pigs and carabao can sleep underneath. It is hard to determine the exact number of families that crowd into such places. It isn't even safe to measure the floor space and estimate the sleeping room as I've seen more than one place where they use feet for pillows. The poorer people eat and sleep on the floor. Sanitation facilities are nil and when nature calls the great outdoors is one's kingdom. If it is a public performance, it won't affect the fellow's chances of

running for mayor.

When you meet a Filipino on the street, he will watch you carefully to see if you are going to bite his head off if he speaks to you. Most Americans are friendly and ninety per cent of the time the Filipino will say, "Hello Joe." You have to be cagey at times like this as your actions will determine the course of immediate events. If you simply nod your head in a polite "good day" and continue on your way nothing will happen. If you stop to say more than two words to most Filipinos they think you are going to pass the time of day with them, and most important, offer them an American cigaret. As a matter of fact he will generally assume that you will stop and always proceeds right to the point.... "Cigaret, Joe?"

It took quite awhile for most Yanks to learn to be diplomatic and keep both friends and cigarets. Just say no with a friendly smile and shake the extended hand with a hearty swing. The last step puzzles the poor fellow and he is left wondering if he did right or wrong. If, on the other hand you produce a package, every "companion" in the neighborhood will appear. And those who can't attend don't have to worry as those who do, will take two or three for their "companions". If there is but one Filipino and you take out your pack, carefully looking around, he will snatch five or six smokes so fast your eyes will spin for a week.

Next comes the light. If he has a match which is very unlikely, it will be of Japanese origin and

won't light. They are made of very poor material and won't burn under the most favorable conditions. He looks beseechingly into your eyes and mutters, "Iscuse please," smiling a pleasant matter-of-fact smile.

As he drags deeply on your Lucky he exclaims, "very good," He isn't telling you anything new, but you smile and make him think you are happy because he is happy. He then says, "We have suffered for three years--no smoke." He holds the slowly dwindling cigaret up in your face so you can't forget your foolishness. "Jap cigarets no good," and he spits in distaste, twisting his face up in knots and rolling his eyes as if he had been poisoned. "American cigarets very good, very good," and he beams all over the place.

Perhaps most symbolic of their simplicity of life, wants and needs, is their national drink, tuba. Tuba is the juice from the cocoanut tree which is tapped and sold the same day. It is a very powerful drink and will leave you wishing you had stood in bed. A night on Boiler Makers would be mild compared to a night of tuba.

All one has to do to gather this national drink is to climb to the top of a cocoanut tree and cut off a frond. From this opening the tuba will slowly drip into the little bamboo container that you have hung under it.

Every twenty-four hours the tuba boy strides the twenty easy paces to the top and empties this container into a mahogany bowl strapped to his waist.

Then he drops a pinch of some ground bark from another tree into the juice to give it flavor. Over eighty per cent of the people drink tuba, and I suppose the twenty per cent that do not save their share until it turns to vinegar a few days later.

Given a small amount of rice, a tin roof to shed the rain, an American cigaret, a few clothes for semi-modesty, a guitar and some tuba, the Filipino seems to be content. As I see it, the Filipino asks for little, needs little and gives little. Perhaps that is why they are strange to us. They have never heard of Horatio Alger's boys.

Love,

Your Son

\* \* \*

## Chapter X

### Two Thousand Steps

Lieutenant Colonel Herman Jones stood in the shade at the bottom of Hell's Half Acre and snuffed out his cigaret. As he looked long and thoughtfully at the 3,000 foot mountain, where the men of the 1st Battalion had been successful in reaching the top, he recalled the praise of General Brush, "It was a magnificent action, calling for the utmost in courage and physical stamina."

Stretching his long legs he started up the dirt stairway dug by his men. The red dirt stairway wound around the many fresh bomb craters upward through a charred, shell-chewed forest. The sun played on the battered aluminum mess gear of a dead American soldier. Threads of communication wire were strung along the trail. Here and there were empty ration containers, crumpled letters from home which had been read during the battle lulls, a five gallon water can punctured by bullets, a Jap helmet blown to bits, and a GI shoe covered with dried blood. The dirt steps never seemed to end--they twisted away as far as the eye could see.

Adjusting his pistol belt he climbed past two empty machine gun ammunition boxes. His canteen was full and it would be full two hours later when he reached the top. One by one the short steps were left behind and new ones stretched up before him. The path cut steeply and sharply to the right to miss a towering mahogany tree. Only patches of sunlight sneaked through the massive over-head foliage as the serpent-like path was sucked into the jungle.



Jones stopped for a rest, sitting on a big black rock as he took out his lean pack of cigarettes. Tiny colorful butterflies danced merrily through the blue hazy smoke. "This country is rougher than New Britain or New Guinea," he mused, "but the boys didn't stop."

Small vines interlaced into a formidable wall and mantled the ground and surrounding trees like a plague. Thick bamboo groves reached hungrily for air and sunlight, only to be hedged out by their towering mahogany neighbors. Moss flourished by an underground spring and here and there banana trees bore their fruit.

"They crawled on their bellies," his thoughts continued, as he turned his head slowly toward the green wall. "There were sixty-nine dead Japs on the trail and a lot more out there. And," he nodded to the wall of green, "one of my best lieutenants, John Dolan, was killed in there." 'High Pockets' mashed out his cigaret.

The doughboys had wiggled half way up the first day and then had to withdraw at night when they could not get through the Nips. They were dug in in trenches that sprawled all over the mountain. Machine guns fired on the Yanks from as many as five directions at once.

The next day the Yanks pushed three-quarters of the way up to meet the same type of resistance. This time they stayed and dug in right under the Nips' noses. But the Japs tossed a rain of hand grenades down on the men all night. By three-thirty the fol-

lowing afternoon the assault companies were on the first crest of the mountain and the Japanese had retreated down the sides and to the highest point.

They had knocked the Japs out of these positions with grenades, rifles, bayonets and mortars in close-in assault. The artillery gave direct fire support, sometimes blasting entrenchments fifty yards from our own front.

As he rose to continue his climb, Rupert Murray and Alden Wiksten came jumping and racing down the steps carrying shovels. Jones waited for them. "How's it coming?" he asked, referring to their task of digging steps.

"Pretty good, Sir," replied Wiksten smiling and wiping some of the grime from his face.

"You know, Colonel," spoke up Murray, "the way I figure this job is like this. If we have to dig all the way to the top there will be more than 2,000 steps up the side of the hill. And, that is more steps than they've got in the Empire State Building."

Jones smiled as he turned upward. The air was getting cool and as he looked back he could see the blue ocean twenty miles away, the tall mountains on Panay, and way beyond, miles beyond, was home.

\* \* \*

In the assault up Dolan Hill, Glenn Greager was pouring lead at the Japanese from his foxhole in the perimeter when the man on his right front was hit in the leg by shell fragments. A medic crawled forward

to treat the wound and as he worked he too was shot through the head by a sniper. Greager saw him crumple and knew that another medic would come and try to save the wounded man. He left his safe foxhole and crawled some twelve feet over to the wounded man's hole. Lying on his stomach he struggled, and lifted and finally pulled the dead medic off of the wounded Yank. In ten minutes he was on his way back to his hole, sweat and tears streaming down his face.

Shortly afterward another aid man crawled forward over the same trail carved by Greager. As he attended the bleeding leg, he, too was shot through the head by the same sniper. The pale wounded soldier still lived and another cool, but scared medic worked his way to the rescue. When he arrived he found the man had died and as he shouted the sad news to Greager, he was killed by the sniper's bullets. Greager saw four of his friends dead, lying in a heap, where he had spent ten minutes. As he looked he asked the unanswered question, "Why not me?"

A hushed cough brought Walter Lefevers to an abrupt halt as he was climbing the side of Dolan Hill on patrol. He listened intently and peered searchingly into the dense undergrowth surrounding him. In two trying minutes of thorough scrutiny, he espied a Japanese pillbox right by his arm. He listened in hope of determining how many Nips were hidden, but gave it up and slid quietly back down the trail a few feet to hide in the bushes.

Moments later a careless Nip walked sprightly

along the same path heading for the hideaway. As Lefevers dropped him with a burst from his tommy gun he thought he would rush back to his patrol and tell them what he had found. Running down the path he charged into his third Nip who was hiding in the bushes. Again the tommy sang out. Three Japanese died at the hands of Lefevers in a matter of minutes in three different places, all because of a cough.

\* \* \*

Rain was a dreaded curse and coming on top of all other miseries was often the straw that broke the camel's back. Yet, rain was also a blessing to some men. Sam Kennedy was busy throwing water out of his foxhole when he saw a movement a little way off. Knowing there was not supposed to be anyone out there, he fired. Sheets of rain kept his catch secret until the next morning. In the clear morning sunlight he found a dynamite laden Nip six feet away. Searching him the men found a map of Japanese positions on Dolan's Hill and Hill 4055. It was a find that saved many lives.

\* \* \*

There were lots of electrical storms high on Dolan Hill and Bob Quinn is one man who will remember the feel of electricity. He knows that lightning will strike twice in the same place as he was hit twice while sitting in his foxhole. Lightning storms were just as much a menace as were the Japanese. Lightning injured thirteen and killed one in a week.

The second time, Quinn was hit the hardest. He felt as though he had been hit by a mortar shell. It snapped his head back and he tingled all over for three or four seconds. He hastily examined his body to make sure it was all there.

Quinn was a lightning veteran by the time he was struck the THIRD time. He said it felt as though someone had hit his funnybone. Three times and out, though, and he certainly hoped it would be the last time.

\* \* \*

Lieutenant Harry Harper thought he was doing the boys a favor when he buried thirty frozen chickens in the tropical ground in an attempt to preserve them until the boys returned from maneuvers. The mephitic air when he dug them up for dinner was emphatic proof that the tropics are tropical.

\* \* \*

Fred Romero climbed slowly up the path on Dolan Hill. His buddies occupied the front and part of the top, but there were still Nips on the sides and the very top. Plumpish, round-faced Romero was looking for those still on the side as he stalked along with his Garand rifle ready. He was the lead scout in the patrol poking into the seemingly deserted Japanese diggings. Over the narrow slit trenches

that ran jaggedly in and out of the bamboo groves were small thatched huts hastily thrown together as protection against the incessant rain.

Romero held his right hand up as a signal to the second scout who was twenty-five yards to his rear. He caught the warning instantly and rapidly relayed it to the patrol leader. While the patrol leader was coming up to examine the camp Romero and the second scout exchanged a few words about the war in Europe.

"Well, we've got half of the bastards whipped," noted the second scout. "Wonder how long these yellow jerks think they can hold out?"

"Lord only knows," sighed Romero dislodging a pebble with his heel and then kicking it into the bushes. "Since they don't have good radio communication like we do, it's liable to be months before these guys even know about Germany falling."

The last words of Romero never reached the second scout as they were drowned out by the familiar fire of a captured Browning Automatic Rifle. The second scout fell to the ground, dead, as Romero plunged to the hard ground and wiggled over to a large rock on his left. He could see the location of the gun but knew he could not reach it with his one grenade. The gun fired again and looking over his shoulder Romero saw that the squad leader and his two aids had been killed when they attempted to get back to the patrol. As the BAR fired, a Japanese machine gun opened up and split the air with its rattling chatter. They stopped as suddenly as they

had begun and Romero knew that everyone had been killed but him.

"Let's see," pondered Romero as he lay on his side, "I wonder what time it is. Must be nearly noon. We started out about ten--yeah, it's noon, all right. Oh, oh, here come a couple of Nips--heading right this way...I'll shove my rifle up in the bushes so they won't see it and stop for it. Then I'll lie here on my side with my hand like this--holding this grenade to my chest--like I am dead. There, that oughta do it...if they turn me over I'll blow all of us to hell and back."

The two Nips did not see Romero and passed without bothering him. They stopped beside the second scout and picked up his rifle. Then they went to the others and collected their rifles and ammunition. On their way back they saw Romero and came over to his side. Through slitted eyes he watched their approach.

"Wonder what they'll do? Don't think that I've moved at all--maybe they know that I'm not dead and are figuring out how to kill me. Jeeze I wish I could understand their lingo...don't like the look in their eyes. Looks like what that one says, goes. Wonder if they will bayonet me to see if I'm still alive--or will they decide to cut my head off--maybe I'd better get up and let 'em have this grenade--no, maybe they will go away. Dear God, please don't let them torture me, and if I die, please take care of Mom. Dear God, please."

Lifting their rifles to their shoulders, the two Japs turned and strolled away leaving Romero

completely exhausted. It wasn't until early evening that he saw more Japanese and again he lived in constant dread that they would discover his ruse. In groups of four and five, they walked by him on their way to a small river to bathe. Romero still lay in the same position, hardly breathing and not daring to move a muscle. As darkness descended, he could hear and see his would-be killers preparing their food and shelter. Around nine o'clock he cautiously removed his canteen from his pouch. His mouth was parched.....

"I guess all of them must be in the sack by now...it's nearly midnight. If I'm going to get out of here I'd better get started. Let's see. We came up this trail and there were those huts with Nips in them so I can't go that way. If I remember correctly there should be a stream over to my left a little ways. I'll follow that and leave my rifle and steel helmet here so I can crawl more quietly...easy does it...wish it would rain...but that thunder and lightning will help a little. I can hear the river now...must be getting close. Ouch! Those damned thorns--must be a bamboo tree in front of me. Jeeze, it's so dark I can't see a thing. Ahhhh, here's the river--but this bank is too steep. I'll have to go farther down before I can get into it..."

"Boy, some of these rocks are sharp, but this is a nice, swift current. Guiding myself along with my hands and letting the river do the rest, it shouldn't take me too long to get out of here. I wonder how far I've gone now...not more than thirty or forty yards, I guess..."

Romero floated past Japanese guards in the middle of a thunder storm and on toward his camp. By sunrise he had traveled over two thousand yards in enemy-held country. He waited until the sun was well up before exposing himself to his own men who might mistake him for a Japanese.

Once in their arms, his legs gave away and he collapsed. He had spent fourteen hours in the middle of a Japanese camp playing dead. For every hour there, he had to spend one day in the hospital while his torn and tattered nerves became normal again.

\* \* \*

Poker playing on New Britain was stiff as the pound note was equal to \$3.20. In the Philippines, the lowest folding lettuce was equal to \$.50, and poker wasn't nearly so expensive. One finds, however, that the majority of the men liked poker best of all in Korea as a Yen note was equal to six cents. There one could bump for 100 Yen and feel like a millionaire.

\* \* \*

Sunday, May 12, 1945 dawned bright and clear and for the first time since the fighting had begun on Negros all of the men were off of the front lines and in their rear command post. They had been ordered back so the airforce could try to bomb the Nips off the top of the hill.

Even though the long walk down was short compared to the longer walk back, everyone was in a jovial mood. Lieutenant Gene Behmer was in charge of the bombing and stacked up a nice testimonial for himself with seven hundred odd sorties. As he was busy with preparation for the final concentrated blow, Chaplains Weaver and O'Brien made a disturbing discovery. They wanted to have a Memorial Service, a Thanksgiving Service for the End of the War in Europe, and here it was Mother's Day. They decided there was only one thing to do, so they combined the services.

That morning with the huge mountain as a backdrop, men knelt in prayer and worship on the ground for which they had fought. The Division Band was on hand to offer music as the men prayed silently for a hasty end of their own war and allowed some tears to escape as they thought about Mother and Home. Together they repeated the Ninth Psalm of David which begins:

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvellous works.

"I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.

"When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

"For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou sittest in the throne judging right.

"Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.



"O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

"But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

"And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

"And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

"Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings."

\* \* \*

"Just ask to enlist in V.I.P. next time. There's a snap. To get into V.I.P., one must be a civilian of good standing. He is made an honorary Lt. General and lives in elegant quarters. V.I.P. is short for Very Important Person, and most V.I.P.s work directly out of Washington where one will never have a housing problem like we faced in the Pacific.

\* \* \*

The Heaven of Negros, as it might well be called, was a spacious, two story frame house with a large veranda and steel bars over the windows. The steel bars were not to keep our men in, but rather to keep thieves out. The four upstairs rooms housed soft, luxurious army cots and the downstairs a large kitchen, and a lounge where a phonograph and magazines were at one's disposal.

If you had been at the front for fifty days running then you were eligible for three days at the Rest Camp where you were sure to get all of the beer you could drink and more than enough good food.

Lieutenant Ted Reiff, Frank Carmody, Larry Benedict and Clark Collins were on the job full time making sure that tired fighters had everything it was possible to give them. For their first meal the men nearly always had fried chicken with dumplings and all the trimmings. After that followed hamburger, roast beef, roast pork; breakfast of bacon and eggs; the tables always had plenty of fresh tomatoes, onions, peppers and radishes. And there were always seconds.

Since the army did not authorize such a feed, the quartet in charge of the camp took it on themselves to barter and trade with the Filipinos for most of the fresh vegetables, chickens and eggs. As group after group left their old, dirty, tattered and torn clothes behind, these persevering leaders collected the discarded garments and traded them for food.

Having no other means of transportation, they repaired a Japanese water truck and toured the bar-

rios hunting for fresh eggs. They constructed outdoor showers and kept them filled with water from the truck. It is true that the Rest Camp wasn't all that it could have been with better equipment and more room, but it was a life saver to many men as it stood. One might even say that a dirty pair of pants was responsible for what happiness and security the fighters of Dolan Hill had while on their three day reprieve from combat.

\* \* \*

In Hawaii there was a rumor that the 40th men would never hit combat as General MacArthur was quoted as saying, "I wouldn't have the 40th Division under me if it was the last outfit in the Pacific."--Oh, well, it gave us something to argue about.

\* \* \*

In the bright tropical sunlight the small band of men made a bold march into the jungled valley on the side of Dolan Hill and by nightfall occupied a priceless piece of land behind the Japanese atop the steep mountain. "It looks like a bottle-neck to me," remarked one scholarly chap standing on the fifteen feet of ground they had and noticing the sheer drop of more than two hundred feet on each side of him.

The Japs were dug in to their front, as well as their own men. They had been sent around to the rear in one of the few surrounding tactics used. Pfc. Jim

Humphries and Hubert Davenport lay in their foxhole as they listened to the firing up front and watched the occasional bright flashes of an exploding mortar shell. They were tired but their minds were alert and wondering.

"Do you think they know we are here?" asked Davenport. "I don't see how they could miss us. We were out in their country all day."

"Naw," drawled Humphries with a slight southern accent. "Hell's bells, man, if they knew we were here do you think they'd just let us stay? They'd have everything including the kitchen sink on us by now." He drew his short bayonet from his scabbard and with a grunt stuck it in the corner of his foxhole. "There, just in case."

Jim Humphries was right. The Japanese did not have the slightest idea they were surrounded as they crouched low in their pillboxes. The next morning, during an intense Yank artillery and mortar barrage they must have wondered if the world was coming to an end. They had just suffered through three days of aerial bombing. By prearrangement, the shelling ceased as abruptly as it began and the determined Yanks picked up the battle.

John Sjogren and his squad hugged the ground behind a large log while they studied the situation. They knew their battlefield was honeycombed with pillboxes but they could not locate any. "Put-tut-tut-tut-tut," spoke a Japanese machine gun as bits of dirt flew up from in front of the concealed muzzle. The bullets zinged over their heads and the

men took warning, pressing lower to the ground.

"That's the first one," Sjogren muttered to himself. And then aloud he shouted hurriedly. "Everyone pepper that Joe." Sjogren rolled over a few times until he was a little way away from his men and in a better position to throw hand grenades. It wasn't long before the air seemed full of the missiles thrown by Sjogren, but he seemed to sense that it wasn't doing the work. "More fire," he yelled picking up a big fist full of grenades. Standing up he prepared to throw when someone yelled, "Spider ---the second's hit."

Dropping to his knees Sjogren crawled swiftly over to his second in command's side and found him dead with a bullet hole in his head. Hoping against hope that he still might be alive and that he was wrong, Sjogren gently lifted his friend from his firing position and carried him back from the front to an aid station. Bitterly he accepted the fact that his friend was dead and stamped back for more fighting and, if possible, some revenge. He picked up his grenades and carefully selecting his first target charged into the open through a hail of singing steel.

Half standing, half crawling--running--creeping--stooping--dodging--jumping and twisting, Sjogren slipped up to the opening of the first pillbox before the Japanese were able to kill him. Rapidly he pushed and jammed grenades into the small slit in the front. He was too fast for the occupants and they couldn't push them all out. One grenade was

ejected though and when it exploded, Sjogren was sprayed with bits of steel.

Wounded, Sjogren searched out the next entrenchment and concentrated on it as his squad increased their fire. One Nip looked out of his hole to get a better look at Sjogren and he was looking death in the face. Sjogren shot him through the head and before the second Nip had a chance to do anything, the barrel chested fighter was in the 'Spider' hole fighting him hand to hand. He punched the Jap in the mouth and pushed him backwards trying to get his carbine up for the kill. The Nip pulled his pistol and fired wildly but before he could fire again, Jim Ware had arrived and killed him with a well-placed shot.

As Sjogren battled from pillbox to pillbox, he encountered a stubborn machine gun. Getting near enough to grab it by the barrel he jerked it out, leaving the gunner at the mercy of his follow-up grenade. With almost superhuman endurance and luck, Sjogren fought for five hours. When things quieted down he was credited with single handedly destroying nine pillboxes and killing forty-three Nipponese.

While Sjogren and the rest of the men walked to the rear, Major James Marr was busily engaged at the front door of the unpersuadable inhabitants. While directing the fight he saw Harry Holder drawing Japanese fire by 'using his head'. "It was one of the funniest things I've seen under fire," Marr said later. "Holder would stick his head around the trunk of a tree and when they shot at him would pull it back in and turn around, making a sort 'well, what

do you know' face.

"And there was poor Wilber Denison who was so determined not to let a Nip get the best of him. He had a tug of war with a Nip over his rifle. On the third big pull the Nip skinned Wilber's hands and retrieved his rifle. Denison came back after some grenades with a silly smile and assured us that if he was ten years younger that young whippersnapper couldn't have won."

When the fight for Bottle Neck Ridge was over, the men sank wearily to the ground certain that their final objective had been taken. It had been one of the bloodiest campaigns with a fitting climax. In over-running the last desperate Japanese of Colonel Yamaguchi's 172nd Independent Infantry Battalion, the 77th Brigade infantrymen killed one hundred and eleven Japs, and destroyed forty pillboxes. Sjogren received the only Congressional Medal of Honor in the 160th.

Around the first of June hopes began to soar as rumors circulated that we were through on Negros and the fighting was going to be turned over to the guerillas. They were to keep the outposts surrounding the defeated isolated Nips until the end of the war.

Even the food tasted better although it was still the same old stuff. Men began to take a new interest in life. There was more joking, singing and chow hound races. It was the middle of June before actual results were evident and one by one, units moved into a rear area. Working every day for two weeks the men built up their tent-homes, cut

grass, made slick mess halls, laid sand-bag sidewalks and kept things all polished up. Then on July 1, Negros passed from the hands of the 40th and everyone chucked aside all efforts to make life comfortable and moved to Panay.

On Santa Barbara airstrip new tents went up and with the same painstaking labor, we prepared to live while sweating out our next assignment which all agreed would be a plunge into Japan.

\* \* \*

En route to Hawaii the indoctrination courses made us certain we'd never learn to pronounce a single native word. It wasn't long though before the sloe-eyed maidens had us rattling off "hoomalimali" for baloney and "humuhumunukunukuapuaa" for that little fish in the song.

\* \* \*

## Chapter XI

### For Three Years We Have Suffered

All GI's soon turned cold ears to woeful tales from liberated Filipinos who began by saying, "For three years we have suffered." It was not long until it was a joke among us, as we felt that we had suffered for years, too. Here is a different, sobering picture of "For three years we have suffered," which may make us GI's feel a little ashamed of our scorn. It is an article David L. Brigham (40th Division Public Relations) wrote for 'Sunburst Saga':



#### A COUNTRY DOCTOR FACES WAR

Dr. Edwardo Gonzaga is a Filipino. Sent to the United States on a scholarship from the Baptist mission and school in Iloilo, Panay, he received his AB degree from Denison University at Denison, Ohio. He earned his way by cooking for the College President.

Graduating with high honors, he transferred to Temple University in Philadelphia (1931-1936) to complete his studies for a doctor's degree in medicine. He graduated with honors after again cooking the entire time for the Temple President. He received an award and medal for his work as an outstanding surgical student. After graduation, he returned to his native city to become a surgeon in the big Iloilo hospital.

Mrs. Gonzaga left for the States in 1938 after Dr. Gonzaga's return. She also had a scholarship from the Baptist mission but this was for singing. Two years she spent at Ottawa University in Ottawa,

Kansas. Her spare time was spent on concert tours which included all of the large midwest cities.

Then came Pearl Harbor and war to the Philippines. The Gonzaga family moved to the mountains where they worked with the USAFFE Base Hospital in Panay. They were captured and made prisoners for four months. Later they moved back to the city where medical attention was desperately needed. Constantly they endured the torture of Japanese suspicion.

Dr. Gonzaga and his wife had just returned from a five day sail boat ride from Negros. Behind them were the memories of brothers, sisters and parents massacred by the enemy.

Gonzaga's policy of treating Japs with a mixture of disdain and double talk kept him in constant trouble. His orders were to treat Japanese and only those civilians who were favorably inclined to the Jap cause. Being a doctor and also a loyal Filipino-American, the doctor clung to his pledge to care for all who needed him.

"Day and night the Japs harassed me," the doctor said. "I had to make many trips on foot into the country. As I crossed each bridge I was halted by guards and soon learned a little secret. If I bowed deeply and spoke one sentence I was permitted to pass without stating my business."

The sentence was "Ohio gozamasu, Arigate gazaimasu." This, in English, means, "Good morning, most respectfully, thank you most respectfully." Failing to bow properly meant a severe slap in the face followed by a bayonet against the belly.

One midnight in 1943, Gonzaga's house was raided. He was accused of treating a fellow named Marshall, son of an anti-Jap leader. It was true, but the doctor covered himself by saying the only way he could tell them whether he had treated the son was for them to give him his name. They could not oblige so the guards withdrew their bayonets which pinned him against the wall. Other guards searched the house for evidence and they made off with every small item of value which they could carry. The doctor knew better than to file a complaint.

"I was rushed very rudely to the city jail and placed in cell Nine overlooking the court through which suspects passed before and after torture. The main means of securing information was a board, two feet long and two inches thick. I sat in my cell for eighteen days hearing the slap, slap of that board and the moans of the suspects, day and night. I soon established a formula. Each time the board fell, I counted. If the total reached forty or more, I said there will be a dead man in the morning and my predictions were always confirmed.

"One of the most brutal atrocities was the practice of peeling back the scalp, slowly and painfully, and sprinkling salt in the wound as they went. When the man fell, he was revived and the process continued until he died.

"My brother-in-law was there. He was innocent of any fault but a former Japanese civilian turned interpreter, had a grudge against him from a school-day fight. He suggested that he be arrested and re-

ceived the reward given each underground collaborator who brought in a suspect. My brother-in-law was placed against a wall with his hands tied overhead. Time and again a fist drove deep into his body below the solar plexus. When he fainted he was revived and the beating continued with each blow followed by the query, 'Are you a guerrilla?' When he tried to cover his body from a blow, he was grasped by the shirt and solid blows slammed on his chin. Finally he said, 'I am not a guerrilla, but if you want me to say I am, I will.' With that the beating ceased and the boy was given a cigaret.

"I heard about it all and went to the Japanese officials to tell them my brother-in-law was innocent and ask for his release. That request was granted and he was to come home in three days but so severely had he been beaten that the Japanese were not willing to let him go for eighteen days. At the end of that time he still stooped like a hunchback but was able to come back to us."

Following his prison siege, Gonzaga decided to move his family to the mountains and forests. Without shoes and existing on small portions of rice and fish, the doctor continued his practice.

"I treated the citizens and army men for every imaginable disease and injury but I consider my operations the most interesting. Let me tell you about the emergency appendectomies I performed on six guerrillas without a loss.

"Always it was necessary to work in a nipá shack with a bamboo bed for an operating table. This was

placed on chairs to make it of sufficient height. Not very stable but the best we had under the circumstances. The patient's hands were tied with rattan, (a cane-like material used for making chair seats). Novocaine was the only available anesthetic.

"I used a cocoanut husk for a scrub brush and Filipino soap combining cocoanut oil and lye. I had lysol and alcohol for disinfecting purposes. There were no rubber gloves and only a few baby diapers for sanitary protection. We sterilized these by ironing them constantly for thirty minutes with a hot iron. Six of these diapers were placed on the patient and one was pinned to my underwear. I made a gauze mask.

"Let's not forget I was working in the forest all the time and considered myself fortunate to have the small items I had been able to transport with me. I had only one crude homemade scalpel. For retractors I took pieces of wire clothesline which an assistant held. The wire had been doubled to give more width. There were only three hemostats and I had to tie the bleeding vessel before going on to the next.

"The operation took from a half hour to forty minutes from the time the incision was made until the last cat gut had been drawn through. Usually I am done in fifteen to twenty minutes with proper equipment. Before closing the incision I placed sulfanilamide in the cavity. Then as I closed it up I just crossed my fingers, hoping that nothing would happen. Only once did I have infection in a patient."

Dr. Gonzaga also told of the miracles he had seen. A seventy-six year old Filipino was suspected and a bayonet was slowly forced, as was the practice, through his back until inches of blade shown on the forward side. The penetration went just below the liver and just to the right of the stomach. Apparently the intestines were not punctured for the old man recovered with only the use of native herbs and has only two large scars to recall the incident.

I met a girl, whom the doctor introduced as he would a ghost. Just before we entered Iloilo, the town of Jaro was destroyed and all civilians bayoneted and supposedly killed. This girl bears six great scars where a bayonet had been thrust completely through her neck three times.

The Doctor saw ears being severed from Americans and Filipinos alike. Helplessly he observed the Japs gouge eyes from their sockets and then behead the victim.

From Guimaras Island to Iloilo came eight hundred suspects to be lined up on the beach and beheaded. One by one they bowed their heads to Jap swords. Also while the doctor gazed in horror, the feet of little children were tied and their small bodies and heads were swung against a concrete walk until they were lifeless and shapeless.

Nor has he forgotten the Japanese bayonet practice he was forced to witness. Not satisfied with the straw and burlap dummy of the American Army, they rounded up many of the younger boys and men of the towns. These were tied to cocoanut palms, and

the soldiers lined up to wait their turn to charge and thrust the helpless Filipinos.

"The worst part of it all," Gonzaga commented, "was that if you were found to have no fault you were nevertheless broken in body, mind and spirit." The only consolation was the Japanese, "So sorry, Please excuse honorable mistake."

Now the doctor is back with his people and his profession. Equipment is arriving from America and once again he will carry on his ministering with the added burden of rebuilding every civilian who lived with the Nip occupation forces. It is a task to defeat a man of lesser stature or perseverance than Dr. Edwardo Gonzaga.

\* \* \*

Much has been written about Tokyo Rose and our appreciation of her good music and chatter. But the best and loudest laugh that she gave us was on January 10, 1945---the day after S Day at Lingayen. She reported that the first ten waves of the invasion forces were completely annihilated on the beach. We, of the first ten waves, listened to her "News" some six miles inland--after passing the beach without firing a shot or losing a man.

\* \* \*

This is the Valley of Hope, snuggled between those high, jungle covered mountains. Here, where the grass is now green again and you can see nothing



that hints of terror, death laid the ashes of nineteen Americans who were massacred. In May, 1942, when the Japanese landed on Panay, these people fled Iloilo only to be chased and killed. Another portion of the Baptist Missionaries under Dr. Frederick Chambers, stayed, were taken prisoners, and today are still alive.

Paterno H. Enano, a former student at the Philippine Central College was present at the executions and witnessed Captain Kunoyi Watanabe, known as the Terror of China, live up to his nickname. Three years later Enano sat in the burned-out offices of the once beautiful college, and told his story.

"When I was a student I learned some Japanese," he began, "and since I spoke my native tongue and English, plus a little Japanese, the Japs forced me to be an interpreter. They couldn't keep me long, though, as I escaped and joined the guerrillas. Before I could make my getaway, however, the following took place:

"We left the township of Libacao. There were about five hundred of us including officers and headed toward Iloilo. Along the route, we encountered three Americans. They were taken prisoners by Watanabe. I knew one of them. His name was Lieutenant King. I guess that Watanabe figured the other Americans were around there some place as he stopped a Filipino farmer and threatened to kill him unless he told where they were hiding. The farmer told him where the Valley of Hope was.

"Watanabe was overjoyed to learn where the mis-

sionaries and their families were hiding and wasted no time. He marched his men in a straight line, arriving there about 9:00 A.M. the following morning, December 19. It was Sunday and the Americans were holding worship when the Japanese officer ordered half of his men to surround the little dale and the other half to go with him. The missionaries felt secure as they did not have any guards out and Watanabe was inside their little church before they knew what was happening. He had the entire village searched and found eleven Baptist missionaries with their families--a total of sixteen. Dr. Francis H. Rose, Field Representative of the American Baptist Missionary Society, was their leader and he tried to convince Watanabe that they were doing no wrong. But it was useless as the bloodthirsty captain had already made up his mind what he was going to do with them.

"The Japanese decided to take the Americans to a nipa shack about half a kilometer away and keep them under guard until the next day. They took all of their canned food and would not give them any food or water. They had to sleep on the cold ground without any blankets.

"About 3:00 P.M. on December 20, the Japs came after Mrs. Charma Covell, instructor in religious education, and took her to the house of execution. I heard Mrs. Covell who was one of my former teachers, plead with Watanabe. She said, 'Captain Watanabe, why will you kill us all? We are Christian missionaries.'

"Watanabe did not say anything. He only smiled

and signaled for the guards who had their bayonets fixed, to take her into the house. He was the only one to follow her in. I saw her kneel and he raised his saber and then I ran away. As I ran I heard her scream. From a distance I saw eleven other Americans walk to the house with their hands tied behind them to be beheaded by the only man there--Captain Watanabe. In another house, seven others were killed the same way.

"I returned about two hours later and found the house in flames--the air was heavy with the odor of burning flesh. I couldn't see much and waited until the fire died out before making an examination. I noticed particularly that none of the heads of the men and women were attached to the bodies. The heads of the three small children were, though, and I think they were bayoneted to death rather than beheaded.

"I managed to escape from the Japs a few days later when they got drunk and I joined the guerrillas and became a sergeant."

It was some three weeks later that Angracio C. Alora, General Secretary of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, and Reverend Delfin Dianala, pastor of the Katipunan Baptist Church were able to visit the Valley of Hope. Making a rapid trip without the knowledge or consent of the Japanese, they discovered the charred bones of their friends in the ashes of the two nipa huts. With care and reverence they gathered the bones and placed them in a cloth sack--identifying as many of the nineteen skulls as they could from size, shape and bridge-work. Walk-

## For Three Years We Have Suffered 185

ing back to the Valley of Hope Chapel, they secretly buried the remains in a common unmarked grave at the foot of the pulpit, sprinkling the bones with sand to help preserve them.

A few weeks later the Japanese returned to destroy anything they had missed before. Entering the Chapel they chopped up the pulpit and communion table for firewood, making their fire over the unmarked grave of those they had killed. Thus, for many months, the only marker was a small pile of wood ashes left by the Japanese after they had eaten and departed.

\* \* \*

Ration day generally wasn't bargain day. Nearly everyone wanted a popular brand of cigaret and had to be content with some unknown kind. It seemed like they had an inside track to our door. Tropical candies were accepted as sure-fire trading material with the natives. Toothpaste wasn't the best, but it was better than nothing.

Most men soon sought a buddy who did not smoke cigarets and who chose a pipe or cigars. Many lasting friendships were built from the weekly swapping, and possibly many enemies, as it was always a question whether one pack of smokes was equal to one or two stogies. The few-and-far-between lads who did not use the weed or drink that 'awful stuff' called beer were always in the driver's seat with the Top--or at least the Section Sergeant.

\* \* \*

All books should have a love interest, be they history or math. It is a little hard to wedge it in some books and this is one of them. However, there is one true love affair that gives some romantic aspects to the occupation. The leading lady is Lydia Perez of Bacolod, Negros. She is one girl that you would look at more than twice, being slender and well developed. Her high forehead and dark fiery eyes attracted you and her soothing, sultry voice bewitched you. She was beautiful, half Filipino and half Spanish. And she was rich. Her father owned three haciendas and great quantities of rice and sugar cane. Her life story rolled along very smoothly until the war came and then things took a bad turn for the worse.

Shortly after the Japs landed on Negros, her father was approached by the guerrillas and asked to support a regiment of them from his land. This he gladly consented to do. Two of her four brothers joined the guerrillas and it looked like an all out fight against the Japanese.

Her father did a lot of travelling though and was arrested by the Japanese as a spy. The Nips did not know that he was supporting a regiment of guerrillas, but the guerrillas suspected that he had turned traitor after he was arrested. Figuring he would tell all he knew they burned down his haciendas and rice and sugar cane. The crops for the years 1942, '43, and '44 were wiped out--his fortune was gone.

While her father was in prison, Lydia was taken

prisoner and kept for four days on water while they tried to get evidence against him. When she was released she decided to stay in Bacolod with her mother who had come from San Carlos. A few days after their reunion they received a note attached to her younger brother's head as a warning to her father. It said that the same thing would happen to him if he returned to his burned-down home. The hatred of the guerrillas for Lydia's father was intense--the father-and-son line had been broken.

In this maze of incidents too bewildering for most to grasp, Lydia struck out on her own to seek a new life. It was not intentional--it was love.

One afternoon at a birthday party she met a Japanese Naval Captain who was born and raised for the most part in the Philippines. Captain Junichi Watanabe (not to be confused with Captain Kunoyi Watanabe) was Occidental in matters of courtship and love. He was a powerful figure in the government, and as Japanese go, he was nice. He was the most respected Japanese on Negros and was known for his fairness. They were happy and planned to marry.

When the Yanks returned to the Philippines, the couple decided they had better speed things up a little. Junichi went to see the Priest, was converted from Shintoism to Catholicism and on March 27, 1945, they were married in the Bacolod Cathedral. Two days later, while they were honeymooning in a nipa hut near the foot of Hell's Half Acre, we landed. Johnny (his English name) sent his wife back to the city and he took up his position in Colonel Yama-

guchi's defense. During the fight, Lydia wrote him a letter that was carried by a Filipino, begging him to surrender.

"April 24, 1945"

"My dearest Johnny:

I cannot wait for very long, neither have I the patience to wait and know how you are, where you are and when you are coming back. Oh, Johnny, I am very lonely. Please come home.

As for me, do not worry a bit. I am very well. I am living at home with the family. There, you see! I am not even in any camp as are all the rest of the Japanese families.

Johnny, the man who is giving you this letter is reliable and please trust him. He will do everything for you and your own good.

Johnny, please come back. Think of the situation. You have a wife and a big surprise for you. What will you get fighting out there? It does not help the war situation in any way whatsoever. So, why stay there? That is no place for a human being, and I know you can do a lot more here than anywhere else. There are plenty of people suffering in the city due to misunderstanding, and you are the only person who can clear it up. I think your person is needed here more than any place else.

Johnny, please come home. I need you very badly. Forget pride. I will love you just the same, although you be a captain or a prisoner of war. My love for you is just the same and you will have the best treat-

ment. I mean good, and I will be with you. And one thing, the American forces will guarantee your safety.

So long, think it well or rather think of your safety. I need you alive and not dead.

Your loving wife,  
Lydia."

Johnny was a long time in coming back, but he did make it. According to Abe Gonzales, Editor of the Iloilo Antigbataas, they have a lovely baby and he is an interpreter for the American Army.

The love interest with a happy ending.

\* \* \*

Fortieth Division telephone code names normally followed a uniform pattern. On New Britain the exchanges all began with the letter "E" which put quite a strain on the signal officer's vocabulary, causing him to resort to proper names. At first it was startling to hear someone ask the operator, "please give me Eileen", which turned out to be the 6th AAA Group, or "Elsie", the 251st Field Hospital.

\* \* \*

Hawaiian Radio Motto

"There will be no work in the pineapple fields today."

\* \* \*

List of those killed in the December Massacre as given in a sworn statement by Paterno H. Enano, Engracio C. Alora, Rev. Delfin Dianala and Mr. and Mrs. Urbano Neguin:

Dr. Francis H. Rose,  
Field Representative of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society and Professor of Zoology in Central Philippine College.

Mrs. Gertrude H. Rose,  
wife of Dr. Rose, Professor of Mathematics and Foreign Languages in Central Philippine College.

James H. Covell,  
English Professor, Central Philippine College.

Mrs. Charma Covell,  
wife of Prof. Covell, instructor in Religious Education in Central Philippine College.

Miss Dorothy Dowell,  
Principal, Baptist Missionary Training School, Central Philippine College.

Miss Signe Erickson,  
Professor of Religious Education, Central Philippine College.

Dr. Frederick Meyers,  
Director of Immanuel Hospital, Capiz.

Jane Addams,  
Head Nurse of Immanuel Hospital.

Reverend Earle Rounds,  
Director of Rural Education for Convention of Bap-

tist Churches on Panay. Mr. Rounds also served the Filipino guerrillas as a Chaplain.

Mrs. Earle Rounds,  
wife of Mr. Rounds.

Douglas Rounds,  
eight year old son of the Reverend and Mrs. Rounds.

Lt. Robert King,  
former Iloilo business man, commissioned in the United States Army after the outbreak of the war.

Mr. and Mrs. Clardy,  
formerly an engineer in the Philippines and wife.

Johnny and Terry Clardy,  
sons of above couple--under ten.

Two unidentified men,  
also believed to have been engineers. Both reportedly escaped from a mining camp in the Zambales Mountains on Luzon and were captured by the Japanese while attempting to work inland on Panay to join the guerrillas.

\* \* \*

## Chapter XII

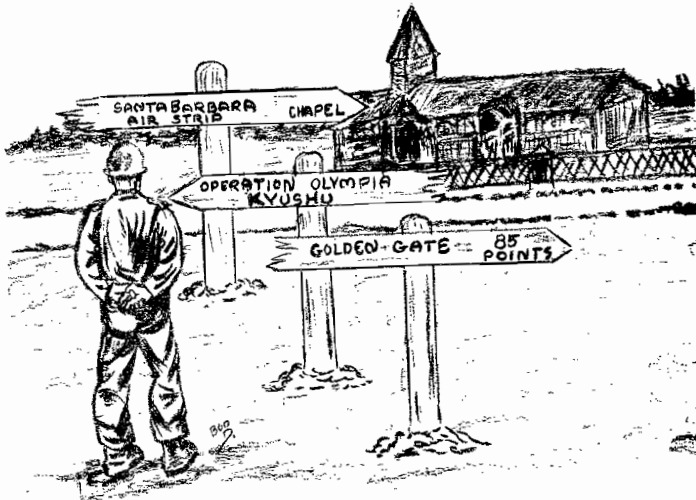
### Victory--Olympia

Tall, thin-faced, blond Dave Brigham shook the rain from his undersized poncho and ducking his head, he stepped through the side door of the Lido night club. The hubbub inside, as the couples whirled around the floor to the Divisionaires' "I'll Walk Alone", was refreshing and exciting. Uniformed waitresses circled carefully around tables with their orders of sandwiches, Coca-Cola and ice cream.

It was difficult to see in the dim light and Brigham slowly began to scan the room studying each head by the canale light reflected on the tables. Suddenly he sighted the one he searched for and unceremoniously made his way across the fine polished floor. Filipino girls and soldiers looked wonderingly after him. A bouncer moved quickly from his post and started for him, but Brigham was off the floor and at the table of Anthony Intrabartolo before the bouncer could reach him.

"Can I talk to you a minute?" asked Brigham excusing himself before the table of merrymakers. Danny Bartolo, as he is known among his friends, jumped to his feet and they whispered excitedly together. Immediately Bartolo motioned to his friend, Bill Wardell, the band leader, and asked for the "Mike". He had a dramatic touch as he stepped toward the center of the stage for his greatest act. The undertone of the audience ceased and soon the room was as still as a country night.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have your atten-



tion?" His voice boomed loudly over the room and he stepped back from the mike and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. He seemed to be searching out every face within the range of his vision. With a short pause he stated simply, "We have just received word that Japan has surrendered."

The stillness rose slowly into a slight hissing noise as hundreds of people seemed to inhale instantaneously. The deep hissing was followed by the wildest explosion of shouting and noise ever heard within the walls of the Lido Club. Girls screamed and laughed as tears streamed down their cheeks and men swore loudly as they attempted to express joy, disbelief and bewilderment. The band struck up with "California, Here I Come" and the room swayed with dancing feet.

The explosion--The Japanese Have Surrendered--echoed throughout the city and island. Navy Shore Patrol men discarded their armbands, saying, to hell with everyone--that tonight was a night for celebration. Night clubs were torn apart as happy men and girls danced and kissed on table tops.

Men in the Second Battalion were on shipboard when they heard of the surrender. For two days they had been rehearsing landings on Negros in preparation for Japan. When the loud speaker blared the news, the Captain probably thought his ship was going to the bottom. Men grabbed anything they could find and started pounding the steel decks until the ship vibrated with the pounding and men were afraid they would be deafened. You can't excite some people

with any news--one man playing pinochle calmly announced, "The hell you say. I'll believe it tomorrow--maybe."

The pessimist was partially justified. It was four days later, August 14, 1945, that final confirmation of the Japanese surrender was announced by the White House. During those four uncertain days, everyone hungrily read all available news sheets and kept their ears glued to the radio as speculation ran high.

A perpetual discussion on the new Atomic bomb could be heard from street corner to street corner, bar to bar, and tent to tent. No one knew exactly how it worked, or how much damage it inflicted but from the first reports we knew we had a powerful new weapon of destruction that might destroy the entire world. It took some time for our minds to get accustomed to the fact that Germany and Japan had been working on just such a bomb to kill us, but that we had beaten them to the draw. As we read accounts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki we could not reconstruct in our minds a bomb equal to twenty thousand tons of TNT. It was hard to believe that one bomb could destroy sixty per cent of a large industrial city like Hiroshima. But, we knew it was true and because it wasn't something from "Superman comics", Japan had to surrender or else find herself under the Pacific Ocean.

Colonel Raymond Stanton captured the more serious tone of surrender in his speech on V-J Day when he gave us something to ponder over. Standing on

the runway of the Santa Barbara Airstrip, he said in part:

"Today is V-J Day...the day we have been looking forward to for what has seemed an eternity. This day must be set aside to thank Almighty God for sparing us the sorrow that lay ahead in the path of war, had hostilities continued.

"The officers and men of the 160th have fought through some of the worst fighting in the South Pacific and know only too well what sorrows, hardship and even death itself mean to them. They have been exposed to a cruel and difficult type of warfare for months on end--going from island to island with only one thought uppermost in mind--that of crushing the Japanese for all time. This goal has now been attained.

"The ruthless warlords of Japan have been brought to an ignominious end by the will of an indomitable people..... It is the hope and prayerful wish of every man in this command that the sacrifices, sickness and death of our comrades be remembered by our countrymen in the maintenance of peace to come....."

With the end of hostilities came a new task, that of accepting the surrender of Japanese troops. We worried some over the possibility that they would try a last banzai attack to save their honor and in so doing kill more of our men. But, we did not understand how much power the Emperor had. It finally resolved to this: When the Emperor said fight, they fought: when he said stop, they stopped. With this education in oriental philosophy came another bit of

information that scared most of us---and made us thankful for the Atomic bomb.

We found out, trickle by trickle, that we had been scheduled to land off Kyushu four days ahead of the major invasion and seize radar stations. It seemed like a suicide mission as we knew the Nips would probably have thrown everything in the books at us, including their long range coastal guns. The Atomic bomb cancelled the need for operation Olympia of which we were to have been the spearhead.

\* \* \*

The mud was very deep on the Canal. Take the fellow who finished his smoke and threw it on the ground. He stepped on it to put it out, and they were still digging for him at the end of the third day.

\* \* \*

On Saturday there was always inspection, especially since the war was over there was nothing to do but put on the spit-and-polish and get ready to be occupational instead of fighting soldiers. Al Chessani was busily engaged voicing his opinion on the futility of trying to pass an inspection where they looked for dirt and corrosion in the small eyelets on his rifle belt instead of examining his highly polished rifle, when a Filipino came running up and shouted, "Japanese near here."

John Hansen dropped his mess gear and without changing his polished shoes started out in the lead



of the hastily organized patrol. They had not gone very far when they found two Nips hidden in a bamboo thicket. Knowing the war was over and thinking they might want to surrender, Hansen yelled for them to come out with their hands up. For a reply he received two shots across his bow. Words don't mix with lead and Hansen replied with three shots, killing one Nip. The other Jap did not want to argue with such accurate shooting and started out on the run. He did not know he had been quietly surrounded and before he had taken forty steps he found the long, strong arms of Mike Chizmar folded like steel around his arms, pinning them to his side.

This was on August 25, almost two weeks after the end of the war. Chizmar had accepted the first Japanese to surrender, under rather strained circumstances it must be admitted, and Hanson was the last man to kill a Jap, in the 160th, perhaps in the 40th Division.

\* \* \*

Obtaining light for our tents was a problem. On the first night, six inch candles stuck on cots did the trick. By the second or third night, barrack bags and squad boxes with a few Coleman lanterns arrived but most of the time the mantles were broken. Within a week the Regimental or Battalion generator was installed and a sixty watt bulb burned fiercely in most tents. One company hit the bell on the

Canal. Some geniuses lifted a large, portable generator from the Island Chapel and buried it in the ground until an M.C. came close to discovering the "lost" generator.

\* \* \*

On August 28, Alfred Hubbard sighted the first members of the Japanese surrender party as they came down a path from the mountains outside of Massin. The three officers and eight enlisted men accepted orders from Colonel Stanton for the complete surrender to take place on September 1. With their orders and an American radio for communication, the Nips returned to their camp.

At the appointed time, Colonel Tozuka was ready to surrender his 1800 troops. As he approached the table to submit his saber as a token of complete surrender it was obvious he was not well, or else the defeat was too much for him to bear. He later said, "It was naturally very regrettable that we had to lose the war. Our defeat was due to your material and chemical superiority." When he heard that Lt. Colonel Yamaguchi, a member of General Kono's staff had said it was a "Godsend the Japanese were defeated," and that they had always thought themselves as superhumans, he changed his statement a little to conform to the "established policy."

Feeling much relieved at having said the right thing, he continued to talk. "I do not know how many men you had against me, but just when we found out the war was over we were considering plans for

the retaking of Iloilo.

"You remember when you were fighting us early in May near Leon? You lost quite a few men when you tried to take one ridge. I had a good notion to let you have that ridge as my men were on ridges on each flank and then we were going to surround and kill you before we retook Iloilo. We could have done it as we had 1800 men but you thought we had only a few. Am I right?" To this question our boys could only stare and wonder how close to certain death they had been.

\* \* \*

The morning after the first night on Guadalcanal made many feel like a combat veteran. It was dark when we arrived in our areas and pitched pup tents. In the cold morning we awoke amid pieces of exploded shells and duds from the recent Hell's Point Ammunition Dump explosion.

\* \* \*

At 4:12 P.M., August 30, near Santa Rosa hacienda on Negros, the commanding general of the Japanese forces on Panay and Negros surrendered his 5,000 troops and then collapsed--literally--at the feet of his conquerors. Two days later in an army hospital, I spent an hour with the stricken war lord. The doctor in charge said he was suffering from a case of "loss of face" and remarked it was the first case of this kind he had ever treated.

During our entire talk the stocky general sat cross-legged on an army cot and fanned himself with his long ivory fan even though it was not hot. There was a carved golden dragon on each side of the handle which he displayed with a fine flourish. General Taseai Kono wore cotton breeches, long underwear and a short-sleeved silk shirt. He seemed fascinated by his bare feet for he stared at them constantly while the interpreter translated.

He said, "It will be a long, long time before there is another war. Perhaps no nation will want another war." When asked if Japan had had enough war he said that the people of Japan had, but no matter how fed up with it he was, he would still be fighting if the Emperor hadn't ordered the surrender. "I would have stayed in the mountains until the last man starved to death." Kono was not kidding. In two rooms above him were some of the men who had surrendered and who were suffering from beri-beri and malnutrition. One of them who lived in the Philippines for ten years, admitted that hundreds of Japanese had died from starvation.

Kono knew that Americans would return to the Philippines, but he did not know where they would land. He was completely surprised with the Leyte landing and he did not know how to prepare his defense on Panay and Negros. He had expected the first landing on Mindanao. Sucking an American cigaret, he declared, "I'm glad the Emperor surrendered as it saved many lives.

"I lost face--all the Japanese people lost face.

"I don't think the Emperor will commit hari-kari. I would have committed hari-kari if my responsibilities were great enough, but they weren't."

I could not help remarking that defense of two islands and a command of 19,000 troops was a pretty good piece of responsibility. I suppose I felt it still was not too late and that I might be able to change his mind.

"General, during the latter part of April a cub plane crashed in your territory. Two people were in it. The pilot was killed but the other man wasn't. He was taken a prisoner and later beheaded. His body was found two weeks later when our troops pushed past the plane, but his head was missing. This was a crime by your men, General. You are responsible."

For an answer the round faced General started fanning. In a few minutes he replied, "I didn't know about it all--it is to be regretted."

The interview with the man who had directed the fruitless fight against the 160th and 40th Division was ended and I rose from my chair to leave. As I reached the door, the interpreter spoke.

"The General would like to know about the millions of balloon bombs that were directed toward the United States."

"Oh yes," I answered, "two balloons landed and killed six people who were picnicking. Why? Were they your secret weapon?"

The General laughed a weak laugh that was all teeth as the interpreter translated. He replied,

"No--it was just an experiment."

"Well, General, we Americans tried a little experiment, too. Only we got 300,000 of your people with the atom bombs. Tell me, General, which experiment worked better?" He continued to fan--the hard, cruel look in his eyes smoldered, his buck teeth frozen in a forced smile.

\* \* \*

Jungle rot was our worst scourge; the curse of the natives; the headache of the medics. One fellow was discharged when the doctor could not stop his hair from falling out like the leaves in fall.

\* \* \*

Figures and statistics also tell a story. Take, for instance, the news release compiled for the Division's third anniversary overseas, on August 23.

"Since embarking in 1942 for the Hawaiian Islands, the 40th has accounted for 12,555 Japanese killed in the campaigns of New Britain and Luzon, the Visayan Islands, Leyte and Mindanao in the Philippines. 40th Division infantrymen, in 238 days of front line combat, have made seven assault landings and helped to liberate from Japanese occupation, eight Philippine Islands--Luzon, Mindanao, Negros, Panay, Leyte, Masbate, Guimaras and Inampulugan.

"Land area in the Philippines liberated by the 40th totals approximately 15,655 square miles, or

more than one-tenth of the entire islands. The Division also captured 33 Japanese airfields.

"40th Division officers and men have received, during the Philippine campaign 3,257 combat awards. These include: One Congressional Medal of Honor, 8 Distinguished Service Crosses, 15 Legions of Merit, 224 Silver Stars, 872 Bronze Stars, 55 Air Medals, 2,055 Purple Hearts, 20 Soldier's Medals, 5 Meritorious Service Unit Plaques and Distinguished Unit Citations."

These figures give only part of the picture even though released at the end of the war. There was so much paper work that many awards had not been announced. Probably the figure 12,555 might be raised also with the inclusion of the last skirmish of Santa Barbara on August 25.

The 160th was always in there pitching in the heat of battles. Otherwise it could not claim the only Congressional Medal of Honor, three of the eight Distinguished Service Crosses, fifty-five of the Silver Stars, two hundred thirty-eight Bronze Stars, four Air Medals and over four hundred sixty-four Purple Hearts. Neither could it point to the highest regimental fatality list--two hundred and sixty-seven men killed in action.

Major Glenn Jones, Captains Harry Spinnler, Wesley Logan, Bernard Levine, Clare Fitzwilliams and Frank Rosenthal feel proud of the figures showing the accomplishments of their hundred and ten men in the Medics. Out of the hundred and ten, five were awarded Silver Stars, twenty-seven the Bronze Star

and fifty-four the Purple Heart--two receiving the Oak Leaf Cluster on the latter.

On Luzon those aid men were on the line for fifty-three continuous days and for eighty-three days on Negros and Panay. They administered six hundred and eighty units of blood plasma under combat conditions in the field and maintained an almost unbelievable record: losing less than one per cent of the men treated. They treated over 10,000 people for ailments from toothache to emergency minor operations on civilians and soldiers.

The litter bearers and aid men with the front line companies were the backbone of efficient medical service. Exposed to enemy fire while treating a majority of wounds, eighteen were killed at the side of wounded men. Six medics have had a wounded man killed by a sniper while they were trying to save him. Three medics were killed in the same spot, by the same sniper.

They have administered blood plasma in the dark with only the fiery tracer bullets and occasional flares to help them seek out the life-line vein. The evacuation of wounded has taken hours at times. It once took twenty men eleven hours to carry one man a mile and a half. The medics asked no ground, gave everything and sacrificed their lives so that the wounded men might live.

That is the story in statistics.

The fight for cold beer was perpetual ...some buried it in the ground; some put it in the sun with a wet rag over it; some traded everything the Government owned for ice; but most of us drank it hot and loved it.

\* \* \*

Cleo Ladd, Earl Hawkins, Wayne Griffith, Albert Michealis and Charles Allen sat in their tent on the airstrip watching Japanese digging post holes for a concentration camp.

"This sure is pleasure," sighed Ladd, "to lie on this bunk and watch those guys digging their own pen."

"Yep," agreed Allen, "It's a treat all right, but I'm more enthused about seeing that Golden Gate myself. Dear, dear, those poor lads who have to go to Korea and straighten out the Nips there. I'm sure glad I ain't going."

"Why, I think that would be a nice trip," laughed Michealis. "Look, here comes one of the lucky boys who is going to make that trip. Hey, Downing, come here."

Steve Downing trudged across the dirt street and stopped to look at the sign on the tent..... "Civilians Only. Soldiers Keep Out."

"Steve, old pal, tell us how it feels to be one of the glorious occupation men selected to go to Korea."

"Oh, go to hell," Steve said stomping away. "Just 'cause you guys are going home you don't have to rub it in."

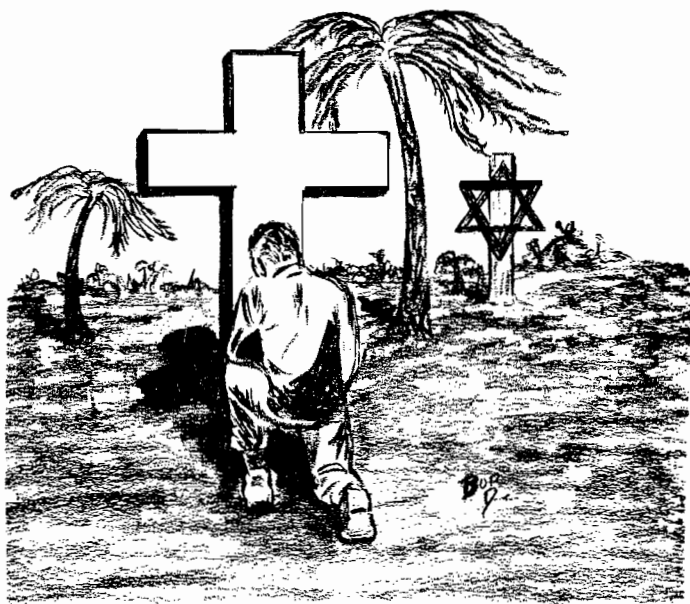
"Say, Griff, what are you going to do when you get home?" asked Hawkins. "Going back to Bowling Green?"

"Maybe, I don't know for sure. I am not going to do very much for a while. How about you, Al?"

"Me?" asked Michealis. "Oh, I am going to take up Art."

"ART?!" exclaimed the men in unison. "Hell, you don't even know what a crayon looks like," added one.

"Yep," repeated Michealis. "Yep, I'm going to take up Art--the Art of doing what I haven't been doing for the past three years."



## Chapter XIII

### Gallant Men

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

\* \* \*

Cpl. Louis Abajian	S/Sgt Wendell L. Baldwin
Pvt. Charlie F. Akin	T/5 John J. Baralto
Pfc. Alfred Alexander	Pfc. Glenn V. Barber
Pfc. Floyd B. Anderson	Pfc. Jay D. Barney
2nd Lt. Howell L. Andrews	Sgt. Edwin J. Baumeister
Pfc. Ray G. Anthony	Pfc. Ralph H. Becker
Pfc. Nicholas L. Aquelino	Pfc. Charles D. Bendure
Pfc. Louis Araujo, Jr.	Pfc. Kenneth R. Bennett
Pfc. John B. Babcock	Pfc. Alvin M. Berg
Pfc. Ralph J. Bahnick	Pfc. Elmer H. Biel
Pfc. Earl J. Baker	Pfc. Alvin M. Bietz

Cpl. Frank D. Blackwell  
 2nd. Lt. Jerome Bolen  
 Pfc. Leo F. Bonte  
 Sgt. John F. Bovenizer  
 Pfc. James R. Bridger  
 Pfc. Albert A. Brown  
 S/Sgt. Edw. E. Burlew  
 Pfc. Leslie G. Burns  
 Pfc. Joe N. Camargo  
 Cpl. David J. Cameron  
 Pfc. Frederick A. Cameron  
 T/Sgt. Fred N. Cameron  
 T/Sgt. Ralph H. Cannon  
 Pfc. Aloysius B. Capp  
 Pfc. Esteban L. Carrillo  
 T/3 Jack Carteri  
 S/Sgt. Royce H. Cash  
 Pfc. Roy Chaput  
 Pfc. Guy J. Ciaroni  
 Sgt. James R. Clapper  
 Pfc. Stanley W. Clift  
 Pfc. Wm. L. Clifton  
 Pfc. Virgil E. Cody  
 Pfc. Tandy W. Collinsworth  
 Sgt. William A. Compton  
 Pfc. Leon Cooper  
 S/Sgt. Raymond J. Corbesia  
 Pfc. Tony M. Cornett  
 Pfc. Malcolm G. Craft  
 Pvt. Fred E. Craig  
 Pfc. Harvey Crawford  
 Pfc. Lonnie F. Creech  
 Pfc. Raymond L. Crosier  
 1st Lt. Richard Cummings  
 Pfc. Elvin J. Dahl  
 Pvt. Keith L. Dalton, Jr.  
 Pfc. Moyle H. Davis  
 Pfc. Jay Delwaskie  
 Pfc. Horace L. Delino  
 S/Sgt. Frank Diaz  
 S/Sgt. Philip B. Dickerson  
 Pfc. Marechal Diebolt  
 Pvt. Peter M. Dinizio  
 1st Lt. John W. Dolan  
 Pfc. Michael A. Domsich  
 Pfc. William M. Donaldson  
 Pfc. Kirby Dowies  
 Pfc. Milton B. Dunn  
 S/Sgt. Samuel L. Dutcher  
 S/Sgt. Robert F. Edelman  
 Pvt. Charles W. Edmunds  
 Pfc. James P. Egan  
 Pfc. John P. Egan  
 Pfc. Raymond F. Elie  
 Pfc. William J. Emmert  
 T/Sgt. Clifford W. Eng  
 Pfc. Harold S. Erickson  
 Pvt. Lyman G. Erickson  
 S/Sgt. William Evenson  
 Pvt. John V. Fannin  
 Pfc. Irving Farber  
 Pfc. Lemuel P. Ferguson  
 T/5 Forrest D. Fifer  
 Pfc. William J. Fisher

Pfc. Delbert R. Florence  
 Pfc. Felix R. Florez  
 Pfc. Noble J. Flynn  
 Sgt. Charles D. Foreman  
 Pvt. Gail E. Fortney  
 Pfc. Harry H. Frader  
 Pfc. Arden J. Gage  
 Pfc. Lupe M. Garcia  
 Pfc. Martin P. Garcia  
 Pfc. Gilberto Garza  
 Pfc. Robert W. Gash  
 1st Lt. Wilma Gibbs  
 Pfc. Canton Q. Gill  
 Pfc. Tom M. Gillespie  
 Pfc. John J. Giovia  
 S/Sgt. William S. Giza  
 Pfc. Roy H. Goble  
 Pfc. Jessie L. Gonazales  
 Pfc. Boris Gordon  
 Pfc. Wesley H., Gray  
 S/Sgt. Robert L. Greer  
 Pfc. Nick R. Griseto  
 Pfc. Harry R. Grove  
 Pfc. Ben S. Gutierrez  
 S/Sgt. Richard Hampoyan  
 Pfc. James R. Hancock  
 S/Sgt. Ralph M. Hansen  
 Pvt. Frazier L. Harpe  
 Pfc. Charles J. Hart  
 Pfc. Clyde M. Harvey  
 Pvt. Clarence E. Hass  
 Pfc. Leo F. Hawkinson  
 S/Sgt. Stuart O. Haynie  
 Pfc. Jack R. Heavener  
 Pfc. Lloyd H. Herbig  
 Pfc. Raymond M. Hermann  
 Pfc. John Y. Herrera  
 Pfc. Dudley D. Holt  
 Pvt. Richard S. Hughes  
 Sgt. Richard P. Huisenga  
 Pvt. Wayne Hutchinson  
 Pfc. Lloyd P. Jacobs  
 Pfc. George P. James  
 Pvt. Delbert E. Jewell  
 T/Sgt. Ernest L. Johnson  
 Pfc. David Kahanovitz  
 Pfc. Glenn E. Karkie  
 Pfc. Paul R. Keefer  
 Pfc. Lawrence E. Keeling  
 Pfc. Paul L. Keen  
 Pvt. Albert Kennedy  
 Pfc. John R. Kenedy  
 Sgt. Charles J. Kerfin  
 Pfc. Marvin G. Kersten  
 Sgt. Clyde E. Kilgore  
 Pfc. Wilber J. Kinney  
 2nd Lt. Charles E. Komosinski  
 Pfc. Jesse Koon, Jr.  
 Pfc. Arne A. Korpi  
 Pfc. Raymond L. Kountz  
 Pfc. Bernard S. Krispinsky  
 Pfc. Elmer B. Kurr  
 Pfc. Warren A. Lambert  
 Pfc. Berent L. Larson

Pfc. John T. LaSocki  
 Sgt. Leo A. Lehner  
 Pfc. Joseph F. Lentine  
 Pfc. Christian C. Leshner  
 Pfc. Otho Lister  
 Pfc. Jack J. Logan  
 T/5 Charlie C. Long  
 Pfc. James V. Looney  
 Pfc. Benito Lopez  
 Pvt. John T. Lorek  
 S/Sgt. Victor Lund  
 Pvt. Clarence A. Lutz  
 Pfc. James V. Maceroni  
 Capt. Bolling S. Mach  
 Pfc. Edw. T. Majeski  
 Pvt. Samuel W. Mannisto  
 Pfc. Ray D. Markham  
 Pvt. Talbert A. Marlin  
 Sgt. William B. Martin  
 Pfc. Stanley P. Maslasky  
 S/Sgt. Joe F. Mason  
 1st Lt. Bill A. Maxfield  
 T/Sgt. Bernard C. McAnally  
 Pfc. Oliver E. McDaniel  
 S/Sgt. Virgil F. McDonald  
 1st Lt. Kenneth S. McPheeters  
 Maj. John D. McSevney  
 Pfc. Frank Mergec, Jr.  
 Pfc. Joe N. Mihok  
 Pfc. Iriah Mitchell  
 Pfc. Alex L. Mogart  
 S/Sgt. Arley J. Moore  
 S/Sgt. Thomas C. Munoz  
 1st Lt. Bernard J. Nash  
 Pfc. Arthur A. Nichols  
 Pfc. Charles W. O'Brien  
 Sgt. Leo S. Ogolini  
 1st Lt. Kenneth P. Omtvedt  
 Pfc. Virgil A. Ormsby  
 Pfc. Carl G. Osterman  
 T/Sgt. Charles P. Peri  
 Pfc. Isiah B. Persinger  
 Pfc. Eugene V. Peter  
 2nd Lt. John J. Phelan  
 Pvt. Floyd C. Phillips  
 Pfc. George A. Pickett  
 Pfc. Norbert A. Pink  
 Pfc. Gordon B. Pittman, Jr.  
 Pvt. Carmen Polito  
 Pfc. Wm. C. Portenier  
 Pvt. Walter L. Prado  
 Pvt. Dempsey C. Putnam  
 Pfc. Ralph C. Putnam  
 Capt. Albert G. Raybun  
 Sgt. Edward S. Rayburn  
 Cpl. Eugene F. Reaume  
 S/Sgt. George Repinski  
 1st Lt. Alfred L. Richmond  
 Pfc. Jack Rigsby  
 S/Sgt. Joseph Robbins  
 Pfc. Joseph N. Robinson  
 Pfc. Chester E. Robisch  
 Pfc. Bill F. Rodriguez  
 Sgt. Ted Rogmaryn

Pfc. Pete Romero  
 Cpl. George C. Rose  
 Pfc. Norman E. Roy  
 Pfc. Eliseo E. Sanchez  
 Pfc. Harold E. Sands  
 Pfc. LaVern A. Sarazin  
 Pfc. Herman A. Satory  
 Pfc. Charles Scafuri  
 Pfc. Victor E. Schade  
 Pfc. Chris J. Schneibel  
 Pfc. Roland J. Schoenemann  
 Pfc. Hugh Schrader, Jr.  
 Pfc. James R. S. Schuler  
 Pvt. Lester F. Schumacher  
 Pvt. William E. Shea  
 Sgt. Vincent A. Sheffield  
 Pfc. Ralph C. Shoemaker  
 Cpl. Homer A. Schuck  
 Pfc. Herbert Shultz  
 Pfc. Raymond W. Sides  
 Pfc. Orville D. Simmons  
 Pfc. Charles Simoni  
 Pfc. Floyd E. Simons  
 Pvt. Chester F. Slezenger  
 Pfc. Charles M. Smallwood  
 S/Sgt. Alfred F. Smith  
 Pvt. Amon G. Smith  
 Pfc. Glen E. Smith  
 S/Sgt. Jay D. Smith  
 Pfc. Clarence F. Spreen  
 T/Sgt. William S. Squire  
 S/Sgt. Erwin J. Steffens  
 Sgt. Raymond G. Stevenson  
 Pfc. Herbert C. Stewart  
 Capt. Edward L. Stilwell  
 T/4 William A. Stohosky  
 1st Lt. James L. Stolzenberg  
 Pfc. Earl M. Stout  
 S/Sgt. Roy L. Swanson  
 Pfc. Joh J. Takacs  
 1st Lt. Eugene Talbot  
 S/Sgt. Richard J. Teeple  
 1st Lt. Philip E. Thompson  
 S/Sgt. Robert E. Thompson  
 Cpl. Lee I. Tinsman  
 T/5 Leon Von Transehe  
 S/Sgt. Bart H. Traywick  
 Maj. Francis E. Tredget  
 Pfc. Francis Tsosie  
 Sgt. Steve Urina  
 Pfc. Isaac M. Van Hook  
 Pfc. Irwin H. Van Waning  
 Pfc. Fraudiciano Velasquez  
 Sgt. Earle L. Velasco  
 Sgt. Joseph C. Wagner  
 S/Sgt. Frank D. Walker, Jr.  
 Pfc. Norman Walker  
 Pfc. Robert Walker  
 Pfc. Wilton W. Wedel  
 Pfc. Robert E. Wells  
 Sgt. Glen A. Whiteaker  
 Pfc. Anthony B. Whitten  
 Pfc. Harvey L. Whittle  
 T/4 Charles W. Wiggins



Pfc. Andrew I. Williams

Sgt. Joseph R. Wilmoth

S/Sgt. Herbert J. Woehl

Pfc. Ford J. Wood

T/5 Russell L. Wright

T/Sgt. Robert M. Zaparty

\* \* \*

"May thy rest be this day in  
peace, and thy dwelling-place in  
the Paradise of God."