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OPERATIONS OF SERVICE COMPANY, 31ST INFANTRY (PHILIPPINE DIVISION) 5 JANUARY 1942 - 9 APRIL 1942 (PHILIPPINE ISLAND CAMPAIGN) (Personal Experience of a Service Company Commander)

Type of operation described: SERVICE COMPANY
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NOTE: Of the references used, only A-1, A-7, A-8 and A-11 are numbered. The others are notes made in Bataan by officers, who are, except for the author of A-6, now dead.

FOREWARD

To undertake to write the history of the actions of a company during four months of combat is ambitious. To undertake to fit that history to the length of this monograph might be termed by a student of good writing to be erratic.

Granting both undertakings to be as stated, the writer wishes to involve even more historical time in order to prepare background; for this monograph does not attempt to give all detailed movements of the Service Company, 31st Infantry from 5 January 1942 to 9 April 1942, but proceeding on the assumption that we can learn from mistakes, it gives only those actions which hold out a lesson, demonstrate a fault, or point out the application of a principle to be followed.

It is generally granted that on the outbreak of war on 7 December 1941 our army on the whole waw faultily trained in the problems of logistics. Many officers of company and field grade were ignorant of their responsibilities in supply and troop movement. The Louisiana maneuvers helped remedy this in the "States", but this narrative does not take place within this country. Many of the mistakes pointed out in the following account can be attributed to lack of peace time training.

One other point must be clarified before the reader begins this account. The dates mentioned throughout the monograph are in Philippine time which is one day later than United States time.

OPERATIONS OF SERVICE COMPANY, 31ST INFANTRY
(PHILIPPINE DIVISION) 5 JANUARY 1942 - 9 APRIL 1942
(PHILIPPINE ISLAND CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Service Company Commander)

INTRODUCTION

The Service Company, 31st Infantry, stationed in Manila, was a part of the only white infantry regiment in the Philippine Islands. In fact, there were only two other infantry regiments of the United States Army stationed in the Philippine Islands-- the 57th Infantry, and the 45th Infantry, both of the Philippine Scouts. (1)

Before July 1941, this Service Company was peacefully engaged in the routine garrison duties of serving the 31st Infantry, and providing transportation and maintenance for the Post of Manila, on which it was stationed. It was composed of a lieutenant colonel, S-4, a major, post transportation officer, a captain, company commander, four lieutenants, and 104 enlisted men. These were organized much the same as the organization you knew throughout World War II. There was a company headquarters, a headquarters platoon, and a transportation platoon.

This ordered existence changed somewhat after 26 July 1941. At that time the United States Armed Forces of the Far East (USAFFE) was organized, and a supreme commander over these forces was appointed. In early August the Philippine Army which formed the bulk of these forces was mobilized. (2)

Many of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the 31st Infantry were called out to command or instruct the Philippine Army units. All but two of the officers of Service Company (the mainte-

(1) A-6, A-7, p.4, A-10 (2) A-1, p.65, A-6

36

nance officer, a[illegible] the S-4, 2nd Battalion) were c[illegible]ed out on this duty. A first lieutenant who had commanded a rifle company took over the duties of S-4. Another first lieutenant, former rifle company commander, took command of Service Company, and with it the duties of Transportation Officer, Post of Manila. Neither of these officers had hitherto served with a Service Company.

Both the previous transportation officer and the previous company commander were graduates of the Motor Course and the Tank Course at the Infantry School. Both officers were intently enthusiastic over motors, and as a result, had collected a nucleus of trained, enthusiastic motor mechanics and drivers. Because it was charged with post motor maintenance as well as regimental, the maintenance section had equipment above that of the T/O&E at that time, and was capable of higher than second echelon maintenance. Two of the mechanics were graduates of recognized civilian schools on auto mechanics. They possessed their own set of tools, and used those tools on government maintenance. The drivers were selected carefully from the regiment. Since any motor accident or misuse of transportation might result in repercussions from the Philippine Government, any driver not capable nor dependable was transferred from the transportation platoon to another part of the company or back to a line company.

From the above description, it can be seen that the transportation platoon was highly skilled in the technique of driving and motor maintenance. The same state of efficiency existed in the S-4 section. It held non-commissioned officers of high caliber who had been well trained and supervised by the former S-4. The new S-4 proved capable and industrious, and continued the efficient peace time performance of this section.

However, due to the shortage of transportation and perhaps due somewhat to oversight by the higher command, the Service Company did not receive training as a unit. It became simply a truck transport company with the headquarters platoon attached for rations and administration.

Shortly before the war, the regiment participated in a great number of field problems. Tactical situations were taken up in great detail-- except for the problems of transportation and supply. Even when these problems were simulated, and actions and orders regarding such were demanded of the unit commanders during the course of the exercise, the following critique often omitted a discussion of them.

The result was that neither the company and battalion commanders nor the Service Company Commander knew what to expect from each other. Battalion S-4's, who were then assigned to Service Company, and their battalion sections had not worked with their respective battalions. Kitchen truck drivers were not assigned to definite companies until shortly before the outbreak of war. Team work so necessary in battle was not being properly developed.

After USAFFE assumed command, the Philippines moved from last place to first in priority in supplies and equipment. (3) Plans were made to divide the regiment and form from it the cadres for two regiments. The regiment received its first (later to prove its only) increment of selective servicemen. Rumors flew high and wide of the great numbers of ships tied up on the west coast that were to form convoys to the Philippines. The time was late November 1941.

THE MOVE TO BATAAN

On 8 December 1941, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, and the war was on. That same day Japanese planes accounted for the greater part

(3) A-6

of the small force of planes stationed in the Philippines. (4)

The 31st Infantry, less the 1st Battalion, left back to guard HQ. USAFFE in Manila, moved to the road between Nichols Field and Fort McKinley on the southern outskirts of Manila, and took up positions guarding Nichols Field from possible airborne attack. (5)

Lieutenant Colonel Paquet assumed the duties of S-4, relieving Lieutenant Mead, who became munitions officer. For the next two days the S-4 section was turned over to the munitions officer. This section worked hard to clear the magazines located in Fort Santiago, about six blocks from the Post of Manila, of ammunition and explosives. Since the regiment was still on the garrison ration, the S-4 section was not concerned with Class I supply at that time.

Kitchens were released to company control in the Nichols Field position. Companies had taken two days garrison ration with them when they moved out of Manila. These two days of supply were maintained by sending trucks back to the still laden storerooms of the companies. (6)

The regiment spent four days in this position watching the bombing of Nichols Field and Cavite Naval Yard, and receiving a bombing and strafing as price of admission to the show. (7) Reports vary as to whether there was one casualty or no casualties in the regiment from this attack. At least no casualties were suffered by Service Company.

On the morning of the third day, the Service Company Commander received orders to report to the regimental commander. A warning order for a motor movement had been received at regimental headquarters. The company commander was ordered to proceed to Fort McKinley, contact the G-4, Philippine Division, and receive the non-organic vehicles assigned us for the move. At this time the transportation of the regiment, less the 1st Battalion, totaled

(4) A-1, p.65, A-6, A-12; (5) A-2, A-4, A-7, p.4 & 10; (6) A-10; (7) A-1, p.71

one staff car, three motorcycles, two 1/4 ton trucks, eight 1/2 ton trucks, command, thirty three 1/2 ton trucks, weapon carriers, communication, and maintenance, twenty-five 1 1/2 ton trucks, cargo and two 1 1/2 ton trucks, shop. Naturally the Service Company commander looked forward to any augmentation of his vehicles. (8)

On contacting the G-4 he found this augmentation to be 56 buses of the type used by the natives in traveling between the provinces of Luzon. The average capacity was a little over twenty men per bus. Also thrown in on this allotment ~~was~~ were eight taxis. These were used in the battalions' headquarters for the short time the vehicles held up under field conditions. All these vehicles had been commandeered or obtained through a previous peace time arrangement with the bus companies.

The Service Company Commander returned to regiment with the vehicles. On reporting to the regimental commander, he found that the regiment less the trains would move at 0230 the following morning, 12 December, to Bataan, and go into bivouc at KM 137.2 on Pilar-Bagac Road (Map I). The regimental trains would follow at 0600 the same date. (9)

The transportation chief and the truck masters began at once to check the newly acquired transportation in preparation for the move. Difficulty was encountered in this inspection, since the drivers were the native civilian bus drivers, and only two or three could speak English. It was discovered that a number of the buses were diesel or alcohol burners, and several of these were in need of fuel. Fuel for them was located after a frantic search, and the transportation was declared ready to move. Incidentally, the diesel burners were exchanged at the end of the movement for gasoline operated buses, and the maintenance section converted the

(8) A-2, A-4, A-8, p.5, A-10; (9) A-2, A-4, A-10

alcohol burners into gasoline burners by altering the carburator jet and the timing. (10)

The regiment moved out at 0230, 12 December, in open column formation, 100 yards per truck. The rate was set at 25 miles per hour. The Service Company Commander followed with the regimental trains in the same formation at 0600. Protection against enemy aircraft was afforded the regimental column by mounting caliber .50 and caliber .30 machine guns on weapons trucks interspersed within the column. The regimental trains had only rifles and automatic rifles for such protection. (11)

The trains proceeded at 25 miles per hour until they reached San Fernando. There, on turning ~~West~~ west, onto the San Fernando-~~Liac~~ LAMAG Junction road, they were slowed to between 5 and 10 miles per hour by heavy traffic. Units were pouring into Bataan. Organizations were intermixed with other organizations and with separate supply trucks which were hauling supplies from Manila. It was evident that either higher headquarters had failed to provide a movement schedule, or that it was being entirely disregarded. The long tightly jammed column turned south at Liac Junction, and crawled down the only road into the Bataan Peninsula. Two large formations of Japanese heavy bombers (they looked like our DC-3) roared overhead. They were not interested. Their mission was to bomb Corregidor. (12)

Here the Japanese made one of their big mistakes. They could have wiped out the first big exodus into Bataan, for the tightly jammed column could not have escaped. They could have rendered ineffective the 31st Infantry, a part of the Philippine Division that was to cause the Japanese so much trouble in the capture of Bataan. This would have been a great morale factor on their side. Such a defeat might have caused the immediate collapse of already weakened American prestige, with a corresponding weakening of

(10) A-9; (11) A-10; (12) A-11

Filipino resistance. It also would have seriously affected later movements by slowing down the transport of troops and supplies on this road. The fact that the Japanese allowed large bodies of troops and supplies without air cover to use this road without receiving any serious air attack cannot be explained by this author.

When the regiment reached Pilar it turned west and went into bivouac at kilometer 137.2 on the south side of the Pilar-Bagac Road. Service Company bivouaced on the north side of this road at approximately the same kilometer mark. The battalions took up positions defending Bagac Bay from possible enemy landings. (Map I) The kitchen and baggage train was released to company control. (13)

PROBLEMS OF SUPPLY

From this time until 4 January 1942, the regiment was held in reserve. During this time it occupied various positions which constituted a threat by enemy landing, and reconnoitered and prepared defense positions along the Abucay line and Orion line. These lines were to become the principle positions in the defense of Bataan, but the 31st Infantry was not to occupy those parts of the lines that they so carefully prepared. (14)

While in this position, recommendations went forward for promotions to captain for the company commander, munitions officer, and personnel adjutant; and recommendations for two commissions and four warrant officer ratings to be made from the ranks of Service Company went forward. All were approved.

Supply during this time was comparatively simple. The division distributing point for Class I supplies was located in a large warehouse in Lubao. Since the Philippine Division was composed of Philippine Scouts except for the 31st Infantry, and it was not deemed feasible to try to supply two types of rations, the 31st Infantry had to go on the Scout ration. This meant shortage of flour and very little bread, as rice was issued instead. However, most mess sergeants

(13) A-2, A-4, A-8, A-10; (14) A-4, A-8

found that by trading the rice to the natives for flour, fresh fruit or livestock, they did not do too badly. (15)

The biggest difficulty encountered by the Service Company during this time was the transporting of these supplies. Because of the active enemy air, and the vulnerable position occupied by the division quartermaster, supplies could be drawn only at night under strict black out restrictions. Most of the government vehicles did not have blackout lights, and of course none of the commandeered civilian transportation ~~was~~ were so equipped. Make shift blackout lights in the regiment were constructed by painting most of the headlight with opaque paint, leaving only a small opening covered with several layers of blue cellophane. Many units however failed to do this and a large number of serious accidents occurred through collisions. Since this period ~~occured~~ took place during the dark of the moon, and visibility was practically nil, many accidents occurred through drivers running off the Road. Captain Mead, the regimental munitions officer, suffered a bad leg injury when his command car went off the road into a culvert. At a later date, the staff car carrying the regimental commander and three members of his staff went off the road, turned over three times and landed in a ditch. The S-2 and the dental officer were seriously hurt and hospitalized for a long time, the others badly shaken up. Under such conditions of active enemy air, some improved means of blackout driving will have to be discovered. Perhaps the metrascope offers a solution. (16)

During the Japanese landings at Lingayan, in the north, and Legaspi and Lamon Bay, in the south, our forces in Luzon were steadily pushed back on all fronts. Manila was evacuated December 31, 1941. The 1st Battalion, 31st Infantry, which had been left back to guard Manila, had been moved by boat to Corregidor on 25 December. They

(15) A-9; (16) A-2, A-4, A-12

turned their transportation over to the Quartermaster, Philippine Department. The regiment did not see this transportation again. (17)

When Manila was about to be evacuated there was a frantic effort to complete the movement of the supplies from the warehouses of the Quartermaster, Philippine Department, which had been located in Manila, to Corregidor and Bataan. Trucks were loaded with supplies, put under the control of native civilian drivers, and dispatched individually to Bataan. Many of these supplies never reached Bataan, but did show up in the black markets later set up in the prison camps of the American prisoners of war. (Officially uncorraborated testimony of American soldiers and officers serving in Manila at this time). The boats transporting supplies and equipment to Corregidor came under heavy bombing, and much of the supplies were sunk. On the 27th and 28th of December, Manila was heavily bombed. On the 29th of December, Corregidor was raided heavily. These heavy raids continued on Corregidor until the 20th of January. Many of the stores and supplies of Manila had been moved to Corregidor where bomb proof storage was not then available. (18)

The Service Company, 31st Infantry could have moved many of these supplies to Bataan, but since the regiment was held on constant alert, and required to be completely mobile, the regimental commander could not release any of his vehicles to augment the tiresome rice diet supplied by division.

By 27 December, the 1st Corps defending Northen Luzon had been pushed back to a point where it was necessary to evacuate Fort Stotsenburg, which was located about sixty miles north of Manila. This time, permission was secured from the regiment to send three trucks to Fort Stotsenburg to pick up abandoned supplies. Some food and equipment was obtained. Again there appears a lack of a coordinated withdrawal of supplies and equipment by a reliable supply headquarters. Most of the supplies withdrawn were taken by unit raiding parties with

(17) A-3, A-10; (18) A-6, A-11

insufficient regard to military necessity, and not by a central supply agency which would have properly conserved them. (19)

Due to the rapid withdrawal from the north and insufficient transportation of the troops in that sector, many supplies issued these troops could not be evacuated. About fifty large sacks of rick and several cases of chub salmon of the cheapest grade were recovered by the Service Company, 31st Infantry. (20)

MOVE TO OLONGAPO

On 30 December, the 31st Infantry was ordered to proceed to the vicinity of Olongapo to prevent possible enemy landings in Subic Bay. There was insufficient transportation to move the accumulated food supplies that the Service Company had collected, so they were stored in an abandoned ice plant in the town of Samal, and a cook left to guard them. (21)

The regiment took up position in depth along the Liac Junction—Olongapo road. Kitchens were released to battalion and separate companies control.

Olongapo had been a naval base, but it had hurriedly been evacuated as the Japanese advanced down the central plain from Lingayen. Again there was evidence of food supplies abandoned to the native civilians. (22)

THE COVERING FORCES AT COLIS

On 3 January, the 31st Infantry received the warning order that they would be prepared to move to Colis and take up a position guarding the entrance to Bataan. (23)

On the evening of 4 January, the regiment moved, and took up the position shown on Map I. They were joined at this position by the 1st Battalion, 31st Infantry, which had been released by USAFFE to regimental control. The next day was spent by the regiment in

(19) Testimony of W.O. Shratz, Service Company, 31st Infantry and his detail who evacuated some of the supplies. (20) A-10; (21) A-4, A-10; (22) A-10, A-11; (23) A-2, A-4, A-10

reconnoitering and preparing for the Colis position. The mission of the 31st Infantry was to act as a covering force and hold until all elements of the 1st and 2nd Corps had withdrawn into Bataan. The 72nd Infantry, Philippine Army was on the right, and the 26th Cavalry, Philippine Scouts on the left of the 31st Infantry. (24)

Service Company set up the regimental train bivouac area just east of Balanga as shown on Map I and spent the day of the 5th in resupplying the 1st Battalion, which had lost practically all its equipment. Seven new international ½ ton trucks, 2x4, which were standard Philippine Constabulary vehicles, were obtained from G-4, 2nd Corps and given to the 1st Battalion as weapons carriers. Considerable maintenance trouble resulted later, as these trucks were not built to be subjected to treatment they necessarily received on the rough trails.

Perhaps there is some question as to the location of the regimental trains so far behind the regimental position. This was determined by the lack of suitable unoccupied positions forward. The engineers had not yet built the trail net that later criss-crossed Bataan. It was very difficult to get off the main road except at the small towns. Up to this time Japanese air had been flying over these towns on the way to Corregidor, but had done little bombing. Now all towns became the targets of the bombers. All were burned to the ground. (25)

By 6 January, all elements of 1st and 2nd Corps had withdrawn into Bataan. About 1400, 6 January, heavy artillery concentrations were fired by the Japanese. They were adjusted by a low flying enemy observation plane circling lazily overhead, who occasionally dove and strafed the troops below. The troops were warned not to fire for fear of revealing the front line positions. (26)

At this time the Service Company Commander had gone forward by motorcycle to determine the situation, contact his battalion S-4's, and give them the feeding plan. He meant to report into the regimental CP, but over ran it, and ended up in the front line of the 72nd Infantry, which straddled the road. At this time only artillery and

(24) A-2, A-8; (25) A-6, A-10; (26) A-2, A-10

mortar fire was being exchanged between the two forces. (27)

He found the Filipino lieutenant who was commanding the company, and dropped down alongside him in a small ditch. He brought with him considerable mortar fire, but the lieutenant was courteous enough not to complain.

Before the Filipino officer could reply to the question "What's the situation?", "Photo Joe", as the observation plane was called, paid them a strafing visit. After the plane had passed and the officers had recovered from the horizontal, rapid firing broke out in the area immediately to their rear. "Firecrackers" explained the lieutenant, and he laughed. Firecrackers were reportedly dropped by the Japanese in the rear of our lines to demoralize our troops by making them think they were surrounded. These troops had already been initiated and showed no reaction. (28)

The Service Company Commander found that he was on the boundary of the 72nd Infantry, Philippine Army and the 31st Infantry, United States Army, with the 1st Battalion, 31st Infantry on his immediate left. He decided to go on to the 1st Battalion, contact the Battalion S-4, and give him his plan. He would then proceed to the 3rd Battalion, which was south of the 1st Battalion, and formed the regimental reserve. From there he could go south two or three hundred yards more to the regimental CP and contact the S-4.

All this, except for the heavy artillery firing, was accomplished according to plan. According to one authority, "The Japanese used more artillery in this action (Bataan) than ever before or since, and enjoyed complete freedom of the skies." This author seriously doubts if this action equaled the artillery preparation for the Corregidor landing but it was as intensely concentrated, as accurately adjusted here, as in any other action in Bataan. (29)

Shortly before leaving the 1st Battalion, a heavy fire fight

(27) A-9; (28) A-9; (29) A-11

began but the Japanese small arms fire was causing practically no casualties. Artillery fire, however, was very effective on personnel, and even more so on communications. (30)

The 1st Battalion, 23d FA, PS which was in direct support of the 31st Infantry, was knocked out of action by this fire. One concentration knocked out all guns of one battery.

The Service Company Commander finally reached regimental CP and gave his recommendations to the S-4. The regimental commander was interested to find that someone had recently been along the lines of the 72nd Infantry, for he had received a rumor that the 72nd had broken and that his right flank was open. He was told that the 72nd still held. A short time before, "B" Company which had been on the right and connecting with the 72nd, had withdrawn from the line. The company had been demoralized by the rumor of the open flank. It appears as though the left company of the 72nd had pulled back somewhat. "L" company immediately closed the gap. (31)

An analysis of the above action shows that the supply problem was very poorly handled. No system was used in the plan. The battalion S-4's should have reconnoitered supply routes into their positions, drawn up a feeding plan and presented it to their battalion commanding officers for approval. The S-4 should have consolidated these plans and made such adjustments necessary to fit the regimental plan. Unfortunately there was neither wire nor radio communication between regiment and the Service Company. The lack of communications made planning difficult and slow.

The Service Company Commander's plan was approved by S-4, and the captain returned to his company to bring forward his trucks. However, he was delayed in returning to his company. His motorcycle driver had returned to the company on receiving a false report that his company commander had been killed. The officer commandeered a

(30) A-2, A-9; (31) A-2

ride from a vehicle going to the rear. He was delayed a short time by the flames of the burning town of Hermosa, which had been bombed about 2 hours before. The Japanese had dropped incendiary bombs (probably white phosphorus) on the town, and the frame buildings went up like tinder. (32)

It was about 2100 when the Service Company Commander returned to regiment with the kitchen trains. There the S-4 told him it was not deemed feasible to attempt to feed the regiment, as the regiment would withdraw at 0130 the following morning, 6 January. The Service Company Commander was ordered to take the kitchens back to the rear and return with the buses to transport the regiment. The entrucking point was designated as a point near the bridge on the south edge of Hermosa. Here, there was a good turn around. This point was about two kilometers south of the main line of resistance. The troops were to fall back to an unimproved road running behind the regimental CP, then move east to the main road and march down that road to the entrucking point. Three companies, "A", "E", and "K" were to remain in position as covering shell until 0430 that morning. (33)

At 0100 the buses were lined up, waiting at the EP. At this time furious small arms fire broke out along the MLR. The Japanese had begun a night attack. The attack was evidently localized, for the firing soon quieted down. (34)

In about thirty minutes the first troops reached the buses. Company "K" and Company "A" (less the first platoon), of the covering shell, arrived soon after. The Company Commander of Company "A" reported that one of his platoons had taken a different route out of the position, and that he had lost contact with the platoon. Company "E" was reported as having been cut off, but no definite information was available.

The regiment, less Company "E" and 1st Platoon, Company "A", moved by motor to the rear. The Service Company Commander, his driver,

(32) A-9; (33) A-4, A-9; (34) A-9

the S-4, 1st Battalion, a rifleman, and a sergeant, truck master, waited with five buses for the lost elements of the covering shell.

By 0600 the 192nd Tank Battalion, which formed the rear guard for all forces in the action, had withdrawn over the Hermosa Bridge, and a detachment of engineers prepared to blow that bridge.

The Service Company Commander left the S-4, 1st Battalion and the rifleman stationed at the bridge, and he and his driver drove forward towards the position. About four hundred yards from the former CP, 31st Infantry, they pulled off the road and observed the position. No activity was noted and they turned back to the bridge. Just before reaching it they picked up one wounded Filipino soldier and one staff sergeant from Company "E". (35)

The staff sergeant reported that his company had withdrawn to the unimproved road, and were marching east down that road when they were ambushed by a group of the enemy hiding in a nipa shack. The company scattered and took off through the brush to the south. He had become separated and had made his way alone to the main road.

The Filipino soldier stated that he and other members of his company had been in a nipa shack when they were surprised by a group of Japanese marching down the road. The Japanese had opened fire, and he had been injured. (36)

The author of the monograph does not say that the Company "E" and the Filipino soldiers were mistakenly engaged in combat, for he has no proof. Interrogation, by the Service Company Commander of men from Company "E" who made their way back through the hills to rejoin their outfit (almost the entire company reported in, although some wandered about in the hills for as much as three days), failed to bring out definite proof. The entire purpose of presenting this incident is to show that a withdrawal at night over difficult terrain, while in contact with the enemy, presents difficult problems in co-ordination, control, and leadership. Maximum use

(35) A-9; (36) A-9

must be made of staff officers for co-ordination. The commanding officer of the covering shell (here no over-all commander was appointed) must exercise control as to withdrawal routes and schedules. Unit commanders must exert leadership, prevent surprise, and must have alternate plans to meet the changing situation.

The Service Company Commander picked up the elements of his company waiting at the bridge and moved to the rear, leaving the impatient engineers to blow the bridge behind them. The S-4, 1st Battalion and the rifleman had prevented them from hitherto doing this.

SUPPLY DIFFICULTIES

The regiment moved into a position at Wawa, just north of Pilar, with the 3rd Battalion at Balanga. One day later the entire regiment moved into the Pandan position (also known as the Orion position), just north of Limay. Service Company set up the train bivouac area near kilometer 143, but released the kitchens to battalion and separate company control. (37)

As stated before, all but a few of the "E" Company personnel made their way back to join their outfit in this position. A few men from the 1st Platoon, "A" Company got back and substantiated the report that the platoon had been ambushed. The platoon leader, Lt. Litkowski, was killed in this action.

The 31st Infantry now became part of the Second Corps reserve, and until 14 January was engaged in preparing the Orion line, the second line of defense of Bataan. (38)

By this time the shortage of food stocks in the Philippines had become acute. The small military stockpile at the outbreak of war had been further diminished by lack of proper supply systems controlling conservation. (39)

No food stocks had been stored on Bataan before the war. This might have been due to the defense plan of the Philippines in operation at the start of the war, which rejected the old WPO-3 (War Plan Orange)

(37) A-10; (38) A-2, A-4, A-8; (39) A-11

envisioning only a delaying action at the beaches before withdrawing to Bataan, and instead substituted the plan to defend at the beaches. With the poorly trained, unequipped Philippine Army, this plan collapsed, and WPO-3 was declared in operation in less than a month after war began. Regardless of the reason, there were no food stocks buried on Bataan, although ammunition piles had been set up in March 1941. (40)

Now, with Manila and all the military garrisons of Luzon in the hands of the Japanese, the troops of Bataan and Corregidor had only the Corregidor stores plus what small amounts of food inter-island steamers could sneak in through the Japanese held waters from Cebu and Negros. (41)

Rations were drastically and continuously reduced. In January the ration was reduced by one third. By 9 April, the end of the operation, the troops were receiving actually less than one-third of an army ration. The basic components of this ration were rice and meat. The meat was either canned corned beef, canned salmon or fresh carabao meat (the Philippine water buffalo). The veterinary corps set up an abattoir and began butchering what carabao they could get from the natives. The meat ration was set at 4 ounces per man per day. (See exhibit A)

For about two months this ration was enhanced every ten days by a special treat from the Quartermaster, Philippine Department. This practice began at the engagement at Colis, when the Service Company Commander, despairing of serving up hot rice in the fox holes, and receiving no solution at division (which admittedly had none to give), presented his problem to the department quartermaster. The company commander received enough canned goods to pass down one can of corned beef and one can of tomatoes for every three men in the fox holes. He also received a little flour, raisens, pickles, catsup, and the like, which though not in sufficient quanities to make a ration issue, greatly benefited the messes through the ingenuity of their mess sergeants in fixing up the tiresome rice. (42)

(40) A-6; (41) A-11; (42) A-9

ACTION AT ABUCAY

On 11 January, the Japanese began their offensive on the Abucay Hacienda line. On the night of 15 January, the regiment moved by motor to an assembly area two kilometers west of Balanga to support this line. By the sixteenth, the Japanese had broken through the defenses of the 51st Division, Philippine Army, and this division had disintegrated. The 31st Infantry was then ordered up to counter-attack, restore the line, and hold the division front. (43)

At the beginning of this operation, the kitchen trains were under battalion control. They reverted to regimental control because the road into the regimental sector ran parallel to the enemy front, and was under Japanese artillery fire.

The regiment counter attacked and gained about 300 yards. The line then remained static with small local attacks by both sides failing to change it. (44)

Great concentration was then laid on preparing a strong defensive position along this line. Each rifle company had two Browning heavy machine guns, and the heavy weapons companies had eight. Eight more heavy machine guns were issued to each battalion and these were put in the line. Extra automatic rifles were issued. The regiment had been issued 60 mm mortars before the war but no ammunition for these mortars had reached the Philippines, hence they had been turned back to ordinance. The regiment had 81 mm mortars, but they also lacked service ammunition. Only 2000 rounds of 81 mm service ammunition were in the "Islands" at the outbreak of war. However, the weapon was used, and used effectively, by firing the old Stokes 3 inch mortar ammunition in it. However, only one out of every three rounds would detonate. The grenade proved a valuable weapon in this close jungle fighting but unfortunately during the Abucay Hacienda action a lot of defective grenades were drawn from ordnance.

(43) A-1, p.78; (44) A-1, A-2, A-4, p.76

On the average, less than one in three would detonate. It was found that one lot had a defective primer and this was the cause. The munitions section sorted out all those with this lot number and had ordnance change the primers. (45)

All through this action and the actions to follow, the munitions section did stellar work. They continually kept one day's fire for all weapons at the position, and maintained one day's fire on the ammunition trucks at the ammunition point located in the Service Company bivouac area. They drove their trucks between this point and the front line along the Hacienda Road between the bombardments of the Japanese artillery and air. They recovered several cases of small arms ammunition that had been abandoned by the unit which the regiment replaced. By doing so, they not only conserved ammunition, but they prevented the Japanese from firing it back at the troops through the Browning Automatic Rifles that they evidently had previously captured. (46)

Mention must be made also of the other sections in this action. The regimental headquarters section of the headquarters platoon manned the regimental CP, while under artillery bombardment and sniper attack. The personnel section stayed back with the division, of course, but they relieved the regiment of its paper work. They were kept busy processing applications for insurance, typing up communications, and general administrative work.

The maintenance section kept the vehicles in tip top condition. This section furnished a mechanic and a ½ ton truck for each battalion's front line maintenance. The mechanics worked between the Service Company and their assigned battalion. During this action at Abucay, two communication trucks from Headquarters Company, 31st Infantry, were knocked out by air bombing of the mango grove (Map 2). The Japanese artillery opened up at this time with heavy shell fire on the grove. The mechanic of the

(45) A-10; (46) A-10

3rd Battalion maintenance, saw the trucks knocked out, stopped and repaired both trucks while under shell fire and then drove ~~both~~ the trucks from the shelled area. He was awarded the Silver Star for this action. (47)

The supply section, though they worked between the Service Company bivouac area and the division DP in this action, did an excellent job in breaking down the small rations alloted the regiment. They worked under constant threat of air attack, while in the bivouac area or on the road.

The company headquarters relieved the company commander of administrative details and provided the perimeter guard for the bivouac area.

The chaplain section, consisting of one chaplain (captain) and one corporal assistant, exposed themselves constantly to bombing, shelling, and small arms fire in the front line. The chaplain administered spiritual aid to the wounded and helped recover the bodies of the badly wounded and dying. He received the Silver Star in this section.

The story of Service Company would be far from complete without mention of the faithful service performed by the Filipino civilians who served with the company.

First the heroic service of the KP's who served without pay must be acknowledged. In the Philippines, soldiers did not serve KP duty, but hired native labor to perform this task. When the war broke, all five of them hired by the company, took to the field and served throughout the campaign. Since the soldiers were not receiving their monthly pay checks, the KP's were not paid. Red tape held up the government acknowledgment of their service until too late for them to be paid on the one partial pay that the civilian component of the company received.

(47) A-10

Second, the native drivers must receive praise for the gallant service they performed. The seventy of them were organized into a platoon composed of four sections. Those sections drove the buses used as personnel carriers for the three battalions and the separate companies. They identified themselves with the company, and except for one man, did not request or desire relief from any hazardous duty. One was killed, and another injured by bombing while in service of the company. When any of these men were transferred by corps to drive for another organization, within a short time, they mysteriously found their way back to the 31st Infantry.

WITHDRAWAL FROM ABUCAY

Japanese pressure on the Abucay position continued to increase. On 24 January, the regimental commander was ordered to report to the Commanding General, Second Corps, at the Balanga Church.

There the corps commander outlined his plan for the withdrawal from the Abucay line. Units were to pull out successively from the right, and then fall back to the Orion line. The 45th Infantry, Philippine Scouts and the 31st Infantry would hold the left flank until the other units withdrew. A time schedule for the withdrawal was given at this time.

The 31st Infantry officers returned to their CP, and there the regimental commander issued his order. This, in substance, stated that the regiment would withdraw that evening beginning at 2000. The time for each battalion's withdrawal was coordinated. A covering shell of one company from each battalion would be left back to hold off the enemy until 0300 the next morning, 25 January. At that time a detail of fifteen trucks under the command of the Service Company Commander would withdraw the shell by motor. Three companies of the 45th Infantry, Philippine Scouts, would also form a shell and coordinate in the withdrawal. The CP of the 31st Division, Philippine

Army was picked as the entrucking point because it had a turn around and that division would have withdrawn by that time. (48)

Shortly before 2000, the Japanese launched an attack. The regiment went ahead with its plans for withdrawal, but control became difficult. One company of the 3d Battalion that was supposed to become part of the covering shell had difficulty extricating itself from the enemy and joining the other two companies. It became mixed with other units, and the battalion commander ordered the unit to move on out with the rest of the battalion, leaving only two companies of the 31st Infantry in the shell. Regimental headquarters moved out without leaving any staff officers behind, unless you wish to consider the Service Company Commander who had received no specific orders except those relating to transportation, and who remained at the CP simply because he had no other place to go at the time. This officer did know the plan however, and as he saw "C" Company, one of the companies supposed to be part of the covering shell, march past, he pulled it out of the column and put it in a defensive line. The captain of this company, noted for his bravery under fire, knew only that he was supposed to form part of the covering shell, but he did not know where, and he could not find the commanding officer of the shell. The commander appointed was the executive officer of the 3rd Battalion, who, for some reason, failed to contact his forces until after they were put into position. (49)

A short time later, the leading elements of a company came into view over the crest of the hill in front of the defensive position. This position on a slight rear slope, had been picked for its field of fire. This company was falling slowly back with security forces out. It was Company "G", the only company that had properly performed its mission, and it had been left alone with no contact with our forces. After a few unquiet moments, the company was properly identified as friend and not foe. The two companies formed a front and waited.

(48) A-2, A-4, A-7, A-8, A-9; (49) A-7, A-9

The Service Company Commander went to the rear, joined the trucks which he had put undercover about 200 yards from the EP, and waited. About 0130 he went forward on foot to see how the action was progressing. The action appeared to be progressing, but the position of the defense lines was regressing. A hot fire fight was going on, and the shell had fallen back about two hundred yards. The company commander decided to move his trucks up to the EP and get them turned around, just in case the troops could not hold until 0300. (50)

When the trucks were moved up, they had to be turned around under fire in the midst of the troops, who had meanwhile fallen back as far as the entrucking point. After turning around they moved on down the road about one hundred yards. One battalion of the 45th Infantry had been cut off, and the covering shell was determined to hold until the battalion could get out.

The 192d Tank Battalion had been given a mission of covering the "Back Road" and the "East Road" (Map 2). Tanks were disposed, covering the junctions of both these roads with the Abucay Hacienda Road. The battalion commander was contacted at the latter junction, and persuaded to send one platoon of tanks up in front of the truck column to cover the entrucking of the troops.

The battalion of the 45th Infantry, Philippine Scouts which had been cut off fought its way back, reached the covering shell shortly before 0300, and proceeded down the route of its withdrawal.

About 0300 the covering shell entrucked under the cover of heavy fire from the tanks, and withdrew from the position. (51)

After the withdrawal from the Abucay line, the 31st Infantry became Army reserve. On 7 February, the regiment moved south to Lamao. The 1st and 2d Battalions bivouaced on Artillery Loop. The Service Company remained in the same bivouac. Regimental Head-

(50) A-9; (51) A-7, A-8, A-9

quarters and the 3rd Battalion bivouaced on the Lamao River, about one mile west of Lamao. Kitchens were released to battalion control.

The regiment had suffered heavy casualities. To fill these losses, men from non-combatant units were sent up. The regiment settled down to a training period.

The Japanese had suffered heavy losses at Abucay also. In addition, the Japanese had been forced to divert some of their air to New Guinea. A lull in the fighting occured. The American-Filipino forces settled down behind the Orion line.

THE LULL

Now in addition to the ever decreasing ration, two more shortages appeared to plague the troops. The first was gasoline, the second, quinine.

The huge tanks of gasoline in Manila had been fired to prevent their capture by the Japanese. In the rapid withdrawal from North Luzon, gasoline had to be destroyed for the same reason. (51 A)

All but a very few planes had either left Bataan by now or had been destroyed; therefore, some excess aviation gas was available. This was mixed with kerosene to form motor fuel. Now a strict conservation program was inaugarated. At first the gasoline ration was fixed at three gallons of fuel per day for necessary administrative vehicles. It was then lowered to three gallons a week per vehicle for the regiment. The vehicles had to burn at least that amount of fuel to keep the batteries charged. Strict control was enforced by the regimental commander on the movement of all vehicles.

No gasoline could be spared for the M1937 field ranges. It was found that by altering the range and constructing a smoke stack on it that it became a much better wood range than in its normal state. The maintenance section accomplished this job for the regiment.

The stock of quinine pills ran out and powdered quinine was issued

(51 A) A-1, p.75

until that supply was also exhausted. Strict control had to be exerted to insure that the troops took the unpleasant tasting powder. This was done in Service Company by putting an officer in the chow line to see that every man took the medicine.

On 3 March, Lieutenant Colonel Paquet, the S-4, became executive officer. Captain Mead moved up to S-4. In the latter part of March, the Japanese renewed activity. Several reconnaissances by force were made by the enemy along the Orion line. On the right of the line they were thrown back by the strong defense of the 57th Philippine Scouts.

THE JAPANESE BREAK THROUGH

On 3 April, the main attack of the Japanese was launched against the 41st Division. This division held the left of the Second Corps line, which rested on Mount Samat. (51 B)

The evening of 4 April, the 31st Infantry was ordered to move up to a position of readiness on trails 10 and 2. Kitchens remained under battalion control. Because of heavy traffic on the main road and the lack of a suitable turn around, the troops of the third battalion marched to the bus park about two miles away. The very poor condition of the troops became apparent on this short march. Malnutrition and malaria made this short distance difficult. Companies had only 65 to 75 effectives to make the move. (52)

On 5 April, the regiment received orders to attack the enemy positions on Mount Samat at 0700 on 6 April. That evening about 1700 the 1st Battalion moved out on foot with the mission to secure trail 2 as far as trail 44, inclusive. The regiment was to move by motor after dark to the junction of trail 2 and trail 44, and there remain until 0430 April 6. (53)

The Service Company Commander who was then also acting as S-4, since Captain Mead had been committed to the hospital, was back at the 1st Battalion train bivouac when he received a message from the re-

(51 B) A-1, p.84; (52) A-2, A-4, A-9; (53) A-2, A-5, A-12

gimental executive officer to dispatch the 1st Battalion kitchens by way of trail 44 to the junction of trails 2 and 44. The remainder of the regiment would feed in their present positions before moving by motor to the assembly area. (54)

The regiment entrucked about 2100 and moved forward. Before leaving, the company commander ordered the transportation officer to move the Service Company bivouac area forward to an area he had previously reconnoitered at the junction of trails 8 and 10. (Map III)

As the motor column reached the 1st Battalion, small arms fire came from the front. Word was sent back that the kitchen trucks of the 1st Battalion were cut off on trail 44. The Service Company Commander went forward and found a stalled ambulance on trail 44 about twenty five yards up the trail from its junction with trail 2. The ambulance had been evacuating wounded when the fire fight broke out. The driver had become excited, stalled the ambulance, and had jumped off and taken cover.

The mess sergeants, cooks, and drivers of the kitchen trucks took up the fire fight while one of the drivers got the ambulance started. The ambulance driver was found, put back in his ambulance and he drove off to the clearing station.

The 2nd Battalion pushed through the 1st Battalion, drove the Japanese back, secured the trail junction, and prepared to launch the attack against Mount Samat. One day's C ration was issued to the troops before they jumped off.

The munitions officer had secured 81mm mortar ammunition a short time prior to the attack. A small amount of this ammunition had been shipped in to the Philippines by submarine after the outbreak of war. Maximum use was not made of this valuable ammunition in this action, for the troops were so weak, and the weapons companies so depleted of men, that the portage of the ammunition up the rugged

(54) A-9

mountain trails proved a difficult problem. The troops attacked, but failed to eject the Japanese from their positions. The Japanese counterattacked, and the troops took up a defensive position along the San Vicente River (Map III). (55)

The Service Company Commander took all transportation to the rear by way of trail 44. On arriving at the junction of trails 8 and 10 at dawn, he found his company already in the position he had ordered them to occupy.

The transportation officer, the warrant officer, supply, and the warrant officer, maintenance, all were dissatisfied with the position, thinking it too far forward, and within artillery range. Enemy air was now extremely active, and they warned that the position would be bombed within a few hours because our own artillery positions were close. The position undoubtedly had been spotted, since one section of the area had been shelled the day before.

This advice was over ruled. The transportation officer and the warrant officer, supply, were sent forward with rations and water, and with orders to determine the regiment's needs. The company commander attempted to get some sleep.

About noon the company received the worst bombing it experienced in Bataan. A flight of dive bombers dove on the bivouac area. After the flight had released all their bombs, one plane would remain and strafe the area with machine guns until another flight appeared. This continued for about two hours.

Fortunately, the company was well dug in and no casualities were suffered. Many of the trucks were hit by bomb fragments, but none were put out of action. One battalion of the 57th Infantry which had established its trains in this same area was not so fortunate. Several men were killed and a direct hit was scored on one of the ammunition trucks.

(55) A-1, p.84, A-5, A-12

A group of Philippine Army soldiers ~~were~~ was caught on the road in front of the position. They became frantic under the bombing and strafing, and ran hither and yon, trying to find cover. Their movement, of course, brought down heavy fire, and officers and non-commissioned officers of the company had to order them away from the area. (56)

When darkness came, the company commander was glad to order the company back to its old position. He went forward to the regimental CP. Before leaving he arranged to meet the transportation officer and the warrant officer, supply, at the regimental CP the next morning at 0430. They were to have rations and water with them. In the mean time, the company commander would locate the battalion DP's. (57)

The kitchen trucks were brought up the next morning at the given time. The company commander went forward with the trucks to their battalion DP's. The last truck finished feeding and turned back to the rear about 0630. The company commander returned to the regimental CP.

When he arrived there, he found only the regimental chaplain and three or four men. The chaplain informed him that it appeared that the Japanese were preparing to launch a heavy attack, and that the regimental commander and his staff had gone forward.

Soon heavy artillery fire came from the Japanese lines. This was followed by machine gun and rifle fire, and it was evident that the attack was under way. At about 1000, sniper fire was coming into the CP. A party from the 51st Division, that had moved over directly in front of the CP, was organized to hunt the snipers. This caused the snipers to cease fire only while the party was in the area.

The company commander believed that it was time to move the CP when he could no longer contact the 51st Division who had been in his front. (The 31st Infantry CP had been located to the right of the regiment because of the road net). All telephone communication had been

(56) A-9; (57) A-9

blown out by artillery fire, no radio had been left at the CP, and the two messages ~~ba~~ he sent to the regimental commander were not answered. (It was later determined that the regimental commander did not receive these messages). Finally a message came through directing the company commander to move the regimental CP to the junction of trails 2 and 10.

On the way back, he met General Bleumel, CG of the 31st Division, PA, who, with rifle in hand, was trying to collect all units streaming to the rear, and to form them along a delaying position. This he had been unable to do. (58)

At the new location of the CP, an attempt was made to collect scattered personnel who were coming back, and to contact the regiment, so that these men could rejoin. Company "K" was stopped here and reorganized. A report was received that the regiment had been unable to withdraw on trail 2, and was drawing back through the hills west of the trail.

The Japanese now started a heavy artillery and air bombardment to further demoralize the retreating troops. With the capture of Mount Samat, the Japanese had gained observation of the area. Artillery concentrations were laid down on all trail junctions. The new CP was bombed and shelled. The 1st Battalion trains were still in this area. The company commander after a reconnoissance, determined that it would be better to send them down trail 10 to the main road and then to the rear, rather than directly to the rear on trail 18, since the Quartermaster, Philippine Division, was now trying to withdraw over that trail.

The 1st Battalion trains were ordered to return to the regimental train bivouac area at KP 149. The column moved out during the shelling. Two trucks were knocked out by bombs on this withdrawal.

Company "K" proceeded to the rear. The Service Company Commander, the chaplain, and the few command post personnel moved back to KP 149.

(58) A-2, A-5, A-12

The company commander went to Second Corps Headquarters to find out the location of the regiment. Second Corps did not have that information. About 2100 on 7 April, G-4, Second Corps told the company commander that he had received a message earlier that evening from the regimental commander that he would be at the junction of trails 18 and 2, and for his Service Company Commander to meet him there with rations.

C rations were loaded on a 1½ ton truck, and the truck proceeded from the bivouac area (KP 149, East Road) down to trail 24, then west on trail 24 to trail 20. Here the Service Company Commander was at fault for not having known the trails better. He would have saved much time, and perhaps accomplished his mission, if he had known that trail 22 (the trail which had once been a bivouac area for the 1st and 2nd Battalions and was then known as Artillery Loop) connected with trail 20 and was a big short cut (Map 3).

It took almost six hours after starting up trail 20 to get as far as trail 22, a distance of about five miles. Service vehicles, tactical motor vehicles, and self propelled artillery were withdrawing down this narrow trail, and it was difficult to buck the flowing stream of vehicles.

On reaching trail 22, the company commander was stopped by the advanced unit of the 26th Cavalry. He was told that there were no friendly units on trail 20 above this point, and that the 31st Infantry could not be at trails 18 and 12.

The company commander knew that the Alongan River was to be the next line of defense. He turned down trail 22 in an attempt to find the regiment. About one mile down the trail, he found a small detachment of about forty or fifty men under the command of Lieutenant Flynn from "L" Company. This officer had been unable to locate the regiment, but knew it should be somewhere along the Alongan River immediately to his rear. The rations were left with him, and the company commander returned to his bivouac area with the truck.

On arriving at the bivouac area, he found that the regimental S-3 had been there, and had ordered the company to withdraw to what had formerly been the regimental CP near the junction of trails 20 and 24. Most of the company had withdrawn to the new position by the time the company commander arrived.

The S-3 had been told on his arrival at the bivouac, that the company commander was out delivering rations to the regiment, so thinking that the location of the regiment was known, the S-3 left no message giving that needed information.

The company commander was able to contact General Bleumel, who was in command of the Alongan River defense, through a telephone that had been left at II Corps Headquarters when that installation withdrew. The general had not contacted the regimental commander of the 31st Infantry. It was extremely difficult for units to find each other in the dense underbrush along the Alongan River line. (59)

Finally, on the afternoon of that day, 8 April, a scouting party, sent out from the Service Company, contacted the regiment. The regiment also made contact with the defense line commander, General Bleumel, about this time. About 1600, word was brought back by the S-2 that the regiment would fall back that evening to the vicinity of the present Service Company bivouac area, and would feed in that area.

The company commander decided that it would soon be necessary to again withdraw the trains. The transportation officer was sent back to reconnoiter a new bivouac area somewhere on the Mareveles Cut-Off (Map 3). The munitions officer who had business with Philippine Department Ordnance, went with him.

About 1800, a message, from the regimental executive officer, arrived directing the company commander to move his bivouac to the rear over trail 20.

It was useless to try to move anything with less pulling power

(59) A-2, A-5, A-10

than 4x4's over the trail. The personnel buses had been returned to corps two days previous when things started breaking up, but the company still had three or four busses they had been using as cargo vehicles. These were burned.

The maintenance section did a commendable job getting the vehicles through the Lamao River and up the steep slippery hill on the other side. Almost every vehicle had to be snaked up by the shop trucks.

While the above operation took place, units were streaming through on both sides of the slippery trail. Finally, the 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry, came through. The battalion commander announced that he was ~~on~~ the rear guard of the 31st Infantry and that the rest of the regiment had proceeded him.

The Service Company Commander left the type C rations he had saved out for the regiment to the straggling units going up the trail, as he had sent his trucks to the rear, and had no means to transport them on foot. He sent his command car to the rear also and followed afoot with "I" Company which had become separated from the battalion and from its officers. Within a short time they caught up with the 3d Battalion and he released I Company.

Just before reaching KP 167, on the east road, he ran into a column of traffic halted on the road. The ordnance depot was being destroyed to prevent it from falling into enemy hands. The company commander found his two shop vehicles and the company's kitchen truck in this column. The remainder of the vehicles appeared to have gotten through before the road was blocked.

It appeared as though the road would be blocked several hours. Unofficial word was passed down the line that Bataan forces would surrender at 0900 the following morning. A jeep flying a white flag and carrying officers passed through the column, headed for the front. The Service Company Commander ordered the two shop trucks and kitchen

truck destroyed. T[illegible] was performed by the maintena[illegible] crew. (60)

The small group numbering about fourteen men and one officer moved off the road and went to sleep. A watch of two guards was rotated.

Early the next morning the company commander was awakened by his transportation officer. With him was the munitions officer. They had spent the night at Second Corps Headquarters about one kilometer farther down the road. They requested permission to stay with Second Corps Headquarters, which planned to surrender at its present location. The request was granted.

The remainder of the company set out marching for the proposed bivouac area on the Marveles Cut Off near the Panakian River. It was not then known if any of the company had reached this chosen area.

The company underwent several bombings and strafings in the next two or three kilometers of marching, but suffered no casualties. Groups of soldiers who had thrown away their arms were seen marching along the road with a white flag raised in an effort to escape the strafings. (None of these groups witnessed by the author were Americans). Natives began walking around in beautifully starched white clothes. These clothes had not been worn since 8 December.

After about three kilometers of marching, the column met a truck driven by the parts clerk. He had been sent out by the first sergeant to look for the company. The group piled in and drove about two kilometers before they reached the bivouac area, located on the south side of the road at the location stated above (Map 3). "I" Company of the 31st Infantry moved in on the opposite side of the road a short time later.

THE CAPTURE

The bivouac had insufficient cover and about 1000 that morning, 9 April, we were spotted from the air. Bombing and strafings followed

(60) A-9

for the next two hours. The Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, with a few remnants of his battalion, joined "I" Company during this time. (We later heard that the rest of the regiment had surrendered under orders earlier that morning on trail 20).

The bombing lifted. We heard small arms fire in the distance. Soon a few rifle shots were coming into the bivouac.

The Service Company Commander received an order to report to the 3rd Battalion CP and to bring his men. On arrival, he was told that since it appeared that all organized resistance was at an end, a break would be made for Mariveles, in an attempt to get to Corregidor. Service Company was ordered to form a line of resistance across its present bivouac area, and hold the enemy while the 3d Battalion withdrew. Service Company would follow, fighting a delaying action.

Service Company moved out and took up firing positions. The company at this time totaled less than twenty five men. There were four automatic rifles amongst them. The rest, except for about six who had only pistols, were armed with the M-1.

Evidently, only the most advanced enemy elements were in front of the company front. It received only small arms fire. The 3d Battalion moved out rapidly towards Mariveles.

After about two minutes of small arms fire from the unseen enemy on the hill to our front, a platoon of enemy tanks drove into the position, stopped and delivered heavy machine gun fire. The Service Company, 31st Infantry was captured. (61)

(61) A-9

In criticism of the actions of this unit, account must be taken of the difficulties under which they labored. Since division supply points were undermanned and underequipped, supplies were never sent forward, but were obtained by the Service Company going to the rear for all classes of supply, regardless of the distances, which were sometimes great. These supplies had to be sent forward to companies so low in strength that many times, when in action, carrying parties of sufficient size could not be spared. This caused difficulties of distribution.

The advanced state of technical training of this company paid dividends in combat. The lack of peace time tactical training as a service company, and resulting reluctance to consider that this job was always "to serve" caused no difficulty, since the regiment was not immediately committed, and a few days after the outbreak of war, all personnel fully realized their duties and carried them out with enthusiasm. However, it must be remembered that service units will in time of peace, unless they receive realistic field training, be prone to forget their job is "to serve" the combat elements.

Only the failure of the Japanese to recognize the situation, and adjust their inelastic plans, prevented them from destroying the poorly planned, poorly controlled movements of the American and Filipino forces into Bataan.

Movement at night was extremely difficult since complete black-out throughout the Philippines was ordered, and the motor trails of Bataan were new and usually difficult to traverse by motor. Artificial moonlight, had it been taught the troops, could have been used to some advantage.

In the initial stages of the defense of the Philippines, higher headquarters failed to properly govern and conserve supplies.

On the whole, locations for the regimental train bivouacs were

properly chosen, considering the availability of positions, even though they were at times too distant from the regiment. Twice, however, the company commander moved the unit too far forward. This resulted in exposing them to artillery fire and a resultant lowering in efficiency at the time. Good use of cover and concealment was made in bivouac areas.

The withdrawal of the covering shell at Colis was improperly planned and executed. No commander was placed over the three company commanders in the shell, and no staff officers were sent down to check the time and coordination of the withdrawal.

Failure to stock food and medical supplies in Bataan is difficult to understand especially since small arms ammunition was stocked on this peninsula. Hunger and disease were greater enemies than the Japanese soldiers.

The actions of the Service Company Commander in dealing with the Philippine Department Quartermaster over the heads of Philippine Division Quartermaster and G-4, Second Corps, were certainly out of line and should not have been tolerated.

It appears as though there was poor coordination from the top down on the issue of Class I supplies. About 5 April, during the final action on Bataan, the Service Company Commander made a determined effort to obtain type C ration then unavailable at division. After considerable argument at Department Quartermaster, he was told that there ~~was~~ were no more such rations on Bataan, and only a message from G-4 to Corregidor could get the type C ration transported to Bataan. G-4 was so notified by the company commander, the message was sent, and the supplies received. They were received too late to be of much use. If such supplies were available, they should have been issued before that time or not at all.

Allocation of duties between the S-4 and the Service Company Com-

mander were at first poor. ~~Then~~ Later they became excellent.

The company commander did not use his transportation officer to fullest advantage. Many of the duties performed by the company commander in the transportation of supplies could and should have been delegated to the transportation officer. The resultant lack of training was felt by both commander and subordinate in the final stages of Bataan, when the commander had to assume the duties of S-4, and had to delegate duties he had heretofore performed, to the transportation officer.

The native civilian component performed excellent service throughout the campaign. They were governed almost wholly by white non-commissioned officers of the company, and one highly intelligent native civilian deputized by the company commander. Their bravery under bombings and shell fire, and their expressed desire to stay with the outfit when it was not mandatory, proved that under competent leadership in the junior grades, the Filipino would serve well under hazardous circumstances.

The withdrawal of the covering shell at Abucay points out the difficulty of making a withdrawal of a rear guard by motor when that rear guard is engaged with the enemy. The proper use of staff officers in this withdrawal was notably absent. The use of armor to protect the entrucking of a rear guard is brought out in this action.

On moving into the Orion line the night of 5 April, a mistake was made in sending the 1st Battalion kitchen trucks over route 44 to meet the battalion. It was not known for certain whether or not there was enemy on the route. Evidently, the enemy might be expected in that vicinity, or the 1st Battalion would not have been given the mission of securing the regiment's route of advance to trail 44. The trucks should have followed the battalion up trail 2.

The lack of communications between regiment and the company was a serious handicap. Except in one bivouac area in which the company remained for some time, and telephone communication was established, no communication other than motor messenger was available. The line companies had the old SCR 131 (Code only) and the old SCR 195 ("Walkie Talkie"). Supply was so limited that neither were made available to Service Company. Neither would have been suitable if so available.

Troop movement and traffic control, what little there was of it in Bataan, appeared to be observed entirely from a supply view, and not from an operations standpoint. Until gasoline was rationed, no restrictions were placed on motor or foot movement along the only road in Bataan. At one time, the S-4, 31st Infantry asked for, and was promised, priority on a trail for a given movement. The priority was valueless because it was not enforced by military police.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Service units must receive tactical training in conjunction with combat units in time of peace.

2. Plans must be elastic.

3. Air power properly used at the proper time can destroy or render ineffective an army using a limited road net.

4. Continuous technical development and troop training is needed to perfect blackout movements.

5. The American soldier is, by training, exceedingly wasteful, and strict control must be exerted by commanders taking troops into extended operations where re-supply will be difficult.

6. Regimental train bivouacs must be carefully chosen with respect to cover and concealment, routes into and out of position, and general operating efficiency.

7. Withdrawals are difficult operations. They must be carefully

planned and executed. The commander must have intimate knowledge of all details of the plan, and exert strict control over the movement. Maximum use must be made of staff officers to achieve coordination and control.

8. The fundamental law of unity of command must not be violated.

9. Supply must not be disregarded in either strategical or tactical planning.

10. Complete coordination between supply headquarters from top to bottom must be achieved or the supply line breaks down.

11. Reserve supplies, like reserve troops, can be committed too late to be of value.

12. The regimental train bivouacs must maintain a perimeter defense in jungle operations, either from its own personnel or attached personnel from line companies.

13. Communications are a vital part of efficient operation in the Service Company as well as in the line company.

14. Higher headquarters must control the evacuation of supplies, and in an emergency must determine and set priorities on the types of supplies withdrawn.