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ADVANCED OFFICERS CLASS #1

DATE 22 April 1948

MILITARY MONOGRAPH

TITLE: BREAKTHROUGH TO MANILA

SCOPE: This monograph is an historical example of a reinforced, motorized infantry battalion executing a penetration.

This unit was the 2nd Squadron of the 8th Cavalry Regiment (dismounted). The place was Luzon, P.I. and the mission was a penetration of over one hundred miles into the Jap-held city of Manila.

This monograph is designed to point out how an infantry unit accomplished its mission, employing speed, mobility, aggressiveness and reinforcing armor.

41-6

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BREAKTHROUGH TO MANILA

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BREAKTHROUGH TO MANILA

SECTION I

SITUATION ON LUZON AT THE END OF JANUARY 1945

On 27 January 1945, the 1st Cavalry Division began debarkation on Luzon Island, at Lingayan Gulf, in the beachhead established by Sixth U. S. Army some two weeks previously.¹ The Division completed debarkation and closed a few miles inland on 28 January, where it set about readying itself for combat.

Orders were received here which, on the 29th, moved the Division to the vicinity of Guimba, which is a few miles north and west of Cabanatuan on the Pampanga River. (See sketch #1.)

It was here at Guimba that the Division received orders for the operation which carried it into Manila over one hundred miles to the south.

~~The enemy situation at the time was generally as follows:~~ The Japanese Army was making a determined defense in the hills to the east and west of Lingayen Valley and was fighting a delaying action down the valley toward Manila. The enemy fell back slowly, taking advantage of the numerous stream lines behind which he held successive delaying positions until driven out. On the front of the 1st Cavalry Division the enemy held the line of the Pampanga River including Cabanatuan² which was held in some strength. (For the enemy front see sketch #1.)

1. After Action Report, 8th Cavalry.

2. Luzon Campaign, Vol. I, page 31.

The friendly situation was generally secure with the firmly established beachhead being large enough to provide freedom of maneuver. The 37th Infantry Division had penetrated to the Clark Field--Fort Stotsenburg area and was engaged in securing the hills on its west flank prior to continuing the attack to the south.³ (See sketch #1.)

The next objective was obviously Manila which would provide an excellent harbour and dock facilities for the use of Sixth U. S. Army. It had become evident, however, from intelligence sources, that the Japs were determined to hold on to the city as long as possible.

It was known that there was a large internment camp, at Santo Tomas University in Manila, containing about four thousand Allied civilian nationals. General MacArthur's Headquarters feared that if there were a prolonged fight for the city, the Japanese garrison might massacre these internees in a spirit of revenge.

~~In view of the above on the morning of 30 January, the Commanding General, 1st Cavalry Division was ordered to move a motorized force into Manila, there to seize the Santo Tomas Internment Camp and the Malacanan Palace (the principal government building in Manila). This was to be accomplished prior to 2400 hours 3 February. The Division elements were then to hold the Camp and Palace until relieved by orders from higher headquarters.~~

3. Luzon Campaign, Vol. I, page 29.

SECTION II

PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR PENETRATION TO MANILA

On 31 January the Division was reinforced by the 44th Tank Battalion (-Co. C)⁴ and by such trucks from army truck companies as were necessary for the operation.

A glance at the overall situation on 31 January revealed that to accomplish its mission the Division would have to make a penetration of over one hundred miles through enemy-held territory in three days' time. In addition to the intervening Jap forces, there were an estimated eighteen thousand enemy in the city of Manila itself.⁵ This latter force consisted primarily of Imperial Marines and naval personnel whose ships had been sunk in Manila Bay by air attacks.

As can easily be seen the above was quite a mission to assign a division which had only landed three days before and which had long since become accustomed to fighting a slow and grudging war in dense jungle, and mountainous terrain. This was, of course, an ideal mission for an armored division or a combat command, but the only armored division on the Island unfortunately was Japanese.⁶

By the morning of 31 January the division operation plan was completed and oral orders were issued.

4. After Action Report, 44th Tank Battalion.

5. Enemy on Luzon, page 8.

6. Luzon Campaign, Vol. I, page 29.

The Division Commander's plan called for two motorized squadrons, each reinforced by one medium tank company to make the initial thrust into Manila. (This was known as "massing your armor" in Pacific operations). Company D (Light Tank) 44th Tank Battalion was to operate under division control to provide security for the Division's left flank. The remainder of the Division was to follow into the city as transportation became available. The two leading Squadrons, 2nd Squadron of 8th Cavalry and 2nd Squadron of 5th Cavalry were to operate under the control of Brigadier General William C. Chase.

The orders for the operation called for the 2nd Squadron of the 8th Cavalry to lead the Attack initially; resistance was to be bypassed whenever possible; enemy on the flanks were to be disregarded unless they actually rendered further advance impossible. In the event that the lead squadron became heavily engaged and could advance no further, the following ~~squadron was to bypass this resistance and move on the objective, Manila.~~ As the action actually occurred the 2nd Squadron of the 8th Cavalry, to which the writer belonged, was never completely stopped and so led the penetration all the way into the objective. For this reason, from here on this narrative deals almost exclusively with the 2nd Squadron of the 8th Cavalry which will simply be referred to as "the Squadron". This squadron reinforced as of 31 January consisted of the following units:

1. 2nd Squadron 8th Cavalry
 - a. Three rifle troops (E, F, & G)
 - b. One weapons troop (H)

2. Company B, 44th Tank Battalion
3. Battery B, 61st Field Artillery Battalion (105mm Towed)
4. Reconnaissance Platoon, Regimental Hq. Tr.
5. Anti-Tank Platoon, Regimental Hq. Tr. (37mm Towed)
6. One Platoon Troop C, 8th Engineer Squadron
7. Section of .50 caliber Machine Guns, Weapons Troop
8. Maintenance Section, Service Troop
9. One Platoon, Troop B, 1st Medical Squadron
10. Trucks from Division

The logistical plan called for all rifle elements and weapons crews to be mounted in $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks, $\frac{3}{4}$ ton weapon carriers, or $\frac{1}{4}$ ton trucks. The Tank Company and other attachments naturally had their own transportation.

Each vehicle was to carry enough rations to last its crew or passengers for approximately one week. Ammunition was overloaded on a like basis. The Tank Company had sufficient trucks from its parent Battalion to supply itself for 4 or 5 days, except for gasoline.⁷

These large quantities of supplies were carried as a precaution against being cut off, either on the route, or in Manila. It was expected that the motorized force would be reinforced within forty eight hours after reaching the objective but the extra supplies went along anyhow.

The 2nd Squadron of the 5th Cavalry had received similar attachments and was similarly supplied.

7. These supply figures are estimated since facts are not available.

Supplies did support Squadron (+) for five days however.

The tactical plan called for the Squadron to force crossings at two points over the Pampanga River. The secondary or western crossing was a "sneak" affair which was to insure a toehold in case the main effort nearer Cabanatuan was a failure. (See sketch #2.) The very poor ford at the secondary crossing site prevented its use by the entire force but explained why this point was not defended.

Upon securing a bridgehead the Squadron was to reorganize in assembly position "A" (see sketch #2), then move south as rapidly as possible. Highway #5 was the axis of advance.

The Regimental Commander, in his orders, stressed the point of speed; he also pointed out that any unit finding itself cut off or separated should remain on the axis of advance and head for the objective. The converging action of all elements of the Division, and the 37th Division, would render this more practicable than was at first apparent.

SECTION III

CONDUCT OF THE OPERATION

The Squadron moved into its assembly position (see sketch #2) about 2200 on the night of 31 January and teams of tanks and motorized infantry were formed. The listening posts occupied by the Division Reconnaissance Troop along the Pampanga River reported no enemy activity at the western ford and enemy patrols only at the point where the main effort was to be made.

Accordingly at 0001, 1 February, the attack was launched as planned (without artillery preparation in order to gain surprise).

The main attack was successful against light enemy resistance and the bulk of the Squadron was across the river by 0900.

The secondary attack made by Troop G met no resistance but the condition of the ford was so poor that after several hours work only half the vehicles had crossed. The Commanding Officer, Troop G, ordered the rear half of his troop to withdraw and rejoin the Squadron, to cross with the main effort, while Troop G (- 2 platoons) moved on to designated assembly position "A".

The smaller force returned to the Squadron, reported the situation to the Squadron Commander and crossed the river near Cabanatuan while Troop G (-) moved out on the south bank.

The Squadron closed at the designated assembly point "A" (see sketch #2) about 1000 with the exception of Troop G (-) which was not to be found. Patrols were sent out to locate this force and it was finally learned from natives in the area that Troop G (-) had reached the rendezvous point about

0830 and that the Commanding Officer finding no one there, for some reason, apparently believed that he was late and that the Squadron had gone on ahead. He, remembering the Regimental C. O.'s orders, without further ado had started south along Highway #5 with Troop G (- 2 platoons).

The Squadron C.O. was informed at once as to what had happened, and since Troop G (-) by that time (1130) had moved out of radio range, a liaison plane was dispatched to locate this force.

At the same time the Squadron moved south along Highway #5 to the southern edge of Santa Rosa where it was halted for some two hours. (See assembly position "B", sketch #2.) This halt was probably caused by the delayed reaction of the Jap force in Cabanatuan, which was strongly counter-attacking other elements of the Division in rear of the Squadron, though no explanation was given by higher headquarters.

By 1340 the liaison plane had located Troop G (-) which had advanced about forty miles to the south and found it engaged with a Jap force near the town of Baliuag. Orders were relayed by the plane for Troop G (-) to break off action and withdraw north since it was such a small force. At the same time the remainder of Troop G reinforced with two medium tanks was dispatched at top speed to aid the forward element.

While the Squadron's main body had been halted, Division Headquarters had sent Company D (Light Tank) of the 44th Tank Battalion to the town of Gapan, about ten miles south of Santa Rosa, (see sketch #2) to secure the bridge over the Penaranda River at that point. Upon arrival at Gapan this company became engaged with Jap Infantry defending the town. The Tank Company

had several men killed and wounded but lost no tanks. Among the casualties was Lt. Col. Tom Ross, Commanding Officer, 44th Tank Battalion, who was killed as he entered the edge of town.⁸

(It is interesting to note that Troop G (-) had passed through this town several hours earlier with such speed that the Japs they saw had not fired on them until the last vehicle was almost out of the town.)

About 1600 in the afternoon Company D 44th Tank Battalion was on the verge of withdrawing from Gapan (for lack of infantry support) when both halves of Troop G entered the town almost simultaneously from the north and the south. A quick redeployment of the tanks and infantry took place and in a matter of minutes the town was cleared of all Japs except twenty or thirty dead ones.

While this action was in progress, the Commanding Officer, 2nd Squadron received permission to move his main body, which was still sitting idle at Santa Rosa. He immediately ordered Troop G reinforced by the two medium tanks at Gapan to turn again and move south to the vicinity of Baliuag, acting as covering force for the Squadron. Just north of Baliuag, Troop G was to seize and secure a bivouac position for the Squadron on the best possible ground for the night's halt.

The Light Tank Company was to hold Gapan and the bridge until both Motorized Squadrons had passed, then revert to division control.

The Squadron was to follow Troop G at one hour's interval closing on G at Baliuag for the night.

8. After Action Report, 44th Tank Battalion

This was accomplished by 0100 of 2 February and the column coiled into a tight perimeter (see sketch #3) for a few hours rest while refueling and maintenance were performed.

The first day's action had carried the Squadron approximately fifty miles, at the cost, however, of a good deal of marching and countermarching amid some confusion. This, in view of the very light enemy resistance, was not so good. We of the Squadron were beginning to learn a little more about coordination of a fast-moving force, however.

On the morning of 2 February the Squadron moved out in the order F, Hq., G, Trains, and E, thus rotating the advance guard force. Each troop was reinforced by a platoon of medium tanks. The artillery battery moved at the head of the trains.

Troop F moved dismounted through Baliuag, which the enemy had apparently abandoned during the night. The Squadron followed through the town mounted and upon clearing Baliuag, Troop G moved into the lead. The column moved about five miles to Plaridel where Highway #5 crossed the Angat River. The bridge here was blown out and the leading elements of Troop G were immediately fired on from the south bank. The engineers reported that the bridge could not be quickly repaired, so the Commanding Officer 2nd Squadron ordered Troop G to make a demonstration by fire while Troop F reconnoitered for a ford to the northeast. This was done with some success. The enemy delaying force was engaged by tank cannon, mortar, and machine gun fire while Troop F crossed a dismounted force unopposed at Santa Barbara Ford (see sketch #3). Troop G remained in position most of the morning occupying the Japs while the Squadron

was crossing. Just after noon Troop G was pulled back and followed the Squadron across the river.

This ford was rather deep and it was found necessary to tow all wheeled vehicles across with the tanks or the engineer bulldozer. This slowed the crossing considerably and it was around 1400 when all elements had completed fording.

The column moved out at once in order E, Hq., F, Trains and G, following a very poor secondary road (see sketch #3) which bypassed the Jap force at Plaridel. This route took the Squadron at a slow pace some ten miles to San Juan (see sketch #3). Here at about 1600 contact was made with the leading elements of the 37th Infantry Division which was moving south along Highway #3 toward Manila.

Since both units could not move along the same road, the Squadron was halted to refuel and prepare for a night movement by secondary roads to the east.

The end of the second day found the Squadron in good condition and operating much more smoothly than on the previous day. The difficult fording of the Angat River, however, and after that a very poor road had practically neutralized our best efforts. In short, the column had moved only about fourteen miles in a straight line toward its objective. It was evident that if the mission was to be accomplished we would really have to move from here on. It was also evident that enemy resistance was stiffening as we approached Manila.

The route selected for the remainder of the march into Manila was as

shown on the accompanying sketch #3, a distance of over forty miles.

On the map this route looked fairly practicable and it was adopted on order of higher headquarters. However, when this route was pointed out to a Filipino Resistance Movement Officer accompanying the Squadron he grew rather pale and stated that we'd never get to Manila that way. In his opinion the Squadron would be slaughtered in the hills northeast of Manila, inasmuch as this road through Novaliches was the main Jap supply route into Manila and was guarded by the best part of a division. Since this officer had left the Manila area during the previous fifteen days there was good reason to believe him.

In addition to the above, our tactical air reported that this Novaliches road was the only route into Manila on which the bridges were intact. This report bore out the statement that the road would be well defended but forced the adoption of this route since we needed these bridges to maintain the speed and impetus of attack.

The Squadron moved out, accordingly, along the new route at 2100 hours in the order G, Hq., F, Trains and E. The secondary road was found to be a continual bog due to a recent rain and it was about midnight when Troop G reached the improved road at Santo Cruz (see sketch #3). The natives here on being awakened and questioned told us there were Japs in Santa Maria, though they didn't know how many. The Troop therefore halted at Santa Clara while a dismounted patrol was sent into Santa Maria. As the patrol neared the edge of town about 0200 hours, a challenge in Japanese was hurled at them and immediately followed by a burst of small arms fire which wounded

three men. The patrol withdrew and Troop G's Weapons Platoon immediately started pounding the town with mortar and machine gun fire. The Commanding Officer, 2nd Squadron determined to wait for daylight to attack but meanwhile had the reconnaissance platoon search for a crossing over the Santa Maria River on the south flank of the Squadron. About 0500 it began to grow light and Troops E and F attacked across open ground with G and H giving long-range supporting fire. The Jap force gave up the fight after taking fairly heavy casualties and withdrew from the town.

Reconnaissance was immediately pushed to the bridge over the Santa Maria River east of town but this bridge was found to be blown out. About this time, the Reconnaissance Platoon reported a good ford about one thousand yards southwest of Santa Maria. The platoon was ordered across and the Squadron began to follow. The Reconnaissance Platoon found no enemy and was ordered to move east to Santa Nino on the road south of the river. Within twenty minutes after moving out, however, the platoon was screaming for help via radio saying that it had been ambushed and was pinned down.

This was the first time that the Reconnaissance Platoon had been used to lead the attack, and it was definitely not a success, since they were entirely "jeep-mounted". Troop F with its platoon of tanks hastily completed fording the river and dashed off to the aid of the embattled force. Arriving on the scene of action at Santo Nino (see sketch #3) the troop dismounted from its trucks and launched a rapid tank-infantry assault which wiped out a force of about thirty Japs defending Santo Nino.

Within an hour the entire Squadron had closed on Troop F and immediately

moved out toward Muzon in order F, Hq., G, Trains and E. As the lead elements approached Muzon (see sketch #3) a number of trucks and troops were seen in the village. Troop F immediately dismounted and went into action. The attack was a complete success due to its speed and the violent and accurate firing of the tank platoon which assaulted with Troop F. Fifteen Japanese trucks were destroyed and twenty to thirty enemy were killed in the fight. The remainder took to their heels.

This attack was carried out so hastily that Troop G didn't get to fire a shot even though the men were dismounted and moved into the village just behind Troop F.

The Reconnaissance Platoon was detailed to complete the destruction of enemy equipment in the village and the column moved out in the same order as before. As Troop F approached the road junction marked Hot Corner on the sketch, the leading vehicles received 20mm and small arms fire. Again the troopers dismounted and attacked in conjunction with the attached tank platoon. This time, however, it became apparent that the enemy was in considerable strength. This fact was also evident to the rest of the Squadron since, as soon as it halted, intense fire was received from both sides of the road for the entire length of the column. All hands took to the ditches and returned the fire vigorously. In the case of Troop G, the enemy had to be driven from the ditches before the troopers could occupy same.

For some minutes the issue of this fight hung in doubt, since the Squadron had obviously run into the middle of a very large force and was taking heavy casualties at first. Apparently the Japs were as greatly

surprised as we were, however, which shortly turned the trick. In any event the road junction and the column's flanks were cleared after about twenty minutes of very hot, close-range fighting. Troop E was detailed to hold this critical point until relieved by the following Squadron of the 5th Cavalry and the column moved out again in the same order as before.

There was no further action until the leading elements reached Novaliches (see sketch #3) early in the afternoon. Here Troop F ran into a road block at the bridge over the Tulliahan River. Again the column received fire from both flanks and it was necessary to fight in three directions at once. As the F Troopers worked their way onto the bridge, a mine with enough explosive to demolish two bridges was discovered and unfortunately the fuse had been lit. Lt. "Pat" Sutton, a U. S. Naval demolitions expert, was with the leading elements to take care of just such an emergency and he quickly disarmed the mine in spite of intense enemy fire which wounded several men helping him.

Lt. Sutton's heroic action gave the Squadron the vital bridge intact and after about an hour's fight Novaliches was cleared sufficiently to allow the column to move through.

From here on to the final objective at Santo Tomas the column's movement resembled a Wild West Movie. Off and on for the entire distance, some twelve to fifteen miles, the Squadron received fire from the flanks of the road which was vigorously returned from both the tank guns and truck-mounted machine guns.

In the course of this running action two small Jap truck convoys loaded

with troops were encountered. These troops may have been on their way out to stop our column, however, they never had a chance to put up a fight as they were virtually annihilated in their vehicles by our tank and machine gun fire.

Strangely enough the Squadron had only ten or fifteen men hit in this action and never stopped its movement. In spite of this speed it was found later that the Squadron had badly "clobbered" a Jap Battalion in the cemetery northeast of Manila which had attempted to halt it. (See sketch #3).

As the column entered the northern section of Manila, Troop F with its tank platoon raced to the Malacanan Palace on the north bank of the Pasig River which was seized without difficulty. The remainder of the Squadron started towards the Santo Tomas Internment Camp, unfortunately, however, a portion of Troop G took the wrong route and became engaged with a large Jap force near the Far Eastern University.

All three of the officers with this force were wounded within the first ten minutes of the action and for approximately two hours a squad leader, Sgt. John Gallagher, commanded that portion of the Troop. Sgt. Gallagher's command fought off repeated Japanese attacks and accounted for one hundred and seventy five counted enemy dead. Troop G's own losses were ten killed and twenty wounded, about forty per cent casualties.

While this action was taking place the remainder of the force (which now consisted of one platoon of Troop G, Troop H, Battery B 61st Field Artillery, one tank platoon, and the trains) reached the prison camp. A tank crashed through the gate and there was a short skirmish in the dusk with the Jap

Guards. The Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Conner was wounded near the gate but his executive, Major Gerhart took command at once and continued to supervise the clearing of the University Grounds.

This mopping up was in progress when it was discovered about 2000 hours that the Jap guard commander had taken two hundred of the internees as hostages and with seventy of his men was barricaded in the Education Building. Since these hostages rendered an attack on this building impossible a strong guard was posted around it and a hasty defense of the camp area was organized.

The 2nd Squadron of the 5th Cavalry, with General Chase in command, was about two hours behind the Squadron and arrived in Manila about 2130 hours. This force at once went to the relief of Troop G (-) at the Far Eastern University and aided it in withdrawing to Santo Tomas. Here, General Chase took command of both Squadrons and organized the defense of the prison grounds for the night.

Strangely enough the large enemy force in Manila did not attack or bother Santo Tomas during the night and only made two or three small uncoordinated attacks on Troop F at the Palace. These were easily beaten off and at daylight of the 4th of February the only major problem was how to handle the seventy Japs barricaded in the Education Building with their two hundred hostages.

Colonel Charles E. Brady, acting as General Chase's spokesman, several times during the day of the 4th entered the Education Building under a flag of truce where he vainly attempted to persuade Col. Hayashi (the Jap commander) to surrender.

Late in the afternoon of 4 February Col. Hayashi informed Col. Brady that

we would have to release him and his men with their arms and equipment at a point well outside our lines or else he would slaughter his hostages and make a suicide defense of the building. When General Chase was informed of this he at once decided that the lives of the hostages were more important than the seventy Japanese soldiers and agreed to the "Nip" terms.

As a result, at daybreak on 5 February, Troop G 8th Cavalry formed around the door of the Education Building to escort the Jap force out. Within two or three minutes the armed Japanese soldiers filed out of the building and, closely surrounded by the men of Troop G, were escorted out of the Prison area. The small column moved without incident to a point near the Pasig River where the two forces parted, the Nips moving out of sight to the south and the Cavalrymen turning back to Santo Tomas. The writer believes this to be the only incident of this kind in the Pacific War, wherein negotiations were successfully carried out between the Enemy and the U. S. Forces without any treachery.

The removal of this enemy force left Santo Tomas completely liberated and the arrival of elements of the 37th Infantry Division in Northern Manila on the night of 4-5 February had tightened the U. S. grip on the city. The Jap withdrew south of the Pasig River on 5 February with the bulk of his force, there to make his last stand. Thus the original mission of the Squadron, the liberation of Santo Tomas, was successfully completed.

The 2nd Squadron of the 8th Cavalry reinforced primarily by Company B 44th Tank Battalion and Battery B 61st Field Artillery could well be proud of its accomplishments. The final box score was: over eight hundred enemy

killed,⁹ and approximately thirty five trucks destroyed. The Squadron had moved over one hundred and fifteen miles through enemy territory in less than three days' time and had liberated approximately four thousand Allied prisoners.

The Squadron's losses were light by comparison; less than twenty killed, less than one hundred and fifteen casualties of all kinds for the five days, 1-5 February 1945.

9. After Action Report, 8th Cavalry Regiment.

SECTION IV

CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTARY ON THE OPERATION

There are several factors about this operation that are worthy of note and are of some interest, they fall generally under the three headings of Tactics, Equipment, and Enemy.

First, let us consider Tactics; such a deep and rapid penetration of the enemy had never before been attempted in the Pacific War. There were no previous examples to follow, nor was there any unit which had any experience along these lines. The operation was a success, however, because the principles and methods employed were basically sound. The writer has since heard many of these methods and principles taught at the Armored School. For example; speed, violence, and aggressive attack were the keynotes of each action; whenever possible an enemy force was contained and bypassed; when this latter was impossible the attack merely cleared the route of advance and moved through the enemy strong point with minimum security precautions for the flanks. In addition, the Squadron column was reasonably self-sufficient in that it did not require, or receive, resupply for some five days.

Secondly, under the heading of equipment we find several items that were not at all desirable for such an operation.

The personnel carriers employed were standard $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks with some $\frac{3}{4}$ ton weapons carriers and $\frac{1}{4}$ ton trucks here and there. All of these vehicles were unarmored and afforded absolutely no protection to their passengers.

The communications equipment available was very poor with the standard troop radio being the SCR 300. These sets were naturally very nearly useless except when units were engaged in dismounted action. As nearly as the writer can determine there were four SCR 284s, one of which belonged to the Reconnaissance Platoon, given to the Squadron to facilitate control. This small number of sets meant that these radios had to be switched from one unit to another as the need arose or changed. This, of course, reduced the flexibility of operation considerably and required a great deal of messenger work on the part of Squadron Headquarters and members of the staff. In addition, it is believed that there was only one SCR 506 available to the Squadron Commander for contact with higher Headquarters. Definitely the communications equipment and the personnel carriers were not suitable for a penetration mission of this nature; however, improvisation and thorough coordination by Squadron Headquarters overcame the obstacles created by these weaknesses.

One more shortage existed and that was in Armor, there being only one tank company attached to the Squadron. This was not, however, as dangerous a weakness as might be imagined, since the enemy was weak in AT weapons and in Armor, in the Division Zone. As a result, the single tank company was able to provide sufficient support and shock to the Squadron attacks to insure success.

The third factor--The Enemy, is of some interest in that two major weaknesses of the Japanese Army were pointed up by this operation. These weaknesses were: (1) Inadequate communications which failed to provide the

enemy with adequate warning of the Squadron's approach and (2) The slow reaction on the part of all ranks in the Japanese Army to an unforeseen situation. This latter is, in the writer's mind, the only explanation as to why the Squadron column was not destroyed, either near Novaliches or in Manila, since at both of these points, the enemy force outnumbered the cavalymen and initially surrounded them.

In conclusion, it is well to remember that a small aggressive, well-led force which possesses a high degree of mobility, fire power, and shock action can do wonders against an enemy who is not expecting a rapid attack, or who is even a little slow in his reactions.

Armored officers who may find themselves assigned to the tank battalion of an infantry division in some future war should consider that they would have available more and better tanks, and more men, than did the 2nd Squadron 8th Cavalry Regiment. Their accomplishments should accordingly be greater!

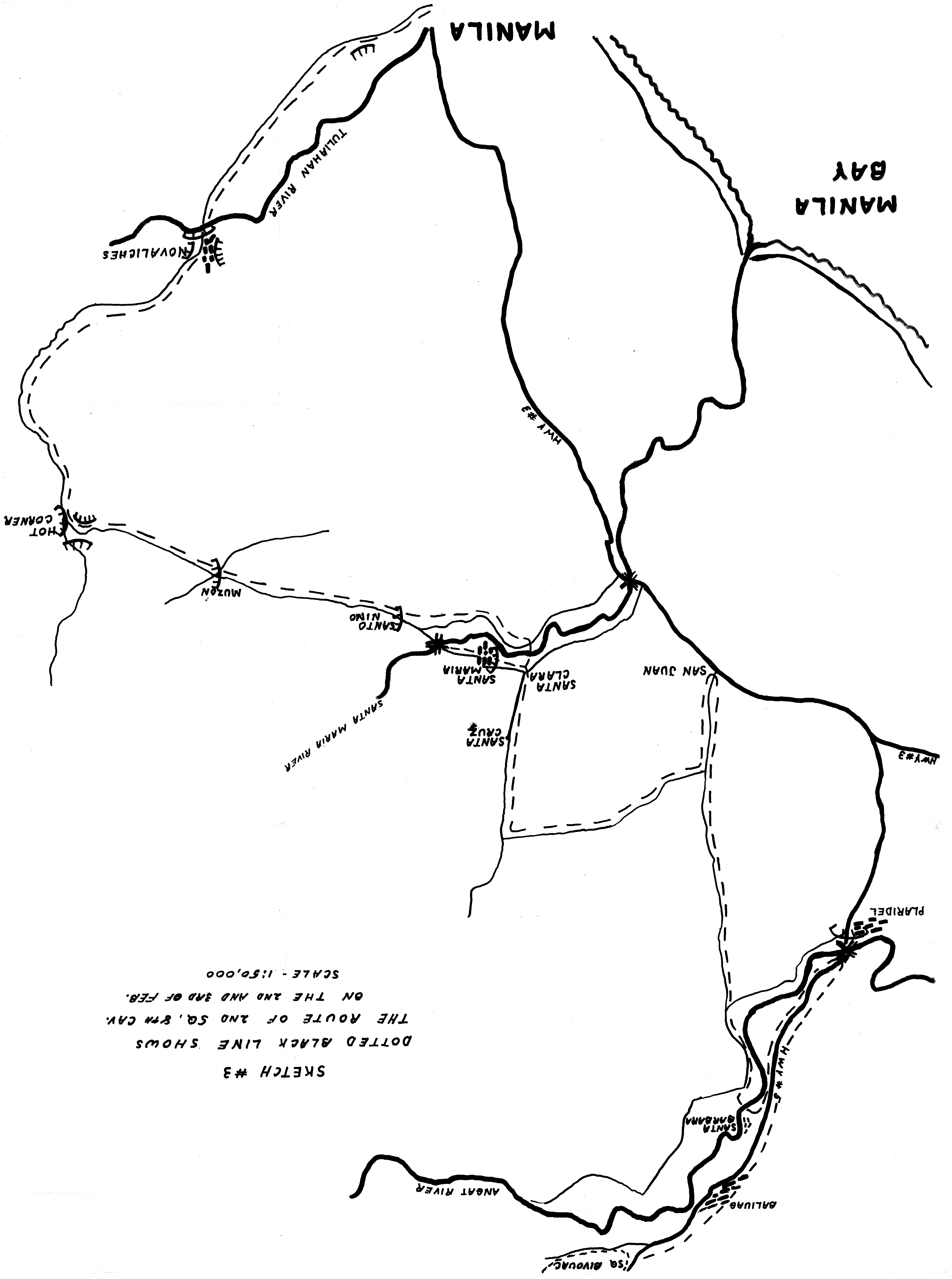
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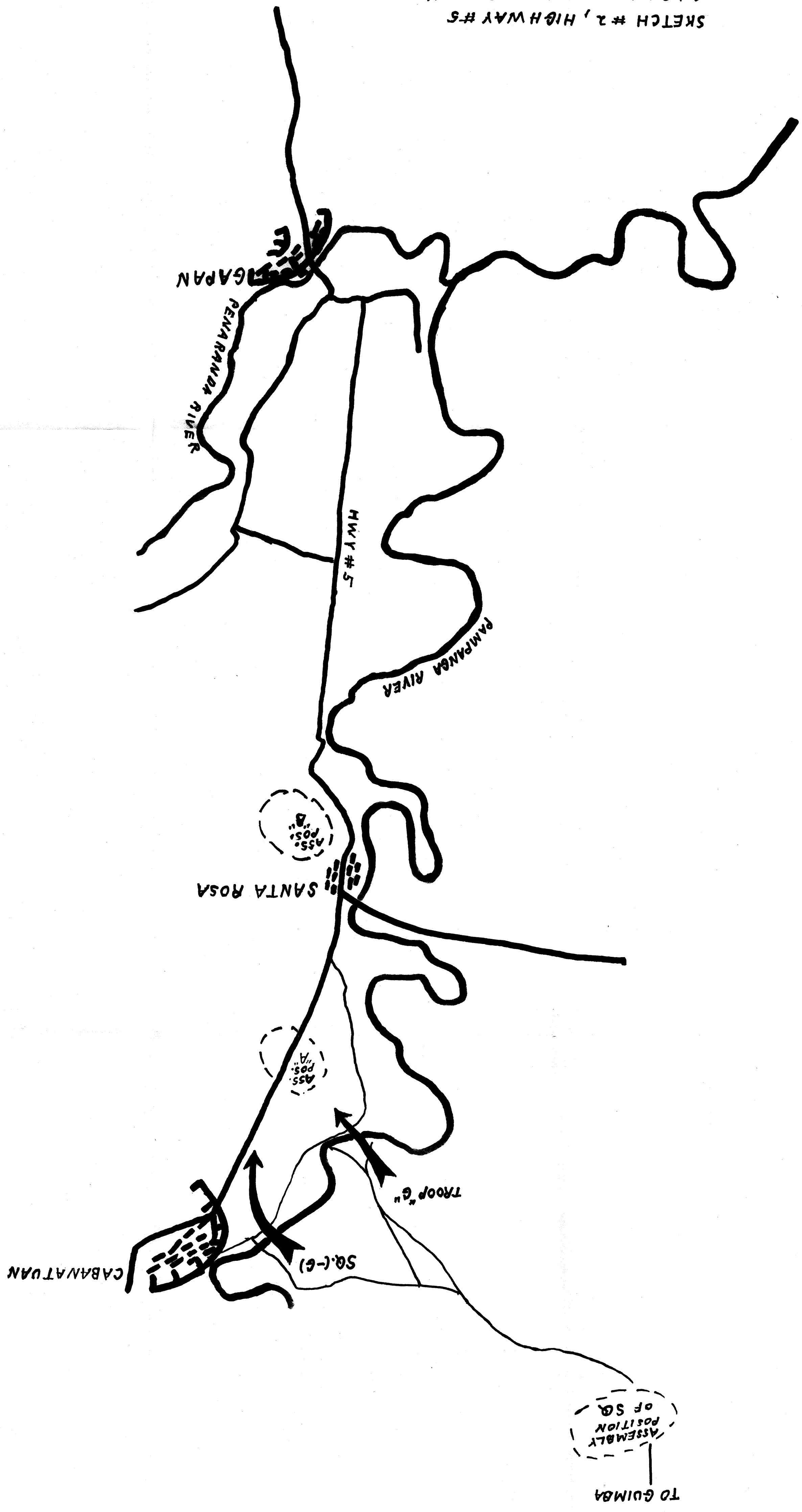
Luzon Campaign, Volume I; Hq. 6th U. S. Army, 1945.

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SKETCH #3
 THE ROUTE OF 2ND SQ. 8TH CAV.
 ON THE 2ND AND 3RD OF FEB.
 SCALE - 1:50,000

SKETCH #2, HIGHWAY #5
CABANATUAN AND GAPAN
SCALE - 1:50,000



SCALE 1:500,000 APPROX.

29 JANUARY 1945

ENEMY AND FRIENDLY DISPOSITIONS ON LUZON

SKETCH #1

