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SKYLINE RIDGE

SCOPE - This monograph covers the activities of certain elements of the 136th Infantry Regiment, 33rd Infantry Division. From 9 April 1945 to 13 May 1945. The action took place in the vicinity of TEBBO, Nueve Vizcaya province, Northern Luzon. Errors made are noted and the lessons learned are emphasized.

41-33

James W. Cavender
Capt. Cav.

PREFACE

The action related in this paper is factual in each detail having been substantiated by historical documents as listed in the bibliography. However, the errors made and the recommendations which are set forth are entirely the opinions of the writer. Although several mistakes are brought out, the over-all leadership in this operation was superior and the heroism of the individual soldier in many instances was unexcelled.

The 136th Infantry Regiment was activated as a part of the 33rd Infantry Division on 1 April 1942 at Camp Forest, Tennessee. The regiment received its training in the zone of the interior at Camp Forest, Tennessee, Ft. Lewis, Washington, and Camp Clipper, California where it underwent desert training. On 5th of July 1943 the regiment set sail for overseas. Upon arrival in the Hawaiian Islands, the 136th Infantry took over the defense mission of Maui and Molokai. In addition to carrying out the mission of defense, extensive training in jungle warfare and amphibious operations was conducted. The regiment, fully ready to be tested, departed from the Hawaiian Islands on 1 May 1944 and landed at Finschhafen, New Guinea, where our jungle and amphibious training was completed. The 2nd Battalion attached to the 123rd Infantry Regiment at Sarmi and Maffin Bay, Dutch New Guinea, received approximately two months of actual jungle combat experience.

The 136th Infantry was then sent to Morotai, Netherlands East Indies, where it gave an excellent account of itself in 27 days of furious jungle combat. It then continued on and landed at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Phillipine

Islands, on 11 February 1945. The regiment immediately relieved elements of the 43rd Infantry Division which had pushed north from Lingayen Gulf and had driven the Japs back to the range of foothills at the base of the Caraballo mountains in northern Luzon. Approximately 60 days of the most rugged mountain warfare ensued with the regiment securing the division right flank and pushing north through the mountains toward Baguio, the summer Capitol of the Phillipines.

On 9th of April the regiment's zone was extended to the east to include the valley's of the Agno and Ambayabang Rivers. We relieved elements of the 130th Infantry who had just 5 days previously relieved elements of the 52nd Infantry Division. This new responsibility spread our regimental front over an almost unbelievable area. It extended from the southern slopes of Mt. Santo Tomas, across Kennon road east to and inclusive of the Ambayabang River, a distance of 17 air miles. This new area the regiment had been assigned was known as "TEBBO".

It is of the action in this area, and the battle for the dominating terrain known as "Skyline Ridge" that I shall write in bringing out the combat lessons learned and the necessity for alert and aggressive leadership.*

* See sketch No. 1

TEBBO

Front line positions in the Tebbo area were located at the terminus of a deep salient which had been thrust forward up the Ambayabang River from St. Nicolas to Santa-Rosa, and then northwest to the high ground south and southwest of Tebbo, overlooking the valley of the Agno River. Three thousand yards beyond Lawican the road ended at a gap between the ridges, affording an excellent view of the Agno River Valley for a distance of eight thousand yards, and observation of the slopes leading down from the mountains on either side. The higher ridge line on the right was known as Skyline Ridge. The village or Barrio of Tebbo lay thirty-five hundred yards beyond the gap on the west bank of the Agno River. The Barrio was dominated by a small hill ferrated with fox holes and caves, which because of its shape and appearance was immediately christened "Hand Grenade Hill".

Information of the enemy in this sector was practically non-existent at the time of the relief by 136th Infantry. The area had been quiet for some time and units occupying the area prior to the relief had

evidently been content to sit and hold the very weak positions they occupied. They had not patrolled aggressively for information of the enemy. The unit being relieved stated that there was no activity and that the assignment would be a chance for rest and recuperation for the relieving units. This false impression gained from poor information of the enemy proved to be most unfortunate for those units affecting the relief. Information gained later revealed that there were at least twelve hundred enemy combat troops in the area. The enemy troops known as the HIBI Force were broken down as follows:

16th Reconnaissance Regiment	700
5th Tank Company, 2nd Armored Division (Dismounted)	75
Tate Force - elements of 2nd Glider Infantry Regiment and 112th Fishing Battalion	150
Elements of 7th Provisional Field Replacement Unit	100
Elements of L and C Garrison Unit	175
Total	1200

The HIBI Force was commanded by Lt. Colonel Hibi Satoshi, Commander of the 16th Reconnaissance Regiment. The 16th Reconnaissance Regiment was originally a part of the 16th

Division which was famous for the rape of Nanking. The regiment was left on Luzon when the remainder of the Division went to Leyte. This force, although they did not have any artillery, possessed a preponderance of automatic weapons. They were armed with heavy machine guns, light machine guns, also light machine guns which had been stripped from Jap fighter planes and rigged to fire from ground mounts. They had a considerable number of mortars, both 90mm and light knee mortars. They had one 37mm gun that was destroyed shortly after the relief.

The heavy commitments of the 136th Infantry left available for the mission of taking over the TEBBO area the 2nd Battalion, which had been relieved only two days previously from very arduous fighting along Kennon Road. The Battalion moved to San Manuel on 9 April 1945. Due to the information of the enemy and the necessity for maintaining a strong reserve which could be moved to counter possible enemy attacks along our extended front, it was decided to effect the relief at TEBBO with one reinforced rifle company and the 33rd Division Reconnaissance troop, with the remainder of the 2nd Battalion in mobile reserve at San Manuel. The 694th Field Artillery Battalion,

a 105 truck drawn Battalion from Corps was supporting the Tebbo operation from positions at Lawican. This Battalion remained and continued to support the relieving units.

At 0900 on 9 April, Co. F, 136th Infantry, with a section of machine guns attached and a Forward Observer Party from the 694th Field Artillery Battalion occupied the advanced position on Skyline Ridge. The 33rd Reconnaissance Troop, less Headquarter and Liaison sections took over the positions on the high ground to the left of the gap. The Japanese who occupied higher ground some 800 to 1000 yards to the front had watched the relief in detail. They could have and probably did count every man as he came up the narrow winding trail. Had the relief been made at night the initial high price paid by our troops might have been avoided, however, as a hang-over from jungle operations our troops and commanders moved at night only when absolutely necessary. The Japanese did not fail to recognize and immediately capitalize on their most advantageous position. They immediately opened fire on the F Company position with a steady tattoo of machine gun fire, enemy mortar fire began falling in the area. Company F was pinned down on the position not able

to leave their fox holes before night.

At midnight the enemy machine gun and mortar fire increased in intensity, shouts of Banzai were heard. An enemy counterattack was coming from the right flank. Company F fought in a most gallant fashion. They beat off attack after attack. The enemy attack continued until daylight when artillery fire and the fire of F Company forced the enemy to discontinue his assault. The light of day grew brighter and Company F awoke to the realization that they were surrounded. The wire had been out to Battalion and 15 minutes later the company's SCR 300 went dead. The only communication left was through the artillery SCR 284 of the forward observer party. Had another error been made? To the rear of F Company approximately 300 yards along Skyline Ridge was a small knoll slightly higher than the large round knoll Company F had occupied and the Japs were entrenched on this commanding ground. With the Japanese on commanding ground both to the front and rear of F Company and with long gradual slopes fully exposed to enemy crossfire on the right and left of the company, their position was very serious. This seems to be another hang-over from jungle warfare. Although Company F had

taken over the position and occupied it as they had found it, they were disposed in a compact company perimeter. Had they organized the ground in a series of mutually supporting strong points with the strongest on the high ground to their rear the story might have been different.

On the opposite side of the gap, where 3rd Platoon of the 33rd Division Reconnaissance troop had established two positions, the enemy had also been active during this fateful night of 9 - 10 of April. About 2100 one position manned by only 8 men armed with one light machine gun, one 60mm mortar and carbines heard activity in the ravine to their north. The men from the Reconnaissance troop fired their mortar and directed machine gun fire into the ravine, but the Japs came on. Twice they were repelled. The third Banzai was heard shortly after midnight, it seemed to be timed perfectly with the attacks under way some two thousand yards away on the other side of the gap. This time there was no stopping the fanatical enemy, they came on and on until they had overrun the position. One of our men was killed, another never found and the six remaining, all wounded, managed to escape in the darkness; they wandered in one by one up to three days later.

The other position held by the remaining twenty men from 3rd Platoon 33rd Reconnaissance Company was some 800 yards to the northeast of the above position. It was a good position but it was considerably lower than the position the enemy had overrun. They were also harrassed during the night with mortars and attempts at infiltration. Having a double apron fence around their position and considerable fire power they were able to ward off the Japanese.

Having commanded the Rifle Company which several days later recaptured these overrun positions I was again in position to carefully analyze what had happened. Two very important tactical principles seemed to have been violated. Admittedly, the number of troops was very small which was holding this terrain, but even so the two positions organized were not mutually supporting. The other error in this situation was that the commanding terrain was held by only a token force allowing the Japs to gain control and thereby making other terrain in the area practically untenable.*

* For situation at this time see sketch No. 2.

Company F on the east, surrounded, pinned to their foxholes by enemy fire, and at the mercy of the blazing Phillipine sun were in dire need of food, water and ammunition. On the afternoon of the 10th an air drop was attempted. Unfortunately most of the supplies dropped fell into the hands of the enemy. The men of Company F did manage to recover a small amount of water, small arms and mortar ammunition, but no food nor hand grenades.

The enemy fires let up in the afternoon of the 10th and Captain Suess, Commanding Officer of Company F, had an opportunity to reorganize his position slightly for the coming night. Every man dreaded for dark to come for they were hesitant to predict what would happen that night. At sunset a Japanese machine gun opened up wounding several men. Until midnight everyone tensely waited, listening and staring intently into the darkness. At 0100 11 April the attack began. The small knoll on Skyline Ridge was brilliantly illuminated by the raging fires of both the enemy and Company F. Captain Suess found it necessary to shift some of his weary and decimated forces in order to meet the main onslaught of the attacking Japs.

The enemy continued their fanatical attacks at intervals until dawn when they drew back taking as many of their dead and wounded as they could carry. The enemy had suffered a merciless defeat. The dead still lay literally in piles along the entire length of the perimeter, some one hundred and fifty Japanese had joined their ancestors. Company F had also taken their losses. Eleven gallant men were dead and 4 wounded.

Early on the morning of the 11th another air drop was effected and this time a goodly portion of the food, water and ammunition was recovered. While reorganizing and clearing the debris of battle a lone enemy rifle shot resounded over the hill side. Captain Suess was dead. Company F had lost the calm reassuring leadership of their company commander.

The news of the Japanese counterattack on the night of the 9th was relayed through the 694th Field Artillery Battalion to the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion at San Manuel. After conferring with Colonel Cavenee, Regimental Commander 136th Infantry Regiment, the Battalion Commander mounted the remainder of his Battalion on $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks and began the tortuous move up the

Ambayabang River. The road, or more aptly trail, leading to Tebbo forded the Ambayabang River eighteen times from San Manuel to Santo Rosa. The 2nd Battalion composed of Companies E, G and a portion of H Company, arrived at Tebbo shortly after noon on the 10th. Company E immediately moved up on the west side of the gap to reinforce the harrassed troops of the 33rd Reconnaissance Troop. G Company moved up the right toward isolated Company F. They managed to advance to within some fourteen hundred yards of the surrounded company. Since it was late in the afternoon, G Company dug in for the night from where they were unable to assist the besieged Company during the Japanese attack previously described on the night of April 10 and 11th. It is important that we know that all units throughout the Tebbo action were operating at less than fifty percent strength.

Early on the morning of 11 April Company G with all fire support available launched an attack to reopen the supply line to Company F. Company G tried every avenue of approach, but were unable to break the enemy strong points surrounding Company F. With heavy casualties Company G withdrew to the positions they had prepared the night before.

It became apparent to both the Regimental Commander and Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion that it was not possible, with the meager forces available to reopen the supply line to the besieged company. Plans were immediately begun to effect a withdrawal of Company F under cover of darkness. Artillery fires were planned to pin down the enemy and cover the withdrawal. As soon as darkness had descended Company F destroyed all of their heavy equipment including heavy machine guns, mortars and radios. They prepared their litter cases and noiselessly began their descent down the precipitous ridge from which they had fought so heroically. This was the night of April 11th. Having no communication they were not heard from again that night. Early the next morning an Observation Post spotted them, still a considerable distance from positions in the gap, but trudging on with their litter cases over almost impossible terrain. The day extended into the afternoon, darkness would again be upon us shortly, still Company F had not reached our lines. A strong patrol with several Phillipino carriers was organized and sent out to attempt to meet and assist them. Some one thousand yards from the gap the patrol met the weary Company.

The carriers immediately took over the litter cases and some 30 minutes later the exhausted, footsore and battle weary men were again within friendly lines. This company which had under tremendous difficulty given such an excellent account of itself was immediately entrucked and returned to San Manuel for rest and refitting.

Colonel Ray E. Cavenee, Regimental Commander, realized on 11th of April that in order to destroy the enemy in the Tebbe sector it would be necessary for him to concentrate more of his forces now charged with the defense of such an extended front. By a regrouping of his forces it was possible to extricate the 1st Battalion then committed along and to the east of Kennon Road. The 1st Battalion was motorized and headed for the Tebbe area on the afternoon of the 11th. Certain logistical factors also had to be improved before a concerted effort could be launched to annihilate the enemy. Company C, 108th Medical Battalion, set up a provisional clearing station at Sapinit. To speed up the hitherto serious delay in the evacuation of casualties an air strip was constructed adjacent to the clearing station. This air strip also greatly facilitated the operation of the 694th Field Artillery Battalion's observation planes. Security for the

installations was provided by guerilla forces who patrolled to the right and left of the road.

The counterattack against our light forces was one of the most forceful launched by the Japanese in Northern Luzon. However, it was apparently not planned as a part of a larger coordinated action. Sometime later a prisoner of war confirmed this opinion. He revealed that the Japanese had been ordered to defend the Tebbe area to the last man and if the opportunity presented itself to attack. With the withdrawal of Company F from Skyline Ridge the Japs had immediately begun the organization of the entire ridge, extending their position along the ridge some eight hundred to a thousand yards. Although their losses had been heavy it was considered a possibility that their successes in regaining ground might incite them to attempt even stronger attacks against our positions. Friendly air observation and tactical air support could prevent the enemy from reinforcing his positions during the day. However, he could send in reinforcements by night.

The 1st Battalion 136th Infantry arrived in the Tebbo area after dark on the 11th. C Company immediately pushed up on the right and dug in along side Company G. Company A moved to the same sector digging in on a small hill some 400 yards to the rear of Companies G and C. Company B moved up the ridge to the left and reinforced Company E, which had been continually harrassed by long range fire since their occupation of the position. On 10th of April Battery B of 210th Field Artillery Battalion moved to Lawlean to reinforce the fires of the 694th Field Artillery Battalion which had been minus one battery.

The 13th and 14th of April was spent in patrolling and in building up supplies of ammunition and rations. Late in the afternoon of the 14th the Company Commander of Company A was called to the 1st Battalion command post. The Battalion commander stated that in the plan to regain the lost ground, it was first necessary to secure the left flank by regaining the position lost by the reconnaissance troop. Company A was to move back down into the gap, return to Lawlean and from there make a night attack over some three thousand yards in order to gain a small knoll over-looking the Japanese position. From this position

A Company was to launch an attack against the Japanese strong point in conjunction with Company B which was to attack from the northeast.

Due to the lack of daylight remaining and the possibility of any reconnaissance party being seen by the Japanese, a reconnaissance of the route was not possible. The Company Commander of Company A immediately notified his executive officer to move the company to Lawican. The Company Commander went ahead to make whatever reconnaissance was possible - all he could do was set his compass on the objective. It was arranged for the artillery to fire one WP round each half hour throughout the night to assist in maintaining direction.

As soon as it was dark enough to prevent observation by the enemy the company, heavily laden with both small arms and mortar ammunition, began the ascent. To make the advance more difficult the company strung three telephone lines as it went; one for the artillery Field Observer, one for the Company Commanders net and one for the mortar observer from the 81mm Mortar Platoon of the heavy weapons company. Twice the column lost contact.

It was necessary to halt the company, return to the rear, find the lost men and lead them forward. There was no moon, there was no trail, just a series of steep rugged hills, each one becoming increasingly higher. At times it was necessary to crawl to keep from falling off the hill side.

At 0200 on the morning of the 15th the company arrived at a point just below the crest of the hill which overlooked the Japanese position. The company halted, last minute checks were made for the attack. As soon as daylight began to break the company moved to the crest of the hill. Two Japs evidently acting as sentries were surprised and killed, we had accomplished our mission so far. With good daylight the attack jumped off following a heavy preparation of artillery and mortar fire. Approximately half way up the hill B Company began to receive withering automatic fire. They were unable to advance any further. A Company, which was on the hill, continued the attack but was unable to cross the last ridge. Japs on the reverse slope lay down a blanket of fire covering the crest of the hill. The company pulled

back a few yards and dug in some one hundred and fifty yards from the enemy position. That night and the next day artillery, machine gun and mortar fires were directed on the enemy position. Small patrols searched out avenues of approach to the position. A group reached the top of a small knoll which rose abruptly some 150 feet above the other terrain. That afternoon a section of light machine guns, were moved to the top of the peak, by dark they were in positions from which they could deliver plunging fire into the enemy fox holes. On the morning of 17th of April, Company A stormed the enemy position under cover of the machine gun fire. The hill was taken without a casualty. The previous attack on the 15th had cost Company A two men killed and five wounded. A count of enemy dead on this position totaled eighty seven, but 125 fox holes which the Japs had dug indicated the position had been held by at least a company. Numerous new enemy new identifications were made, and rifles were found of the type used by enemy air born troops. One light machine gun, one 60mm mortar, one sub machine gun, several carbines and one EE 8 A telephone, which the reconnaissance troop lost to the enemy were regained.

The west side of the gap was once again clear of Japanese. The next day Company A assumed responsibility for the entire west sector - companies E and B moved over to assist Companies G and C on the right and to the front toward the village of Tebbo. Patrols from 1st Battalion combed out the wooded draws and set up ambushes along routes frequented by the enemy. Daily observation was maintained over the Agno River Valley to detect enemy attempts to reassemble for a counterattack. To the right of the gap troops under control of the 2nd Battalion conducted vigorous combat patrols of platoon size, harrasing and inflicting numerous casualties on the enemy on Skyline Ridge.

From observation post near the gap, enemy troops were observed moving in the Agno River Valley and up the northwest slopes of Skyline Ridge in areas that could not be covered by our high angle artillery fires at Lawican. In compliance with a request from the Regimental Commander, two 105mm howitzers were brought up to the gap on 18th of April, to place low angle fires on these targets. This proved to be an excellent move for many targets of opportunity were effectively taken under fire. Initially

the guns were moved back to Lawican each night, but as the position became more secure, an entire battery was displaced forward permanently to take advantage of these especially rethumerative targets.

The enemy seemed to have lost his aggressiveness. The furtive night attacks had even dropped off considerably in number and size. On April 20th the 2nd Battalion (-), badly needing rest and recuperation, was moved back to San Manuel and reverted to I Corps reserve. Company E, 2nd Battalion anti-tank platoon, and one section of heavy machine guns were attached to the 1st Battalion, which now assumed full control of the Tebbo area.

The 1st Battalion continued aggressive patrolling throughout the area, sending out both combat and reconnaissance patrols. This type activity continued for the next week. During this period Company A who had taken the brunt of the fighting on the west flank was moved to the east flank and Company C moved to the west flank. At this time dispositions were as follows: Company C on left, Companies E and A up against the enemy positions on the right on Skyline Ridge and Company B deployed in depth to the rear of A and E Companies.

D Company was employed with one heavy machine gun platoon on each side of the gap with the 81mm mortar platoon in the gap in rear of Battalion Headquarters.

On the 28th of April it was decided to feel out the enemy further up the Agno River Valley in the vicinity of Tebbo and Hand Grenade Hill. The 1st Battalion assault group was chosen for this mission, and when they had reached the base of Hand Grenade Hill the enemy opened up with machine guns and mortars. The patrol was caught exposed in the river bed. Artillery was laid down and the patrol withdrew to cover. At nightfall the patrol returned to the base. Another attempt was made to penetrate the Agno River Valley on 29th of April with no more success than the previous patrol. Again on 1st of May Company B reinforced was given the mission of destroying this powerful outpost and of securing Tebbo. They were no more successful than the other units which had tried. The enemy was still intent upon blocking our advance up the Agno River.

If the enemy grip on the Tebbo area was to be broken it was necessary to regain Skyline Ridge. Companies A and G were dug in on the front lines some 1000 yards from

the enemy who was dug in securely on the reverse slopes all along Skyline Ridge. Company G had relieved Company E on 28th of April. To them fell the lot of assaulting the ridge. The company commander of Companies A and G went up in Field Artillery Liaison planes and carefully studied the enemy positions from the air. With information gained from this source, a plan was made. A Company was to attack on the right and G Company on the left. One platoon from A Company was to drive straight up the side of the ridge maintaining pressure on the enemy and if possible driving a penetration across the ridge in order to split the enemy positions. The other two platoons were to make an envelopment to the south and drive northward along the enemy's left flank. (Actually all platoons were nearer squad strength than platoon, most of them being from 12 to 18 men). Company G attacking on the left of Company A was to penetrate the ridge line then drive north toward the position vacated earlier by Company E.

At 0400 on 3 May Companies A and G began to move out across the barren slopes leading to Skyline Ridge. At 0600 they were in position just a stones throw from the strong positions on the reverse slope. The artillery

and mortar preparations were lifted and the assault was launched. The fighting was furious but of necessity slow. Company A kept driving in on the enemy's south flank, but it was necessary ~~from~~ them to reduce one strong point and then another. This required the extensive use of grenades, satchel charges and flame throwers. By 1700 Company A had cleared the enemy from some 600 yards of ridge line. Company G was not as successful and it became evident that they would not be able to reach their objective before night. Company G was withdrawn and Company A began consolidating and organizing the ground they had taken for the night. A carrying party of Filipinos were started toward A Company with much needed grenades, mortar ammunition, water and rations. The party arrived at A Company's position at dusk and while they were depositing the supplies in a small ravine the Japs opened up with a deadly concentration of heavy mortar fire, causing a considerable number of casualties among the Filipinos and several among the men of Company A who had not finished digging in. The Japs launched three Banzai attacks that night on the exhausted troops of Company A, who by fighting courageously, and by bringing down high angle artillery

fire to within twenty-five yards of their fox holes, held the enemy off. A Company was able to hold the ground they had gained that day, however had G Company been moved over and assisted in organizing the ground, instead of pulling back down the ridge when they were unable to take their objective, another very unnecessary risk would not have been taken. The next morning excellent machine gun positions were found from which they could cover A Company's troops in their advance up the remaining position of Skyline Ridge. Company G joined in with Company A to complete the mopping up. By 1630 the fighting had ceased. Company A had lost 2 men killed and fifteen wounded.

Sixty-nine dead Japs were counted on the position. Equipment captured included six light machine guns, one heavy machine gun, one 90mm mortar, and numerous light knee mortars. Units of the 136th Infantry Regiment were once again occupying positions from which they had felt so secure some twenty-seven days before. More complete and accurate information of the enemy could have saved many valuable days in the campaign against the Japanese in northern Luzon.

Late on the afternoon of the 4th of May Companies A and B were relieved on position by Companies E and F. By noon the next day all of the 1st Battalion except Company C were relieved and returned to San Manuel where they reverted to I Corps reserve.

Troop dispositions on the Tebbo area were now as follows: Company C on the left, Companies G and F occupied the newly won positions on Skyline Ridge and Company E was in reserve on high ground some 800 yards northeast of the gap.

The situation was moving rapidly in northern Luzon. Baguio had fallen to other troops of the division and our forces on Kennon road had made a junction with elements of the 123rd Infantry which had moved south from Baguio. The 3rd Battalion, 130th Infantry, had begun to move southeast from Baguio toward Tebbo. At 1400 on May 5, 3rd Battalion 130th Infantry was placed under operational control of the 136th Infantry.

Aggressive patrolling was conducted from 5th to 11th of May. Tebbo, Hand Grenade Hill and the entire Agno River Valley had been cleared, but remnants of the enemy forces still remained on the extremely high ridge some one thousand

yards northeast of Skyline Ridge. The rainy season was approaching and in a few days the fords, upon which our supply line depended, could no longer be used. It was imperative that a coordinated attack be launched immediately to destroy the one remaining enemy strong point remaining in the area. The third Battalion 136th Infantry had been motorized in Baguio and transported an airline distance of 12 or 14 miles, but due to the lack of roads it was necessary that they move by truck a distance of 120 miles in order to reach the Tebbo area.

The attack was launched on the 12th of May, 1945 with 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 136th Infantry, with Company C attached in the assault and the 3rd Battalion 130th Infantry, in regimental reserve. All day the fighting continued. Several times units were able to reach their objectives but were not able to consolidate their gains because of the intense mortar and machine gun fire. Company C executed a diversionary attack on the extreme east flank. The company suffered severe casualties but it had accomplished its objective for the remaining units were able to consolidate their gain. Units of the 2nd

and 3rd Battalion dug in for the night and at 0230 the morning of the 13th of May the Japs launched their last Banzai attack in the Tebbo sector. The next morning units completed mopping up the positions. The Japanese had been completely defeated in this area. A known total of one hundred and seventy-five Japanese were killed in the last attack. Units which had been in practically continuous close contact with the enemy since February 14 could now enjoy a few days of well earned rest. The total enemy dead in the Tebbo area was seven hundred and seventy-five. Five prisoners of war were taken.

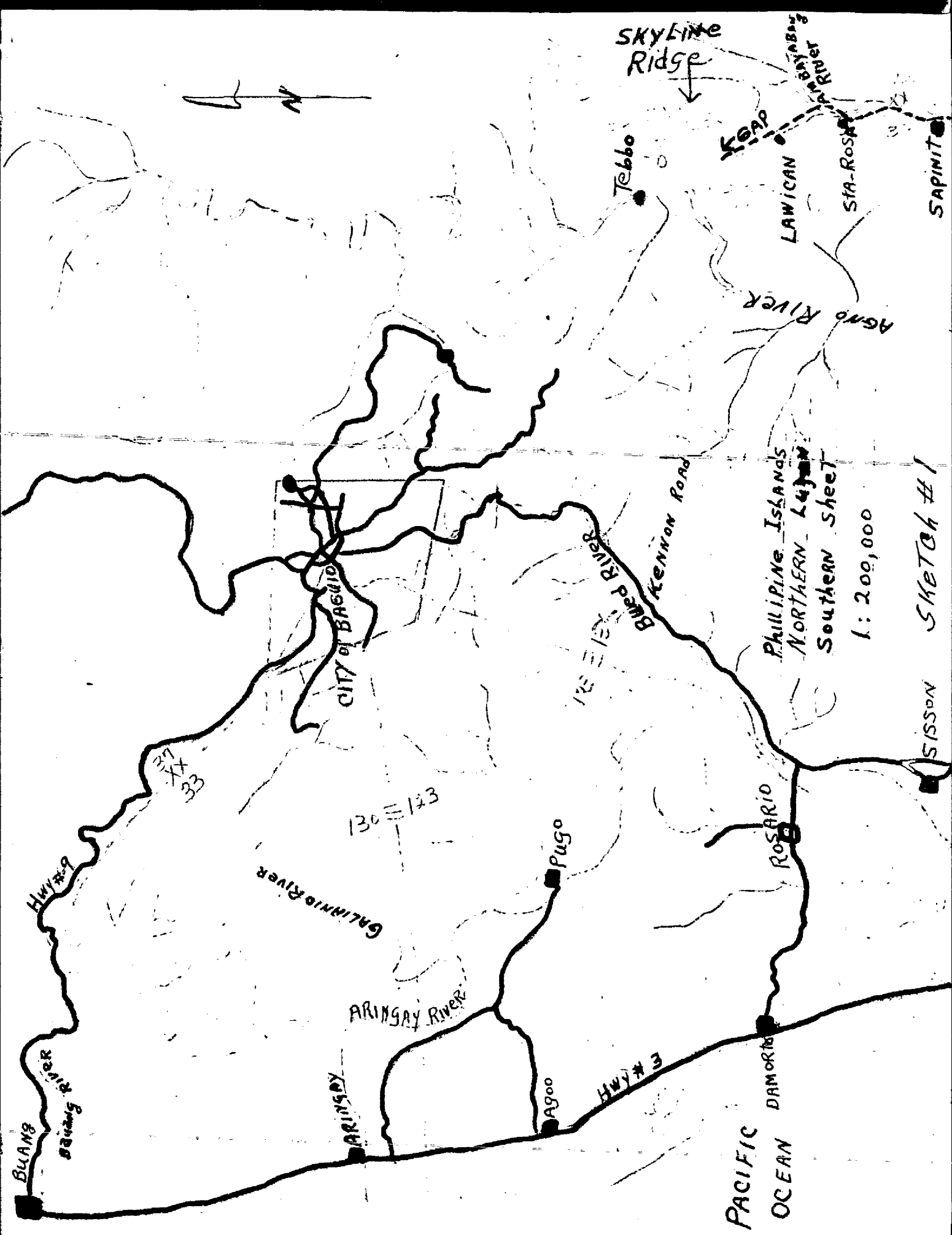
Many lessons can be learned from a study of the "Battle for Skyline Ridge". The lessons learned do not apply only to the Infantry; they are of utmost importance to each and every arm of the ground forces. The tactical principles emphasized are not new, for they have been taught by our armed forces for years; however, they must be stressed over and over again. The following are lessons which are brought out very forcefully in this operation:

1. Commanders of all grades must continually seek out, by all means available, information of the enemy. A commander must not depend on higher headquarters for the information necessary for the accomplishment of his mission.
2. Relief of troops on the front line must be made at night in every instance possible.
3. Leaders must be able to recognize the need of changing one's tactics and dispositions when operations move from one type of terrain to another. (Such as from jungle areas to open terrain).

4. When organizing for the defense front line units must establish mutually supporting positions.
5. Ground force tactics depend on the terrain. When organizing a position for defense the dominating terrain must be organized to be held at all cost.
6. Several patrols and even units of company size became pinned down occasionally by one or two automatic weapons and a few riflemen. This is because of a lack of leadership. A few men, a squad, or platoon can always be maneuvered and must be done immediately upon being fired upon by the enemy.
7. Combat leadership wins battles. From the crew, team or squad leader right up the chain of command, leadership must be forever alert, they must be informed and they must exert their influence on the problem at hand in every manner possible.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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3. "LESSONS LEARNED ON LUZON," A C of S, G-3
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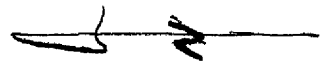


PACIFIC OCEAN

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
NORTHERN Luzon
Southern Sheet

1:200,000

SISSON SKETCH #1



SKYLINE Ridge

CITY OF BAGUIO

GALINJO RIVER

ARINGAY RIVER

BUED RIVER

KENNON ROAD

AGNO RIVER

LAWICAN

STA-ROSA

SAPINITO

KEAP

TEBO

PUGO

ROSARIO

DAMORTIS

AGOO

HWY 3

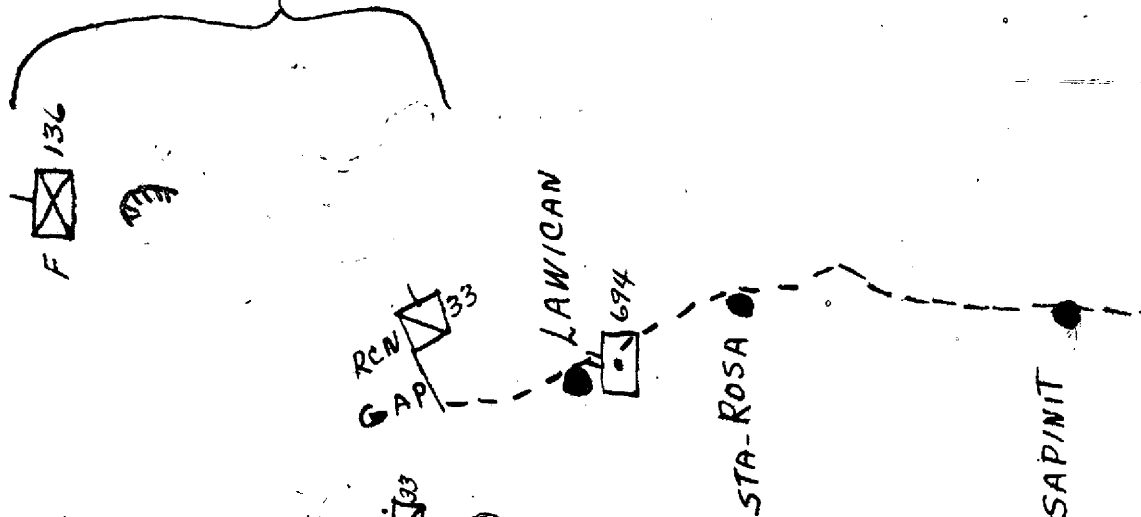
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SKYLINE RIDGE

AMBAYABANG RIVER



TEBBO

REN GAP

LAWICAN

STA-ROSA

SAPINIT

AGNO RIVER

SITUATION AS OF

10. APRIL 1945

Sketch # 2