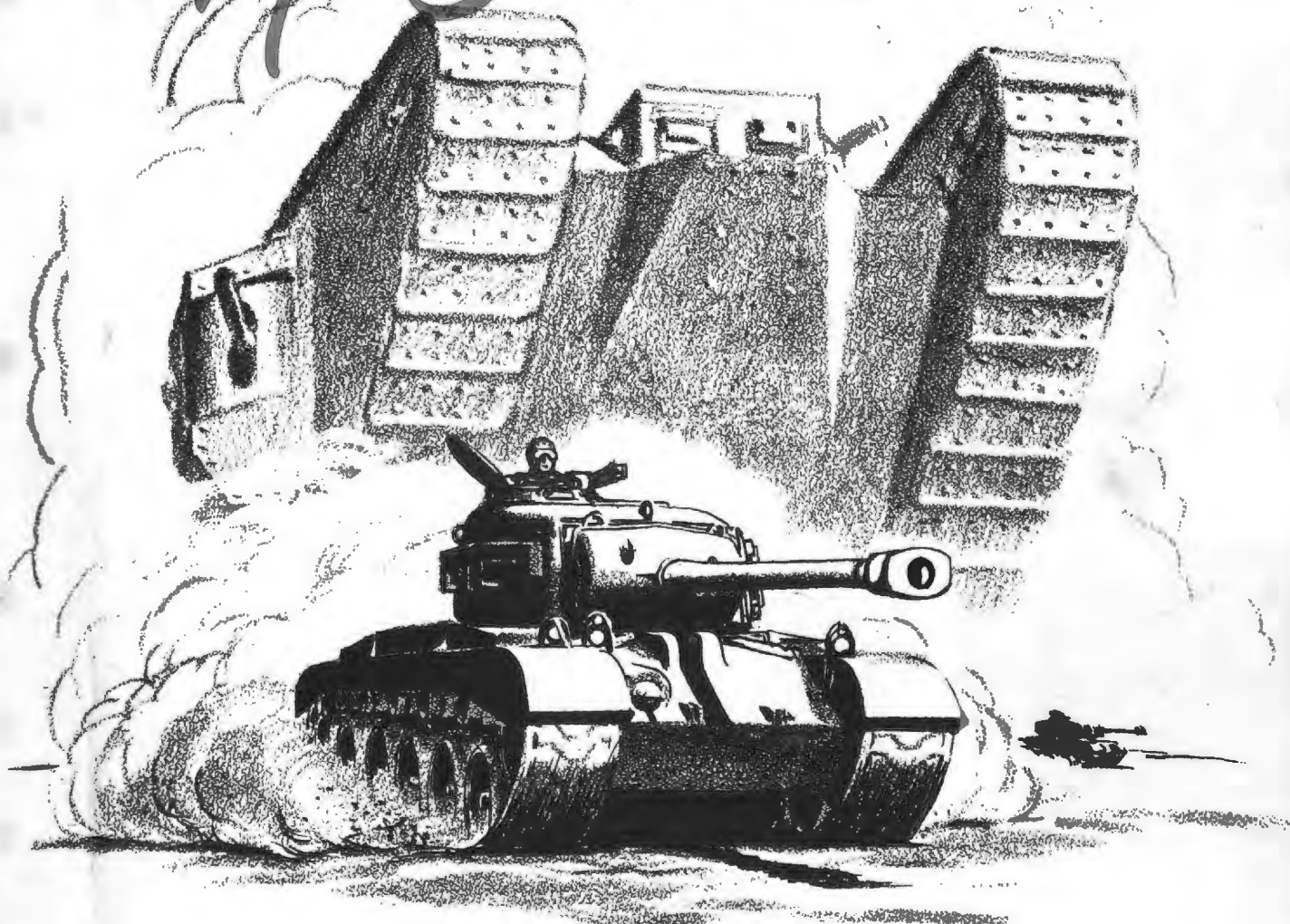


Armor on Luzon

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A RESEARCH REPORT

Prepared at
THE ARMORED SCHOOL
Fort Knox Kentucky
1949 - 1950

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ARMOR ON LUZON

(COMPARISON OF EMPLOYMENT OF ARMORED UNITS
IN THE 1941-42 AND 1944-45 LUZON CAMPAIGNS)

A RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED

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PREFACE

This report contains a description of the employment of armor on Luzon during two periods, 1941-1942 and 1945. The campaigns on Luzon were essentially an infantry effort, with armor at all times supporting infantry units. Because of the scattered nature of armored activity, detailed reports on the operations of individual tank battalions are not available. Only by piecing together pertinent information from many separate reports of tank action was a logical sequence attained. Gaps existing in after-action reports were bridged by interviews with personnel who had participated in the Luzon campaigns.

Inasmuch as the operations of tank battalions during the second phase were so similar, this report makes a full study of the overall operations of only one tank battalion during this phase.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I

| <u>Chapter</u> | | <u>Page</u> |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 2 | TERRAIN STUDY, CENTRAL LUZON..... | 3 |

PART II

1941-1942 CAMPAIGN

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 3 | INTRODUCTION..... | 16 |
| 4 | OPERATIONS OF THE PROVISIONAL TANK GROUP..... | 21 |
| 5 | SMALL UNIT ENGAGEMENTS AND ORDER OF BATTLE, DECORATIONS, CASUALTIES, AND FIRST OF THE PROVISIONAL TANK GROUP..... | 37 |

PART III

1944-1945 CAMPAIGN.

| | | |
|---|--|----|
| 6 | HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE 754th TANK BATTALION..... | 52 |
| 7 | OPERATIONS, 754th TANK BATTALION..... | 56 |
| 8 | STAFF STUDIES..... | 78 |

PART IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----|
| 9 | SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS..... | 112 |
|---|------------------------------|-----|

PART I

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The speed and violence with which the Japanese struck LUZON on 8 December 1941 left the gallant defenders bewildered, yet determined to push the enemy back into the sea. During the bleak, dark days to follow, the defenders of LUZON utilized every lethal resource to delay and strike back at a well-trained enemy. Many of the extraordinary feats of the Allied defenders have taken their places in the annals of history. Many super-human efforts to stop, repel, and destroy the attacking Japanese have been masked from the world by modesty, indifference, and death.

Every available man and weapon were thrown into the defense of LUZON. Men who had never been infantrymen fought side by side with trained infantrymen courageously. The ultimate result of the four months of delaying actions on LUZON was the fall of BATAAN on 9 April 1942.

Present armored doctrine of mobility, mass, firepower, penetration, and exploitation is hardly applicable to armored action on LUZON, where most of the tank warfare was limited to tank-supported infantry operations. Accounts of these operations have been taken from official documents, and from authoritative comments by persons who were physically present during the actions on LUZON. Much credit is given to Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver, USA (Retired), Commanding Provisional Tank Group on LUZON in 1941-1942, and Lieutenant Colonel Ben M. Brothers, Executive Officer and later Commanding Officer of the 754th Tank Battalion on LUZON in 1945 for their eye-witness accounts.

This study of the LUZON campaigns will reveal the need for tank-infantry coordination and cooperation in order to shatter and destroy the forces of a determined enemy. Determination alone was not sufficient. Such coordination and cooperation was only achieved through adequate training and mutual understanding of limitations and capabilities of all arms.

The study of the two campaigns emphasized the fact that terrain was the key to success in the operations on LUZON. Any review of the tactical employment of tanks and armor must be with an appreciation of terrain and the restrictions that it placed upon operations.

CHAPTER 2

TERRAIN STUDY, CENTRAL LUZON¹

The area covered by this study of the CENTRAL LUZON area comprises the Provinces of BATAAN, BULACAN, NEUVA ECIJA, PAMPANGA, RIZAL, TARLAC, ZAMBALES, and the City of MANILA. It includes the major portion of the CENTRAL LUZON PLAIN. (See orientation map, page 14.)

The CENTRAL VALLEY of LUZON is a level alluvial plain extending northwest to southeast for about 120 miles between LINGAYEN GULF and LAGUNA DE BAY, 10 miles southeast of MANILA. It is shut off from the CHINA SEA on the west by the high and rugged ZAMBALES MOUNTAINS, and from the PACIFIC OCEAN on the east by the rough and heavily forested SIERRA MADRE. The plain itself is broken by a single topographic feature--the isolated extinct volcano of MT ARAYAT.

The eastern part of the CENTRAL PLAIN produces rice, while the sandy western portion grows sugar cane. Fruit trees are not planted as orchards. The rolling foothills are cultivated with corn and root crops. The lowlands have been completely cleared; the mountain areas are covered with rain forest except in northern ZAMBALES, where the lower slopes are covered with pine trees.

There is a well developed rail and road net. Besides the two main north-south highways, there are many lateral roads. Few roads connect the east and west coasts. All the main roads of the CENTRAL PLAIN are paved either with concrete or asphalt. The lateral roads are all-weather, rock-surfaced roads.

MANILA, capital of the PHILIPPINES, is the most important city in the area. It is the main gateway to PHILIPPINE commerce and is one

FOREWORD

It is a privilege to have had access to this study during its preparation; to have had confirmed, from the Armored experience in the later phase of the Battle of the Philippines, that the fundamentals applied or attempted in the sorry pioneer Armored effort there in 1941 and 1942, were sound; that the failures or lacks were due to causes which may be avoided by their recognition through such studies, and consequent action of those on whom the destinies of Armored troops may depend.

The Provisional Tank Group, USAFFE, took to the field in battle-alert ten days after its organization--lacking a headquarters company, one light battalion, and both medium battalions. It was unacclimated; unused to its weapons, armor, radio; a new arm unacquainted with and to the people with whom it was to be associated. The group learned the hardest way, for tankers--in defensive battle, covering the withdrawal into Bataan for 18 days of unremitting strain and action with an enemy who did not attack in force but infiltrated at night and around the flanks, sniped by day, and used his aviation immune from air counterattack or observation. The old verities of FIND, FEND, FIX, and FIGHT did not work. On the rare occasions when the enemy did advance in force--as at Baliuag, Remlus, Saxmoan, Bani Bani--the tanks did extraordinary execution. When the tanks took the offensive in the Pocket Battles on the West Coast of Bataan, a degree of infantry cooperation had developed so that the ultimate conspicuous success in that new type of warfare, in heavy jungle intricately honeycombed, depended upon the joint attack by armor and infantry closely associated. If the tanks

attacked alone, the enemy sought the depths of his maze of burrows, emerging to take in reverse tanks disabled by land or magnetic mines or mortar fire--using grenades and flame throwers. In these melees, with or without infantry (a way had to be painfully bucked before the infantry could be committed), the back of the tank and its deck were particularly vulnerable to mortar fire, even grenades. For obvious reasons the enemy did not use his air.

The pressure for employment of tanks in isolated platoons, divorced from company or battalion supply, maintenance and salvage, reconnaissance, communication, and intelligence, was an experience felt acutely then as in 1944-1945. The integrity of the company at least had to be maintained. There were no replacements, no reserves, no prospects in the last three months of our lonely war.

No jeremiad is intended--but tankers, present and future, are urged to keep companies and battalions inviolate, self-sufficient as to supply, transport, fire power, organic covering, maintenance, and reconnaissance troops and facilities--as when the Armored Force had its beginning.

It was said in mid 1941 that mechanized experience was not important for high armored command--that athletic experience was more essential to getting teamwork. A manager or coach can tell a team what to do and how to do it--if he knows the game; but the team has to be able to do it, individually and as a team. Even an all-star team needs practice--including skull. Hence THE ARMORED SCHOOL. A salute to it; and may its teaching extend to all who control or affect the destinies of armored troops in any future war.

/s/ J. R. N. WEAVER, Brig Gen, USA (Retd)



Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver, U. S. Army (Retired)

of the leading ports in the Far East. About 90 per cent of the manufacturing facilities of the PHILIPPINES are located in MANILA. Other important towns include CABANATUAN, capital of the rice-producing NEUVA ECIJA Province. TAILAC and SAN FERNANDO are leading towns in the sugar producing areas, and GUAGUA is the center of the fish industry. This area is one of the most thickly populated (336 people to a square mile) of the PHILIPPINES, having more than 2,500,000 people. The greatest part of the American and European population of the island lives in this area. About half the native population is Tagalog, with Pampagos and Ilocanos making up the greater part of the balance. Chinese number about 56,000.

Standard time for MANILA is that of the 120th Meridian, or eight hours ahead of Greenwich mean time. The metric system is used throughout the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS. Magnetic variation in 1941 was 0 degrees 30 minutes East. There is an annual decrease of one minute.

MANILA and CENTRAL LUZON are generously supplied with free-flowing artesian wells. Municipal sources are generally from deep-cased, sealed wells which are normally clear and pure. Native developed wells along the banks of streams or swamps should not be considered pure. Mountain streams in non-populated areas are normally clear and pure. It must be borne in mind that the natives are more immune to water-borne diseases of their country than new arrivals.

The most reliable and accurate charts for coastal and off-shore conditions are the United States Coast and Geographic Nautical Charts.

For inland conditions, the one inch to the mile, the Philippine Department Engineer's map of one-half inch to the mile, and the 1:200,000

C&GS Manila PI Maps 5-1940, 6-1933, and 7-1941, are the most reliable. Roads on the one-half inch to the mile scale are corrected to 1940 and 1941.

CENTRAL LUZON comprises three major physiographic units--the CENTRAL SIERRA MADRE RANGE of the east; the great CENTRAL VALLEY of LUZON; and the ZAMBALES RANGE of the west. The CORDILLERA CENTRAL (CARABALLO MOUNTAINS) bounds the CENTRAL PLAIN on its northern extremities.

The CENTRAL SIERRA MADRE, with peaks rising to over 5000 feet, is rugged and heavily wooded, and forms an almost inaccessible barrier between the CENTRAL PLAIN and the PACIFIC OCEAN.

The ZAMBALES RANGE, rising in places to over 6000 feet, forms an almost uninterrupted chain along the whole of west CENTRAL LUZON, and separates the CENTRAL PLAIN from the CHINA SEA.

The great CENTRAL VALLEY is a level alluvial plain extending from LINGAYEN GULF southeast to LAGUNA DE BAY, a distance of about 120 miles. It has an average width of about 40 miles. The plain is totally cleared of forest, is highly cultivated, and is thickly populated. It is one of the most strategically important areas in the PHILIPPINES.

The SIERRA MADRE forms an almost unbroken chain of mountains paralleling the eastern coast of LUZON for about 340 miles. That portion between the northern shores of LAGUNA DE BAY and BALER BAY can be referred to as the CENTRAL SIERRA MADRE. The average height of the range is 2000-3000 feet, with many peaks rising to almost 5000 feet.

It has a general north-south trend with a somewhat complicated drainage system. Southward, the range decreases in altitude and ends in a belt of hills, some of which extend into LAGUNA DE BAY to form

its irregular shore line.

The range throughout is heavily wooded and that, combined with the rough character of the terrain, makes it a very difficult barrier to military operations on any but the smallest scale.

In the foothills zone, where the vegetation is mainly grass with patches of forest, there are numerous tracks and trails, and movement will be less restricted, especially along the valley flats. The river bottoms are firm and can be forded, but are subject to rapid rise and flash floods after heavy storms.

The CENTRAL PLAIN is probably the most important and critical area in the PHILIPPINES. It has a heavy concentration of population and wealth, and MANILA is situated on the eastern shores of spacious MANILA BAY. In addition to the existing well developed airfields, the plain contains numerous sites for other airfields. It is served by a good road system, with well developed highways and permanent bridges erected over the larger streams.

The plain begins at LINGAYEN GULF and extends southeast to LAGUNA DE BAY. It has been formed by alluvial debris brought down from the high ranges on the north, east, and west, all of which rise sharply from the plain with relatively little foothill formation. Its surface is very low, nowhere exceeding 100 feet above sea level, except where MT ARAYAT (3564 feet), an extinct volcano, rises as an isolated, conspicuous mass in the middle of the plain. It is watered by a considerable number of small streams which flow into the larger rivers, comprising the main drainage system.

Movement is fairly free over most of the plain, especially on

the higher sandy tracts covering broad areas, such as exist in the vicinity of the TARLAC RIVER, extending northeast across the plain. In low areas, especially in the southern part of the plain, which are poorly drained, movement will be more difficult during the rainy season. Major obstacles are the wide large rivers, which are generally too deep for fording, and some of which have low, marshy approaches. The rice paddies will be obstacles during the wet season, from May through October, and in the limited areas where a second crop is grown during January, February, and March. MT ARAYAT is the only major mountainous obstacle on the plain, partly blocking it on its western side, and serving mainly as a good observation post.

The ZAMBALES RANGE forms an unbroken chain paralleling the western coast of CENTRAL LUZON for about 140 miles. It comprises three fairly distinct physiographic units--the main mass of the mountain chain between the CENTRAL PLAIN and the CHINA SEA; the mountainous BATAAN PENINSULA; and the small mountainous area of ZINCO PICOS west of SUBIC BAY.

The main mountain chain is similar to the SIERRA MADRE with broad, rugged, and complex masses of ridges and peaks, and following a general north-south trend. Destructive flash floods are prevalent during the rainy season from May to October. During the dry season the rivers are small and can be easily forded. It is generally heavily forested, with patches of grassland, but the rugged character of the terrain prohibits movement for any but relatively small bodies of troops.

The rough terrain of BATAAN PENINSULA is heavily wooded and free movement is restricted to the coastal highway and the connecting

road across the peninsula between the two mountains. There are many miles of "jeep tracks" particularly on the northern slopes of the MARIVELES MOUNTAINS. The coastal plain on the east side is mainly under rice and corn cultivation, and affords free movement except for the wet rice paddies during the rainy season.

The CINCO PICOS PROMONTORY west of SUBIC BAY is almost cut off from the ZAMBALES RANGE by a stretch of low land extending from near the head of SUBIC BAY to the west coast. It is connected by a narrow belt of hills of 1000-foot elevation. The terrain is rough and broken into a number of high peaks. The area is covered mainly by forest and grassland, and is served by numerous trails, with much rough going, restricting movement to foot troops only.

In CENTRAL LUZON the vegetation consists mainly of primary and secondary forest, grassland, and cultivated crops. All three types cover extensive areas, the forest predominating on the mountains, the grassland along the foothills, and the cultivated crops in the great central plain and small coastal plains. In addition, there are relatively small areas of coastal and fresh-water swamps.

The AGNO and the PAMPANGA are the major rivers. Both have their sources in the CORDILLERA CENTRAL to the north; the AGNO flows southwest across the plain toward the foot of the ZAMBALES RANGE, and then swings northward to empty into LINGAYEN GULF. The PAMPANGA and its major tributary, the CHICO, traverse the plain southward to empty into MANILA BAY. The western part of the plain is watered by the TARLAC, formed at the confluence of the BULSA and O'DONNELL Rivers. This system drains northward to the AGNO River and LINGAYEN GULF. The south-

west part of the plain has an extensive network of streams which go to make up the GUAGUA River system emptying into MANILA BAY. Farther south is the small but important PASIG River, connecting MANILA BAY with the large lake, LAGUNA DE BAY. The larger rivers are generally deep with meandering courses. The banks consist of sand and silt and are subject to overbank flooding during the wet season.

The only important lake in the area is LAGUNA DE BAY, which forms an important obstacle on the approach to MANILA from the south. It is extensive enough for amphibious operations of importance and may be of value as a site for a seaplane base.

Two major swamps are worthy of note. CANDABA SWAMP, of fresh water, normally covers about 85 square miles, and is a major obstacle for 20 miles up the lower portion of the CENTRAL LUZON PLAIN. The other swamp, the salt marsh delta area around the northern fringe of MANILA BAY covering about 100 square miles, has an extensive network of deep waterways suitable for shallow-draft navigation.

Roads in this area have been more highly developed than in any other part of the PHILIPPINES. The main approaches to MANILA are ROUTE 3, which runs from the north down the western side of the CENTRAL LUZON VALLEY; and ROUTE 1, which makes its approach from the south. ROUTE 5 runs from the eastern side of the valley to a junction with ROUTE 3 at a point 20 miles north of MANILA, forming a huge Y. Within the fork of the Y, CANDABA SWAMP has prevented the construction of any lateral roads for some 28 miles north, where ROUTE 10 runs southwest to ROUTE 3 at SAN FERNANDO. North from ROUTE 10 there is a network of both all-weather and seasonal roads across the valley in all directions.

From the LINGAYEN GULF area, an estimated 13,500-ton daily road capacity could be handled. Minor approaches to MANILA include ROUTES 51 and 21, which may be of considerable importance under certain conditions to relieve traffic on ROUTES 3 and 1.

The seasonal distinction in CENTRAL LUZON depends on precipitation rather than temperature. The dry season from November to May can be classified into two seasons: (a) the cool and dry season of the northeast monsoons during December, January, and part of February; and (b) the hot and dry season of the trade winds during February, March, and April. The wet season starts with the thundershowers of May and June, and continues through the periods of the southwest monsoons from June to November. The most uncomfortable season is during May and June, when the atmosphere is humid because of short rains with little cloud cover between showers. Thus, we find two pronounced seasons, one dry in winter and spring; the other wet in summer and autumn. The wettest months occur during the southwest monsoons. In the wet season the mean monthly precipitation ranges from 7.7 to 17.1 inches, with the heaviest falls in July and August. As much as 13.2 inches has fallen in 24 hours, but the maximum rainfall seldom exceeds 10 inches for one day. Torrential rainfall of short duration occurs at times in spring and fall. Precipitation is generally of a showery nature and is light and of short duration.

The northeast monsoons generally set in during late October and continue until April. The direction is mainly north and northeast, swinging more east toward the end of the season. It blows with remarkable steadiness when best developed during January. Freshening winds

are generally of shorter duration and become less frequent as the north-east monsoon draws to a close.

The southwest monsoons, following a transition period of variable winds, prevails from June to September. It is steadiest in July and August. It is intermittent because of frequent storms, and corresponds with the period of greatest rainfall and least visibility.

Typhoons are the principal weather hazard in the PHILIPPINES. There is a variability in the number of typhoons from one year to the next. More than 50 per cent of the total number have occurred from September through November. About 20 per cent of the total occurs in July and August, and the remainder through the rest of the year, with February being the least probable.

Cloudiness is relatively extensive in all months. It is at a minimum in the spring, while maximum is found in the summer.

Visibility is generally good. Fog is rare in the lowlands, other than ground-fog, which dissipates quickly at daybreak.

Comparatively uniform temperatures prevail in this area, with the difference between the mean temperature in the hottest and coolest month being approximately seven degrees in the MANILA area.

Seasonal variation of relative humidity is more marked than in areas farther to the south. Lowest values of relative humidity occur in April at coastal stations, mean values being below 75 per cent at that time. In summer and autumn, mean relative humidity lies between 80 and 85 per cent.

The PHILIPPINES are centrally located in respect to vital areas of JAPAN, CHINA, BURMA, FRENCHINDO CHINA, THAILAND, MALAYA,

and the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES and constitutes a pivotal point for their control. The islands are also strategically placed across the trade routes connecting JAPAN and CHINA with the EAST INDIES, INDIA, AUSTRALIA, and EUROPE.

The CENTRAL LUZON area is the most developed, both economically and militarily, and contains the national capital, MANILA.

The wide central plain, with its developed road net, offers opportunity for mobile warfare, while flanking mountains are natural obstacles to by-pass maneuvers. The water entrance to MANILA through MANILA BAY is blocked by the fortified island of CORREGIDOR, while the northern end of the plains open on LINGAYEN GULF with its many landing beaches.

Operations would be difficult during the rainy season. Food and other supplies would mold rapidly. Construction of new airfields in the rice country is next to impossible after the ground becomes saturated.

Unloading operations are impossible during typhoons and squalls, and the ships would be endangered in most ports.

In the rainy season, cross-country movement in the agricultural area is impossible. During typhoons, highways are blocked with trees, slides, and flooded rivers. The hot dry season materially lowers the vitality of foot troops, but the effect of this can be decreased with proper clothing and headgear, and minimizing marching during the midday heat. Runways and dispersal areas at most fields, unless paved, would be unusable during the wet season. Cloud cover and low visibility are the most extensive during this period. Typhoons and wet landing fields are the main hazards to air operations.

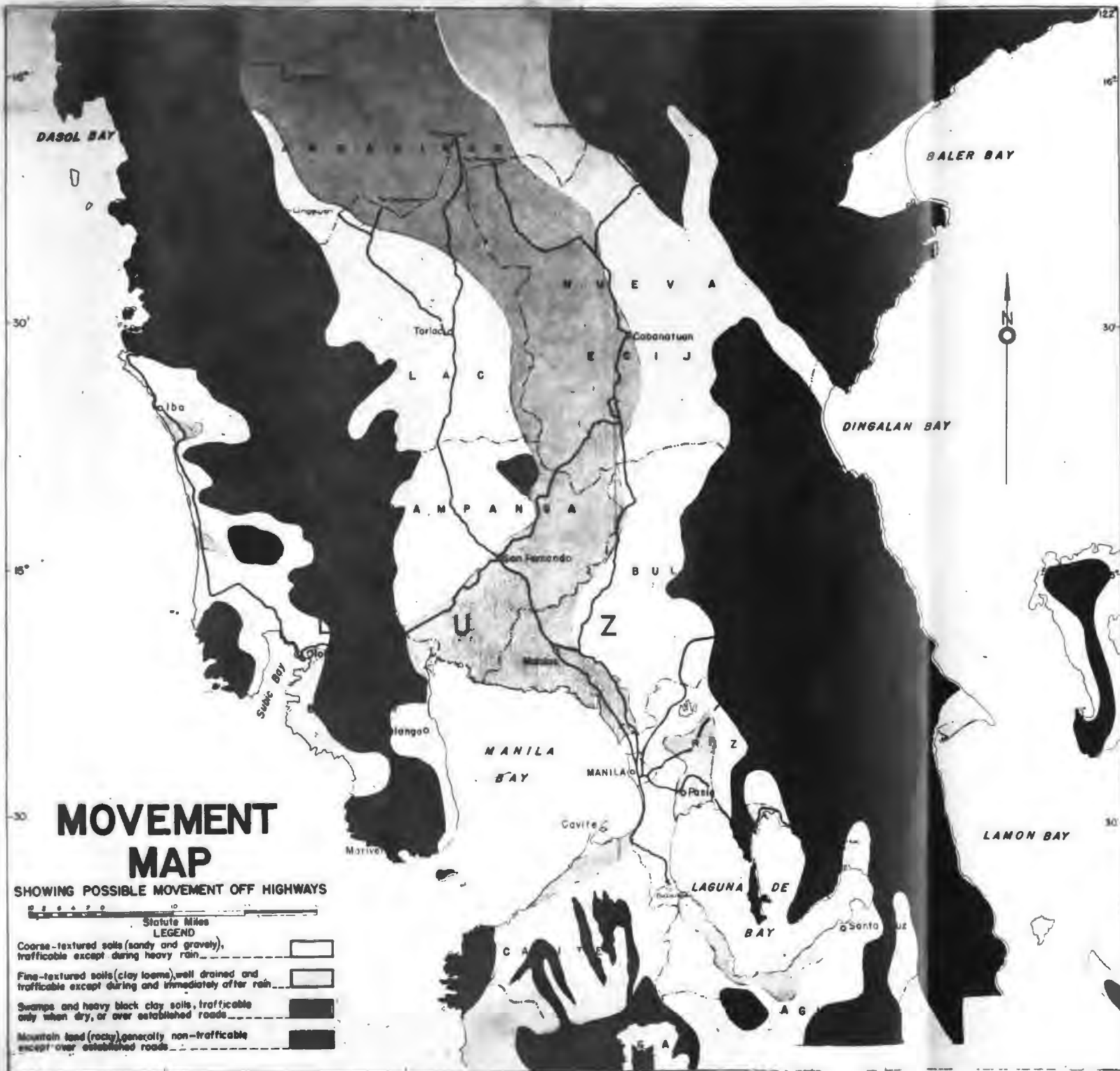
NOTES FOR CHAPTER 2

¹ Terrain Study No. 94, Central Luzon, Vol I, Philippine Series, Allied Geographical Section, Southwest Pacific Area, dtd 18 Oct 44, pp 1-6, 45-65, 112, 193, 243-245, 257-261.



LUZ





PART III
1941-1942 CAMPAIGN

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION

The Provisional Tank Group, U. S. Army Forces Far East, had its beginning 9 October 1941, when Colonel James R. N. Weaver, then Commanding Officer of the 68th Armored Regiment, 2d Armored Division, received a top secret letter which directed him to proceed to CAMP POLK, LOUISIANA. As Colonel Weaver was temporarily in command of the 2d Armored Division, a delay of several days was entailed until his command could be transferred and routine administrative duties completed. On 13 October 1941, from FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY, he was ordered to the Port of Embarkation (West Coast) for shipment and to receive his orders upon arrival. At this port he was assigned three officers, which was the beginning of the Provisional Tank Group Headquarters.

The location of the following units which were to be assigned to his command is noted at this time:

The Group Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment was yet to be formed.

The 192d Tank Battalion¹, commanded by Major Theodore F. Wickford, embarked on the same transport, the PRESIDENT SCOTT, which was to take Colonel Weaver to the PHILIPPINES. The 192d Tank Battalion was composed of National Guard companies. Headquarters and Company B from MAYWOOD, ILLINOIS; Company C from PORT CLINTON, OHIO; and Company A from JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN. One company, formerly Company D of the 192d Tank Battalion, was from HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY. This unit, upon

arrival in the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, was to be transferred to the 194th Tank Battalion. Their equipment was new, and this unit, like the 194th Tank Battalion, was equipped with new M3 tanks and half-tracks. The unit arrived at MANILA on 20 November 1941, and was stationed at FORT STOTSENBURG. This unit had recently participated in TENNESSEE and LOUISIANA maneuvers, from which they proceeded to the PHILIPPINES.

The 194th Tank Battalion², the other battalion of the group, was the first of the tank units to arrive in the PHILIPPINES. It definitely had the advantage over the 192d Tank Battalion, which arrived about three weeks before the outbreak of the war. The 194th Tank Battalion, a National Guard unit, was composed of Company A from BRAINERD, MINNESOTA; Company B from ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI; and Company C from SALINAS, CALIFORNIA. The companies were mobilized at their home stations on 10 February 1941. The senior captain, Ernest B. Miller, of Company A, was to become the battalion commander. The companies assembled at FORT LEWIS, on 22 February 1941. Here the Headquarters and Headquarters Company had to be formed and officers for the staff assembled. In April of 1941, draftees were assigned to the battalion and it was brought up to strength. In May of 1941 the tank strength of the unit was eight outmoded models. In July 1941, a few more 1937 tanks arrived. In August 1941, Company B was alerted for shipment to ALASKA. This company was not replaced until November 1941, when the 194th Tank Battalion and the 192d Tank Battalion joined the Tank Group in the PHILIPPINES. This was when the 192d Tank Battalion transferred Company D to the 194th Tank Battalion, and thus the battalion was reconstituted. On 14 August 1941, Major Miller, Commanding Officer, 194th Tank Battalion, was

ordered to FORT KNOX on a classified mission from FORT LEWIS. On 15 August 1941, Major Miller was informed by Armored Force Headquarters that his unit was alerted for overseas shipment for tropical service. The briefing revealed the battalion's destination would be the PHILIPPINES. His equipment would be shipped directly to the port. The majority of the tanks were taken from the 1st Armored Division. Shortly afterwards the battalion commander returned to FORT LEWIS and then proceeded to SAN FRANCISCO to make arrangements for shipment. The vessel, the PRESIDENT COOLIDGE, was due to sail on 8 September 1941. The battalion arrived from FORT LEWIS on 5 September 1941, to stage and embark. The orders from FORT KNOX were that the battalion would be combat loaded upon departure.

At the port the 17th Armored Ordnance Company assisted in loading the tanks of the battalion. This was the beginning of its association with the 194th Tank Battalion. At 2100 hours, 8 September 1941, the battalion sailed for the PHILIPPINES, arrived at MANILA on 26 September 1941, and moved to FORT STOTSENBURG. This company was transferred from the UNITED STATES to the PHILIPPINES on the same ship as the 194th Tank Battalion and later became the ordnance company of the tank group.³

Colonel Weaver's unit, the Provisional Tank Group, was formally activated on 21 November 1941, the day after his arrival in the PHILIPPINES.

Because of limitations, tank training to familiarize the personnel with their weapons and vehicles was well nigh impossible. Of the personnel, 35 per cent were new to any type of tank, and all were

new to the M3 tank, with which the units were now equipped. Ammunition, gasoline, and range facilities were requested, but little was made available. On 30 November 1941, the tank group commander ordered post ordnance to issue to his units 37-mm, caliber .50, and caliber .45 ammunition. Range facilities were not made available; consequently many of the men fired their weapons for the first time when the Japs made their initial attack.

The 194th Tank Battalion had been allotted 40,000 gallons of gasoline upon its arrival in the PHILIPPINES. The tank group, upon activation, found that additional gasoline would not be provided for other units in the group. This allowed less than 200 miles travel for the 108 tanks of the two battalions. (Each battalion had 54 tanks at the beginning of the war.)

Spare parts in the PHILIPPINES amounted to approximately six car-loads, which included tracks, engines, etc. Efforts made to secure these parts were futile, and it was not until the unit arrived in BATAAN in January of 1942 that this equipment was available to the organization.

Attempts were made to familiarize all officer personnel of FORT STOTSENBURG with the new tank, but without pronounced success. On one occasion an American officer approached a Japanese tank to talk with the crew, thinking it to be an American tank; and then a few days later the tank group had some of their own tanks reported as Japanese and fired upon by friendly forces. Ground troops, at the time of their arrival on BATAAN, had become familiar with the tanks, largely because of an extensive tank-infantry training program which had been instituted after the withdrawal from the PILAR-BAGAC line. A hitherto unknown

method of instruction in armor was used in this program, the highlight of which was the rotation of a tank unit through successive infantry battalion areas, emphasizing tank-infantry coordination.

General Weaver states, in his after action report:

...The tanks were mistakenly considered invulnerable, self-sustaining fortresses, capable of going anywhere, surmounting extraordinary obstacles and performing prodigies such as operations against snipers, flushing enemy out of cane fields, patrolling against infiltration--operation stymied by the inherent blindness of the tank, the noise of its operation, and its considerable dead space, permitting approach to it by enemy mines, grenades, flame throwers, particularly in heavy vegetation, and when the tanks were immobilized by blown tracks or bogging. Supposedly modest requests for 'just two or three tanks' had to be filled with a company if physically possible--a project wherein tank use was remunerative at all, warranted the use of a company to insure enough power to punch through, give mutual support, and insure the salvage by towing of the inevitable tank casualties....

Before the arrival of the tank group, the 194th Tank Battalion had performed reconnaissance to SUBIC BAY, LINGAYEN GULF, MT ARAYAT, and in a limited degree to BAGUIO. The tank group commander and his staff covered in reconnaissance HIGHWAYS 3 and 13, and the area on the LINGAYEN GULF west and north of the AGNO RIVER. Further, the area around FORT STOTSENBURG was covered by ground and air, paying particular attention to the partially completed field at O'DONNELL. It was believed that possibilities for enemy paratroops were present in this area.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 3

¹Official Reports by Commanding Officer, 192d Tank Battalion, to Commanding General, Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 1941

²Official Reports by Commanding Officer, 194th Tank Battalion, to Commanding General, Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 1941.

³After-Action Report, Provisional Tank Group, 1941-1942.

CHAPTER 4

OPERATIONS OF THE PROVISIONAL TANK GROUP¹

8 December 1941--8 January 1942

At the outbreak of hostilities all tanks and half-tracks of the tank battalions were in battle position. The 192d Tank Battalion was north and east of FORT STOTSENBURG. The 194th Tank Battalion was under WATCH HILL, and in the island between the two main landing strips of CLARK FIELD. These units had been in place, combat loaded, since 1 December 1941.

When word came early on the morning of 8 December 1941 of the attack upon PEARL HARBOR, all units were in their positions and the crews were with their tanks, alerted for action. At approximately 1130 the American planes returned from reconnaissance and landed at CLARK FIELD. At this time the tankers, eating in the vicinity of their tanks, observed a V-formation of approximately 50 planes, which appeared to be coming from the north at about 20,000 feet. Almost immediately the bombs began falling upon CLARK FIELD. The antiaircraft guns of the 200th Antiaircraft Battalion and of the tank group immediately went into action, but because of the great range, their fire was not effective. The weapons of the two tank battalions were of no value until the Japanese started dive and glide bombing. The caliber .30 antiaircraft guns in the tanks and the caliber .30 and .50 guns mounted on the half-tracks were brought into action when the strafing phase began. The tremendous volume of fire was largely wasted upon the attacking planes, and its greatest value was to keep the dive and glide bombers from continuing

to exploit their success. One enemy plane was downed by the fire of the 192d Tank Battalion. The tanks being well camouflaged, were first overlooked by the enemy as they concentrated upon the unconcealed planes. This attack lasted approximately 40 minutes.

Shortly thereafter the tanks were redisposed. The 194th Tank Battalion was sent to the northeast of CLARK FIELD, where it had cover and dispersion. The 192d Tank Battalion was sent to the unoccupied position covering the south airstrip of CLARK FIELD which, though still under construction, might have been used for hostile landings, being comparatively undamaged. D'DONNELL FIELD received the protection of a half-track platoon to forestall any airborne landings. Company A of the 192d Tank Battalion was moved to DAU in position of readiness in the vicinity of the main highway and railroad. Two more attacks followed on CLARK FIELD, one on the 10th and one on the 13th of December, 1941. The last attack destroyed a half-track in the park of the group ordnance company. During the interval between the two attacks, the tanks cooperated with the units of the 26th Cavalry in a chase of paratroopers which had supposedly been dropped in the area near ARAYAT.

At this time the critical supply of tank gasoline, ammunition, and spare parts, which had been held in reserve, were released. Gasoline was spotted at various places, 20,000 gallons at DAU, 10,000 gallons at GERONA, 10,000 gallons at FORT STOTSENBURG, and 20,000 gallons at ALABANA in SOUTH LUZON.

On 12 December 1941 the tank group commander was called to headquarters USAFFE in MANILA. Information received at this time was that landings were imminent at SOUTH LUZON. The 194th Tank Battalion, being

the more experienced, was sent south of SAN FERNANDO near the CALUMPIT BRIDGE. Headquarters, Tank Group, completed the reconnaissance during the 13th of December, and the advance party of the 194th Tank Battalion was spotted at MONTILUPA, where this battalion was to rendezvous. Reconnaissance was then continued in the vicinity of LAKE TAAL and the southern and western coasts of SOUTH LUZON. During this reconnaissance division commanders of the 41st and 51st Philippine Divisions were contacted. The battalion moved into position on the 14th of December 1941. On the 15th of December, Company C of the 194th Tank Battalion moved into position at TAGAYTAY RIDGE, its only activity consisting of attempting to apprehend fifth columnists who were sending up flares at night. This operation continued until Christmas Eve. At this time, Company C was attached to the SOUTH LUZON FORCES, which were then engaged with the Japanese who had made landings at MAUBAN and ANTIMONAN. Headquarters of the tank group was ordered from FORT STOTSENBERG to MANILA and opened there on 15 December 1941. It was here that the half-tracks of the Headquarters Detachment were incorporated into the air defense plan of the walled city of MANILA.

At this time a fugitive British ship arrived in MANILA with approximately 40 Bren gun carriers on board. This shipment was originally destined for SINGAPORE. The vehicles, which were shipped minus guns, were taken over by USAFFE and released to the tank group. The group, over a period of time, was able to arm some of these vehicles with caliber .30 machine guns salvaged from lost tanks and integrated 30 into the group organization. The balance were sent to the 26th Cavalry and some Philippine divisions. On the night of 21-22 December

the tank group commander was ordered by Headquarters USAFFE to send one battalion, minus one company, to the LINGAYEN GULF area for support of General Wainwright, who was commanding the NORTH LUZON forces. This unit, the 192d Tank Battalion, marched into the area designated. The remaining company was at DAU and it was ordered to the LA UNION COAST to meet anticipated landings at daylight.

On 22 December the latter company was discovered by the tank group commander at ROSARIO, out of gasoline. Conflicting orders, not issued by tank group, had prevented this unit from regassing at GERONA. Information was received that the enemy was operating and had engaged the 11th Philippine Division in the area of DAMORTIS. The anticipated landings had been made by the Japanese. A squadron of the 26th Cavalry was ordered into this area and reported back that enemy cyclists or motorized units were in the area. At this time General Wainwright's headquarters requested help from the tank group commander, and the lack of gasoline was explained. The resources of this company were pooled, and a platoon was given the mission. The commander of the tank platoon, Lieutenant Morin, was ordered into the DAMORTIS area, but not beyond the town of AGOO. This platoon was completely destroyed during the day. The enemy pressure at DAMORTIS was increasing, and a need for tanks was evident. As soon as gasoline arrived, the balance of the company was sent into the DAMORTIS area, with instructions to cover the withdrawing forces. The tanks were to fall back one by one, peeling off successively from the front after the infantry had withdrawn. The situation in SOUTH LUZON was developing rapidly, but the most critical situation was in NORTH LUZON. The redeployment of tanks from the south occurred on 24

December, when the 194th Tank Battalion (minus Company C), arrived and was placed in the line to the left of the 192d Tank Battalion just south of the AGNO RIVER and west of CARMEN.

On 23-24 December 1941, all three line companies of the 192d Tank Battalion were operating north of the AGNO RIVER when the main bridge at CARMEN was bombed. Tank units still north of the AGNO had to make long marches to the two highway bridges remaining to get south of the river. In accordance with orders received from Headquarters USAFFE on 25 December, the tank group was to cover the withdrawal of the NORTH LUZON forces in the following manner: The south bank of the AGNO RIVER was to be held until the night of 26-27 December; they were to withdraw to a line SANTO IGNACIA--GERONA--SANTO TOMAS--SAN JOSE. The following night, 27-28 December, withdrawal was to be to the line TARLAC--CABANA--TUAN, and the night of 28-29 December to the south bank of the BAMBAN RIVER--GAPAN. This position was to be organized for indefinite defense. (See Map No. 1.)

On 24 December, in SOUTH LUZON, Company C of the 194th Tank Battalion moved via the LAKE TAAL road to SANTO TOMAS and bivouacked near SAN PABLO. This unit was to assist in operations at LUCENA--PAGBILAO--LUCBAN area.

During the period 25-26 December reconnaissance was made to effect the above mentioned plans. Written SOPs were put into effect, instructions given, orders, etc., were issued to unit commanders. On the night of 26-27 December the Japanese occupied CARMEN, after the American-Philippino units had withdrawn from the south bank of the AGNO RIVER. Company D of the 194th Tank Battalion, in withdrawing, arrived



CENTRAL LUZON

Scale
1:1,100,000

Legend

- Towns
- Highways
- ~ Rivers
- ▶ Japanese Landings
- 1 Planned withdrawal phase lines

in the area of MONCADA, north of the AGNO RIVER, and found the bridges blown. Reconnaissance disclosed no available crossings for the tanks, and the 15 remaining vehicles of the unit were abandoned. SOP destruction of one platoon of these vehicles was incomplete, as some were later seen with the Japanese forces at BALIUAG. This left but 20 tanks remaining to the 194th Tank Battalion in NORTH LUZON.

On the night of 26-27 December, the 192d and 194th Tank Battalions withdrew to the south following the four Philippine Army divisions, whom they had been supporting. After destroying what aviation gasoline at CARMEN they could not carry, gasoline caches were spotted for the successive withdrawal positions. Company C of the 194th Tank Battalion, in SOUTH LUZON, was defending near SAN PABLO and LUCBAN in support of two Philippine Army divisions.

On 29 December the tank group commander received orders from Headquarters USAFFE to organize the antitank defense of the BAMBAN line in collaboration with the NORTH LUZON force commander. The TARLAC line was evacuated that night. The BAMBAN line was to be held until further orders. Withdrawal was ordered the next night, and the bridges blown. Company A of the 192d Tank Battalion was extended to replace the tanks lost by the 194th Tank Battalion during the withdrawal. The 194th Tank Battalion (minus Company C) was sent to a position in readiness at ARAYAT.

The axis of withdrawal for the 192d Tank Battalion was ROUTE 5, and for the 194th Tank Battalion was ROUTE 3. During the period 30 December 1941--1 January 1942, the 192d Tank Battalion covered the withdrawal of the Philippine Army divisions east and west of the PAMPANGA

RIVER. At this time they used tanks east and west of the CALUMPIT BRIDGE over the PAMPANGA RIVER to cover the withdrawal of the SOUTH LUZON forces toward BATAAN.

During the period until 31 December, the 194th Tank Battalion was covering the withdrawal of the Philippine divisions south on ROUTE 3 toward SAN FERNANDO and BATAAN.

On 2 January the tank group received orders from Headquarters USAFFE to cover the withdrawal into BATAAN to the LYAC JUNCTION covering position and thereafter to proceed to bivouac area. The 192d Tank Battalion was passed through the 194th Tank Battalion, which reassembled with but 30 tanks left, and had a short rest. The 194th Tank Battalion, plus Company A of the 192d Tank Battalion, attached, was assigned to cover the withdrawal into BATAAN with HIGHWAY 7 as an axis. The 192d Tank Battalion was sent to cover the northwest flank via ANGELES, PORAC, SAN JOSE, and DINALUPIHAN. The bridge the 194th Tank Battalion was to cross into BATAAN was covered by the 192d Tank Battalion. The tank group was then to take a position to support the occupancy of the initial LYAC JUNCTION covering position. Withdrawal was accomplished as planned, as there was no longer any question of premature destruction of bridges. The withdrawal of the 192d and 194th Tank Battalions was carried out in their prescribed zones under heavy pressure and was completed on the night of 6-7 January 1942, when the 194th Tank Battalion withdrew across the river at CULIS, covered by the 192d Tank Battalion. The 192d Tank Battalion was the last of the American forces to cross the bridge into BATAAN before it was blown. There was no immediate enemy pressure or followup on the night of 6-7 January. The provisions of a

long-existing plan had been accomplished approximately a month after the beginning of hostilities. The unit was now on BATAAN.

9 January 1942--26 January 1942

Upon the arrival on BATAAN, the tank battalions were in a position of readiness between CULIS and HERMOSA with entry by way of HERMOSA. On the morning of 8 January 1942, enemy artillery fire started dropping over the area. The enemy had observation on several stretches of roads for considerable distances. It was learned from the artillery commander of the 71st Philippine Army Division that this unit was out of gun crews and further the 31st United States Infantry to the front had broken. The tank group formed a composite company, under Captain Hanes (192d Tank Battalion) to move out and protect the EAST COAST ROAD north of HERMOSA. The unit's position was very dangerous, and the above measure was taken to prevent the enemy forces, particularly mechanized, from over-running the only axial road and driving into BATAAN before the main battle position was occupied. Meanwhile, the 71st Philippine Army command post was continually under fire and withdrew. Remaining tanks (the group less composite company) were ordered under cover of darkness to move to a position in bivouac south of the AUBUCAY--HACIENDA road. (See Map No. 2.) At this time, tanks were suffering from lack of maintenance and the men from exhaustion and poor food, as they had been constantly on the move for a month. They were placed on half rations on 6 January.

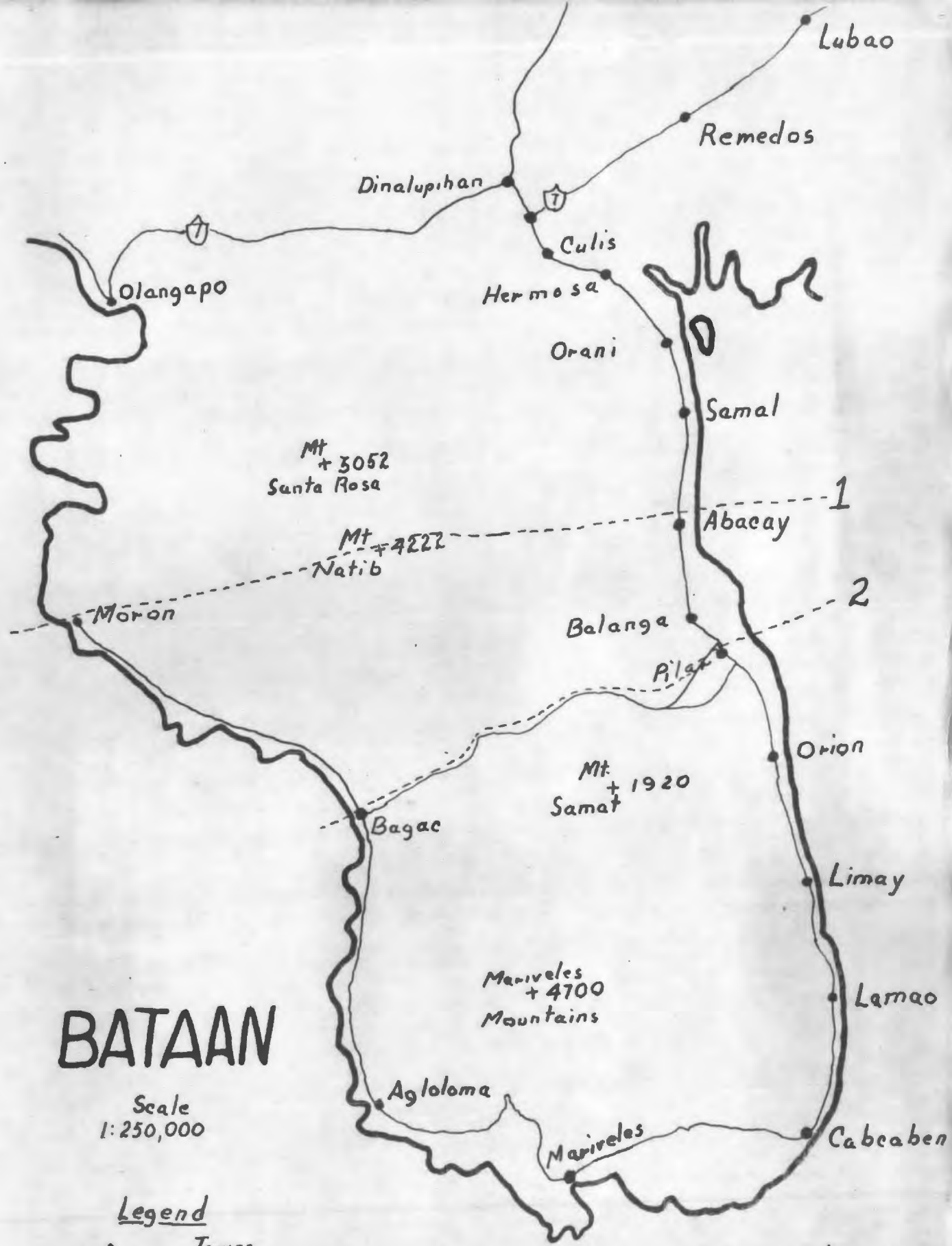
The southward move of Captain Hanes' covering force was ordered by another headquarters because of an intended bridge blowing on the arterial (and only) road in the area. It was premature, as the enemy

did not advance. The main body of the tanks continued to receive artillery fire, but it was unobserved fire and established brackets were not closed.

The tank battalions went into bivouac just south of the PILAR--BAGAO road and were able to get a few days rest and reorganization, which were badly needed. The 17th Ordnance Company came forward and was able to complete excellent work in bringing all of the remaining tanks into fighting trim. Crews were fed from their own kitchens and, for a change, had improved conditions. Units were reorganized, and companies of both battalions were reduced to ten tanks, with three tanks to a platoon.

On 12 January, Companies C and D of the 194th Tank Battalion, under Captain Moffett, were sent to the CADRE ROAD to a position of alert. Artillery fire and bombing continued, and two ammunition dumps were blown up. It was discovered that the area to the front had been mined so promiscuously by our troops as to deny forward exit. The unit was returned to the battalion on the 13th.

The Japanese had cut the WEST COAST HIGHWAY, so on the 16th of January Company C of the 194th Tank Battalion was sent to BAGAC on the request of General Wainwright's headquarters for the purpose of opening the highway. Shortly afterward a platoon (three tanks) was employed at the MORON HIGHWAY and the junction of TRAIL 162. The platoon moved out, received fire from an antitank gun which they knocked out, and, with the infantry, cleared the balance of the road block. Moving on, mines were encountered, and two of the three tanks were lost temporarily. The force for which the tanks were endeavoring to open a road of exit



BATAAN

Scale
1:250,000

Legend

- Towns
- Roads
- - - 1 Organized Defensive Positions



later escaped by way of the coast, losing all their heavy equipment.

In the II Corps sector the tanks were called upon several times. Once they were to "rescue" the 31st Philippine Army Division command post, but it was a false alarm. Another unluccrative mission was when the tanks were called forward to flush some snipers alleged to be in standing cane. Requests for tanks to go after snipers beyond the MLR were refused. The trade of a sniper for a tank was not considered worthwhile.

By 24 January the entire 194th Tank Battalion, minus its Headquarters Company, was in the HACIENDA ROAD area with a supporting mission. Company D had a slight brush, but that was about the extent of the action and movement. Protective mining by friendly troops continued to prevent tank forays, and their presence in the vicinity of friendly troops was thought to draw aerial attack and enemy fire. Meanwhile, the 192d Tank Battalion, on USAFFE orders, had been charged with the security of the east coast, south from MAGALANG at the eastern part of the main battle position. This unit placed tanks in alert positions and patrolled with half-tracks.

The troops were to withdraw from the ABUCAY--HACIENDA battle position and the 194th Tank Battalion was charged with covering the withdrawal on the axis of the BACK ROAD. The 192d Tank Battalion was on the axis of the EAST COAST ROAD, which was also their zone of responsibility. The 192d and 194th Tank Battalions then went into prepared positions in their zones of responsibility. The covering position to be occupied by the tanks at daylight on 25 January was generally the line BALANGA--CADRE ROAD--BANI BANI ROAD. The withdrawal

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was to start at midnight. Tank officers supplemented division officers at critical check points to determine when the infantry withdrawal was complete and helped guide troops of other elements toward their new positions. It was not until daylight that the tanks were able to start their own withdrawal. The enemy did not follow closely, nor bomb, until almost mid-day. The tanks stayed on their mission until the night of 26-27 January, taking positions along the roadside. The new position was, roughly, the PILAR--BAGAC ROAD. The Japanese seemed to make little effort to follow, and it was on the morning of 26 January, about 1000, when the 192d Tank Battalion started to receive artillery fire. Around 1100 bombing and artillery fire started in earnest. Also, at about 0945, a civilian came along the road in the sector of the 194th Tank Battalion, which was about a kilometer north of the PILAR BAGAC ROAD, and stated that the enemy was approaching in several columns. The 194th Tank Battalion had with it, at this time, four self-propelled mounts of Major Ganahls' 75-mm self-propelled battalion. The enemy appeared and all weapons were brought to bear. The fight lasted about 45 minutes, and out of an estimated 1200 Japanese, at least 500 were casualties. What would have been the result if this force had hit the new battle lines, which were just being organized, is evident. Air retaliation came promptly, as the tanks were then south of the PILAR BAGAC ROAD. Several tanks were hit, but not put out of action. From this action the tanks were able to go into bivouac for a short period.

27 January--8 April 1942

The Provisional Tank Group assumed the beach defenses on the east coast of BATAAN on 28 January. The 192d Tank Battalion was

responsible for the coast from PANDAN POINT to LIMAY, and the 194th Tank Battalion from LIMAY (exclusive) to CABCABEN. The mission was to set up positions with tanks, after dark. Half-tracks were to move from position to position, and to maintain radio contact with in-shore and off-shore patrols, and liaison with beach patrols.

On 31 January General Wainwright asked for a "few tanks" to patrol the roads in his sector against infiltration. Upon the recommendation of the tank group commander, half-tracks and 1/4-ton trucks were to be used on this mission as they were better suited for the job.

On 1 February the 192d Tank Battalion, less Company B, was ordered to the west coast of BATAAN. The 194th Tank Battalion assumed the east coast defense in its entirety; Company B of the 192d Tank Battalion was in reserve, and was responsible for the beach defense of the south coast, along with the 17th Armored Ordnance Company. There were repeated alarms off-shore, but the knowledge that the tanks were on beach defense deterred the Japanese from making any landings, according to later enemy admission. The armored troops, on their own initiative, on 1 February took over the defense of the airfields at CABCABEN, MARIVELES, and BATAAN, against possible landings of Japanese airborne troops, which were known to be on FORMOSA. Upon arriving at the west coast on 1 February, the 192d Tank Battalion was employed immediately between the WEST COAST ROAD and the CHINA SEA. Fighting in this area was particularly fierce and this battalion suffered serious losses of men and materials. This was the new type of action known as "pocket battles," in heavy jungle. While the 192d Tank Battalion (less a company) was operating on the west coast, its companies were rotated with

the reserve company on the south coast to enable them to rest and over-haul. The 192d Tank Battalion was widely scattered.

By March the daily ration was but 950 calories. Both battalions had many men sick with dengue fever, worms, and malaria. As the ineffectiveness of the Filipinos increased and the threat of enemy attacks increased, the armored troops had to take over more and more of the beach defenses. Administration, supply, and reconnaissance of tanks were at a minimum because the daily gas ration per battalion had been cut to 15 gallons, and finally to ten gallons, due to the critical shortage of gasoline. Ammunition was the only type of supply of which there was an abundance.

On 3 April the Japanese started their final all-out offensive. Bombing on the front lines was very heavy; enemy pressure eased on the east front, and an obvious drive to break through via the PANGLINGAN corridor developed. The pressure was heavy and all tank units were being forced slowly back. The east coast looked like a fiesta with the tracer and flare activities--probably from fifth columnists or infiltrated enemy. The tanks were being bombed on the trails and in positions and were being severely punished without an opportunity to fight back.

On 7 April the 45th and 57th Infantry Philippine Scouts, supported by tanks, attempted to restore the 41st Division's broken front and stop a break-through between corps, but steady infiltration in the jungle voided this action. A counterattack was made on the 8th to the east in an effort to extricate the units along TRAIL 8. This was stopped by heavy enemy fire. Enemy antitank fire knocked out the lead tank, after which the infantry withdrew under cover of the tank fire.

By the afternoon of 8 April communications to all front line units had been disrupted and the 194th Tank Battalion was engaged in furious fighting on the EAST COAST ROAD in the vicinity of CABEABEN. At 1830, with the inevitable collapse indicated by Bataan Force Headquarters, the tank group commander sent the following secret message to all major tank unit commanders:

.. ...You will make plans, to be communicated to company commanders only, and be prepared to destroy within one hour after receipt by radio, or other means, of the word CRASH, all tanks and combat vehicles, arms, ammunition, gas, and radios, reserving sufficient trucks to close to rear echelons as soon as possible thereafter.

At 2230 General King, the Commanding General on BATAAN, made the decision to send a flag across the lines at daylight. Destruction of the main ordnance dumps began at 2340 and the troops were informed to destroy their arms and cease resistance at 0700, 9 April 1942. The signal CRASH was sent out by radio, courier, and telephone at 0535. All tanks, vehicles, arms, ammunition, and equipment were destroyed as per instructions, and maps and papers useful to the enemy were burned or buried. The end had come, so all personnel prepared for the uncertain future with stomachs and canteens full for the last time.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 4

¹The reference material for this chapter was obtained from the personal notes and After-Action Report written by Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver, Commanding General of the Provisional Tank Group.

CHAPTER 5

SMALL UNIT ENGAGEMENTS

Action of Company B, 192d Tank Battalion, between AGOO and DAMORTIS.¹

On 22 December 1941, General Wainwright's headquarters had in support the 192d Tank Battalion (minus one company). The company was in the area of ROSARIO, out of gas, when request was received to send it to meet a mechanized element in the vicinity of DAMORTIS. The situation was explained and the unit pooled all their gasoline, being able to fill the tanks of but one platoon. Lieutenant Morin was the platoon commander, and his orders were to proceed beyond DAMORTIS but not beyond AGOO. The platoon moved out and reached DAMORTIS without encountering any of the Japanese forces. Pushing on toward AGOO, they ran into a counterthrust of hostile light tanks and a fire fight developed. The enemy tanks were of a low silhouette, no turret, with sides sloped so that an impact close enough to normal to secure a penetration was difficult to obtain. These tanks, with a 47-mm gun either on the tank or off as an antitank weapon, were effective against our tanks with their perpendicular surfaces and high profiles. The platoon commander's tank left the road to maneuver out of the trap, received a hit, and burned. It is worth noting that this platoon achieved several firsts, all at the same time. It had the first tank lost in World War II; the crew captured were the first Armored Force prisoners of World War II. The platoon sergeant's tank received a direct hit at the bow gun, which killed the assistant driver. He was the first Armored soldier killed in a tank versus tank fight in World War II. The balance of the platoon, four in number, all were badly hit, but were brought back to

ROSARIO by their crews. During the salvage operations they were lost to bombings and mishaps. The enemy tanks received hits, but the only known result was shots which were seen to ricochet off their sloping surfaces.

Action of the 194th Tank Battalion at the AGNO RIVER.^{1&4}

During the withdrawal of the American-Filipino Forces from the AGNO RIVER line on the night of 26 December 1941, the following action occurred:

Due to nonreceipt of orders and lack of contact, the 194th Tank Battalion's right flank was exposed when the infantry units and the 192d Tank Battalion withdrew to a switch position at 1930. The Japanese occupied CARMEN, which was astride the route of withdrawal for the battalion. Company A, 194th Tank Battalion, overran a Japanese road block and went through a running fire from the Japanese guns and heavy mortars while proceeding through CARMEN. The withdrawal was completed with a tragic loss of equipment and personnel, consisting of one company commander, one platoon leader, eight enlisted men killed or missing, and 17 tanks of the 194th Tank Battalion.

A roadblock was established on HIGHWAY 3, south of CARMEN, consisting of several tanks and a 75-mm self-propelled gun, which was picked up during the withdrawal, or which had been sent up from the rear by the tank group commander.

By 0250, 27 December 1941, all stragglers had been cleared through the roadblock. Suddenly, motorized movement could be heard from the north, which was determined to be a Japanese armored column of undetermined size. The lead vehicle came down the road with dimmed

lights. Guns of the roadblock had been laid so as to cover the entire road and ditches from several angles. When the lead Japanese vehicle was about 150 feet from the roadblock, the Americans opened fire. The tank guns and machine guns, and the 75-mm weapons swept the road, firing at such a short range that only one shot was fired in return. After about 15 minutes of steady firing, the roadblock withdrew to the south about one kilometer, on a predetermined signal, as it was considered to be too dangerous to stay in position long without infantry protection.

Up until this time the Japanese main effort had been south on HIGHWAY 3. Whether the roadblock determined the future Japanese action or not cannot be determined, but the fact remains that their main effort was directed in the CABANATUAN area. After the fighting at the roadblock, the Japanese organized CARMEN for defense, as they believed a counterattack was on the way, or that one was imminent.

Action of the 194th Tank Battalion on the road to BATAAN.⁴

During the afternoon of 5 January 1942, the 194th Tank Battalion, with Company A, 192d Tank Battalion, attached, received orders to withdraw from the GUAGUA--PORAC line which they were occupying and withdraw south through LUGAO to the vicinity of REMEDIOS, where they were to establish a defensive position in conjunction with the Philippine Infantry.

Upon arriving at the REMEDIOS position, no infantry was on hand, nor did any arrive, so the position was organized with the 194th Tank Battalion and Company A, 192d Tank Battalion. Positions were selected astride the highway along an old creek bed. Bren gun carriers, which had been assigned earlier in the campaign from a shipment destined for

SINGAPORE, and upon which caliber .30 machine guns had been mounted; half-tracks, tanks, and carriers were disposed in line. Outposts (consisting of half-tracks and their crews) were placed on each flank and one on the highway to the immediate front. The moon came up early in the evening, giving excellent visibility, and the position afforded excellent fields of fire. About 0150, 6 January 1942, the outpost on the highway challenged a group of people coming down the road. The reply was made by Filipinos, but the outpost, suspecting a familiar Japanese ruse of using Filipinos, fired and immediately the Japanese could be heard chanting and howling, and then the Japanese attacked immediately. They attacked across the open field in the bright moonlight and started the use of what was at first believed to be gas, but turned out to be smoke, which blew back into their lines. On the left the Japanese attacked in open order, but on the right (east of the highway) they attacked in columns. All of the tank guns and weapons were in operation, and the casualties to the attackers were very heavy. A fire started by tracer ammunition in front of our tanks threatened the tanks, but it was extinguished by the gallantry of Lieutenant Petree, who was mortally wounded when hit by a fragment from a mortar shell. (He died about a week later.) The Silver Star was awarded to Lieutenant Petree posthumously.

The Japanese could not make any headway across the open field, but due to the lack of infantry the tank flanks were extremely vulnerable. The Japanese did not discover this; therefore the Americans had little trouble on their flanks, which were exposed and very vulnerable. The Japanese withdrew about 0300, leaving masses of their

casualties behind. It was impossible to estimate the exact number of Japanese dead and wounded, but they must have been tremendous.

Nothing was heard of the Japanese for two days after this action, which emphasizes its importance as the Americans and Filipinos were moving against time to get their defenses organized, and this extra time, which this action afforded, proved most valuable. Had the Japanese been able to attack the hastily and partially organized American-Filipino positions early in the morning of 6 January 1942, the results might have been disastrous.

ORDER OF BATTLE^{1&2}

1 January 1942

Headquarters Provisional Tank Group, USAFFE

Commanding Officer: Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver.

17th Armored Ordnance Company

Commanding Officer: Captain Richard C. Kadel.

192d Tank Battalion (Light)

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel Theodore F. Wickord.

Headquarters Company Commanding Officer: Captain Fred Bruni

Company A Commanding Officer: Captain Walter Wright; 1st
Lieutenant Kenneth Bloomfield (25 December).

Company B Commanding Officer: Captain Donald Hanes.

Company C Commanding Officer: Captain John Sorenson, 1st
Lieutenant Collins (22 December),

194th Tank Battalion (Light)

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel Ernest B. Miller.

Headquarters Company Commanding Officer: Captain John Riley.

Company A Commanding Officer: 1st Lieutenant E. L. Burke,
Captain Root (26 December).

Company C Commanding Officer: Captain F. C. Moffitt.

Company D, 192d Tank Battalion (Attached) Commanding
Officer: Captain Altman.

DECORATIONS^{1&2}

8 December 1941--8 April 1942

This unit, during its action, received for its members the following decorations:

Known to have been awarded:

- 3 Distinguished Service Crosses
- 1 Distinguished Service Medal
- 4 Legions of Merit
- 12 Silver Stars, with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters
- 18 Bronze Stars
- 3 Presidential Unit Citations

Recommended, but awards not known or not approved:

- 4 Distinguished Service Crosses
- 1 Distinguished Service Medal
- 3 Legions of Merit
- 9 Silver Stars
- 5 Bronze Stars

The following are examples of awards given to members of the Provisional Tank Group:

HEADQUARTERS
United States Forces in the Philippines
Fort Mills, P. I.

GENERAL ORDERS)
No. 24)

12 April 1942

* * *

I - Award of Distinguished Service Cross. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the Act of Congress approved July 9, 1918, (Bul. No. 43, WD, 1918), the Distinguished Service Cross is awarded by the Commanding General, United States Forces in the Philippines, for extraordinary heroism in action, to the following named officer of the United States Forces in the Philippines:

JAMES R. N. WEAVER, (O-3100), Brigadier General, U. S. Army, Commanding Provisional Tank Group, United States Forces in the Philippines, For extraordinary heroism in action in the vicinity of Quinauan Point, Bataan, Philippine Islands, on February 2, 1942. During repeated attacks by his tank unit of strongly held enemy positions, Brigadier General Weaver maintained advanced observation and command posts well forward of our infantry front lines, and fully exposed to heavy enemy mortar and machine gun fire, in order to more effectively observe and direct his tank operation. During the action this valiant officer was at times within thirty yards of the hostile infantry lines, and on one occasion was required to fire his pistol at an enemy soldier armed with an automatic rifle within twenty yards of his position. Brigadier General Weaver's strong and intelligent leadership, as well as his vivid example of courage and devotion to duty which inspired the personnel of his command to intense effort, were significant factors in determining the outstanding success of the entire operation.

* * *

By command of Lieutenant General WAINWRIGHT:

LEWIS C. BEEBE,
Brigadier General, GSC,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

s/ Carl H. Seals
CARL H. SEALS,
Brigadier General, USA,
Adjutant General.

WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D. C., 18 November 1946.

GENERAL ORDERS)
No. 139)

E-X-T-R-A-C-T

III - SILVER STAR. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul. 43, 1918), a Silver Star for gallantry in action during the periods indicated was awarded posthumously by General J. M. Wainwright, United States Army, to the following-named enlisted men:

Staff Sergeant Henry M. Luther (Army Serial No. 20645207) Infantry, Army of the United States, a member of the 192d Tank Battalion, distinguished himself at Bataan, Philippine Islands, on or about 5 January 1942. During an attack in which Company A, 192d Tank Battalion, was assigned a supporting mission, one of the tanks hit an enemy mine and was put out of action. Sergeant Luther, seeing the disabled tank exposed to enemy antitank and artillery fire, left his place of comparative safety and proceeded on foot to the aid of the stranded crew. Under his supervision, the tank, with most of its crew seriously wounded, was brought back behind friendly lines. Sergeant Luther's action served as an inspiration to the officers and men of his battalion.

* * * * *

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

s/ Edward F. Witsell
EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

/s/ A. D. DONAL
Major, AGD
Adjutant

HEADQUARTERS PROVISIONAL TANK GROUP USAFFE

GENERAL ORDERS)

No. 10)

February 2, 1942.

E-X-T-R-A-C-T

8. Second Lieutenant Edward G. Winger, O-405247, Company B, 192nd Tank Battalion (L), GHQ, is awarded the Silver Star, posthumously, for gallantry in action in accordance with the following citation:

"In the area north of Trails number 7 and 5, West Coast Sector, Bataan, P.I., during the period 4-6 February, 1942, Lieutenant Winger gallantly led his tanks against enemy flame-throwers over terrain not favorable to tank operation, and successfully knocked out several enemy machine gun emplacements, thus making the advance of friendly infantry possible. It was on this type of terrain that Lieutenant Winger's tank was stalled, and while evacuating his tank, he was wounded. Lieutenant Winger later died from these wounds in a field hospital. Resident at entry into service: Maywood, Illinois."

s/ Jas R. N. Weaver
JAS. R. N. WEAVER
Brigadier General
Commanding

GENERAL ORDERS)
No. 101)

WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D. C., 8 November 1945

E-X-T-R-A-C-T

VI--BATTLE HONORS.--As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec I, WD Bul. 22, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec III, WD Bul. 11, 1942), the following are added to the list of battles and campaigns of the United States Army as published in WD General Orders 14, 1942:

1. The Provisional Tank Group, United States Army Forces in the Far East, composed of the following units:

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment; 192nd General
Headquarters Tank Battalion (Light); 194th General
Headquarters Tank Battalion (Light) (less detachments);
17th Ordnance Company (Armored)

is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action during the defense of the Philippines. Organized late in November 1941, it took battle positions on 1 December in the vicinity of Clark Field and Fort Stotsenburg, from which it fought a notable action in the defense of these critical points in the initial hostile attack. In the course of the withdrawal into Bataan, its units were constantly in the field, covering the supporting divisions of the North Luzon Force, and two of the South Luzon Force, its elements operating initially 150 miles apart. This unit contributed most vitally in all stages and under extraordinary handicaps to the protraction of the operations and the successful withdrawal. Its units were the last out of both North and South Luzon and the last into the Bataan Peninsula, on 7 January 1942.

2. The Provisional Tank Group, United States Army Forces in the Far East, composed of the following units:

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment; 19nd General
Headquarters Tank Battalion (Light); 194th General
Headquarters Tank Battalion (Light) (less detachments);
17th Ordnance Company (Armored)

is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action during the defense of the Philippines. During the period from 6 January to 8 March 1942, after covering the withdrawal of the Luzon Forces into the Bataan Peninsula, the group was charged with the support of the I and II Philippine Corps, the cordon defense of the coasts of Bataan, and the defense of the three major landing fields. These measures prevented a projected landing of airborne and paratroop enemy, as well as several abortive thrusts across Manila Bay, any of

GO 101, War Department, Washington, D. C., 8 November 1945 (cont'd)

which would have meant early disaster in Bataan. Under constant air attack, these units, despite heavy losses in men and material, maintained a magnificent defense and through their ability, courage, and devotion to duty contributed in large measure to the prolonged defense of the Bataan Peninsula.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

G. C. MARSHALL
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

s/ Edward F. Witsell
EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
Acting The Adjutant General

CASUALTIES^{1&2}

| | <u>Officers</u> | <u>Enlisted</u> |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Killed in Action | 7% | 4% |
| Missing in Action | 1.5% | 2% |
| Killed in Action (after surrender-- drowning, bombing, execution, etc.) | 33% | 12.7% |
| Dead (nonbattle) | <u>25%</u> | <u>43%</u> |
| | 65.5% | 49.5% |

Out of the 85 officers and 1067 enlisted men of the Provisional Tank Group, United States Army Forces in the Far East who actually reached the Philippines, there follows a numerical list of casualties:

| | <u>Officers</u> | <u>Enlisted</u> |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Killed in Action (Prior to 9 April 1942) | 6 | 41 |
| Killed in Action (In POW status) | 28 | 136 |
| Died as a result of disease and starvation | 22 | 432 |

Wounded in action reports are not available, as records were destroyed and lost at the close of the campaign, April 1942.

FIRSTS OF THE PROVISIONAL TANK GROUP^{1&2}

1. First Plane Downed by Armored Force Soldiers. During the initial attack by the Japanese upon CLARK FIELD, Technical Sergeant Zemon Bardowski, Company B, 192d Tank Battalion, shot down one of the enemy attackers as the planes swept in to strafe and bomb. This was the first enemy plane to the credit of the Armored Force in World War II.

2. First Armored Force Soldier Killed: During the initial attack at CLARK FIELD, Private Brooks of Company D, 192d Tank Battalion (attached to 194th Tank Battalion), was struck and killed. He was the first Armored Force soldier to fall in World War II.

3. First Prisoners Captured: During the period 10-13 December members of the Tank Group brought into FORT STOTSENBURG three Japanese aviators (apparently naval) that had been rescued from the NEGROTOS. These aviators were the first of the enemy to be taken in World War II.

4. First Tank Lost in World War II: During the action in the area of DAMORTIS; 22 December 1941, Lieutenant Morin, who was leading a platoon, ran into a tank force of Japanese. His tank was hit and burned as he was attempting to maneuver out of the trap. Here was lost the first tank in World War II.

5. First Armored Force Soldiers Captured: In the above action Lieutenant Morin and his crew of three managed to escape from the burning tank, but were taken by the enemy. These were the first Armored Force soldiers to be taken by the enemy. Their survival was not known until May 1942.

6. First Armored Force Soldier Killed in Tank Action: In the

same action in which Lieutenant Morin lost his tank the platoon sergeant of the unit had his tank hit. The shot was a direct hit at the ball and socket joint of the bow gun. The shot entered the tank and decapitated the assistant driver, Private Henry Deckert, Company B, 192d Tank Battalion. He was the first Armored Force soldier to be killed in a tank versus tank battle in World War II.

7. The first armored officer to fall in action was Captain Walter Wright, Company A, 192d Tank Battalion, at CABANATUAN, 24 December 1941.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 5

¹After Action Report, Provisional Tank Group, 1941-1942.

²Personal Notes and Orders of Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver, Commanding General, Provisional Tank Group, USAFFE.

³Military Monograph--First United States Tank Action in World War II, by Lt Col Thomas Dooley, The Armored School, 1 May 1948.

⁴"Bataan Uncensored," a book by Colonel E. B. Miller, Commanding Officer of the 194th Tank Battalion.

PART III

1944-1945 CAMPAIGN

CHAPTER 6

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE 754TH MEDIUM TANK BATTALION¹

Behind the battle efficiency of any combat unit there exists an essential complex organization. This organizational structure of men and material is purposely planned to operate at maximum efficiency. This is necessary if the unit is to successfully accomplish the primary role for which it is intended.

The initial organization is sometimes a perpetual maze of designations and reorganizations. Such was the case of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion. The throes of this unit's organization are presented here in condensed form.

On 1 June 1941, at PINE CAMP, NEW YORK, the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was activated. Its nucleus was a cadre from the 1st Armored Division of FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY, with filler personnel from The Armored Force Training Center, FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY. The battalion was activated under T/O 17-45, dated 15 November 1940, with a strength of 33 officers and 600 enlisted men. Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Wallace was placed in command.

On 29 December 1941, under T/O 17-55, dated 15 November 1940, the battalion was redesignated the 754th Light Tank Battalion and placed in GHQ Reserve.

The battalion departed from PINE CAMP, NEW YORK, for FORT DIX, NEW JERSEY, arriving the following day to await overseas shipment. Leaving FORT DIX two days later, the battalion arrived at the Brooklyn

Army Base, loaded on the US Army Transport, JOHN ERICSSON, and put out to sea on 20 January 1942 as part of Task Force 6814. Arriving at COLON, PANAMA CANAL ZONE, on 31 January 1942, the ship passed through the PANAMA CANAL and left BALBOA 1 February 1942.

After an uneventful trip, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, was reached on 27 February 1942. The battalion was billeted in private homes at BALLARAT, AUSTRALIA, and set sail from MELBOURNE on 6 March. Arriving at NOUMEA, NEW CALDONIA, on 12 March 1942, the battalion became part of the Americal Division.

On 18 November 1942, the status of the battalion was redesignated part of the First Island Command.

Company C left NEW CALEDONIA for GUADALCANAL on 4 May 1943, arriving on 9 May, but departed 20 June to rejoin the battalion at NEW CALEDONIA. On 6 August 1943, Companies A and C, plus detachments from Headquarters and Service Companies, and the Medical Detachment, left for GUADALCANAL from NEW CALEDONIA, arriving on 14 August, and were assigned to the XIV Corps.

There were no changes in the organization; the battalion still being designated as a light tank battalion. However, under T/O&E 17-25, dated 15 September 1943, per General Order Number 358, Headquarters, USAFISPA, dated 7 November 1943, the battalion was reorganized as the 754th Medium Tank Battalion.

During the period 6 January to 1 April, the campaign of the NORTHERN SOLOMONS had been taking place. The battalion was used by the XIV Corps as reserve troops, and given the mission of defending the perimeter at EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY on BOUGAINVILLE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

On 1 November the battalion, under command of Major Leroy C. Arndt, was instructed by XIV Corps to conduct mock landing exercises preparatory to embarking for an unannounced destination, which later turned out to be the landings for the M-I operation at LINGAYEN GULF. For characteristics of this operation, see Chapter 7, "Operations of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 6

¹History and Organization of the 754th Tank Battalion.

ROSTER OF OFFICERS
754th Tank Battalion
As of 9 January 1945

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Serial No.</u> |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Headquarters and Headquarters Company</u> | | |
| Arndt, Leroy C. | Lt Col | 0-321277 |
| Brothers, Benjamin M. | Major | 0-450578 |
| Amorell, Gino F. | Captain | 0-416187 |
| Hargrove, Elmo M. | Captain | 0-388188 |
| Labash, Andrew A. | Captain | 0-425290 |
| Campbell, Frank M. | 1st Lt | 0-1013100 |
| Ellis, George V. | 1st Lt | 0-1287848 |
| Roland, Francis P. | 1st Lt | 0-1013554 |
| Walter, Samuel C. | 1st Lt | 0-1296948 |
| Baynar, Anthony F. Jr | 1st Lt | 0-1017366 |
| Jedlicka, Otto J. | 1st Lt | 0-1293259 |
| <u>Service Company</u> | | |
| Ellis, Quertin C. | Captain | 0-400371 |
| | <u>Company A</u> | |
| Rogers, Coy D. | Captain | 0-1698151 |
| | <u>Company B</u> | |
| Sheehy, William E. | 1st Lt | 0-2042735 |
| | <u>Company C</u> | |
| McNee, William E. | 1st Lt | 0-2042734 |
| | <u>Company D</u> | |
| Sellesi, John S. | Captain | 0-410583 |
| <u>Medical Detachment</u> | | |
| Brady, Charles S. | Captain | 0-367930 |

CHAPTER 7

OPERATIONS OF THE 754TH MEDIUM TANK BATTALION

Prior to the cessation of hostilities in the LUZON campaign, there were approximately 20 tank and tank destroyer battalions on the island.¹ Obviously it would be impossible to follow the actions of each of these units in this report and as the tactics and employment of all were generally similar, this report deals only with the 754th Medium Tank Battalion. It is believed that the actions, tactics, and methods of employment of this battalion were generally typical of the employment of armor on LUZON.

An opportunity for armor to function in its traditional role, especially in the principle of mass, was predicted to materialize by the return of the American Army to the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS in the fall of 1944. The Island of LEYTE, however, was not expected to offer advantageous terrain. As the planning stage for the invasion of the Island of LUZON materialized, it was believed that the broad LUZON PLAIN, which extends from LINGAYEN GULF (area of initial landings) to MANILA, would be ideal for tank operations.²

The bulk of armor in the PACIFIC consisted of separate tank and tank destroyer battalions. Prior to the LUZON operation, these battalions were attached to first one, then another, infantry division. It was found that this type of employment was not especially conducive to properly formulating the tank-infantry team. It was only after rigorous and comprehensive training to instill familiarization of the elements of the tank-infantry team with each others capabilities and

limitations that, for the most part, a splendid spirit of cooperation evolved during the LUZON operation.

Units of these tank battalions were widely separated on occasions during the LUZON campaign, which produced a series of difficulties. A tank company is not organized to function properly logistically or tactically for long periods when separated from its parent organization. In most cases where one company was attached to a division, that company found itself split up with platoons or sections operating in support of regiments.

Before delving into the actual landings, let us touch briefly on the planning and training stage, which ultimately delivered the XIV Corps to its objective on the LINGAYEN GULF area. This illustrates the vast planning necessary in forming a confident, well-trained team of combined arms.

On 1 November 1944, the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was instructed by XIV Corps to be prepared to conduct mock loading and landing exercises preparatory to embarking for an unannounced destination. The interval prior to this date was utilized in the preparation of personnel and equipment for the expected operation.

On 30 November 1944, the 754th Medium Tank Battalion (minus Company B) was attached to the 37th Infantry Division for overwater movement. Company A was attached for both overwater movement and operational control. After plan for the movement were completed and logistical data was prepared, elements of the tank battalion (minus Company B) conducted mock landings with the 37th Infantry Division on the beaches of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. At the conclusion of these exercises,

the unit was tactically loaded on its assigned landing ships. Company B, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, was tactically loaded on four LSMs, and on 15 December 1944, proceeded to NEW GUINEA for practice landings with the 40th Infantry Division.

The mission of the battalion (minus Companies A and B) for the initial phase of the LUZON operation was to remain afloat in the objective area, in XIV Corps reserve, in preparation for landing on the appropriate beach to reinforce either the 37th or 40th Infantry Division. The missions of Companies A and B were to support their respective infantry divisions during the initial landings.

The assault landings on LUZON took place on 9 January 1945, in LINGAYEN GULF, with Sixth Army commanding the operations. Two corps, I Corps and XIV Corps, composed of two divisions each, plus supporting corps troops, landed abreast. Each corps had one medium tank battalion attached. The 716th Medium Tank Battalion was attached to I Corps and the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was attached to XIV Corps.

As the invasion armada steamed into LINGAYEN GULF, we find the 754th Medium Tank Battalion (minus Companies A and B) still in floating XIV Corps reserve. Company A landed with elements of the 37th Infantry Division and moved overland to CANANOLA without engaging in any tank operations. Company B, landing with the 40th Infantry Division, saw only one minor action during the period, when its first platoon was called upon for direct support in the vicinity of PORT SAUL. The tanks fired at close range into enemy occupied pillboxes and trenches in the 185th Regimental sector, after which the infantry was able to proceed and the tank platoon withdrew to its company bivouac.³

59



The infantry in both division sectors were generally able to advance rapidly without encountering any organized resistance.

During the period 11-17 January 1945, the tanks engaged in no armored action. The 2d Platoon, Company B, was called upon to support elements of the 160th Infantry Regiment in its march on AGUILAR, but were not used, as the infantry moved into the town virtually unopposed.

The terrain to this point dictated that traffic be virtually roadbound. Passage over the rice paddies was barely possible, and there was no likelihood that tanks could traverse the numerous fish ponds. Because of this, reconnaissance parties were sent out, in most cases, to determine possibilities of employing tanks to advantage from a terrain standpoint. It was found that when tanks could not traverse difficult terrain, they could be employed to the best advantage as mobile artillery, and in many instances were used as such. An additional difficulty was encountered. The enemy was destroying bridges as he withdrew. The tanks, perforce, had to await reconstruction of these bridges.

At the close of this period, which brought the units up to the broad LUZON PLAIN, the Japanese forces had not been encountered in any appreciable numbers. The 754th Medium Tank Battalion (minus Companies A and B) was still in Corps reserve in the vicinity of BINMALEY. Company A was bivouacked in the 40th Infantry Division zone at MANGATAREM.⁴

Thus the period beginning on 18 January 1945 found the 754th Medium Tank Battalion located on the very edge of the broad LUZON PLAIN. It was poised and eager for combat, as this terrain was considered to be the most favorable for the employment of tanks. It was with keen disappointment for the tankers to cross the entire area without having

once been called upon for support to the infantry. The Japanese elected not to defend the open terrain of the central LUZON PLAINS and our infantry forces encountered little organized enemy defenses. Thus the prime opportunity for the tanks to follow the principles of fire and maneuver had been lost for the moment.⁵

The crossing of the Central LUZON PLAINS was characterized by rapid movements and delays due to the inability to cross the many deep rivers where bridges had been destroyed by the retreating Japanese. Infantry forces moved rapidly ahead, taking advantage of the lack of resistance in the area. Whenever a bridge was completed and opened for heavy traffic, it was necessary for the tanks to make long road marches in an effort to maintain contact with the infantry and be able to give close support. This was a period of short halts and long marches, of round-the-clock driving, of handling and rehandling gas, ammunition, and other supplies. The movement of the tanks was made possible by the untiring efforts of the battalion headquarters company and service company, who furnished the details and transportation to haul the supplies of the line companies to their new locations. This enabled tank crews to devote all of their time to maintenance and preparations for their immediate tactical employment.

At the close of this operation (LUZON PLAIN), Company A was still attached to the 37th Infantry Division; Company B to the 40th Infantry Division, and the remainder of the battalion was kept in XIV Corps reserve. The entire battalion was now in the area of the central plains in a position to support the operations against enemy strong-points, installations, and defensive lines in the CLARK FIELD--FORT

STOTSENBURG area.

During the battle in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSENBURG area (26 January--7 February 1945), the battalion had at least one company of medium tanks attached in support of infantry units at all times. The action during this period was characterized by overall general support. Tanks moved up from their own bivouac area to the requested area of the infantry unit they were supporting. Their targets, in most cases, were strong points consisting of pillboxes, bunkers, and caves, along with sniper, machine gun positions, troop positions, and targets of opportunity as they appeared. Upon successful completion of their mission the tanks were released and returned to their bivouac area.

Units of the tank battalion were kept in mobile reserve in many instances during the overall operation, due to the limitations of movement imposed by unfavorable terrain and numerous mine fields. For this reason, reconnaissance parties were continually being dispatched forward searching for likely positions and good avenues of approach in preparation for anticipated operations.

The mission of security was accomplished quite frequently, both on the XIV Corps flanks and for such important troop and supply installations as deemed necessary by higher headquarters.

Maintenance of vehicles imposed a never ending problem. Maintenance was performed at every opportunity in the bivouac areas, and in some cases by tank crews or maintenance personnel working under fire, repairing or recovering equipment.

The entire operation in the central LUZON PLAIN proved to be long and difficult. The battalion was called upon to fight in terrain

most unfavorable, and in areas covered by land mines and artillery. Long hours spent in closed tanks produced many cases of battle fatigue and heat exhaustion.⁶ It was during this period that several major defects in tank-infantry combined action became painfully apparent. The principles learned from long hours of fighting in the jungles of the SOLOMON ISLANDS and the pre-invasion training between the infantry and the tanks had to be modified. Established theories and practices gave way to snap decisions. The only tactics became those of common sense applications of the unit capabilities toward the achievement of the desired results.

The detrimental effect of lack of sufficient tank-infantry training was most outstanding. Neither arm fully understood the capabilities and limitations of the other. The tankers thought the infantry misused them tactically, and in many instances the infantry felt that the tanks were reluctant to be committed to action. Convincing the infantry commanders that they should utilize the tank unit commanders as special staff officers and advisors, in some cases, was quite a problem.⁷

Let us examine in detail the first and only time in the entire LUZON campaign wherein a unit of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion had occasion to engage in an armored battle of tank versus tank.

During the phase of operations in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSSENBERG area, a platoon of Company D, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, was supporting the 3d Battalion, 129th Regiment, 37th Infantry Division, in its advance generally west from the village of DAU on HIGHWAY 3, through the village of SAPANGABATO, and into the hills ("D") to the west.

(See figure 2, "Small Unit Action," page 67.)

Company D, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, to maintain closer support of elements of the 129th Infantry, had established its command post in a lumber yard approximately 1000 yards southwest of DAU, where a reserve tank platoon was held in readiness. The 129th Regimental Commander and the Commander of Company D were keeping abreast of the situation by accompanying the units in their advance, while the Executive Officer of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was observing a section of the tank platoon which was in support of the operations,

The advance of the combined units was rapid, as the Japanese forces elected to withdraw into the protection of the hills at "D." It was felt that the presence of the supporting tanks hastened this decision.

While passing through the village of SAPANGBATO (which was only lightly defended by the enemy and very quickly overcome) the Executive Officer of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion requested permission of the 129th Regimental Commander to shell various houses therein, which presented likely hiding places for the Japanese defenders. Since the village was occupied by his units with apparent ease, permission was refused.

The force then passed through the village and to a point approximately 2000 yards beyond, on the trail leading into the Japanese positions on the hills at "D." At this point it became necessary to refuel the tanks and replenish their supply of ammunition. As this could not be accomplished in such an exposed position under direct observation by the enemy forces; it was requested that the tanks be allowed to with-

draw to cover and concealment afforded by the lumber yard at their company command post, a distance of approximately five miles. Permission was granted after the company commander agreed to send the reserve tank platoon forward to replace the unit being withdrawn.

Under the covering fires of two 105-mm self propelled M7's (see figure 2) the tank platoon began its withdrawal. At the same time the reserve platoon was on its way to take over the supporting role. The withdrawal was uneventful until the eastern edge of SAPANGBATO was reached. Without warning, six Japanese medium tanks began pursuing the platoon from within the village, meanwhile firing on the M7's and a platoon of the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion on its way north to FORT STOTSENBURG. The enemy tanks destroyed one vehicle in each of these two units.

The withdrawing tank platoon of Company D immediately deployed off the road at point "C" and returned the fire. At exactly the same moment that the Japanese tanks opened fire, the reserve platoon had reached crossroad "B" where it immediately deployed in battle formation. By maneuvering in area "C" with the already deployed tank platoon as the base of fire, the reserve platoon was successful in destroying four of the enemy tanks. During this action the remaining two enemy tanks withdrew to the west, and were later encountered emplaced as strong points in the defense of hills "D" where they were subsequently destroyed.

The 129th Regimental Commander and the Commander of Company D were pinned down by fire in the vicinity of the M7's, but were able, along with the battalion executive officer who was with the base of fire unit, to observe the entire action.

It was determined following the action that the Japanese tanks had taken refuge in concealed positions under the houses of the village (which were built on stilts some distance above the ground) and by remaining quiet and motionless, were undetected during the tank-infantry units advance through the village.

As the infantry was some distance ahead of the tank action, the tanks did not enjoy the immediate support of ground troops. No damage was suffered by the tanks of Company D,⁸

Thus units of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion took advantage of an unexpected situation and by exploiting their characteristics of fire and maneuver to the fullest, were successful in destroying a force that, if left unmolested, could have presented a difficult and serious problem.

As the units moved in for the battle of MANILA (7 February--4 March 1945) we find the 754th Medium Tank Battalion (minus Company B) in the vicinity as XIV Corps reserve.

Throughout this operation there was at least one company left behind in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSENBURG area, engaged in the mopping up operations which finally drove the enemy back into the hills. Company B was the first unit thus assigned.

During the operation in support of attacks leading to the liberation of MANILA, the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was to support, at various times, the 37th and 40th Infantry Divisions, and the 1st Cavalry Division.

Thus began a new type of warfare for the tanks as well as for the infantry. Previously the battalion had not operated against enemy

SMALL UNIT ACTION (SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM)

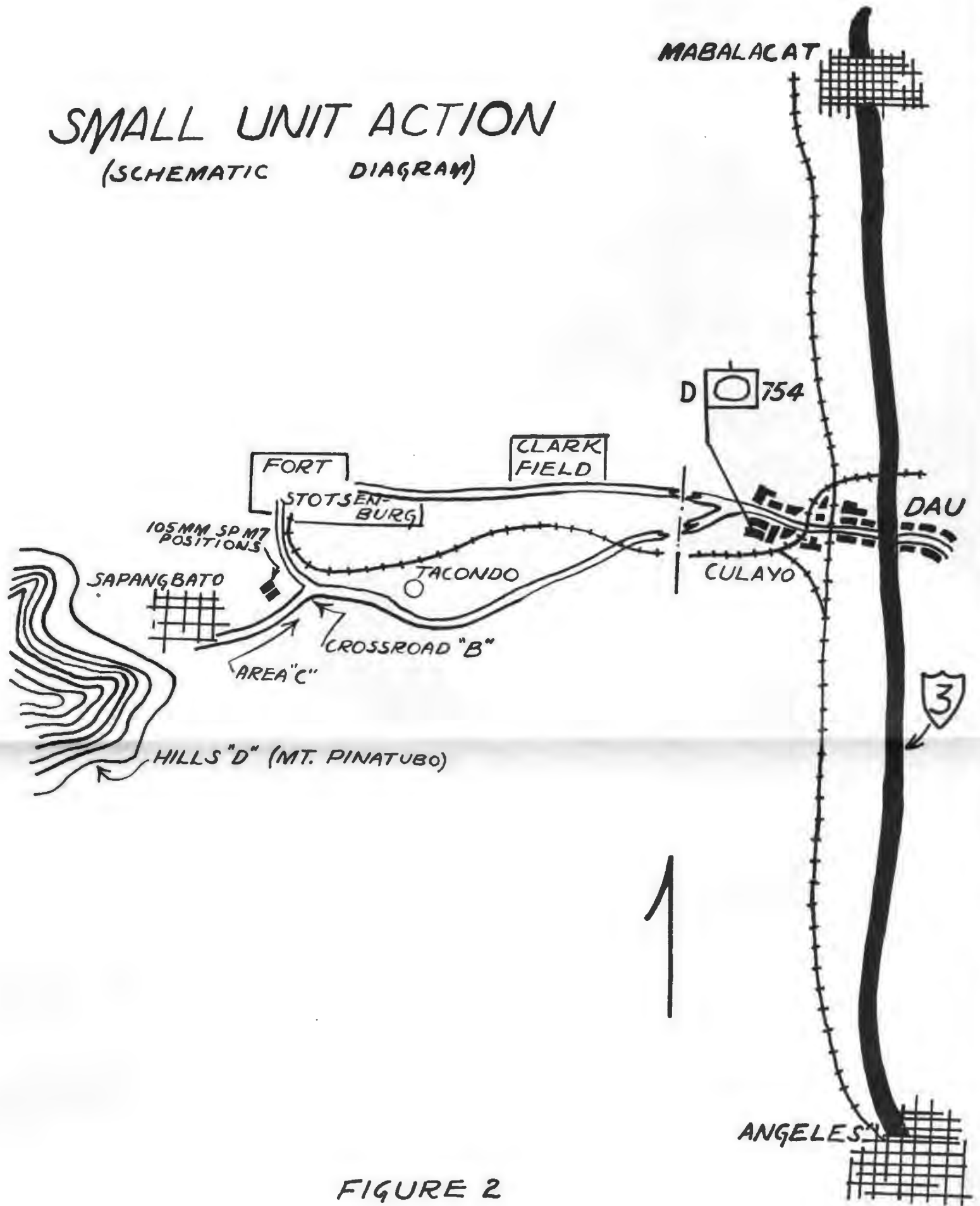


FIGURE 2

installations in cities or specific built-up areas. Tank tactics had to be revised and made more flexible to meet the changes in conditions. Tanks were used primarily as mobile artillery, firing point blank at strong points within the city and aiding in the reduction of road blocks. An increased hazard from mine fields was encountered, especially in the narrow streets through which the infantry was unable to move with any rapidity. Mine sappers found it extremely difficult to clear lanes through the mine fields, due to the great number of strong points covering all approaches. The clearing of many streets was, for that reason, very hasty and as a result the battalion lost several tanks on streets which had supposedly been cleared of mines.⁹

It was found, by the type of fighting experienced in MANILA, that the 75-mm gun was too small to have much, if any, effect against the heavy fortifications found in that city. Enemy snipers stationed in buildings forced the tanks to remain buttoned up, which in turn hampered their efficiency. Snipers hindered communication with the ground troops, as the infantry could not expose themselves to communicate with the tank crew over the external interphone mounted on the rear of the tank.¹⁰

On 9 February 1945, the 754th Medium Tank Battalion (minus Companies A and B) was in the vicinity of GRACE PARK, MANILA, in XIV Corps reserve. Company B was still on the mopping up operation in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSENBERG area. Company A moved to the vicinity of BILIBID PRISON, MANILA. It was assigned to a special force engaged in securing the 37th Infantry Division sector of the MANILA area which was on the north bank of the PASIG RIVER. For the next five days the

69



191753

company conducted motorized patrols of the city streets, cooperating with guerilla forces in driving out snipers and stray Japanese, firing on the Japanese held southern sector of the city, and disrupting Japanese barge traffic on the river.

On 14 February, after the successful crossing of the PASIG RIVER, the tank battalion was assigned as follows: Battalion (minus) remained in GRACE PARK, MANILA; Company A was still supporting the 37th Infantry Division; Company D replaced Company B in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSENBURG area, and Company C was attached to the 38th Infantry Division on BATAAN peninsula.

On 20 February, Company A was attached to the 1st Cavalry Division, and Company B was attached to the 37th Infantry Division. Thus we find each of the tank companies attached to four different divisions and, for the most part, on widely separated fronts, with Companies A and B in the MANILA area, Company C on the BATAAN peninsula, and Company D in the CLARK FIELD--FORT STOTSENBURG area.

An example of the tremendous hardships in both command and logistics, the manner in which units of the tank battalions were divided and the diversified missions assigned them is vividly exemplified in the following extract from the after-action report of the 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 23 February 1945:

...Company A, in support of the 1st Squadron, 5th Cavalry Regiment, shelled the last enemy strong points in the university buildings. The 3d platoon fought in close-fire support of the cavalry advance in the area from the Army and Navy Club to the Manila Hotel. One tank was dispatched to the rotunda to offer protection to an outpost in that area. The tank fired into the INTRAMUROS district with undetermined results.

The 2d Platoon of Combat B participated in the artillery barrage of INTRAMUROS from a position in the vicinity of the City Hall. The tanks fired continuously at the rate of two rounds per minute per tank. The target designated was the southwest section of the walled city. The 3d platoon supported the 129th Infantry Regiment in their attack on the northeast section of the walled city. The 1st platoon, in support of the 3d Battalion, 145th Infantry Regiment, offered direct fire support in the assault on the Finance Building and the Legislative Building.

Company C closed BALANGA, BATAAN Province, and moved to OLONGAPO, BATAAN Province. This company had not yet participated in any action on the BATAAN peninsula due to the lack of enemy resistance.

The 1st platoon of Company D, in support of the 3d Battalion of the 108th Infantry Regiment, supported the infantry in an attack on HILL 11, southwest of BAMBAN. In a combined tank-infantry assault, our forces succeeded in destroying the enemy positions and securing the objective. The 3d platoon supported the 2d Battalion of the 185th Infantry Regiment in that unit's attack upon a series of unnamed hills in the regimental sector.

The rear echelon, Headquarters and Service Companies, landed at LINGAYEN BEACH on this date and rejoined the parent companies at GRACE PARK, MANILA, after a long road march.

The 754th Tank Battalion (minus) remained in the vicinity of GRACE PARK, MANILA.

This report covers only a period of one day, yet appears to be typical of most days of combat operations of armor on LUZON.

Armor's role in the battle of MANILA was characterized by hazardous mine fields in the narrow streets and along good avenues of approach; direct fire missions on Japanese-held portions of the city; and the support of infantry by direct fire against strong points, fortified positions, and snipers. Mopping up operations were ever present, as were security missions along the PASIG RIVER and the flanks of the XIV Corps. Except for scattered Japanese antitank guns and motor gun carriages, tanks did not play a major part in the defense of the

city. Units of the tank battalion found no opportunity to engage in action against enemy tanks during the period.

After the battle of MANILA, operations for the 754th Medium Tank Battalion were shifted to the hills east of MANILA, the SHIMBU LINE, and the BALETE PASS area in northern LUZON. The terrain in this area was mountainous and totally unsuited for tank action, and for this reason the tanks took only a very minor part in the fighting.

In many cases, the tanks did not have sufficient motive power to get into position in this area, and had to be towed by tractors up the steep mountain roads and trails. The role of the tanks was limited to firing into enemy caves, pillboxes, strong points, and other installations. For the most part this type of action characterized the armored role through the balance of the LUZON campaign. ¹¹

An example of tanks in support of infantry occurred in the SHIMBU LINE area, which appears to be typical of the supporting role played by armor during the entire LUZON campaign. Let us examine this small unit operation in detail,

The action took place northwest of MANILA in the vicinity of the town of SAN MATEO, located in a mountainous region barely traversable by armored vehicles. (See figure 3, "Small Unit Action," page 74.)

On 15 April 1945, the 1st Battalion, 63d Regiment, 6th Infantry Division, occupied positions on the highest portion of MOUNT MATABA in the general vicinity of area "A". The Japanese forces held the "U" shaped lower ridge at point "B" extending approximately 150 yards in length from one edge of the ridge to the other. These defenses consisted of numerous machine guns, and interlocking, mutually-supporting

fox holes, connected by deep, covered pits which offered protection from all fire directed into that area. When firing ceased, the fox holes would again be occupied by the defenders and devastating fire from weapons emplaced therein would result.

Although the Japanese positions were under direct fire and observation from units of the 1st Battalion, it was impossible to advance. The attackers were forced in all cases to pass through the fire pattern laid down at point "C." It was necessary also for the 6th Division engineers to construct a road leading to the rear portion of the mountain to adequately support the operations of the 1st Battalion.

After two days of hard fighting, plus direct support from fires of seven field artillery battalions, one 4.2-inch mortar company, and all available organic weapons in the battalion, the Japanese positions were still not neutralized.

It was at this point that the 754th Medium Tank Battalion was called upon to render support to the 1st Battalion. It was felt by the commander of the 1st Battalion that because of the nature of the terrain on MOUNT MATABA and avenues of approach thereto, that two medium tanks, plus one armor-plated bulldozer from the 6th Division Engineer Battalion, would suffice for the operation.

The tanks experienced great difficulty in reaching the positions of the 1st Battalion. As has previously been brought out, their motive power was insufficient to allow them to negotiate the difficult terrain without the aid of towing vehicles.

Upon arrival in the 1st Battalion zone, plans were made, orders issued, and coordinated with all commanders concerned. It was found

SMALL UNIT ACTION

(SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM)

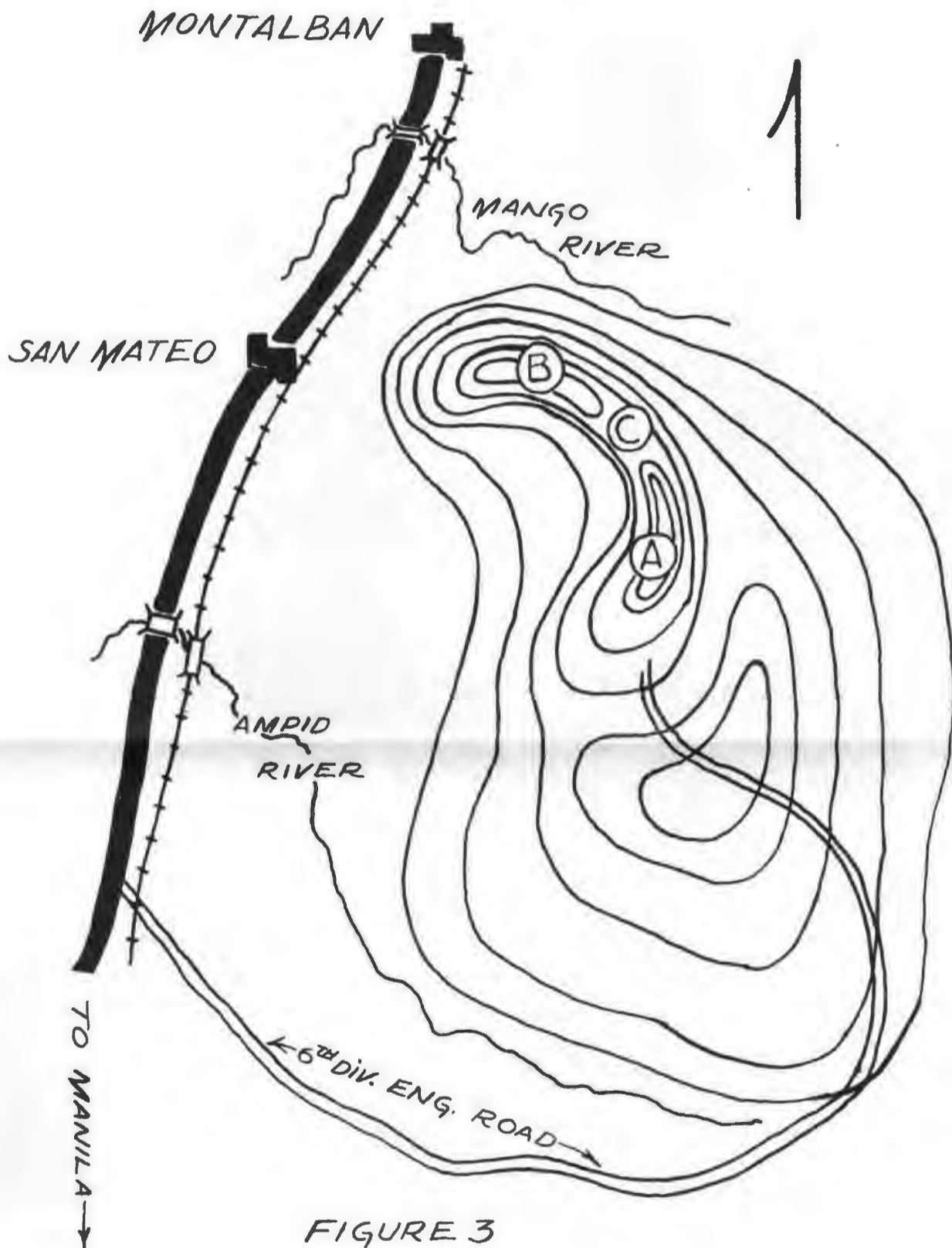


FIGURE 3

that the only suitable terrain from area "A" to area "B" over which the tanks could successfully negotiate and at the same time offer adequate support (Point C) was too narrow for their tread width. For this reason the operation was conducted in the following manner:

The armor-protected bulldozer would precede the advancing tank and widen the trail. Upon reaching a predetermined point, it would withdraw to the starting point, allowing one tank to advance over the newly constructed road, at the same time laying down its maximum volume of fire into the enemy positions. This method was supported by one platoon of infantry from Company B on either side of the advancing vehicle; the second tank from a position in the rear; fires of the field artillery battalions; the 4.2-inch chemical mortar company, and all available weapons within the 1st Battalion.

This "leap frog" action lasted approximately two and a half hours at which time the Japanese positions were overrun, with 150 enemy killed.

This operation clearly illustrates the effectiveness of armor as an integral part of a combined arms team in the attack. It was the opinion of the commanding officer, 1st Battalion, that it was only by the full utilization of the tanks' characteristics of armor-protected fire power and mobility that the Japanese positions were neutralized.¹²

Shortly before the close of the campaign the battalion was concentrated in MANILA, but this state of comparative bliss was doomed to be short lived. Extensive preparation for the invasion of JAPAN was beginning to take place. This preparation again caused the battalion to be split up. V-J Day found the units of the battalion in the following dispositions: Company A attached to the 158th Regimental

Combat Team at LEGASPI on the southern tip of LUZON; Companies B and C were on the ISLAND OF PANAY, attached to the 40th Infantry Division; Company D was at APPARRI, on the northern coast of LUZON, attached to the 37th Infantry Division. Each of the companies had small detachments of the Headquarters and Service Companies attached. The balance of Headquarters and Service Companies remained in MANILA.¹³

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 7

¹Major Milton T. Hunt, "The Use of Armor on Luzon," a student monograph (Fort Knox, The Armored School, 1947), p 4.

²Ibid, p 1.

³After Action Report, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, Phase I, Planning and Loading, 1 November 1944--15 December 1944.

⁴Ibid, The period 18 January 1945.

⁵Major Milton T. Hunt, "The Use of Armor on Luzon," a student monograph (Fort Knox, The Armored School, 1947), p 5.

⁶After Action Report, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, Phase V, The Battle of Clark Field--Fort Stotsenburg Area, 26 January--7 February 1945.

⁷Major Milton T. Hunt, "The Use of Armor on Luzon," a student monograph (Fort Knox, The Armored School, 1947), p 6.

⁸Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

⁹After Action Report, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, Phase VI, The Battle of Manila, 7 February 1945--4 March 1945.

¹⁰Major Milton T. Hunt, "The Use of Armor on Luzon," a student monograph (Fort Knox, The Armored School, 1947), pp 7-10.

¹¹After Action Report, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, Phase VII, The 754th Tank Battalion in Support of Infantry Action in the Hills North and Northeast of Manila, 6 March 1945--30 June 1945.

¹²Personal Interview, Lt Col B. F. Morgan, formerly Commanding 1st Battalion, 63d Regiment, 6th Infantry Division, Feb--Jul 1945.

¹³After Action Report, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, Phase VII, The
754th Tank Battalion in Support of Infantry Action in the Hills North
and Northeast of Manila, 6 March 1945--30 June 1945.

CHAPTER 8

STAFF STUDIES

Study of the G-1 Situation

General. The G-1 plan for the LUZON operation was formulated while the LEYTE operation was still in progress.¹ The resultant time, for detailed study, formation of administrative procedures, conferences, and dissemination of methods and instructions to subordinate units returned a handsome dividend in the smooth, efficient handling of the myriads of administrative minutiae so necessary to the control of a modern army.

The dissemination of information, due partly to this preplanning, was so extensive as to approach the ideal.² Units were so well-informed that each had, at the time of its embarkation, knowledge of its planned employment upon reaching the objective area. Information was also furnished as to which higher command it would be assigned or attached. The usual confusion, so often evident in operations of this kind, was markedly reduced, especially with respect to unit locations and to status of units in the objective area. This preplanning, analysis, establishment of procedures, and particularly the widespread dissemination of the information to subordinate units make this a noteworthy phase of the campaign.

Replacements. The usual bugaboos of the replacement system employed at that time by the entire army cropped up during the LUZON operation. The individual replacement found himself a member of several successive heterogeneous units, being shunted from place to place,

having little or no opportunity to "find" himself until he arrived at a combat command.

Prior to the commencement of hostilities on LUZON, the Commanding General, Sixth Army, requested of the Theater Commander sufficient replacements to bring all units to table of organization strength, plus ten per cent overstrength at the time of embarkation.³ The 754th Tank Battalion did not have a ten per cent overstrength at the time of embarkation.⁴ The forecast of estimated replacements for the first 30 days of the campaign was set as 3000. Actually received during the period of 9 January to 30 June 1945, by the Sixth Army, were 1544 officer replacements and 50,396 enlisted men of all arms and services. This was in response to an estimated three months requirement of 45,699, of which approximately ten per cent were to be officers. A notable point was that of the 1544 officers replacements received, only 42 of all arms and services were of field grade.⁵ It is felt that a higher percentage of field grade officers should have been delivered.

The 12th Replacement Battalion was the sole replacement installation on LUZON until 15 March 1945.⁶ On 8 February 1945, the 12th Replacement Battalion passed from Sixth Army control to the Replacement Command. Replacements were processed at the 4th Replacement Depot on LEYTE and the 5th Replacement Depot at ORO BAY, NEW GUINEA, until subsequently the 5th Replacement Depot was moved into MANILA.

The 12th Replacement Battalion received the replacements, and after receiving assignment instructions from the Sixth Army, generally supervised and expedited deliveries to units. In this system of deliveries again some of the complaints against the replacement system reared up.

The most feasible system during this period of the operation was for both major and smaller units to pick up their own replacements when possible. Meager transportation and inability of some units to pick up their replacements forced the replacement battalion to deliver replacements peddler fashion to small and scattered units. This had to be done in order to facilitate delivery and fully utilize the little transportation available. This problem of moving replacements was further complicated by the fact that the forces for whom they were intended were rapidly advancing. Greatly alleviating this critical shortage of transportation was the subsequent repair and operation of the railroad from LINGYEN to MANILA. Additional relief came in the use of USASOS casual camps for delivery of small groups of replacements to Sixth Army units. The 754th Tank Battalion was not particularly affected by these acute replacement problems, as the battalion required few replacements, totaling approximately 35 or 40 officers and men.⁷

On the whole, replacements were satisfactory, both in type and training, with only a few notable exceptions, mainly in a deficiency in the number of clerks and in the inadequate retraining of former AAF and CAC enlisted personnel as infantrymen. These personnel, frequently of the higher noncommissioned grades, perforce had to be assigned to combat divisions.

Some difficulty was encountered in the assignment of a large number of replacements less than 19 years old. By law, it was required that none be committed to action without completing six months training. This was accomplished by assigning this group to those divisions whose tactical situation best permitted special training.

In all, it is felt that ten per cent personnel overstrength is necessary for an amphibious operation. Further, the replacement flow should begin early and continue to keep units at effective strength rather than at assigned table of organization strength. Replacement units should be placed under army control to insure rapid, efficient processing and assignment of replacements, and army should control and effect the supply of replacements to units attached. The replacement system suffered from inadequate personnel, supplies, and transportation, and unfortunately, these inadequacies were passed on to the replacements in the form of personal discomforts. The replacement system, considering its equipment and organization, however, successfully accomplished its mission.

Casualties and returns. Casualties. For detailed information, see Annexes 1 and 2, pages 85 and 86.

Readjustment program. On 15 April 1945, information was received by the heavily engaged Sixth Army relative to the readjustment program. Inasmuch as this placed an additional administrative burden on the already overtaxed personnel section because of the very limited period of reporting, it is not surprising that units engaged in close combat perforce obtained basic information of the program from personnel in the most advanced areas. A tremendous amount of clerical effort had to be expended in formulating and disseminating the instructions pertaining to readjustment, in the distribution of Adjusted Service Rating (ASR) cards, and in the preparation, consolidation, and submission of these reports.

The 754th Tank Battalion had no personnel involved in this re-

adjustment program until after the entire operation on LUZON was completed.⁸

Recovered personnel. Recovered military personnel always presents complex problems, and these problems were present on LUZON. These problems were further complicated by the absence of an overall theater plan to meet the situation, by conflicting instructions, and the lack of physical means available to accomplish the task.⁹⁻¹⁰

Morale. Postal Service. Nothing improves morale as greatly as the prompt delivery of mail. It is mandatory that maximum effort be expended to insure the early arrival of mail in the objective area and its delivery in a secure, presentable condition. On the whole, mail service to the 754th Tank Battalion was good,¹¹ but this cannot be said of the entire army. Christmas packages, for example, were delayed until April.¹² The climatic conditions for the area added to the damaged condition of many packages and much first-class mail.

Special Services. Motion picture service appeared to be more than adequate and was well received. Such additional services as Post Exchange facilities were installed more or less on a post, camp, or station basis, and serviced units in the corps area in which they were serving.¹³

Rests and leaves. Areas were set up for rest and rehabilitation. One such area was near the RIZAL MONUMENT on HIGHWAY 3 north of MANILA, which was utilized by the 754th Tank Battalion, among other units.¹⁴

Decorations and awards. While the 754th Tank Battalion did not participate in any mass battalion awards, they were not lacking in representation in this field. The 754th Tank Battalion received, among

other awards, 46 Purple Hearts, approximately 15 Bronze Stars, and four Silver Stars.¹⁵

Miscellaneous. Straggler control. Corps were charged with straggler control within their respective areas.¹⁶ Stragglers thus collected were processed through ASCOM and corps casual camps. Operations indicated that corps, division, and separate regimental combat team commanders must provide, in their initial plan, for the establishment of mobile casual camps. The nature of amphibious operations in the Southwest PACIFIC area, the wide dispersion of forces, and the inadequate transportation facilities rendered it imperative that such camps be established as early as possible.

The purpose of these camps, in addition to returning casualties to their respective units, was to re-equip them if any deficiencies in clothing, weapons, or other equipment were noted.

Prisoners of war. The number of prisoners of war in the LUZON campaign was much greater than in any previous operation.¹⁷ The 754th Tank Battalion was under instructions to take any prisoners of war to XIV Corps enclosures. The 754th Tank Battalion did not take any prisoners of war in action. The only prisoners of war taken by the battalion were those Nipponese soldiers straggling into MANILA.¹⁸

Graves registration, burials, and effects. This service was performed by organic quartermaster troops of the Sixth Army.

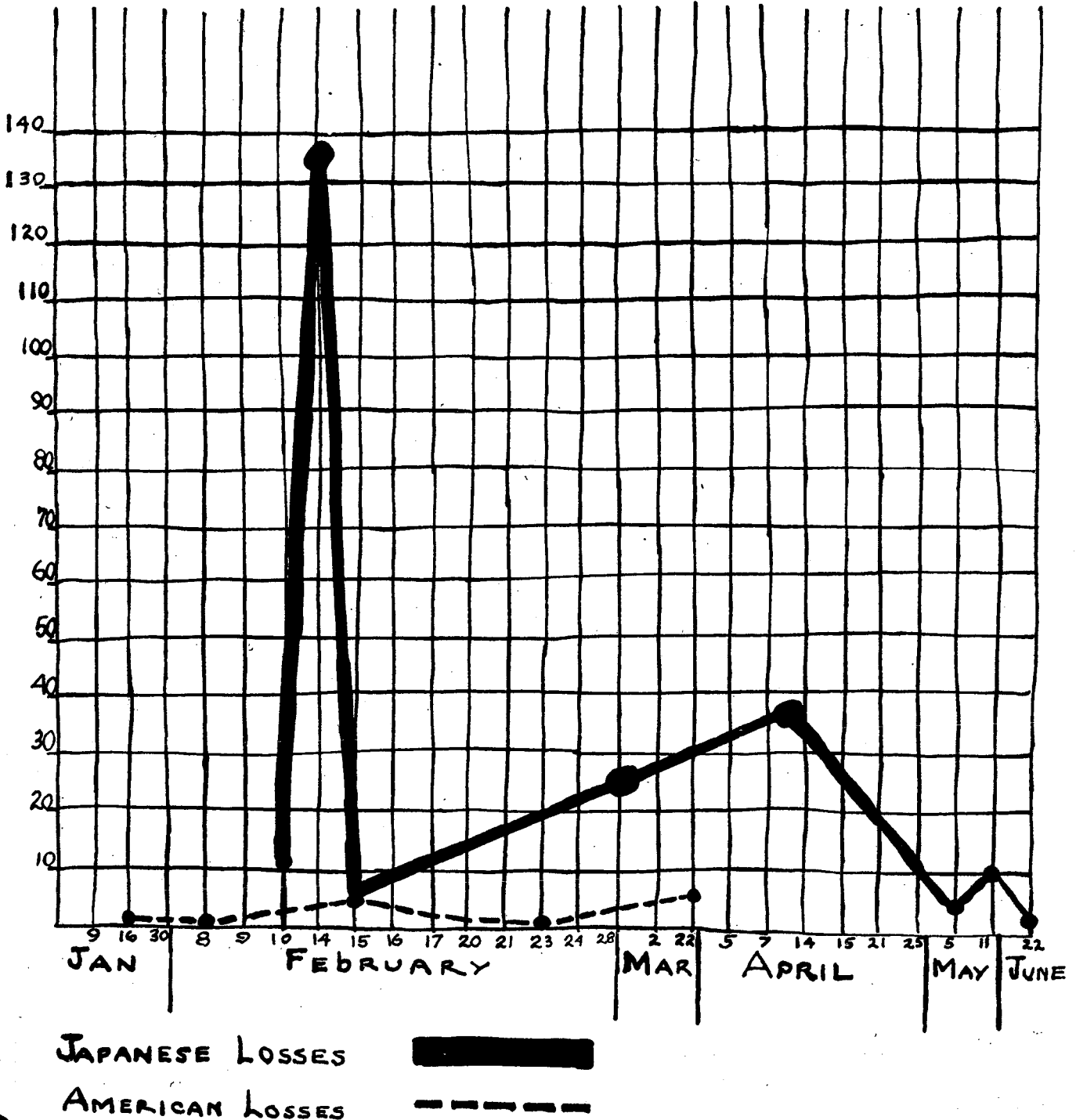
Guerrilla activities. Little information concerning guerrilla activities was available to Sixth Army units prior to the initial landings on LUZON. Shortly after the initial landings, Filipino units, claiming to be guerrillas, contacted many units. Their units, for the

most part, were poorly trained, poorly equipped, and poorly armed. Guerrilla units were attached for supply operations and hospitalization to the United States Army employing them. As the operation progressed, more and more of these guerrillas appeared.¹⁹

Many guerrilla units had as members and usually as leaders, United States Army personnel, and civilians who had either avoided capture by, or escaped from, the Japanese. They usually remained on duty with the guerrilla unit until the need for that particular unit was no longer required. One guerrilla unit, in particular, about the size and organization of a division, was well-organized, exceptionally well-trained, and efficiently led in battle by a United States Army officer who had escaped from BATAAN.²⁰

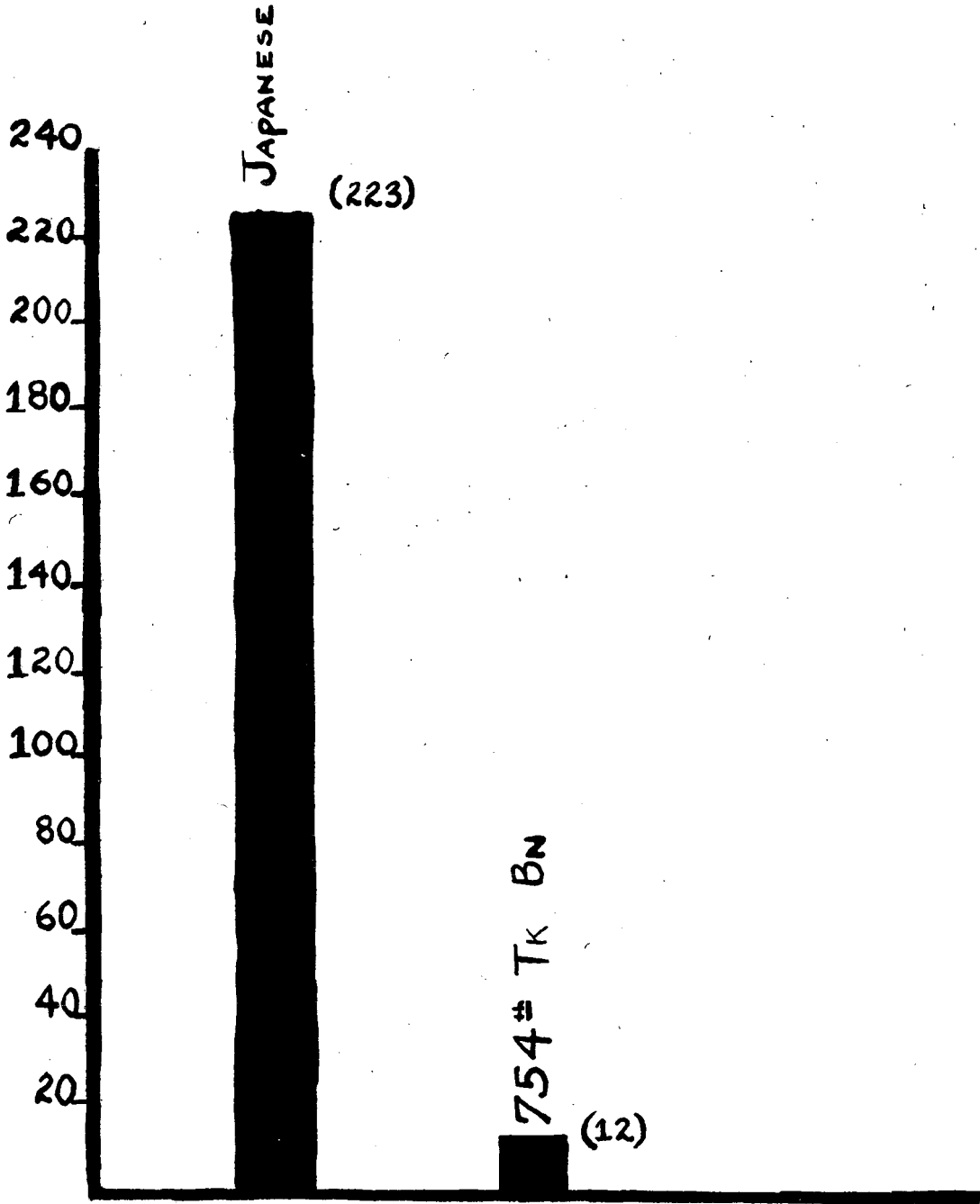
TABLE 1^o

CASUALTY COMPARISON BY DATE 754th TK BN AND OPPOSING JAPANESE FORCES 9 JAN - 30 JUNE 1945



@ AFTER ACTION REPORT - 754th TK BN - JULY 45.

TABLE 2^o
COMPARATIVE LOSSES
9 JAN - 30 JUNE 45



● - After Action Report - 754th TK BN - July 45.

Study of the G-2 Situation

Japanese armored tactics. The tank was considered predominantly as an offensive weapon. This factor, in conjunction with the general view of the Japanese, permitted very little attention to be paid to defensive tactics. Defense was resorted to only when faced with superior hostile forces and then only as a temporary operation while preparing plans for regaining the offensive.

Tactical studies in Japanese army tank schools gave precise instructions for employment of large armored formations. For attacks on lightly held positions, a minimum of 30 to 40 tanks were to be utilized. For more strongly held positions, at least 60 tanks were to be used. Commitment was to be in a "mobile mass" and in support of infantry.

Translation of captured Japanese Field Service Regulations disclosed the following principles for use of tanks in defensive situations: "With mechanized units in the defense, it is essential to utilize their maneuverability as aggressively as possible. When necessary to employ tanks for defense against superior hostile tanks, it is advantageous for our tanks to cooperate closely with artillery and antitank weapons, and to counterattack the enemy as much as possible within areas that the enemy's supporting fires cannot reach."²¹

Vulnerable points on the design and construction of Japanese tanks. All tanks were lightly armored with front plates and sides ranging from 1/4 to one inch of armor. In actual combat, 75-mm HE shells blew turrets off several tanks of the M95 series (see page 99). A 75-mm AP projectile at a range of 100 to 500 yards entered the right front of a similar model and came out the rear, leaving a hole one inch

in diameter all the way through. External exhaust manifold, suspension systems, and idlers were vulnerable to machine gun fire, while bogies could be damaged or destroyed by hand grenades. Turrets on the M95 light tank could be jammed by any small object at the turret when the turret was turned to the overhang hull position of the tank. Although the Japanese continued to improve their models, the standard was below comparable tanks used by Allied armies.

Communication systems used on the tanks by the Japanese also fell short of Allied standards. The platoon leader's tank was the lowest command tank equipped with radio communication. In the event the platoon leader became a casualty, the only means of communication available to the balance of the platoon were visual signals.²²

Japanese employment of armor on LUZON. The Japanese 2d Armored Division on LUZON constituted the first formidable armored force to oppose the advance of American troops toward TOKYO. Subsequent destruction of this force eliminated 20 per cent of the known Japanese armor. The division was believed to have been activated in MANCHURIA in late 1942 or early 1943, and had not participated in actual combat to this time. Its arrival in LUZON in early October 1944 was followed by a period of extensive training activity.²³

Prior to the landing of American forces on LUZON, the manner in which the enemy would employ his armor was a matter of conjecture. Would armor be massed and, with or without supporting infantry, deliver strong attacks on either flank or frontally? Would it be employed in mass or small groups to bolster defensive positions? Would it be used piecemeal in small localized counterattacks?

Information gained from documents captured early in the campaign indicated that the Japanese had little intention of pitting their armor against our Sherman tanks. Later information indicated that a major portion of the armor would assist in holding open an escape route through CABANATUAN, SAN JOSE, NEVA ECIJA PROVINCE, northeast into the CAGAYAN VALLEY.

By 5 March 1945, our planes, artillery, tanks, tank destroyers, and infantry antitank weapons had destroyed 203 medium and 19 light tanks, constituting 95 per cent of the 2d Armored Division. All but six had been destroyed in the MUNOZ--SAN JOSE--LUPAO--SAN MANUAL--BINALONAN--URDANETTA area. Without exception in this area, the tanks were employed defensively to stiffen positions in villages. The tanks were well dug in under heavy concealing foliage, with adobe revetments and were used as a nucleus around which all other measures of defenses were built. Alternate positions were prepared so that the tanks could be shifted about the perimeter as the situation dictated. Counterattacks were used only as a last resort when it appeared inevitable that the local defenses would fall. These limited attacks were launched under cover of darkness in support of infantry final "banzai" attacks. The tankers invariably became confused, making them easy prey for our antitank weapons. Only once did the enemy employ his armor in daylight to support an infantry attack. The three tanks and two self-propelled six-inch howitzers committed in the attack were destroyed, and three other tanks withdrew without entering the fight. The number of tanks employed in defense of the villages varied from nine at URDANETTA to 52 to MUNOZ.²⁶ These figures are based on tanks actually destroyed and do not include the few

tanks that withdrew to avoid destruction.

Order of battle. Some difficulty was encountered in establishing the enemy order of battle in the MANILA area, due to the fact that since Japanese occupation of the PHILIPPINES, this area was used extensively as a staging area for troops of the Japanese Armed Forces enroute to other areas in the South and Southwest Pacific. It appeared that almost every unit staged through MANILA left at least one individual complete with dog tag and paybook, which resulted in "contact identification" of many units of the Japanese army which were not actually present. (For troop list of 2d Armored Division, see page 96.)

Mapping and map reproduction. Mapping and map reproduction during the early stages of the campaign was satisfactory, but when our forces met stubborn resistance in the mountains, it was necessary to acquire large scale photo maps of the area. This method was not always satisfactory, due to the time lag between requests and receipt of the photos. This lag resulted in lack of timely information for use of subordinate units.²⁴

Psychological warfare. The psychological warfare campaign on LUZON was carried on under general directives of the Psychological Warfare Branch, General Headquarters. From 9 January 1945 to 30 June 1945, 29,500,000 leaflets were dropped and more than 30 loudspeaker broadcasts were made to enemy troops.

The leaflets were of three types: newspapers; general leaflets, picturing Japan's position in the war; and surrender passes including promises of good treatment. Quotations from captured enemy documents and analysis of interrogation of prisoners of war disclosed that the

leaflets were effective in lowering the enemy's morale and inducing the surrender of many of them. Keen interest and wide use of this type of warfare was displayed by lower echelons. As the lower units became more aware of its value in reducing loss of American lives, a greater spirit of cooperation in taking prisoners was shown than had been experienced in past campaigns.²⁵

Testing new US material. The Flamethrower, E7-7, mounted in the M5A1 light tank proved effective in offensive operations against enemy dug-in positions. In addition to lowering the morale and completely demoralizing enemy troops, it had the distinct effect of raising the morale of our own troops when used as a supporting weapon. Due to the limitations of the light tank as to maneuverability, power, and gradability, recommendations were later made for the installation of flamethrowers on a medium tank chassis.²⁷

Result of interviews with General Yamashita and other staff officers by 37th Division Staff.

General Tomoyuki Yamashita, the "Tiger of Malaya," assumed command of LUZON forces for the Japanese on 31 December 1944, after the relief of Field Marshal Terauchi had been effected. During Terauchi's command, no serious effort was made to properly organize the PHILIPPINES for defense.

The basic plan for the defense of the island of LUZON had been conceived in September 1944, and called for a defense in strength of the entire island, including all landing beaches, the BICOL PENINSULA, BATANGAS, MANILA BAY, and CORRIGIDOR, SUBIC BAY, LINGAYEN GULF, and the CENTRAL PLAIN, and parts of the east coast. At this time, since only two units, the 105th and 103d Brigade Divisions, were on the island, it was necessary to bring in a large number of troops from CHINA and MANCHURIA, and by October the Japanese were well organized for a strong defense of the island. Subsequent US landings in LEYTE threw the defense plans slightly off; since the 26th Infantry Division (less one regiment and transport unit), one regiment of the 8th Infantry Division, and the 1st Infantry Division, which had not even landed on LUZON, were transshipped from MANILA BAY and sent south to reinforce the troops on LEYTE.

Lieutenant General Muto, Yamashita's chief-of-staff, explained the conditions governing the Japanese conduct of the campaign as being dependent upon three basic assumptions:

1. The US would have complete air superiority by the time operations on LUZON would begin, and that our artillery and armored

forces were far superior to similar Japanese equipment.

2. Shortage of oil and fuel for the operation of available Japanese armor and mechanized equipment.

3. That the native population was hostile to the Japanese, would fight against them if armed, and would supply the US forces with valuable intelligence.

Though neither Yamashita or Muto made mention of any aversion for open country, both stated that "No matter what we do, if you decide you are going to get in somewhere, you get there."

It was not clear to Yamashita where the landings on LUZON might occur. In addition, there were not sufficient troops on the island to hold all the beaches at which we might land. It was also felt that any attempt to meet us on the flat, level plains area would provide us with excellent opportunity for full exploitation of our superior materiel. Yamashita also felt that it was impossible for him to prevent a US occupation of LUZON and regarded his mission as one to contain the maximum number of US divisions, cause great numbers of casualties, and prevent exploitation of the airfields. He assumed from the beginning that he would meet with eventual defeat. Staff officers interrogated claimed that they were aware of the fact that we would land on the shores of LINGAYEN GULF in the exact spots where the landings took place. Their estimate, based on the time interval between previous operations, was that we would land between the 10th and 20th of January 1945. They further contended that their apparent unpreparedness when we landed was the result of General Yamashita's decision that the beaches could not be successfully defended against the expected force of our attack. Planned

delaying action south of the beachhead could not be set up in time to function.

Composition and strength of the island as of January 1945 was as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Northern Sector - Code SHOBU | 10th Division | 6,500 |
| | 19th Division | 8,000 |
| | 23d Division | 12,000 |
| | 103d Division | 15,000 |
| | 105th Division | 6,000 (elements) |
| | 2d Armd Div | 6,000 |
| | Army Hq Troops | 14,000 |
| | 4th Air Army | 18,000 |
| | LofC Troops | 12,000 |
| | Signal Troops | 2,500 |
| | Other | 40,000 |
| | Total | 140,000 |
| Central Sector - Code KEMBU | 1st Airborne Gp | 13,000 |
| | Naval Air Corps | 15,000 |
| | Other | 2,000 |
| | Total | 30,000 |
| Southern Sector - Code SHIMBU | 8th Division | 8,000 |
| | 105th Division | 2,000 (elements) |
| | Manila Def Tps | 15,000 (Army) |
| | Naval Personnel | 15,000 |
| | Other | 40,000 |
| | Total | 80,000 |
| Entire LUZON area | Total | 250,000 |

Above figures were obtained from Japanese staff officers and are estimates rather than exact figures and may vary from fact.

To elaborate on a few of the basic causes, it was felt that a gross error was committed with their premature withdrawal from the beachhead area when they might have punished invading forces most seriously. Another failure lay in their employment of armor, although to some extent inadequate fuel supplies prohibited proper utilization of the 2d Armored

Division. Undue dispersal and small frittering commitments of the armored units contributed to their defeat.

While the Japanese commanders and ranking staff officers attribute American victory largely to overwhelming materiel superiority and fire power, they also attribute it in greater measure to the constant application of the basic principles of warfare—bold, relentless attack, and swift and aggressive movement.²⁸

2D ARMORED DIVISION (Japanese)²⁹

| <u>Unit</u> | <u>Strength</u> | <u>Medium Tanks</u> | <u>Light Tanks</u> | <u>Armd Cars</u> | <u>Arty Pieces</u> | <u>AT Guns</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Div Hq | 300 | 7 | 2 | | | |
| 3d Tank Brig Hq | 110 | 6 | 5 | 2 | | |
| 6th Tank Regt | 685 | 57 | 9 | 1 | | |
| 7th Tank Regt | 810 | 55 | 17 | | | |
| 10th Tank Regt | 695 | 55 | 4 | 1 | | |
| Mob Inf Regt | 1965 | | | 9 | 6 | 27 |
| Mob Arty Regt | 1260 | | | 2 | 35 | 2 |
| Engr Regt | 680 | | | 24 | | 1 |
| AT Unit | 310 | | | | | 18 |
| 1st-3d Ind AT Combat Cos | 510 | | | | | |
| Maint Unit | 460 | 17 | | | | 4 |
| Transportation Unit | 650 | | | | | |
| Sig Unit | 200 | | | | | |
| Med Unit | <u>800</u> | | | | | |
| Totals | 9435 | 197 | 37 | 39 | 41 | 52 |

97



TANKETTE 94 (M1934)³⁰

Weight: 3.27 tons.

Length: 11 feet.

Width: 5 feet, 1 inch.

Height: 5 feet, 3 inches.

Ground clearance: 11 inches.

Fording depth: 24 inches.

Speed (roads): 26.6 miles per hour.

Armor: Front: 14-mm.

Sides: 8-mm.

Armament: One 7.7 Machine Gun in turret.

Ammunition: 1980 rounds.

Engine: 4 cylinder in line, air cooled, gasoline operated.

Horsepower: 32 HP at 1700 RPM.

Transmission: 4 speeds forward; 1 reverse.

Steering: Differential brakes.

Radius of operation: 100 miles.

Gradability: 30 degrees.

Trench crossing ability: 4 feet, six inches.

Crew: 2.

LIGHT TANK 95 (M1935)³¹

Weight: 8.4 tons.

Length: 14 feet, 1 inch.

Width: 6 feet, 11 inches.

Height: 7 feet, 3 inches.

Ground clearance: 15.5 inches.

Width of track: 9.9 inches.

Fording depth: 3 feet, 3 inches.

Radius of operation: 100 miles.

Speeds: Road: 30 mph; Cross country: 14-18 mph.

Armor: Front: 14-mm; Sides: 12-mm.

Armament: Tank Gun, 37-mm; turret machine gun and hull machine gun,
7.7-mm.

Ammunition: Tank gun, 130 rounds; Machine gun, 2970 rounds.

Engine: Diesel, 6 cylinder, air cooled.

Horsepower: 110 HP at 1400 RPM.

Transmission: 4 speeds forward; 1 reverse.

Steering: Clutch brakes.

Fuel capacity: Main tank, 27 gallons; Auxiliary tank, 7.9 gallons.

Crew: 3



101

MEDIUM TANK 97 (M1937)³²

Weight: 15.4 tons.

Length: 18 feet, 4 inches.

Width: 7 feet, 3 inches.

Height: 7 feet, 8 inches.

Ground clearance: 16 inches.

Width of track: 13 inches.

Fording depth: 3 feet, 3 inches.

Radius of action: 100 miles.

Speed: Road, 25 miles per hour.

Armor: Front, 25-mm; Sides, 22-mm.

Armament: Tank gun, 57-mm; rear turret machine gun, 7.7-mm; hull machine gun, 7.7-mm.

Ammunition: Tank gun, 80 HE, 40 APHE; machine gun, 2350 ball, 1350 AP.

Engine: V-12, air cooled, Diesel.

Horsepower: 150 HP at 1500 RPM.

Transmission: 4 speeds forward; 1 reverse; high and low range.

Steering: Clutch brakes.

Fuel capacity: 2 main tanks, 30 and 31.5 gallons.

Crew: 4.

Study of the G-4 Situation

Logistical problems. Due to the nature of operations and limited combat losses (see page 108), the operational efficiency of the 754th Tank Battalion was not affected to any considerable degree by logistical difficulties. The battalion did experience certain problems in supply and maintenance.³³

The battalion was organized and equipped on the basis that the battalion would operate as a unit. During the campaign on LUZON, the battalion did not operate as a unit. One or more companies that were attached to infantry divisions were often broken down into platoons that were further attached to regimental combat teams.³⁴

Tank companies experienced considerable difficulties in obtaining adequate supplies of ammunition and fuel and lubricants from the infantry divisions to which they were attached. This was due to the fact that these divisions did not realize the quantities of these supplies that are normally consumed by a tank unit.³⁵

In order for the companies to carry supplies required for various assigned missions, it was necessary for the battalion to attach 2-1/2-ton trucks from the battalion transportation platoon. This procedure made it very difficult for the battalion to carry out its responsibility of resupplying the battalion as a whole. Supplies had to be transported over long distances, and this, in conjunction with lack of adequate transportation, made it extremely difficult for the battalion to keep all of its companies adequately supplied.³⁶

Maintenance of vehicles was a major problem in the battalion. The main difficulty in maintenance was the shortage of spare parts.

The battalion landed on LUZON without the spare parts load for full track vehicles and without the special armored force tool sets. These supplies and equipment were not available when the battalion sailed from BOUGAINVILLE. These shortages resulted in cargo space being available to carry a greatly increased load of spare parts for wheeled vehicles. This proved to be very fortunate, because the supply of these spare parts was critical on LUZON. In order to obtain spare parts for tanks, it was necessary to revert to cannibalization because such parts were not available through ordnance channels. Any tank that could not be repaired was stripped. This applied not only to tanks of the battalion, but also to other tanks that were found in the combat zone. Since most of the tanks that were disabled by mines or antitank fire did not burn, a considerable number of spare parts were salvaged from these tanks.³⁷

The retreat of the enemy to the hilly, mountainous country forced the tanks to operate on very unfavorable terrain. This caused excessive wear and tear on the tanks, particularly the engines. It was frequently necessary to repair motors after a period of from 25 to 50 hours on this type of terrain. This placed a heavy burden on the maintenance facilities of the battalion. The battalion maintenance personnel were well trained, and by devoting considerable time to maintenance, this difficulty was overcome. Another contributing factor to the success of maintenance was the fact that the nature of operations made it possible to rotate the companies that were supporting infantry divisions.³⁸

This maintenance program made it possible to operate the Conti-

mental radial engines for an average of approximately 500 hours without changing the engine. In a number of instances it was possible to operate engines for a period of 800 to 900 hours without change. Additional mechanics and spare parts, with necessary transportation, from the battalion maintenance platoon, were often sent with companies attached to infantry divisions. This made it possible for the companies to perform necessary maintenance, because time and space factors made it impossible for the battalion to render necessary support in the normal manner.³⁹

Since changes in attachment of companies to infantry divisions were common, it was necessary for the battalion to supply spare parts to all companies, regardless of attachment. Due to the nature of the supply situation, the time required to obtain spare parts was such that by the time the infantry division was able to obtain the spare parts, the company requiring them would no longer be attached to the division. It was found that the parent battalion could supply the companies faster and with less confusion, despite the time and space factors involved. Officers from battalion headquarters visited each company each day, so that there was no delay due to lack of contact between the company and the battalion.⁴⁰

The ordnance tank maintenance units were unable to provide adequate support because they were not properly trained in the repair of medium tanks. These units, prior to operation on LUZON, had been trained to repair only light tanks and wheeled vehicles. In addition, these units lacked the spare parts necessary to make repairs to the tanks and render adequate support to the 754th Tank Battalion. The

artillery sections of these units were properly trained and equipped, and did render adequate support.⁴¹

The M4 and M4A1 tanks with which the battalion was equipped were definitely underpowered for operations in support of infantry on such difficult terrain. In order to ascend a number of the slopes, it was necessary to tow the tanks by tractors or to slip the clutch and jump the tank forward. By the attachment of "duck bill" the flotation of the tanks was increased sufficiently to traverse most of the terrain, including rice paddies during the dry season, when they were drained.

In the later phases of the campaign, shortages of spare parts restricted the operation of the tanks to emergencies. Serious shortages of tank tracks developed because of the short life of the synthetic rubber on hard roads and because neither tank transporter nor rail facilities were available for the movement of tanks over long distances.⁴²

The supply of ammunition also presented certain problems due to inadequate transportation and the limited amount of ammunition available for tanks. Through necessity, the battalion had to supply ammunition to all companies, regardless of attachment. The infantry divisions were unable to keep the tank companies supplied with ammunition. This problem of supply was aggravated by the fact that ammunition supply points, having tank ammunition available, were in some cases 75 miles from the company positions.⁴³

The rate of consumption of tank ammunition in the city of MANILA was particularly high, due to the requirement for direct fire attack against concrete buildings in support of infantry. In addition, the

prohibited use of indirect fire during certain operations in clearing the city placed an additional burden on the tanks to provide direct fire support of infantry troops.⁴⁴

Prior to the departure of the battalion from BOUGAINVILLE, a number of rounds of 75-mm canister ammunition was improvised. The rounds were made from a 75-mm gun shell case and the canister projectile from a 75-mm howitzer shell. This ammunition proved very effective against enemy positions on hillsides and in brush at the top of hills.⁴⁵

The lack of adequate transportation within the 754th Tank Battalion proved to be a serious handicap. In addition to the transportation required for resupply, the companies and platoons needed lighter transportation for liaison with higher headquarters and for reconnaissance. Due to the nature of the terrain, it was only possible to employ the tanks by a constant reconnaissance of the area in which the infantry troops were operating, in order to ascertain whether or not tanks could be used. In addition to this reconnaissance, it was necessary to perform numerous liaison trips to various headquarters to coordinate the employment of tanks and to work out the details of tank support of infantry units. In many cases in which infantry commanders desired to use tanks, it was necessary to make an actual reconnaissance and then recommend whether tanks should be used.⁴⁶

MATERIEL DAMAGED OR LOST 47

754TH MEDIUM TANK BATTALION

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Damaged</u> | <u>Lost</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 9 January 1945 | 4 (W/V) | 6 (W/V) |
| 10 January 1945 | 1 (W/V) | |
| 13 January 1945 | 1 (W/V) | |
| 16 January 1945 | 1 (W/V) | |
| 28 January 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | 2 (M Tk) |
| 29 January 1945 | | 1 (W/V) |
| 31 January 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 6 February 1945 | 2 (M Tk) | |
| 7 February 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 14 February 1945 | 2 (M Tk) | |
| 15 February 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 17 February 1945 | 4 (M Tk) | |
| 19 February 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 22 February 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | 1 (M Tk) |
| 25 February 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 22 March 1945 | | 1 (M Tk) |
| 3 April 1945 | | 1 (M Tk) |
| 16 April 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 21 April 1945 | 1 (M Tk) | |
| 22 April - 30 June 1945 | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Total | 24 | 12 |
| | (7 W/V, 17 M Tk) | (7 W/V, 5 M Tk) |

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 8

¹G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding Officer, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

⁵G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding Officer, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

⁸Ibid.

⁹G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

¹⁰Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding Officer, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

¹³Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding Officer, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Personal Interview, Lt Col B. M. Brothers, formerly Commanding Officer, 754th Medium Tank Battalion, 1945.

¹⁹G-1 Report, After Action Report, 6th U. S. Army.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Japanese Tanks and Antitank Warfare, MID WD, Washington, D. C. Special Series No. 34, 1 August 1945, pp 86-100.

²²Ibid, pp 18-32.

²³Report of the General and Special Staff Sections, Luzon Campaign, 6th Army, Volume III, p 30.

²⁴Ibid, p 17.

²⁵Ibid, p 23.

²⁶USAFFE Board Report No. 265, subject: "Japanese Employment of Tanks on Luzon," 11 April 1945, pp 1-3.

²⁷After Action Report, 13th Armored Group, 11 Jan 45 to 1 Jul 45, dated 10 Aug 45, pp 25-29.

²⁸Results of interviews with General Yamashita and Staff with members of 37th US Infantry Division Staff.

²⁹Enemy on Luzon, GHQ, US Army, Pacific, MIS CS, p 156.

³⁰Japanese Tank and Antitank Warfare, MID WD, Washington, D. C., Special Series No. 34, 1 August 1945, pp 6, 7.

³¹Ibid, pp 19-32.

³²Ibid, pp 43-53.

³³Statement of Major Justice, Maintenance Officer, 754th Tank Battalion (attached to Copy No. 1 of this report in TAS Library).

³⁴After Action Report, 754th Tank Battalion, "Lessons Learned During Luzon Campaign."

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Statement of Major Justice, Maintenance Officer, 754th Tank Battalion.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³After Action Report, 754th Tank Battalion, "Lessons Learned During Luzon Campaign."

⁴⁴Interview with Lt Col B. M. Brothers, Commanding Officer, 754th Tank Battalion.

⁴⁵Statement of Major Justice.

⁴⁶After Action Report, 754th Tank Battalion, "Lessons Learned During Luzon Campaign," and statement of Major Justice.

⁴⁷After Action Report, 754th Tank Battalion.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A major portion of this report is based on the Provisional Tank Group, USAFFE, and the 754th Medium Tank Battalion. Both units participated in their respective campaigns from commencement of operations to the surrender. The activities of these units are typical of armor in general. One fought a delaying action; the other an offensive action. A study of their successes and failures is adequate basis for arriving at conclusions on the employment of armor.

In both campaigns, tank unit actions primarily supported infantry operations. In the first campaign, armor provided the covering force in the withdrawal. In the second campaign, armor supported the assault landings, breaching of strong defenses, and the final consolidation of LUZON. Both tasks demonstrated armor's inherent capabilities of flexibility and maneuverability. Each operation further pointed up the necessity for combined-arms training and utilization.

When tanks are employed in small tank infantry teams in unfavorable terrain, excessive casualties must be expected. The greatest effectiveness of armor presupposes freedom of maneuver to utilize the shock action gained from armor's flexibility and mobility.

The LUZON terrain handicapped armor during both campaigns. Cross country movement was hazardous, at best, the road net very poor, and existing bridges weak. Tanks operated effectively in spite of the many obstacles presented by the terrain,

A minimum of Japanese armor was encountered. In the second

campaign during the Japanese counteroffensive at SAPANGBATO, six Japanese medium tanks attacked the 754th Medium Tank Battalion. The Japanese tanks were inferior in armor and fire power. The 754th Tank Battalion destroyed four of them by offensive fire. The remaining two Japanese tanks retreated and subsequently were encountered being used as dug-in pillboxes.

Viewed in the light of present armored doctrine, it is apparent that armor on LUZON could not be employed to exploit characteristics of high mobility and great fire power. The mobility of the tanks during all but the brief final phases of the operation was limited by the unfavorable terrain. In utilizing great fire power, it is presupposed that armor will be used in mass. This was not possible in either campaign due to the dispersion of tank units.

Overall, the employment of armor on LUZON did not fully exploit the characteristics and capabilities of mass, mobility, fire power, shock action. It should be noted that armor was effectively utilized in withdrawals, and as infantry support, though in an unorthodox manner at times. Justification for such methods of employment lies in the nature of the terrain, coupled with the determination of the enemy.

Both campaigns indicated clearly the necessity of having tanks organic to an infantry division.

Through study and comparison, the necessity for combined arms training and indoctrination of all combat units in the capabilities and limitations of armor was startlingly clear. Such combined training and indoctrination will materially increase the efficiency of combat units in any future operation.

h11

