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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 45TH INFANTRY (PS)
(PHILIPPINE DIVISION) IN THE BATTLE OF THE TUOL POCKET, BATAAN,
29 JANUARY - 19 FEBRUARY 1942 (PHILIPPINE ISLAND CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Battalion Executive Officer)

Type of operation described: BATTALION IN THE ATTACK

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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 45TH INFANTRY (PS)
(PHILIPPINE DIVISION) IN THE BATTLE OF THE TUOL POCKET, BATAAN,
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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS), Philippine Division, in the Battle of the Tuol Pocket, Bataan, Philippines, 29 January - 19 February 1942, during the defense of the Philippines. (1)

The 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS), had been stationed in Bataan since 15 August 1941. (2)

^{Pocket} This battle followed a series of rapid Japanese moves, since their landings in force at Lingayen and Southern Luzon. (3)

Although the defenders' Northern Luzon Force had not retreated to Bataan until the Southern Luzon Force had negotiated the turn of Manila Bay (4), an estimated half of the untrained and ill-equipped Filipino trainees inducted into the United States Armed Forces of the Far East had become lost to us. (5)

Strong attacks at Balanga forced MacArthur's Army to the Abucay Line. A flank attack from the west caused another withdrawal on 25 January 1942. (6)

The enemy permitted some three days surcease for the defenders who were still busily engaged in occupying the new Orion Line. (7) (See Map A) ^{Orion 1101} on map A

Some preliminary work of preparing fields of fire had been previously accomplished and wire installed in accordance with War Plan Orange 3, by the 45th Infantry (PS). (8) A few trails had been widened by hand labor; ^{using} ~~the~~ the universal tool and weapon of the Filipino - the bolo - had been employed. (9)

(1,2) Personal knowledge; (3) A-35, p. 9, 10; (4) A-3, p. 99; A-30; (5) A-1, p. 100, 101; (6) A-4, p. 79; (7) A-32 25 Jan; (8) A-41, p. 1; (9) Personal knowledge.

THE GENERAL SITUATION

Upon arriving behind the new line, the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS), was relieved from its rear guard duties and placed in I Corps reserve. (10) I Corps was the redesignated Northern Luzon Force and was given the mission of defending the west half of Bataan.

The battalion was bivouacked on Trail 9, only a mile from one of its peacetime observation posts on the China Sea Shore at Bagac Point. (11)

~~Then at~~ ^{At} midday on 29 January 1942, while officers and men were bathing, cleaning equipment and clothing, and supervising installation of barbed wire on the MLR, a messenger arrived from Corps Headquarters.

He handed Lieutenant Colonel Leslie T. Lathrop, the Battalion Commander, a sheet of yellow ruled tablet paper with a pencilled mission, "Send a platoon immediately to CP, 11th Infantry, at Trails 5 and 7 to clean out seventeen snipers there. J. M. Wainwright." (12) Colonel Lathrop messaged back he would have troops on the way in half an hour, and, getting authority by telephone, alerted the entire battalion, less kitchens and supply, for immediate departure. (See Map B) (13)

First Lieutenant Robert K. Roberts was directed to entruck his Company B and proceed with the Battalion Staff (less Supply, S-4) to the point of disturbance.

The staff consisted of Executive and Communications Officer, Chaplain, and two medical officers. The Supply Officer and Ammunition Officer were left behind to shuttle the balance of the combat and command units with available transportation; and they, in turn, would move supply and kitchen areas to regimental control near Trails 7 and 9, some ten miles closer to the battalion.

C and D Companies each had two officers; the others but one officer. Two officers and approximately 30 men were in the hospital; one officer and five men were missing in action.

(10) A-4, p. 80; (11) A-41, p. 1; (12) A-3, p. 104; Personal knowledge;
(13) A-41, p. 1, 2; A-7, p. 360.

Tables of Organization listed 6 officers and 135 men per Rifle Company and 6 officers and 151 men for the Weapons Company. Attached communications, supply, and medical personnel totaled about 29.

Troops were armed with M1 rifles; however, most of the ammunition had to be reloaded from the clips of five in which packed. Uniform was khaki trousers with leggings; wool shirts for enlisted men, cotton shirts for officers; and M17 helmets. Organization was in squads of eight, three squads to the platoon; a Weapons Platoon with a light machine gun and two heavy machine guns; one 1½-ton 4x4 truck per company, for all purposes. Sixty millimeter mortars had been left behind as no ammunition was available. The Weapons Company had three heavy machine-gun platoons of two sections (18 men each) and a mortar section of two 81mm mortars. Ammunition, however, was made for the three-inch "Stokes" mortar but could be fired with its shotgun propellant augmented by powder rings. The Weapons Company had a half-ton truck per platoon. Communications consisted of EE5B and EE8 telephones, five of the nine acquired during the counterattacks of the Philippine Division units which had successfully restored the Abucay Line a week before near its center in the vicinity of the Abucay Hacienda. (14)

Troops had been on half rations since 5 January 1942 - half the Scout rations, not American. The issues averaged at this time, per man per day: 5 ounces of rice, 2 ounces of flour, 1/12 can of evaporated milk, 1/14 can of salmon, 1 ounce of dried fruit, 1 ounce of sugar, and some coffee. Occasionally some jam appeared and once a week four ounces of carrabao would replace the salmon component. (15)

The few days of fighting and the arduous marches; hand-carrying equipment for an almost continuous 36 hours into the Hacienda fight and the 18-hour withdrawal march had sapped strength.

(14) A-1, p. 101, A-9, p. 11; (15) A-17, p. 50; A-1, p. 109; A-2, p. 119; A-4, p. 78; A-34, par 14.

Malaria prophylaxis of 10 grains of quinine daily was still possible for another month. (16) Bad water and the flies of the stinking battlefield had brought a few cases of dysentery. (17)

Morale was high. Every Scout in the battalion was qualified with his weapon; one-third were old soldiers with from 8 to 30 years of service; and the newest recruit had nine months service. They had been paid through December, whereas no other troops had been paid on Bataan.

Every old soldier was an expert marksman - and they wanted to revenge their families' sufferings. (There had been Sergeant Reyes, Company D, who had begged to be issued an M1 rifle and be permitted to go to the front line to avenge his family. (18) His two baby daughters were killed and his wife's hand blown off by a bomb in her quarters at his permanent station, Camp Limay, Bataan, which had been converted into a hospital.)

When the orders came on 29 January 1942, therefore, the Scouts of the 1st Battalion rolled their packs while yelling their battle cry, "Petay si la" (They shall die)!

Colonel Lathrop and leading elements arrived at Trails 5 and 7 at 2000 hours 29 January 1942. The following information was received from Colonel Glen R. Townsend, commanding the 11th Infantry (PA):

"About 0800 this morning a Filipino medical officer from his 2d Battalion on his right flank telephoned he was about to drive his civilian sedan to the Regimental CP via Trail 7. A burst of rifle and machine rifle fire was heard very close to headquarters a half-hour later. The doctor failed to arrive. (See Map C)

"I sent a couple of men up the trail to find out what the firing was, and there, only 200 yards from the trail junction, stood the doctor's car, two occupants dead. This patrol was fired on and the leader killed. (19)

(16) Personal knowledge; (17) A-2, p. 119; (18) Personal knowledge; (19) A-37, p. 2; A-35, p. 9.

"I then sent all available personnel from CP and rear area to the scene of the car. They were fired upon by snipers, perhaps seven, including automatic fire. (20)

"G Company attacked from the north and C Company attacked from the northeast - no progress, so I had them dig in. (21)

"I reported the facts by telephone to Brigadier General William E. Brougher, the 11th Division (PA) Commander, and heard mechanical sounds while speaking.

"Later calls during the day indicated interference with the line, which I believe to be tapped by these enemy.

"I have rerouted my supply and communications.

"I have alerted my Regimental Reserve Line to guard the trails and have contact on that line with elements of the 1st Regular Division (PA).

"The enemy has launched several strong attacks against the fronts of both divisions for two days and I believe has penetrated the front somewhere. (See Map D) My battalion commanders have reported our front is solid and unbroken. I have a staff officer personally checking on this for me.

"About 50 men of the 51st Division are holding Trail 5." (22)

THE BATTALION SITUATION

"Battalion Staff, B Company, and 1st Platoon, D Company, were present. Reports had come that the balance of the battalion would arrive by 2200.

A hasty reconnaissance by the officers present found rolling ground on both sides of Trail 7, thick jungle of bamboo clumps, vines, and several large Banyan trees.

Attempts to get to the trail junction were met by bursts of enemy fire from the north on Trail 7. Lieutenant Roberts was ordered to contact the enemy immediately. He put one platoon astride the trail and one platoon to

(20) A-34, p. 2; (21) A-37, p. 2; (22) A-14, p. 61; Annex B; A-35, p. 11; A-28, p. 58.

provide sniper protection. Sergeant Fernandez, an Olympic athlete of 26 years service, led the first platoon. (See Map D)

Roberts extended his line to the right. The Colonel ordered a section of machine guns from the Weapons Company, under Sergeant Reyes, to the junction.

As soon as the balance of the battalion detrucked, the company commanders were oriented, sent on hasty reconnaissance, and upon return, were told the Battalion Plan.

THE BATTALION PLAN OF ATTACK

The 1st Battalion's plan of attack through B Company was to drive the enemy west of Trail 7 to the right of the trail junction, with C Company on the right and A Company on the left. Boundary between companies; Trail 5. Direction of attack; West. (C Company was quickly pinned to the ground by heavy enemy small arms fire. A Company advanced its left flank to clear Trail 5, but was unable to move forward on the right.) (See Map E) (23)

Plan & result of attack mission in same th.

SCR 195 radios (Walky-talkies) would be used for communication with battalion; SCR 131 with higher headquarters.

Ammunition would be distributed from vicinity of CP later.

All men had two units of fire, or 160 rounds of M1 ammunition. Machine guns, each had a thousand rounds. (24)

A machine-gun platoon from Company D was to fire overhead into the jungle, sweeping the trees over the trail junction and along Trail 7.

Battalion CP and aid station on Trail 7, 15 yards and 50 yards, respectively, south of trail junction. Two companies of the 11th Infantry would be on the right.

Artillery was not yet available, but a 37mm antitank gun would support. (25)

The mortar would be set up at trail junction as soon as that area was free of snipers.

(23) A-41, p. 2; (24) Personal knowledge; (25) A-37, p. 3.

THE BATTALION ATTACK - LOWER POCKET

The 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS), located in march order on Trail 7 about 200 yards south of the junction with Trail 5. (26)

Company B advanced at dusk 29 January to make contact. The Point was stopped by heavy enemy machine gun and small arms fire at the trail junction. (27)

The remnants of the 51st Division (PA), mainly from the 52d Infantry (PA) under Captain Gordon Myers, were in foxholes along Trail 5 to the west on the left of 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS). During the night of 29-30 January 1942, the Japanese attempted a bayonet attack on their position. Myers reported considerable casualties among his 70-odd men, but nevertheless that the attack was frustrated and his line held. (28)

The battalion attack jumped off the next morning at 0800 with C Company (see Map F) on the right. Captain Archie L. McMasters, commanding this outfit, had just returned from three days of isolation behind enemy lines with a squad of his rear guard troops. During that time he developed a nervous attention to enemy activities, and this awareness saved his leading platoon from ambush on Trail 7. He discovered several snipers in the trees overhead, and also noticed an enemy machine-gun well dug-in behind a log for enfilade fire on the near side of Trail 7. (29)

The 1st Platoon of C Company had moved ahead with 24 men. They advanced to a line parallel ^{to} the trail and about 10 yards from it, when they came to the final protective line of the Japanese machine-gun. This one platoon lost 4 killed in action and 6 wounded. Corporal Morandorte of the left squad was killed by sniper fire only a couple of yards past the trail junction. (30)

A Company attacked west across Trail 7 and along Trail 5. It advanced about a hundred yards with some casualties, but had to withdraw its right

(26) A-34, par 1; A-28; A-59; (27) A-39, par 2; A-25; (28) A-34, par 1; A-39, par 2; (29) A-34, par 2; A-38, par 3; (30) A-41, p. 3.

flank to keep contact with C Company (31), and was ordered to swing its attack north along Trail 7. (32)

Many grenades or small mortar bursts were encountered, causing Colonel Lathrop to estimate enemy strength at a company from the intensity of its fire. (33)

The enemy was extremely well dug-in and camouflaged. No sand from his foxholes was observed, and he apparently utilized the fallen trees for his protection and concealment in their natural fallen locations. (34)

Four more attacks with fixed bayonets during the day, 30 January, met with no success, but it revealed the Jap position extended about four hundred yards north of Trail 5 on Trail 7, the principal supply artery of the 11th Infantry (PA), and an indefinite distance west. We had 2 or 3 casualties on every attack. (35)

Almost every BAR man became a casualty, therefore these were kept back a little in the attacks. (36) The attack had passed through Roberts' company, and B Company was now placed in battalion reserve. (See Map E)

The Corps Commander personally observed one of the attacks later that day. Lieutenant Colonel Edgar Wright in the General's party had barely passed the Battalion CP when a sniper's bullet cut his eyebrow. A Scout was wounded about 20 yards in rear of the CP. (37)

A hasty reconnaissance by fire (heavy machine-gun) revealed an enemy sniper in a tree within 10 yards of the CP. He was clad in a green suit, rubber-soled shoes, green gloves, green painted face, and a sniper's carbine with telescope. His body hung in the ropes with which he had tied himself to a limb. (38)

The Chaplain made attempts to recover Corporal Morandorte's body, but was fired upon each time. Finally he was ordered to desist until the area was free of fire. (39)

(31) A-41, p. 3; (32) A-35, p. 2; (33) A-35, p. 3; (34) A-34, par 2; (35) A-41, par 3; (36) A-41, p. 5; (37) A-41, p. 3, A-9, p. 19; (38) A-25, Col 15, p. 3; (39) A-39, par 2.

On 31 January, four more attacks were made with no gain. The only weapons we could use were the rifles, BAR's, and machine guns. Our 81mm mortar fired upon the enemy within a few feet of our men. We obtained a British 75mm gun, but aside from the fixed seacoast batteries, there were only two howitzers in the Philippine Islands. All other artillery was flat trajectory and could not be used on an indefinitely located target in rear of our own lines. (40)

1 February - Four more futile attacks were made without advancing a foot. (41)

C Company had apparently encountered the enemy strength. Its losses now amounted to 12 killed and 20 wounded out of its 120 men entering this action.

General Wainwright again was in the front lines on the 2d of February, well in advance of the Battalion CP, dug-in 25 yards north of the trail junction. We had to be in trenches because the enemy rifle fire was cutting through the bamboo thicket on the enemy side of the CP all day and night. (42)

The General was appraised of the difficulties and lack of progress. He concurred in the estimated strength and ordered all available troops in his Corps to wipe out this Pocket. It must be realized that he had to contend with landings of 200-800 Japanese at Quinawan Point, Agloloma Point, and Anyasin Point near Mariveles, so help seemed obscure indeed. He did make available the two 155 howitzers. (43)

On 2 February, General Wainwright placed Colonel Lathrop in direct charge of the operation and attached the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS), to the 11th Division, Brigadier General William E. Brougher in command. (44) This permitted the front line commanders to concentrate on closing and holding their lines. (45)

About 2200, 2 February, the enemy launched an attack on C Company, who fired its every weapon, including the D Company guns. Colonel Lathrop insisted (40) A-35, p. 7; (41) A-34, par 3; (42) A-34, par 4; (43) A-35, p. 7; A-29, p. 10; (44) A-39, par 1; (45) A-38, par 4; A-34, par 4.

on better fire control; however, the attack was stopped. (46) C Company, 11th Infantry, ran out of machine-gun ammunition on this attack. (47)

During this action, the 75mm gun was hauled up to the trail junction and sited north on Trail 7. Our mortar was emplaced near trail junction and fired with high percentage of duds. (48)

On 2 February, one platoon of 4 tanks from B Company, 192d Tank Battalion, arrived to help in the attack. Their commander quickly determined the dense growth and narrow trail would only permit a platoon action, and that would have to be in column. His tanks were the 1941 Model M2A1's, armed only with a 37mm gun and machine guns. (49)

Sergeant Leroy C. Anderson, commander of the lead tank, made a reconnaissance on foot to the trail at several points, in heavy enemy small arms fire. (50)

A suspected gun emplacement on C Company's left front was pointed out as was the location of the known gun. All tank commanders were briefed. They planned to run the gauntlet of Trail 7 and feel it out - they did at 1500, with one tank damaged but getting through. (51) Their plan was to advance with rifleman support from our reserve Company B. Each tank would be covered by the one in rear, but each would also fire into the enemy area to the left with a constant stream of machine-gun fire. They attacked next morning, 3 February 1942. (52)

Lieutenant Roberts voluntarily led his supporting platoon and was accompanied by the Lieutenant from Company D, Willibald C. Bianchi, who asked permission to go along.

Lieutenant John Baker Megrew, the Communications Officer, was wounded at the left flank of Company C, where he stationed himself to observe the action with a telephone connected with all our elements on the line. Fragments cut off a finger and crippled his hand.

(46) A-41, p. 3; (47) A-41, p. 4; (48) A-34, par 5; A-41, p. 3; (49) A-34, par 5; A-38, par 5; A-35, p. 4; (50) A-15, p. 17; (51) A-35; (52) A-34, par 5; A-19, p. 20; A-32, p. 255.

Anderson's tank advanced into heavy rifle and machine-gun fire until it reached the suspected emplacement which was at the base of a huge Banyan tree protected by its large flanged roots. (53)

Bianchi was behind the tank, firing his rifle until his left hand was pierced by two enemy bullets. He thereupon used his pistol. He discovered a heretofore unsuspected machine-gun on the west side of the tree and put it out of action with grenades. By this time the tank was turning into the now confirmed emplacement trying to depress the 37mm gun enough to fire into the hole, with little success. It was too close. Bianchi leaped to the top of the tank, and in spite of two machine-gun bullets through his chest muscles, fired the antiaircraft machine-gun into the emplacement until knocked off the tank by an explosion that wounded him severely. (54)

The tank engine stopped and ammunition in the tank exploded. The crew got out safely with burning hair, under the protection of the accompanying riflemen. (55)

The other tanks passed by firing as they went. The leading tank of the balance was caught on a stump near the machine-gun on McMasters' right. Its fire had neutralized this gun long enough for two of C Company's men to crawl up with grenades and destroy it, thereby permitting the tank crew to get back safely. (56)

The sound of arrival of the tanks had been concealed by a few minutes of sustained fire by every rifle and machine-gun on the line, which kept up until the infantry support of the tanks masked the fire of individual pieces. (57)

Myers reported finding yellow single-strand telephone wire going into the Pocket in a draw on his left. He cut this wire and brought back several hundred feet.

Check of the front line revealed a gap in the MLR of the 1st Division (PA) still open. Enemy pressure continued there, but one 50-caliber gun

(53) A-33, p. 258, 259; (54) Personal knowledge; A-30, p. 113; A-20, p. 21; (55) Personal knowledge; A-29, par 2; (56) A-9, p. 11; A-39, par 2; (57) Personal knowledge.

kept firing every night. Sounds during the past night in this gap were now interpreted as enemy supply columns with animals coming in. (58)

The close of day on 3 February only found a small advance on the right flank, but the tank at the left flank of C Company concealed enemy return to this position and our advance was held up there.

On 4 February, the enemy fire included artillery of about 70mm. Their strength was then estimated at a reinforced battalion. (59)

Our 2.95 mountain guns of Battery F, 24th Field Artillery, began firing, but their forward observer high up in a tree near our CP was twice wounded by the shorts and tree bursts. The fire was adjusted all day long by the simple report of casualties from shorts on the west side or those from overs falling on the troops of Headquarters 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry, 500 yards to the east of Trail 7. Major Winfield N. Robinson, a forester in civil life, reconnoitered a 100 yards of enemy line in front of his C Company, then led an attack, gaining a few yards on 5 February. (60)

The enemy added confusion by firing his artillery at us during this fire mission. (61)

Attempts to launch attacks again met with no measurable success; but another section of tanks again swept up the trail and rescued the one from the stump.

On 5 February, Lieutenant Reed of General Brougher's Staff, called out to the Japs to surrender. He threw in a note tied to a stone. The answer - heavy fire. (62)

On 6 February, Major General A. M. Jones assumed overall command of the operation, including the sectors of the 1st and 11th Divisions. Colonel Lathrop retained direct control under him. (63)

On the 6th, Brigadier General A. M. Jones assumed command of the troops on the Tuol Pocket. Additional troops arrived - Philippine Army units with
(58) Personal knowledge; A-41, p. 3; (59) A-34, par 6; (60) A-36; (61) A-34, par 6; (62) A-34, par 16; (63) A-37, p. 5.

little or no training, accompanied by a battalion of reserve Philippine Constabulary that had more esprit de corps. (64) These were placed on a line extending through one Philippine division area across the center of the Pocket just north of the Tuol River to make a cordon continuous from Myers' detachment to Robinson's right flank and complete encirclement of the Japanese within. They included the 2d Battalion, 92d Infantry; Company B, 1st Battalion (less A and D), 92d Infantry - all at approximately half strength - totaling about 800 men. (65)

It was planned now to prevent any movement in or out of the Pocket by the enemy, to counterattack every effort on his part, and to attack and close in from every side at every opportunity. Nightly attacks on the northwest side of the Pocket had kept a gap for the Japs through our untrained units there.

This day had introduced a new element in this action - air attack. The enemy dive-bombed the west side of the Pocket; however, the dense growth permitted little accuracy and every bomb fell in their own area. (66) Later in the day, the planes returned with parachute packages on the east side. C Company, 45th Infantry (PS), captured three; G Company, 11th Infantry (PA), got eight for its pagan Igorote personnel; and the only remaining one was hung in a tree above the Japanese. (67)

The packages each contained about a thousand rounds of rifle and machine-gun ammunition, ten packages of cigarets, and emergency ration biscuits and sugar candies. (68)

2d Battalion, PC, and one company, 92d Infantry (PA), reported later on 7 February and were used to extend the line.

Frequent attacks were made from all sides of the Pocket during the next few days. Our lack of success with the 155 howitzers, after two days of casualties therefrom on friendly troops, did not eliminate the value of

(64) A-35, p. 5; A-38, par 6; (65) A-34, par 7; A-35, p. 4; (66) A-3, p. 104; (67) A-22; (68) A-38, par 8; A-16, p. 17; A-9, p. 15.

explosives. Our dependence on rifle and machine-gun fire had permitted little progress. These attacks felt out the Japanese position, but gained only 50 yards on the northwest side of the Pocket, closing the gap that had existed, for the Fil-American Forces, as we were now called by the commentators. (69)

On 8-9 February, the Battalion and C Company, 11th Infantry, attacked again, A Company, 45th Infantry, making the main effort from the south. Company A had succeeded in advancing, swinging on its right flank about 50 yards, capturing a water hole and the south end of Trail 7. (70) Other units had moved forward, one foxhole at a time. (71)

First priority was the machine-gun nest at which our tank was located nearest the trail junction. The 75mm gun fired at this through the branches and bejuco vines that partly obscured the target. The first few shells burst as close as 25 yards from the gun, but they cleared a field of fire with fuse setting at zero. Soon an avenue was opened as far as the tank 100 yards away, but the machine-gun at its base continued to chatter. Twenty-one rounds of high explosives were fired at this tank to deny it to the enemy. (72) This fire threw up a wall of bamboo wash about 9 feet high directly in front of the C Company line. (73)

On 8 February, the Battalion CP was moved back 50 yards to the other side of Trail 7. (74)

As dark was falling on 9 February, the target, ^{2 (Tank)} became difficult to see and had to be illuminated. Lieutenant Edward W. Stewart, now returned from the hospital with his abdominal wound still unhealed, moved up to a few yards from the right rear of the tank and prepared to adjust fire. He only asked that the bursts be on the left of the tank because it was only ten yards from his OP, and he was only inches from the gun target line. (75)

He then helped the gunner identify the target by firing tracers from his rifle at the rear of the tank. (76)

(69) A-38, par 7; (70) A-38, par 9; (71) Personal knowledge; A-34, par 8; (72) A-39, par 2; (73) A-41, p. 3; (74)(75) Personal knowledge; (76) A-34, par 17.

C Company men occupied that gun emplacement at daybreak, 10 February 1942.

One mortar had been in action, adjusting fire by sound. A system of telephones had been installed around the perimeter of the Pocket. The mortar was fired at maximum elevation to keep the bursts within the Pocket, now measuring 500 yards square. (77)

Bursts too close were reported by the side concerned, and deflections were effected until the rounds were falling approximately on enemy machine guns as well as the center of the Pocket. Several enemy were heard crying, as rounds burst near the perimeter. (78)

As only one round out of eleven fired burst upon impact, Ordnance was called in. Lieutenant Colonel Lincoln Peebles, Corps Ordnance Officer, came with a supply of checked ammunition and additional fuses. All mortar ammunition in the sector was ordered delivered to the battalion. Every round was checked, nose removed, and fuse cleaned and replaced. (79)

Captain Russel D. Patterson, Weapons Company Commander, personally conducted the mortar fire, but the first fire for effect - 12 bursts being desired on the indefinite target - required 72 rounds for attainment. (80)

Bamboo grenades were the only available items for the men to throw. These were merely sections of bamboo stuffed with dynamite, nails, and fused with a match. As often as not these exploded before hitting the enemy, and frequently those that did hit were thrown back by the enemy. These were considered unsatisfactory, but still desirable over complete absence of grenades. (81)

Sounds of chopping could be heard night and day in the enemy area when fire died down. (82)

By 10 February, progress had been made by inches, moving from foxhole to foxhole, but now it became apparent why the Japanese could continue to

(77) A-14, p. 61; (78) Personal knowledge; (79) A-29, p. 11; Personal knowledge; (80) A-36, p. 18; A-37, p. 4; (81) A-29, p. 11; (82) A-41, p. 5.

resist. They had four or more men in each hole. The hole was not to be seen until our men actually fell into them. All excavated sand had been carried away. (83)

The holes themselves were bellied out below the ground with a firing step built in it as well as convenient shelves cut out for equipment. (84) These foxholes were connected by tunnels and trenches around the entire area as well as leading from the center of the side facing C Company, 45th Infantry (PS), toward the middle of the enemy area. (85)

On 10 February, Trail 7 was finally captured - 12 days of intense effort had gained 150 yards. Approximately 100 enemy dead were counted, and their weapons and ammunition captured. The odor of enemy dead was strong and there were many blue bottle flies. (86)

The influx of troops had enabled A Company to shift to its right along Trail 7. Men were tired; those on the line were paired off into foxholes to permit one man to sleep while the other stood guard and kept in action.

Although less fire was received in the new CP, it was still necessary to take cover during sporadic heavy small arms fire which would rise to a crescendo of sound and slowly diminish to nothing every few hours, day and night. The roar of a hundred or more M1 rifles and eight machine guns was a distinct morale factor to the Scouts, and, in turn, did much to prevent aimed fire from the Nipponese, for hits were frequently observed as high as thirty feet up in trees. A ricochet hit the sleeping runner from D Company, Pfc Leonides, penetrating his neck only 1/4 of an inch.

On this date the enemy strength was estimated at a reinforced regiment. Maps and identification revealed this to be the 20th Infantry, 16th Kimura Division (called Katori). (87)

On 11 February, by 1000, Trail 7 captured, breaking the stubborn resistance, the attack moved slowly ahead, pinching off G Company of

(83) A-29, p. 11; A-34, par 8; (84) A-28, p. 59; (85) Personal knowledge; (86) A-41, par 5; (87) A-34, par 8; A-16, p. 17.

the 11th Infantry (PA), while swinging to the left on Det 51-53d Infantry as a moving pivot in a northwest direction. (88) G Company was sent to Major Crowe to bolster his PA line across the pocket. When Company C was pinched off, it was held in reserve. (89)

The attacked passed a CP area in the rugged terrain cut with draws where some 15 horses lay dead from mortar fire, near three neatly laid-out graves with wooden headboards and surrounded by a border of cigarets. Some 1400 enemy dead or graves were passed. One wounded Japanese superior private was captured. (90) The balance of the Japanese was killed as they walked out of the northwest corner of the Pocket in the gorge of the Tuol River. G Company had mounted two squads with 10 BAR's and four machine guns here. Every one of the 250 Japanese here was killed as they came carrying a rifle in one hand and empty water bottle in the other. (91) Some of the enemy dead carried pieces of raw horse meat which they had been using for food and drink. (92)

Maggots and blood filled the trickle of the Tuol River at this point. (93)

A Company's advance on the 6th had cut off their water supply, and the additional troops arriving that same day had cut their supply route. It must be remembered that these additional troops were untrained and poorly equipped in the main. They suffered many casualties from Japanese charges, and broke their line on several nights. To some of these boys in arms, combat was too horrible and some forty were listed by the surgeon for self-inflicted wounds in hands or feet. (94) General Jones was ordered in to the hospital and relieved by General Brougner the next day. (95) The battalion withdrew to Trails 5 and 7.

On 12 February, C Company, 192d Tank Battalion, relieved B Company, 792d Tank Battalion. (96)

(88) A-34, par 12; (89) A-38, par 10; A-41, p. 6; (90) A-36, p. 16; A-38, par 11; A-34, par 9; A-34, par 12; A-39, par 3; (91) A-4, p. 81; A-34, par 9; A-28, p. 59; (92) A-41, par 6; (93) A-34, par 15; (94) A-34, par 10; A-41, p. 4; (95) A-38, par 11; (96) A-34, par 11.

On 13 February, the area was rechecked by our troops. Eleven Filipinos, including two Philippine women, were found tied to trees and bayoneted. (97) In several instances four or five mortar duds were found within effective radius of emplacements. Those rounds that did explode were extremely effective. (98)

The distinguished graves were dug up and under the bodies of the full colonel and two other officers were found three small mountain cannon, 70 mm, and an antitank gun, 47mm. (99) Also recaptured were 25 horses and 8 mules lost by our troops earlier in the campaign. Numerous rifles, machine rifles, machine guns (light and heavy), some ball ammunition, flame throwers, and grenade throwers with as many rounds of ammunition were in the booty. (100) The Japanese maps in English and Katakana were better than ours - both the linen paper and the topographical data. (101)

The regimental flag of the 20th Infantry Regiment (16th Division) was taken as was a set of 20 by 4, silk, three colored air ground liaison panels. (102)

Losses to the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry, had amounted to 17 killed and 41 wounded. (103) With losses due to malaria and dysentery, the battalion strength was down to two-thirds of the T/O. (104)

The PA men were so hungry, they were eating the uncooked flesh of the dead horses. (105)

Throughout the area the trees were marked with bullets to about 8 feet above the ground. (106)

C Company was ordered back as CP guard; A and B were left as support on the Upper Pocket. (107)

THE ATTACK ON THE UPPER TUOL POCKET

During this action the enemy had made numerous attacks against the 11th Infantry (PA) front line, and did succeed on 7 February in penetrating

(97) A-38, par 12; (98) A-39, par 3; (99) A-36, p. 16; A-34, par 9; (100) A-36, p. 17; (101) A-34, par 15; A-41, p. 6; A-35, p. 16; A-19, p. 20; (102) A-34, par 12; (103) A-34, par 10; (104) Personal knowledge; A-35, p. 17; (105) A-34, par 15; A-41, p. 7; (106) A-41, p. 6; A-35, p. 15; (107) A-41, p. 7.

the sector of Company F, killing 18 of 29 Igorotes of that platoon in their foxholes. They held a series of foxholes on the line, with machine guns against repeated counterattacks, holding a penetration there 600 yards deep. Now we had more strength available. (108) The enemy never succeeded in contacting his besieged 20th Infantry on the ground. (See Map F)

The units which had joined on 6 February now faced to the north and attacked this Upper Pocket on 13 February, with the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry, in reserve. (109) Again the enemy, estimated at a battalion, clung tenaciously. The last 22 rounds of 3" were used on 16 February with five bursts. (110)

However, on this day, an alert was sounded for 80 enemy escapees from the landings on the China Sea. Colonel Lathrop was requested by the Commanding Officer, 11th Infantry (PA), to send a platoon as an enemy patrol had killed a cook on the battalion reserve line. (111)

Captain McMasters went there with a squad and discovered four Japanese. Three were killed in his first volley, but one officer charged the squad with his sword swinging. Private Mario de la Cruz, in off-hand fire, placed four aimed shots into forehead, each cheekbone, and mouth in rapid fire. He was a good combat soldier, making up for his peacetime troublesome attitude. (112)

The Japanese lieutenant's sword was highly ornamented and was forwarded through Philippine Army channels. It is understood to have been identified as belonging to a general and brought to the White House by High Commissioner Sayre. (113)

Chaplain McDonald with a detail of men went through the Tuol Pocket on 12, 13, and 14 February 1942 burying enemy dead where possible. The prolonged and intense firing through the area had so tumbled and broken an already dense jungle that it was almost impossible to carry out this task.

(108) A-35, p. 5; (109) A-34, par 11; (110) A-35, p. 6; (111) A-34, par 13; A-28, p. 59; (112) Personal knowledge; (113) A-34, par 13.

Therefore, in the interest of sanitation, large areas were burned down to cremate the remains.

With the closing of the Pocket, PA morale was at the all time high. (114)

Bold Igorotes had ridden on top of tanks directing them while chopping off entangling bejuco with their bolos. (115)

The enemy considered the 20th Infantry national heroes but the 122d which attempted to breakthrough to them was disgraced for its failure. (116)
Flesh and blood were poor substitutes for suitable weapons.

On the 13th, the battalion was moved to the Upper Pocket to assist if needed there, against the gap in the line in the sector of F Company, 11th Infantry. (See Map F) (117)

This part of the front had been pounded by heavy enemy artillery and subjected to numerous attacks by the 122d Japanese Infantry. (118)

Major Duisterhof with his heritage of Dutch perseverance had been in this activity with his part of savage Igorotes daily. The penetration had succeeded only after every man in the line for 50 yards had been killed. (119)

Here the Japanese occupied our foxholes and set up several machine guns, and held an opening that belled out to a width of 300 yards and a depth of 1000 yards. (120)

These were contained by a mixed assortment of platoons and companies as units came up to stop this threat. Now this force was augmented by the troops from the Lower Pocket, some of whom had been between both groups of Japanese. (121)

14 February - Attack from the south closed about half this remaining area. (122) (See Map G)

15 February - Attacked from south. Closed about half of balance of Pocket. (123)

(114) A-41, par 8; (115) A-25, Col 5, p. 3; A33, p. 264; A-28, p. 59; A- 14, p. 6; A-8, p. 5; (116) A-35, p. 6; Personal knowledge; (117) A-35, p. 17; (118) A-23; A-18, p. 20; (119) A-28, p. 59; A-8, p. 15; (120) A-29, p. 11; (121) A-35, p. 17; (122) A-38, par 13; (123) A-38, par 14.

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the
16 February - Attacked again from south, using mortars. Made some progress. Pocket now 75 yards wide, 100 yards deep. (See Map H)

17 February - Attacking from south, Upper Pocket closed about 0800 by PC Battalion after a PC sergeant and two privates crawled up with grenades and destroyed a key machine-gun. 91st Division units were released at 0700, there being no further need for them. One hundred and fifty enemy dead were found during this last day's fight. (124)

SUMMARY

Units involved in Lower Pocket: Det Hq Co, 11th Inf (PA); Det 51-53 Inf (PA); 1st Bn, 45th Inf (PS) with Communications Detachment, Hq Co, 45th Inf (PS) and Medical Detachment attached; Companies C & G, 11th Inf (PA); Battery F, 24th Field Artillery (PS); AT Gun Detachment, 45th Inf (PS), One Platoon, Companies B & C, 192d Tank Bn; 2d Bn, 92d Inf (PA); 2d Bn, 2d PC; 1st Bn, 92d Inf (PA) less Companies A & D.

Additional units involved in Upper Pocket: Co E, 1st Inf (PA); Companies A, B, K, 3d Inf (PA); Det 3d Bn, 11th Inf; Det 1 Plat, PC; Det Hq, 2d Bn, 11th Inf, Plat, 12th Inf; Bn, PC; and Co A, 92d Inf. (125)

Among the items captured and turned in ^{after} in this action were 27 machine guns, 5 artillery pieces, 9 machine rifles, 5 airplane panel sets, 9 machine rifles, 4 medical kits, 15,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 686 rounds of artillery ammunition, 11 grenade launchers with 456 rounds, 4 flame throwers, and 524 hand grenades. (126)

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

To make an objective analysis of this operation, I believe special consideration must be given to the several extremely peculiar features of this opening campaign of America's participation in World War II.

The United States had committed itself not to modernize its Philippine fortifications. (127) The small force in this Pacific outpost remained

(124) A-35, p. 17; A-33, p. 265, A-29, p. 10, 12; A-27; A-24; A-21; (125) A-38, par 17; (126) A-35, p. 16; A-32, p. 298, 299; A-40; (127) A-35, p. 2.

last priority for supplies and equipment until international relations became so tense in late 1941, corrective action was begun. (128) The poorly trained and miserably equipped bulk of manpower was only about two-thirds mobilized when hostilities commenced. Only about 10% of initial needed equipment and trained troops arrived in time to be effective, and of these, an attack-bomber group never received its aircraft. (129)

Throughout the campaign the enemy had air supremacy that seriously hampered our every move, and prevented any element of our forces on Luzon from enjoying the restorative benefits of rear area pleasures. Hardly any area during the described operation was free from enemy shelling, and all was under aerial bombardment. (130)

The enemy controlled the seas. His sudden land moves had either forced us back from our foods and medicines, or our supply system had made inadequate provision for the hasty withdrawal to Bataan. (131)

At any rate, on the 29th day of war, the American forces were reduced to a half Filipino ration, or a dubious 750 calories per day, for men engaged in almost continuous energy-consuming retreats, marches, maneuvers and battles over considerable rugged terrain consisting of sharp mountain spurs, deep gorges, and increasingly thick jungle while in tropic heat. (132)

Hand grenades were scarce or inoperative; 60mm mortars were extra weight as not a single round had arrived in the islands; 81mm ammunition, likewise, was unknown; and the substitute 3" "Stokes" mortar shells were found to be about 80% defective and tightly rationed. We had no smoke or WP ammunition available. (133)

The mountains and jungles demanded high angle, light, medium, and heavy artillery, but all that was available were two howitzers and one battery of mountain guns to support over 20 miles of front line and some 60 miles of shore line. (134)

(129) A-35, p. 3, 4, 6; A-1, p. 103; (130) A-2, p. 119; (131) A-17, p. 57, 58; (132) A-35, p. 15; A-3, p. 107; (133) A-35, p. 7, 18; (134) A-35, p. 7.

Engineers and their equipment were seriously short and prevented construction of adequate road nets. Demolitions or combat engineer support of any kind was not available in this operation. (135)

No mention was made of a tank dozer; it hadn't been invented yet. The rocket was not developed.

So, in pondering the foregoing action, we must consider American forces armed with rifles, BAR's, machine guns, and only ~~an~~ infinitesimal mortar and artillery support in country so dense only a section of 13-ton tanks could team with infantry, and this in an unorthodox column, without air support. (136)

So, in essence, the tactics were outmoded due to strategic failures in supply and equipment.

It is my opinion that inadequate intelligence presented a faulty conception of the strength of the enemy interrupting the supply route, Trail 7, and the attack was begun with too small a unit.

The succeeding difficult struggle required several days to determine the strength and extent of the enemy position. Due to continuing or interrupted gaps in the front line, the enemy undoubtedly increased his strength in men and supplies. Had this lack of security and supervision not been realized, it may well be the enemy might have succeeded in his intentions as indicated by plotted zones of action on captured maps; i.e., to cut through our forces to extend a penetration to meet with his forces coming inland from the landings to the south, and thereby divide our forces, cutting off I Corps from ammunition and supply. (137)

Throughout the action, the Scouts maintained high morale in spite of malnutrition and lack of supporting arms. In the 19 days, two cigarets per man were issued, plus one cigaret each by Brigadier General Spencer B. Akin, then USAFFE Signal Officer who took a series of official photographs in the closed-out Lower Pocket.

(135) A-35, p. 11; (136) A-35, p. 8; (137) A-35, p. 14; A-12, p. 14, 15; A-5, p. 11; A-10, p. 30; A-6, p. 149; A-3, p. 102.

Had information been complete, on our maps, it would have revealed the waterhole as a logical primary objective; as it was, the significance of its capture was not realized until five days of thirst contributed to the Japanese withdrawal and annihilation.

The dense jungle materially aided the intrenched defenders, particularly so in their manner of construction of foxholes without tell-tale dirt.

The use of snipers by the advance echelons of the Japanese contributed surprise to his effort.

The tangled growth made observation all but impossible, thereby definitely delaying the advance. I am sure that a very high proportion of experts, sharpshooters - yes, even two distinguished marksmen in the 1st Battalion, 45th Infantry (PS) - would have enabled an advance, for no enemy that could be seen could have evaded the accuracy of Scout fire. (138)

The untrained troops of the native units were inspired by the knowledge that the trained Philippine Scouts were fighting in the same action, and the frequent appearance of the American leaders up to Corps Commander, under enemy small arms fire, bolstered their fears to a great extent and helped them to perform the one mission expected - to hold their position, attack by fire, and move ahead if they could.

Colonel Lathrop was loathe to force a premature all-out assault with his battalion in view of the paucity of trained and capable combat troops in the Bataan peninsula. The one American Infantry Regiment had a preponderance of men with six months or less service. The Scout Cavalry Regiment was seriously depleted by battle losses, as were the two Scout Infantry Regiments.

Every casualty among the few trained men seriously affected the reliability of the entire army in Bataan.

The efficacy of the tank-infantry team was considerably lost in the close confines of a jungle trail, but was better than no tanks at all.

(138) Personal knowledge.

The hasty evacuation of the tank crews was unwarranted as one was driven out under its own power and the other pulled off the stump that held it and also left on its own. Heavier tanks, with special equipment such as a dozer blade, should have facilitated opening the trail. Flame throwers, had they been available in these close quarters, could have been effectively used against the machine-gun emplacements.

White phosphorous to burn out undergrowth, grenades, mortars, and accurate high angle artillery were definite needs.

In this action the Scouts lost two officers and 64 men killed or wounded, and an estimated 180 members of the Philippine Army killed or wounded. Approximately 40,000 rounds of small arms, 240 grenades, 20 rounds of 75mm, and 150 rounds of 3-inch mortar ammunition were fired. The enemy lost a regiment of his best troops, 2400 men. (139)

This action won for its participants a Medal of Honor, 5 Distinguished Service Crosses, and several Silver Stars, as well as numerous Purple Hearts, and participating units in this phase of the campaign were all awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. (140)

LESSONS

Lessons that may be found in this operation are:

1. A poorly equipped, poorly supplied, and underfed force, however poorly trained, can hold the defense when assisted by a small element of trained troops.
2. Small arms fire must have supporting weapons to ferret out a determined enemy.
3. Tanks can be better effective for close infantry support against dug-in enemy infantry if the weapons can be deeply depressed. In this connection, a tank could not fire into a foxhole, and its only ammunition being armor-piercing solid shot had no effect; however, the antiaircraft machine-gun on its turret was used by an infantry officer with effect.

(139) A-35, p. 16; (140) A-35, p. 15.

4. An adequate water supply is more essential than food. The Americans and Filipinos were all suffering from malnutrition after six weeks of half-rations and had lost an average of 30 pounds per man. The Japanese could no longer stay to fight after being without water supply five days, yet they still averaged 125.8 pounds and looked to be of normal weight for their short stature. (141)

5. The penetration is a successful military maneuver if it can be supported and augmented. In this instance the Japanese effort was incomplete and caused only harassment, however serious that was.

6. Thorough training and leadership are essential to success in combat.

7. Current and future plans for the defense of American territory should include supply and equipment and men in adequate quantity and quality to withstand attack.