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HISTORICAL RECORD OF THE 118TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

Submitted By

Salipada K. Pendatun  
Major, Infantry, USFIP  
Commanding

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

This Historical Record has been prepared in compliance with 106th Division Memorandum dated 11 February 44. Delay in its submission is unavoidable in view of the necessity of gathering and arranging all the pertinent materials. Lack of stationary is again another delaying factor. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of CIC Memo dated 12 May 44, this Historical Record embodies the history of this unit up to 30 April 44. The Historical Record of this Regiment for the months or periods not covered here will be submitted as soon as accomplished.

Inasmuch as the history of this Regiment is inextricably linked with the histories of the revolutionary movements in Cotabato, of the erstwhile Bukidnon-Cotabato Force (BCF), and that of the 117th Infantry Regiment, the last then forming a part of the 109th Division, this Historical Record must of necessity include some facts about the initial revolutionary movements in Cotabato, the life history of the short-lived BCF, and the early days of the 117th. And as the BCF had as its nucleus accredited members of the Cotabato Bolo Battalion, it was thought best to include in this record pertinent facts relative to the BB, otherwise no just estimate or a thorough understanding of the history which this record endeavours to perpetuate can be satisfactorily arrived at.

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In the afternoon of 12 January 1943, the BCF occupied the Concentration Camp for Prisoners of War at Camp Casisang, 2 kilometers south of Malaybalay. We found the Concentration Camp vacated, the Japanese having transferred most of the prisoners to some other places while some were set free and were then living in Malaybalay. The enemy must have been aware of our projected drive toward Malaybalay and of our plan to liberate concentrated prisoners of war, otherwise they would not have been in such a hurry to leave the PWC, so much so that beddings were left behind, medicine, stationary, etc.

Among official communications found in the Concentration Camp were messages from General MacArthur some of which are quoted hereunder:

RADIOGRAM

TO SHARP 3CF V20 X

May 6, 1942

ALL FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES EXCEPT THOSE ON FORTIFIED ISLANDS AT ENTRANCE TO MANILA BAY ARE HEREBY RELEASED TO YOUR COMMAND. INFORM ALL CONCERNED. REPORT AT ONCE TO MACARTHUR FOR ORDERS. I BELIEVE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVE BEHIND THIS ORDER.

WAINWRIGHT

RADIOGRAM

BNDL DE VNDN

6 May 1942

RADIO MELBOURNE CK 37

WAINWRIGHT HAS SURRENDERED. FROM NOW ON COMMUNICATE ON ALL MATTERS DIRECT WITH ME. HAVE YOU COMMUNICATION WITH CHYMNOWETH?

MACARTHUR

RADIOGRAM

For Reception Only

May 11, 1942

BNDL DE VNDL NRI MOST IMMEDIATE GR 84

AC 676 9/5 AG 676 ORDERS EMANATING FROM GENERAL WAINWRIGHT HAVE NO VALIDITY. IF POSSIBLE SEPARATE YOUR FORCE INTO SMALL ELEMENTS AND INITIATE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. YOU, OF COURSE, HAVE FULL AUTHORITY TO MAKE ANY DECISION THAT IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MAY DEMAND. KEEP IN COMMUNICATION WITH ME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. YOU ARE A GALLANT AND RESOURCEFUL COMMANDER AND I AM PROUD OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

MACARTHUR

These messages gave the officers and the men of the BCF added incentive and bolstered up their spirit and enthusiasm. Having initiated the guerilla activities on our own volition, we continued the fight against the Japanese with greater vigor and elan in the newly gotten knowledge that no less an authority than General MacArthur himself had previously ordered the initiation of guerilla operations.

With our forces occupying Casisang, plans to begin operations against Malaybalay were discussed and formulated. Letters were sent to civilians and non-combatants inside Malaybalay urging them to go to other safer places in view of our proposed attacks. The policemen under the Japanese, the PG, and Governor Antonio Rubin himself were sent letters warning them.

of the impending perils, and inviting them to come over to our side and cooperate. Even Capt Yasiaka, Commanding Officer of the Japanese in Malaybalay, was sent a letter appealing to his spirit of humanity and good sportsmanship. Quoted hereunder in toto is the letter sent to Gov Rubin.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USFIP, BUKIDNON-COTABATO FORCE  
CPQ, BUKIDNON

January 17, 1943

My dear Gov Rubin,

I expect you to do your duty to the Filipino people of your province especially the inhabitants of Malaybalay. Tell your people not to be afraid of the army now operating against the enemy in Bukidnon. I assure you that the officers and men under my command are well disciplined and will give all possible protection to the Filipino citizens of Bukidnon. Therefore, as a responsible man and a leader of your province, you are requested to cooperate with this army. You are duty bound to see to it that the Filipinos of Malaybalay and other inhabitants living in that town, except the Japanese, vacate as soon as possible. They should not fear my men even if they pass our lines, because no harm will be done to them. As a matter of fact, there are already over one hundred civilians who passed our lines since yesterday and were brought to my rear by trucks and distributed to places where there are plenty of food supplies. Now if the policemen and the PC soldiers want to get out from the hands of the Japanese Forces, they can pass our lines by carrying their rifles at sling arms, muzzle down, belts revolved and hands up.

Governor Rubin, I will hold you responsible for the lives and safety of the Malaybalay residents, if you fail to make them vacate Malaybalay in 24 hours. Captain Alviar with all the policemen and PC soldiers will receive proper treatment from me if they will just get out of Malaybalay. I know they are Filipinos and will not die with the enemy.

Your daughter, Mrs. Mendoza, and your son-in-law are all with me now. They are properly treated under the care of Dr. Fortich.

Have Col. Delgado and Capt de Castro informed that their families are enjoying good health and waiting anxiously for them at Linabe. I have paid them several visits since I arrived in your province.

If the civilians get out of Malaybalay, I will exert efforts to cooperate with you in putting them in safe places where they can easily get food supplies and medical attention.

My personal regards to you and other provincial officials of Malaybalay and my friends there.

Sincerely yours,

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(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATUN  
Brigadier General  
Commanding, Bukidnon-Cotabato  
Force

A portion of the letter to Capt Yasiaka is quoted hereunder:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USAFFE, BUKIDNON-COTABATO FORCE  
CPQ, BUKIDNON

January 17, 1943

To the CO, Imperial Japanese Forces  
Malaybalay, Bukidnon

From December 15th 1942 up to January 12th 1943 the undersigned as Commanding General of B-C Force realizing his duty as a soldier and his responsibilities to the civilians and non-combatant population of the City of Malaybalay, exerted efforts in communicating either in writing or by verbal orders and public speeches to the Filipino residents asking them to evacuate at once because we were prepared and ready to start an offensive against your forces at Malaybalay. In my public utterances in different towns and barrios where I had occasion to speak before the people I have asked publicly the cooperation of those present and those not present but willing to cooperate to communicate to civilian residents of Malaybalay advising them to evacuate as soon as possible. But all efforts towards that end failed. The undersigned commanding as he does an army of well disciplined officers and men, found it his duty to save the lives and properties of the innocent residents of Malaybalay by asking these people to evacuate the city in order to avoid being in danger by residing within the theater of operation. Much to my disappointment, information from reliable sources were received by my headquarters that these people are more than willing to evacuate the city of Malaybalay but due to you and your men's unfair policies they are not allowed to get out of the town of Malaybalay. On the other hand, you and your men exerted efforts in prohibiting all civilians from evacuating the town of Malaybalay and you even went to the extent of spreading propaganda among the innocent people that in the event that they will evacuate Malaybalay if caught they will suffer death penalty including their families and confiscating their properties. This policy announced by your administration is certainly contrary to the policies expected of a great nation like Japan and headed by a man who is considered by the Japanese people as their worldly God, the Great Emperor of Japan. And making matters worst propaganda have been made by your headquarters to the effect that the officers and men now operating against you are nothing but groups of organized bandits, marauders, thieves and blood-thirsty people and that it is com-



posed of Moros decided to kill all persons at sight. This mis-information is certainly most disappointing especially it comes from representative of a supposedly renowned power like Japan.

For the preservation of the good name of your Emperor and your national integrity as a people you are requested to allow all civilians and non-combatant residents of Malaybalay to evacuate that place within 24 hours from the receipt of this communication because these people deserve all consideration and protection, not only from this army, but also from the Japanese Imperial Army under your command.....

(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATUN  
Brigadier General USAFFE  
Commanding

Among those to whom letters were sent, or who were made aware of them and the impart they pertended, many heeded our warnings and some even accepted our invitations. It was later learned, however, that Governor Antonio Rubin, instead of acquainting his people with the contents of our messages, sought refuge within the Japanese barracks, and started spreading the false rumor that we were a bunch of Moro bandits either waiting for Christian preys on the outskirts of the town or diabolically planning the pillage and plunder of Malaybalay. Those who were so falsely advised remained with the Japanese inside Malaybalay.

THE SIEGE OF MALAYBALAY

It was during the siege of Malaybalay when our men ~~proved~~<sup>proved</sup> their mettle. Ill-equipped and ill-armed as they were, they were in high spirits all through the siege and played their grim roles honorably on the uncertain field of combat, clearly showing themselves the equal of, if not superior to, their Japanese adversaries. Those who had allowed themselves to be deluded into believing the prejudiced report that the BCF had not in its lifetime actively engaged the enemy, must have to revise their views the moment the true and complete account of our operations in Bukidnon and Cotabato had been written all their details. The BCF has enthusiastically, and at times merrily, fought the Nippons in ~~the~~ Malaybalay. Those had had thrown aspersions on the BCF and accused it of being capable only of looting and raping the women-folk had better list of the tales about these few brave ones who heroically died, and of the many who gladly risked their lives on the blood-drenched fields and byways of Malaybalay, just so they could prove that in this neck of the woods were men who would willingly court and embrace death rather than be enslaved or oppressed.

In compliance with orders from CPQ (BCF hqs then at Bancud), part of the 2nd Inf Regt under Lt-Col Frank D. McGee occupied strategic places between Dalwangan and Malaybalay, Almost simultaneously, the destruction of all bridges north of Malasungay was undertaken by 2nd Lt Arlindo D. Angeles, CE (now Co, Engineer Co, 118th) and the engineering units under him. In the dead of night, 11 Jan 43, Kabakalan Bridge north of Kalaungay was blasted with dynamites the primers of which were improvised.

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The detonations resounded far and wide, ominously foreboding our intentions. Malaybalay then became convinced that operations against the town were in the offing. The Japanese themselves realized that they were in for much trouble. They had known that even *much* before, for which reason they had been busily transferring Prisoners of War from Casisang to Malaybalay and finally from Malaybalay to Cagayan. Should the BCF have full control of that portions portion of the National Highway from Dalwangan to Siasungay, the Japanese in Malaybalay would be entirely cut off from the North. By this time, in Bukidnon there was not a single Japanese garrison south of Malaybalay, the nearest garrison being that beyond to Bukidnon-Cotabato boundary, in Kabacan, 160 kilometers away. At the start of operations against Malaybalay, Datu Un-tug's 3rd Inf Regt occupied strong defensive positions in Upi-and (Araman, Cotabato). Passage of enemy reinforcements from Cotabato was considered a remote possibility.

The Japanese in Malaybalay were determined to keep the Dalwangan-Malaybalay Road open for traffic. At 5:00 AM, 12 Jan 43, Japanese patrols sent out to investigate Kabakahan Bridge encountered a platoon under 2nd Lt Rosales Juni (117th) in the vicinity of the bridge. That same day another platoon under 3rd Lieut Lorenzo Difunturom (now Division Ordnance Officer, 109th Div) encountered another light Japanese patrol in the vicinity of Kalasungay. In both encounters the enemy employed heavy weapons. No casualty on our side; that enemy's loss was not known. That very day a strong Japanese outpost was detailed to guard the Kabakahan Bridge which was being repaired.

On 14 January 43, a detachment under Lt-Col McGee proceeded to and occupied Dalwangan where four (4) Filipino policemen under the Japanese peacefully surrendered together with their arms and ammunitions. The policemen at first decided to fight but they were in the end convinced that to do so would be suicidal and unpatriotic.

At 4:00 AM, 15 January 43, 3rd Lt Pedro Leuterio (now of 117th) and 26 EM deployed across the Sawaga River an attempt to determine the positions of the enemy inside Malaybalay, fired towards the Central School Building, Alhambra Cine, and Governor Antonio Rubin's house. Almost simultaneously, 3rd Lt Salvador Ga (117th) of Lt-Col McGee's regiment and 19 EM attacked the Japanese soldiers in the Forestry Bldg. In both frays, the enemy retaliated by firing heavily at our men, using their mortars and machine guns, but to no avail. We suffered no casualty. The Japanese losses were not known.

The attack on Malaybalay was on. We got our first bitter taste of the chicanery Filipino Japanophiles and the PC were capable of during our initial operations in Malaybalay. It is this very knavery of the part of the PC and their agents which unfortunately marred our relations since then. At 9:30 AM, 15 January 43, 3rd Lt Feliciano Castelo (now of the 117th) and his men crossed the Sawaga River and marched towards the PC Barracks occupied by Filipino policemen under Prisoner of War 3rd Lt Juan Lagrama (PC, USAFFE). Lieut Lagrama offered to surrender all the arms and ammunitions in the custody of his policemen under certain conditions. While negotiations were in progress, Ro-

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que Asehero, confirmed Filipino spy, left unnoticed and reported the whole proceeding to FC Capt Alviar who in turn relayed the matter to Capt Yasiaka, the Japanese Commander. As a result thereof, the Japanese began shelling and machine gunning Lt Castelo and his men and the positions of our supporting units. Even under the heavy firing they were subjected to our men were in high spirits and stuck to their lines till the firing from the enemy's side ceased at 6:30 PM when darkness finally set in. In this single engagement brought about ~~about~~ by the treachery of our brother Filipinos, the BCF lost five (5) men and seven (7) wounded. Casualty of the enemy was not known, but it was believed to be high.

At 6:00 AM, 22 Jan 43, a platoon headed by 2nd Lt Rosales Juni (117th) engaged in Kalasungay 60 Japanese soldiers coming from Malaybalay. Superior firing power of the enemy forced our men to withdraw. The BCF, which suffered no casualty, inflicted a loss of five (5) dead on the Japanese.

Things were happening fast and furious on the northern outskirts of Malaybalay, the area of the 2nd Inf Regt under Lt- Col McGee. While Lt Juni and his men were fighting the Japanese in Kalasungay, a platoon under 3rd Lt Ga, occupying a commanding position in Sumpong Hill, ambushed Japanese foot soldiers bound for the Forestry Building from the Normal School Building. Verified enemy casualties were 13 dead; on our side none. In this ambushing Corp Bajo killed a total of 12 enemy soldiers. Two (2) rifles were taken from the enemy dead.

Although the Japanese inside Malaybalay were strengthening their defenses and still maintained the aggressiveness (or a semblance of it) they were accustomed to in actions against the BCF, the morale of our officers and men rose to newer heights as days went on. Under cover of darkness our soldiers dug their own fox-holes close to Japanese emplacements and managed to lay communication lines from their positions to the rear installations. Everyone was raring to take a pot-shot at the common enemy.

On 28 January 43, Lt Juni and his company and a platoon led by 3rd Francisco Azcona (117th) again engaged the Japanese in the vicinities of Sumpong Hill and the Forestry Bldg. Firing started at 6:30 AM and continued sporadically until 2:00 PM. As usual, the Japanese had superiority of fire and of weapons. In this encounter the group under 3rd Lt Conrado Tadeo (117th) captured one pistol, one Japanese saber, and one field glass all of which belonged to Japanese Capt Marai who was killed in the engagement. As this unit belonged to the regiment of Lt-Col McGee, the saber was awarded to him. Six (6) enemy soldiers were killed. Capt Gil Altamirano, Lt-Col McGee, was captured and subsequently tortured to death by the Japanese. No other casualty was suffered by the BCF. The timely warning of Sgt. B. Matas to the effect that the Japanese had outflanked Lt Juni and his men saved the day for the BCF.

Per CPQ Field Order No. 3, dated 30 January 43, the general attack on Malaybalay by the 1st and the 2nd Inf regiments was ordered. The interest and safety of released prisoners of

war, the civilians, and the non-combatants were as usual kept in mind. Parts of the said Field Order are hereunder quoted:

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USFIP, BUKIDNON-COTABATO FORCE  
CPQ, BUKIDNON

ATTACK AND OCCUPATION OF MALAYBALAY

FIELD ORDER  
No. - - - 3

30 January 43  
3:50 PM

TO: CO's, 1st and 2nd Inf Regt, 1st Division, B-C Force

As we have given all the opportunities to the civilians and noncombatant elements of Malaybalay to evacuate the town before we commenced our attack, and having exerted efforts to contact the policemen, the Filipino Constabulary soldiers, the Prisoners of War and the high government officials of Malaybalay to change their color, but all these measures failed, and having exhausted all means to protect our fellow citizens and other non-combatant elements of Malaybalay, we have to accomplish our mission, therefore our legal and moral obligations regarding the protection of our fellow citizens and other non-combatant residents of Malaybalay now ceases and because of their stubbornness and refusal to abide by our repeated requests for their evacuation from Malaybalay, we have come to the inevitable conclusion that they have sided with the enemy, thus losing their faith and loyalty to their country and to the United States. Do not let any accidental killing of our fellow citizens and non-combatants of Malaybalay cause you any feeling of remorse or regret because we have done everything in our power to protect and save their lives and properties and that you have no other objective than the liberation of your people and country from the clutches of the inhuman and treacherous army of the Imperial Government of Japan.

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8. The policemen and the PC soldiers must not be fired at unless they are seen firing at us or they show signs of resistance. All policemen, PC soldiers and all other armed persons shall be disarmed and sent to the rear immediately...

(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATUN  
Brigadier General  
Commanding

OFFICIAL:  
(SGD) EDWIN D. ANDREWS  
Col, AC, USFIP  
Chief of Staff

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The enemy by then was occupying several different buildings strategically located in Malaybalay town. The Japanese had dug for themselves foxholes and trenches. The civilians who chose to remain aside had also their own foxholes. Malaybalay was virtually a town of foxholes. It must be remembered that the town squatted on rolling ground with commanding hills close by, making sniping very effective. At 5:00 AM, 1 February 43, our forces closed in on the Japanese in their entrenched positions. When our two Cal 50 MG's barked into action the enemy ran to their foxholes and refused to show themselves up. The 1st Bn of the 1st Inf Regt which was then under Capt. M. O. Orbase (now CO, 1st Bn, 118th) succeeded in driving the Japanese and their Filipino allies from the PC barracks, occupying that and the Bukidnon High School grounds and the area west of the road near Governor Rubin's mansion. Except for *some* the slight shrapnel wounds received by some of our soldiers, the BCF suffered no casualty.

The very day after the general attack on Malaybalay, one Japanese plane dropped bombs on our position at Kalasungay, resulting in the wounding of one of our soldiers. At 10:00 AM, the same day, 2 February 43, two Japanese planes reconnoitered above Malaybalay and then nosed towards Kalasungay where two more bombs were dropped. On 3 February 43, two bombers rained a total of 22 bombs on our positions at Casisang and Impalambang. The following day two bombers again appeared over Casisang and Impalambang dropping 34 bombs at random. Four of these bombs barely missed the station wagon of the BCF Commanding Officer who was on his way to the front. In all the bombings done, the BCF suffered no casualty.

Pressure of the enemy inside Malaybalay never abated. Our men, in their outposts or from some vantage points, sniped the enemy whenever he showed himself. On 6 February 43, Pvts Rafael Arboleda and Raymundo Asersi crept to an enemy CP under cover of darkness, and threw one improvised ball grenade, thereafter known as the Flayer Ball Grenade because it was manufactured by Joseph Flayer of our Ordnance Section. At around 5:15 PM 7 February 43, mortal shells from enemy positions killed Pvts Pami Hugo and Marcelo Ngayao, seriously wounding Pvt Joaquin Tolosan, while in the act emplacing our cal 50 MG in the vicinity of Fortich Hill.

Before proceeding further on the activities of the BCF in Malaybalay, let us turn our attention to the units then operating in Cotabato. The officers and men of the 3rd Inf Regt (BCF) under Datu Udtug had also been actively engaging the Japanese all the while. Their field of operations reached as far as Camp Hagonoy in Digos, Davao and all along the ~~the~~ Cotabato-Davao National Highway up to Pikit-Pagalangan. We in Bukidnon were constantly in contact with the 3rd Inf Regt in Cotabato. In fact, all our replacements for men incapacitated from active front line service came from Datu Udtug's unit in Upper Cotabato. Their activities were confined to ambushing patrols which brought a lot of casualties on the part of the Japanese. The FRA, on its part, also gave the

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enemy no quarters. The biggest encounter being that which occurred in Salunaya on 29 January 43, which resulted in the killing of 76 enemy soldiers and Japanese Capt Wisi, who was largely responsible for the wholesale slaughter of innocent people including the families of Lts Emilio Iar (now JO, Combat Co, Hqs Bn, 118th) and Alfredo Garinga (now CO, "G" Co, 2nd Bn, 118th) in Marbel and sitios of the NISA in Koronadal. The PRA unit which participated in the engagement was led by 1st Lt Penaflor Q. Briones and 2nd Lt Siphon Gayak.

On 31 January 43, the PRA consented to forsake the rank of General for its commanding officer and allowed itself to be merged with the BCF as the Lower Cotabato Sector. The PRA then recognized itself, placing Datu Mantil as the commanding officer with the rank of Major and Froilan Matas "G" Co CO with the rank of Captain. We in Bukidnon had not yet been informed of the joining of the PRA with the BCF when Mantil and Matas with their respective cliques parted ways on 6 February 43. As a result, Matas set up his own unit which retained the title of Lower Cotabato Sector, while Datu Mantil left Midsayan for CPQ, BCF, on 8 Feb. 43, arriving in Bangkud on 12 February 43. Immediately upon the arrival of Datu Mantil and his officers and men, they were all put on active duty in the Malaybalay Front.

Night raids and sniping activities continued in Malaybalay. Our Cal 50 MG's and Flayer Ball Grenades demoralized non-combatants inside the town, so much so that a goodly number of them managed to run away to some other safe place. On 15 February 43, at 5:00 AM another general attack was launched on Malaybalay. It must be borned in mind that at certain places where the topography or lay of the town permitted, our men occupied positions close enough to the enemy, permitting clear vision of what was in front and allowing exchanges of voices or shouts. Our men were in exceedingly high spirits and of great enthusiasm. Shouting and making all sorts of noises made macabre by the rat-tat-tat of MG fire and the explosions of effective Flayer Ball Grenades, our men taunted the enemy pinned to their foxholes, ridiculed the Japs for their poor marksmanship. It is undeniably true that while the Japanese had superior fire power, their fire power efficiency was below par. Exchange of fire between us lasted till late in the afternoon. In the afternoon of that attack Lt-Col Robert V. Bowler (now CO, "A" Corps, 10th MD) and Father J. E. Haggarty (SJ) made observations from the CP of the 1st Bn, 1st Inf Regt. So enthusiastic over and all a-twitter were the front line people about the attack that Lt-Col McGee himself kept on advancing ahead of his men, so much so that he was dangerously exposing himself to enemy fire. When information to this effect was received at the CPQ through Major Garcia, the CO of the 2nd Inf Regt, the BCF CO ordered Lt-Col McGee recalled in order to keep him from unnecessarily flirting with death. Lt-Col McGee was not happy at having been ordered to fall back as he was at that time hectically engaged in the philippic pursuit of haranguing the nemy in this wise; "I am McGee, the McGee you've been looking for; if you want me, come and get me," and other taunting words. When Lt-Col McGee arrived at the CP of the 1st Inf

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Regt where the BCF Commanding Officer was, he was greeting by the latter with "I had recalled, Colonel, you were exposing yourself too much" to which Lt-Col replied, "Aw, the Japs couldn't get me." From that time on until the final cessation of operations on Malaybalay, the Japanese limited their movements and confined themselves strictly within their barracks or quarters.

On 17 February 43 our patrols and snipers harassed the Japanese quartered in the vicinity of the Nurses' Home, resulting in the death of one Japanese and six (6) policemen. On 21 February 43 a patrol of five (5) men sent out by Lt Felipe Ubaldo to reconnoiter the area south of the Capitol Building shot and killed an enemy sniper. Two men under Lt. Faustino Patindal shot and killed two enemy soldiers one of whom was about to climb an abocado tree. Pvt 1st Class Vicente Morales under Lt Joene Nobleza shot one Japanese and one policeman. A harassing patrol of 4 EM sent south of the Capitol was driven back by heavy enemy fire. Typewritten copies of BCF messages to Capt Alviar and policemen were thrown to the enemy soldiers who were seen to pick up some of them. At the same time the Little Flower Dormitory where another group of Japanese was huddled was attempted to be burned. Heavy firing from other enemy positions prevented burning. That 21st day of February was a day replete ~~with~~ with action and excitement for our soldiers in the front. The men were determined to get Malaybalay at any cost. On 22 February 43 the platoon under Lt Ga installed a catapult to throw grenades and bombs to enemy emplacements. We had to resort to using bombs retrieved from the Maramag Landing Field as our supply of ammunition was running low, and it was observed that big-sized grenades (Flayer) and bombs were very effective breaker of morale and hearts of the enemy and of their Filipino sympathizers. Lt Pablo Estacio and the platoon under him assisted by the Engineer Unit and the Ordnance Service, loaded electrically controlled bombs on a carabao. The carabao was driven by Pfc Nicomedes Tencorio into the heart of the enemy emplacements where the bombs exploded, causing an unverified number of casualties among the enemy. From 23 to 28 February 43 our men engaged the Japanese here and there. Our snipers too had been very active and accurate. Let one Japanese head pop up from the trenches or one yellow face show itself from the windows and out from somewhere our snipers would take their aim and score a hit. By February 28 the number of the Japanese in Malaybalay had been so depleted due to the vigour and intensity of our attacks and the accuracy of our snipers that the Japanese Garrison Commander had been frantically radioing and SOS for reinforcements. Those who had escaped from Malaybalay and had come to our side informed us that at one time or another the Japanese Commander thought of surrendering, especially if the awaited reinforcement did not come.

It was during the month of February that the released prisoners of war with their families began escaping from Malaybalay in spite of the Japanese threat that anybody caught leaving the town would be killed on the spot. Every day saw escaping fami-

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lies including civilians going into Army territory. It was however on 23 February 43 that the biggest number of released prisoner of war reported to CPQ at Bangcud. This group was composed of Lt-Col Luis M. Delgado, Capt Crispino de Castro, 1st Lt Alfredo M. Bustamante, 1st Lt Alfredo Baking (MC), 2nd Lt Malacas Medina (Sig C), 2nd Lt Frankling Labaon, 2nd Lt F. Abunda, 3rd Lt Sayusay, Sgts Regino Paclar, Miguel Collantes, and Andres Taron. All of these officers and EM, with the exception of Sayusay who had always been ill, reported for and were accepted into service.

Most of those that came out and reported to headquarters were asked about the conditions obtaining within Malaybalay. The following has been gleaned from the descriptions given by the evacuees:

#### Inside Malaybalay

Although the force besieging Malaybalay shot their first volley on the afternoon of 12 Jan 1943, the attack on the enemy did not start in earnest until the 15th when heavy, concentrated firing from various directions around Malaybalay woke the people up from their sleep before daybreak. It seemed as though hell had broken loose, and the people were at their wit's end as to what to do. Those that had foxholes dug around their houses hurried down to them, while those living in the second stories huddled together indiscriminately in the central part of the middle rooms. Inside these rooms was perfect quiet broken only by the hardly audible whispering of someone cautioning the others not to move around too much. Outside, all was pandemonium, caused not by any confused running around of persons but by racket of bursting shells or ricocheting bullets striking against walls.

As daylight broke fear was clearly discernible in the faces of those in foxholes and those huddled indoors. A cessation of fire from around breakfast time to late afternoon took place, thus affording the people an opportunity to vacate their houses and to hide to the Capitol building and the houses in the Capitol grounds. With people rushing here and there, pushing goods-laden carts and littering the streets with their belongings, there was mad confusion and great disorder. All day and the day after the firing was only sporadic.

Some released officers managed to have dugouts constructed under the provincial hospital. In these dugouts the officers and their families lived, slept, cooked, and ate for many a day. To step a few paces away from the dugout was to expose oneself as a target to the unselecting bullet.

During a lull in the exchange of fire it was bruited about that Gov. Rubin had received a communication from the CO of the guerillas. But the nature of the communication was never known as no sooner had Gov. Rubin received and glanced at it than he packed his clothings and, together



with his wife, ran to the Japanese in the Normal School building where he turned over the letter to Capt Yasiaka and escorted himself and his wife.

On the fourth day and all succeeding days the guerillas, on the warpath again, commenced firing. Tracer bullets lined the sky as they dropped on the grounds. The firing was heavier and closer. The guerillas had occupied the nursery an little ways back of which was emplaced on a high ground a cal 50 MG, the vicinity immediately adjacent to the residence of Gov Rubin, the Constabulary barracks, the Cadre, as Sumnung. So near were emplaced the troops of the attacking force that Lt-Col Delgado, Capt de Castro, Capt Sevilla, Capt Bitanga (CE) Capt Q. Cruz (QMS), Lts Bides and Medina, et all were all agreed that it was worse than Digos and that the two warring factions could not have been more than 30 meter apart.

The siege of Malaybalay became protracted. Every day the firing was just as heavy and thick as on the day before. The guerilla bullets were taking quite a toll not only on the Japanese and the policemen and the PC's but also among the civilians. Food supplies within were miserably short. So much so that rotting carcasses of a deceased horse and carabao provided a feast for the starving civilians and released prisoners of war and their families. Things became so hot, the non-combatant were so pitifully miserable, that most of the officer and EM just released from the Concentration Camp with their families and some civilians braved until dangers by literally running through hails of bullets and between two fires in order to get to safer territory and subsequently into the guerilla area.

On 1 March 43 we received information that a big number of Japanese soldiers arrived in Cagayan bound for Malaybalay. On the promise of Lt-Col Bowler to hold or check enemy reinforcements from the North, and with the presence of part of our forces in Dalwangan and Kalasungay, ~~we~~ we felt assured that the Japanese in the besieged town would not get their reinforcements before we finally capture Malaybalay. Thus, instead of relaxing our pressure on the Japanese Garrison we intensified it. Meanwhile, the Japanese troops bound for Malaybalay were able to pass thru the lines of the Sumilao Sector, the 11th Inf Regt upon which Lt-Col Bowler pinned his hopes. It now developed upon our Dalwangan-Kalasungay unit to check or hold the advance of the enemy. On 3 March 43, 3rd Lt Ramon Aquino (now S-3, 3rd Bn, 118th) reported contact with the enemy above Dalwangan. On 4 March 43, Lt Aquino again reported having ambushed the enemy at Wakat and his forced withdrawal to another ambushing position south. On 5 March 43, Lt Aquino reported another engagement with the advancing Japanese. Reinforcements were hurriedly sent to Lt Aquino on the night of 5 March, because we lost contact with him of noon that day. The following day, 6 March, Lt Siphon Gayak and his men encountered the Japanese reinforcements

in Kalasungay. Our unit was forced to withdraw due to the superiority in number and fire power of the enemy. The road to Malaybalay lay open, and the Japanese reinforcements numbering over 300 entered Malaybalay at 5:00 PM, 6 March 43. At 10:00 o'clock that same night, our men loaded two 100-pound electrically controlled bombs on a carabao which was driven towards the Little Flower Dormitory where the bombs and the carabao exploded, causing no little damage to the enemy. The arrival of reinforcements in Malaybalay and our lack of ammunitions forced the withdrawal of our troops to more strategic positions, 8 kilometers south of Malaybalay, where we maintained a front line extending from Bugcaon to Linabo.

CLOSING REMARKS

Almost all of those who took up with us armed resistance against our aggressor, save the new unfortunate brave who died in the field of battle and the few unscrupulous men who could not endure a life of sufferings and privations, are still with us in this Regiment or in another recognized army units. Mention of the fact that in the places occupied by our unit the civilian population, out of their own volition, gave and gave even when it hurts. The surrender of civilians within our occupied area could not be ascribed to their lack of fith in, or disloyalty to, our ideals, bur rather to the effective use by the Japanese of the element of fear as weapon to batter down their resistance until they had reached the limits of their endurance.

Submitted:

(SGD) SALIPADA K. PINDATUN  
Major, Infantry, USFIP  
Commanding

Epis:

1. Letter of General Paulino

A TRUE EXTRACT OF PAGES 189, 201 to 213 & 239 of  
"HISTORY OF THE 'A' CORPS, WESTERN MINDANAO, TENTH MILITARY DISTRICT, VOLUME I" AS MADE FROM COPY NO. 4, BORROWED BY INVESTIGATION BRANCH, AGRD FROM Lt. Serapio J. Datoe, Corps Historian.

*P. L. Saillant, DAC*  
*13 May 51*  
*23 May 51*

*Santos, 26 July 43;*  
2. G.O. # 7, Has 118th, 1 Aug 44  
3. G.O. # 4, CFC, 10th Div

HISTORICAL RECORD OF THE 118TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

Submitted By

6 May 1942

Salipada K. Pendatun  
Major, Infantry, USFIP  
Commanding

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

This Historical Record has been prepared in compliance with 106th Division Memorandum dated 11 February 44. Delay in its submission is unavoidable in view of the necessity of gathering and arranging all the pertinent materials. Lack of stationary is again another delaying factor. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of CIC Memo dated 12 May 44, this Historical Record embodies the history of this unit up to 30 April 44. The Historical Record of this Regiment for the months or periods not covered here will be submitted as soon as accomplished.

Inasmuch as the history of this Regiment is inextricably linked with the histories of the revolutionary movements in Cotabato, of the erstwhile Bukidnon-Cotabato Force (BCF), and that of the 117th Infantry Regiment, the last then forming a part of the 109th Division, this Historical Record must of necessity include some facts about the initial revolutionary movements in Cotabato, the life history of the short-lived BCF, and the early days of the 117th. And as the BCF had as its nucleus accredited members of the Cotabato Bolo Battalion, it was thought best to include in this record pertinent facts relative to the BB, otherwise no just estimate or a thorough understanding of the history which this record endeavours to perpetuate can be satisfactorily arrived at.

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\*\* \*\* \*\* \*\* \*\*

In the afternoon of 12 January 1943, the BCF occupied the Concentration Camp for Prisoners of War at Camp Casisang, 2 kilometers south of Malaybalay. We found the Concentration Camp vacated, the Japanese having transferred most of the prisoners to some other places while some were set free and were then living in Malaybalay. The enemy must have been aware of our projected drive toward Malaybalay and of our plan to liberate concentrated prisoners of war, otherwise they would not have been in such a hurry to leave the POWC, so much so that beddings were left behind, medicine, stationary, etc.

Among official communications found in the Concentration Camp were messages from General MacArthur some of which are quoted hereunder:

RADIOGRAM

TO SHARP 3CF V20 X

May 6, 1942

ALL FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES EXCEPT THOSE ON FORTIFIED ISLANDS AT ENTRANCE TO MANILA BAY ARE HEREBY RELEASED TO YOUR COMMAND. INFORM ALL CONCERNED. REPORT AT ONCE TO MACARTHUR FOR ORDERS. I BELIEVE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVE BEHIND THIS ORDER.

WAINWRIGHT

RADIOGRAM

BNDL DE VIND

RADIO MELBOURNE CK 37

WAINWRIGHT HAS SURRENDERED. FROM NOW ON COMMUNICATE ON ALL MATTERS DIRECT WITH ME. HAVE YOU COMMUNICATION WITH CHYNOWETH?

6 May 1942

MACARTHUR

RADIOGRAM

For Reception Only

BNDL DE VINDL NRI MOST IMMEDIATE GR 84

AC 676 9/5 AG 676 ORDERS EMANATING FROM GENERAL WAINWRIGHT HAVE NO VALIDITY. IF POSSIBLE SEPARATE YOUR FORCE INTO SMALL ELEMENTS AND INITIATE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. YOU, OF COURSE, HAVE FULL AUTHORITY TO MAKE ANY DECISION THAT IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MAY DEMAND. KEEP IN COMMUNICATION WITH ME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. YOU ARE A GALLANT AND RESOURCEFUL COMMANDER AND I AM PROUD OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

May 11, 1942

MACARTHUR

These messages gave the officers and the men of the BCF added incentive and bolstered up their spirit and enthusiasm. Having initiated the guerilla activities on our own volition, we continued the fight against the Japanese with greater vigor and elan in the newly gotten knowledge that no less an authority than General MacArthur himself had previously ordered the initiation of guerilla operations.

With our forces occupying Casisang, plans to begin operations against Malaybalay were discussed and formulated. Letters were sent to civilians and non-combatants inside Malaybalay urging them to go to other safer places in view of our proposed attacks. The policemen under the Japanese, the PC, and Governor Antonio Rubin himself were sent letters warning them of the impending perils, and inviting them to come over to our side and cooperate. Even Capt Yasiaka, Commanding Officer of the Japanese in Malaybalay, was sent a letter appealing to his spirit of humanity and good sportsmanship. Quoted hereunder in toto is the letter sent to Gov Rubin.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USFIP, BUKIINON-COTABATO FORCE  
CFQ, BUKIINON

January 17, 1943

My dear Gov Rubin,

I expect you to do your duty to the Filipino people of your province especially the inhabitants of Malaybalay. Tell your people not to be afraid of the army now operating against the enemy in Bukidnon. I assure you that the officers and men under my command are well disciplined and will give all possible protection to the Filipino citizens of Bukidnon. Therefore, as a responsible man and a leader of your province, you are requested to cooperate with this army. You are duty bound to see to it that the Filipinos of Malaybalay and other inhabitants living in that town, except the Japanese, vacate as soon as possible. They should not

fear my men even if they pass our lines, because no harm will be done to them. As a matter of fact, there are already over one hundred civilians who passed our lines since yesterday and were brought to my rear by trucks and distributed to places where there are plenty of food supplies. Now if the policemen and the PC soldiers want to get out from the hands of the Japanese Forces, they can pass our lines by carrying their rifles at sling arms, muzzle down, belts revolved and hands up.

Governor Rubin, I will hold you responsible for the lives and safety of the Malaybalay residents, if you fail to make them vacate Malaybalay in 24 hours. Captain Alviar with all the policemen and PC soldiers will receive proper treatment from me if they will just get out of Malaybalay. I know they are Filipinos and will not die with the enemy.

You daughter, Mrs. Mendoza, and your son-in-law are all with me now. They are properly treated under the care of Dr. Fortich.

Have Col. Delgado and Capt de Castro informed that their families are enjoying good health and waiting anxiously for them at Linabe. I have paid them several visits since I arrived in your province.

If the civilians get out of Malaybalay, I will exert efforts to cooperate with you in putting them in safe places where they can easily get food supplies and medical attention.

My personal regards to you and other provincial officials of Malaybalay and my friends there.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATON  
Brigadier General  
Commanding, Bukidnon-Cotabato  
Force

A portion of the letter to Capt Yasiaka is quoted hereunder:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USAFFE, BUKIDNON-COTABATO FORCE  
CPQ, BUKIINON

January 17, 1943

To the CO, Imperial Japanese Forces  
Malaybalay, Bukidnon

From December 15th 1942 up to January 12th 1943 the undersigned as Commanding General of B-C Force realizing his duty as a soldier and his responsibilities to the civilians and non-combatant population of the City of Malaybalay, exerted efforts in communicating either in writing or by verbal orders and public speeches to the Filipino residents asking them to evacuate at once because we were prepared and ready to start an offensive

against your forces at Malaybalay. In my public utterances in different towns and barrios where I had occasion to speak before the people, I have asked publicly the cooperation to those present and those not present but willing to cooperate to communicate to civilian residents of Malaybalay advising them to evacuate as soon as possible. But all efforts towards that end failed. The undersigned commanding as he does an army of well disciplined officers and men, found it his duty to save the lives and properties of the innocent residents of Malaybalay by asking these people to evacuate the city in order to avoid being in danger by residing within the theater of operation. Much to my disappointment, information from reliable sources were received by my headquarters that these people are more than willing to evacuate the city of Malaybalay but due to you and your men's unfair policies they are not allowed to get out of the town of Malaybalay. On the other hand, you and your men exerted efforts in prohibiting all civilians from evacuating the town of Malaybalay and you even went to the extent of spreading propaga<sup>n</sup>da among the innocent people that in the event that they will evacuate Malaybalay if caught they will suffer death penalty including their families and confiscating their properties. This policy announced by your administration is certainly contrary to the policies expected of a great nation like Japan and headed by a man who is considered by the Japanese people as their worldly God, the Great Emperor of Japan. And making matters worst propaga<sup>n</sup>da have been made by your headquarters to the effect that the officers and men now operating against you are nothing but groups of organized bandits, marauders, thieves and blood-thirsty people and that it is composed of Moros decided to kill all persons at sight. This misinformation is certainly most disappointing especially it comes from representatives of a supposedly renowned power like Japan.

For the preservation of the good name of your Emperor and your national integrity as a people you are requested to allow all civilians and non-combatant residents of Malaybalay to evacuate that place within 24 hours from the receipt of this communication because these people deserve all consideration and protection, not only from this army, but also from the Japanese Imperial Army under your command.....

(SOD) SALIPADA K. PENDATON  
Brigadier General USAFFE  
Commanding

Among those to whom letters were sent, or who were made aware of them and the impart they pertended, many heeded our warnings and some even accepted our invitations. It was later learned, however, that Governor Antonio Rubin, instead of acquainting his people with the contents of our messages, sought refuge within the Japanese barracks



and started spreading the false rumor that we were a bunch of Moro bandits either waiting for Christian preys on the outskirts of the town of diabolically planning the pillage and plunder of Malaybalay. Those who were so falsely advised remained with the Japanese inside Malaybalay.

On 11 January 43, Lt-Col Frank D. McGee proceeded to and occupied Dalwangan where THE SIEGE OF MALAYBALAY commenced under the Japanese peace.

It was during the siege of Malaybalay when our men proved their mettle. Ill-equipped and ill-armed as they were, they were in high spirits all through the siege and played their grim roles honorably on the uncertain field of combat, clearly showing themselves the equal of, if not superior to, their Japanese adversaries. Those who had allowed themselves to be deluded into believing the prejudiced report that the BCF had not in its lifetime actively engaged the enemy, must have to revise their views the moment the true and complete account of our operations in Bukidnon and Cotabato had been written all their details. The BCF has enthusiastically, and at times merrily, fought the Nippons in Malaybalay. Those had had thrown aspersions on the BCF and accused it of being capable only of looting and raping the women-folk had better list or the tales about these few brave ones who heroically died, and of the many who gladly risked their lives on the blood-drenched fields and byways of Malaybalay, just so they could prove that in this neck of the woods were men who would willingly court and embrace death rather than be enslaved or oppressed.

In compliance with orders from CPQ (BCF hqs then at Bancud), part of the 2nd Inf Regt under Lt-Col Frank D. McGee occupied strategic places between Dalwangan and Malaybalay. Almost simultaneously, the destruction of all bridges north of Kalasungay was undertaken by 2nd Lt Arlindo D. Angeles, CE (now Co, Engineer Co, 118th) and the engineering units under him. In the dead of night, 11 Jan 43, Kabakalan Bridge north of Kalasungay was blasted with dynamites the primers of which were improvised. The detonations resounded far and wide, ominously foreboding our intentions. Malaybalay then became convinced that operations against the town were in the offing. The Japanese themselves realized that they were in for much trouble. They had known that even before, for which reason they had been busily transferring Prisoners of War from Casisang to Malaybalay and finally from Malaybalay to Cagayan. Should the BCF have full control of that portions of the National Highway from Dalwangan to Siasungay, the Japanese in Malaybalay would be entirely cut off from the North. By this time, in Bukidnon there was not a single Japanese garrison south of Malaybalay, the nearest garrison being that beyond to Bukidnon-Cotabato boundary, in Kabacan, 160 kilometers away. At the start of operations against Malaybalay, Datu Untug's 3rd Inf Regt occupied strong defensive positions in Upiand (Araman, Cotabato). Passage of enemy reinforcements from Cotabato was considered a remote possibility.

The Japanese in Malaybalay were determined to keep the Dalwangan-Malaybalay Road open for traffic. At 5:00 AM, 12 Jan 43, Japanese patrols sent out to investigate Kabakalan Bridge encountered a platoon under 2nd Lt Rosales Juni (117th) in the vicinity of the bridge. That same day, another platoon under 3rd Lieut Lorenzo Difuntaron (now Division Ordnance Officer, 109th Div) encountered another light Japanese patrol in the

vicinity of Kalasungay. In both encounters the enemy employed heavy weapons. No casualty on our side; that enemy's loss was not known. That very day a strong Japanese outpost was detailed to guard the Kabakahan Bridge which was being repaired.

On 14 January 43, a detachment under Lt-Col McGee proceeded to and occupied Dalwangan where four (4) Filipino policemen under the Japanese peacefully surrendered together with their arms and ammunitions. The policemen at first decided to fight but they were in the end convinced that to do so would be suicidal and unpatriotic.

At 4:00 AM, 15 January 43, 3rd Lt Pedro Leuterio (now of 117th) and 26 EM deployed across the Sawaga River an attempt to determine the positions of the enemy inside Malaybalay, fired towards the Central School Building, Alhambra Cine, and Governor Antonio Rubin's house. Almost simultaneously, 3rd Lt Salvador Ga (117th) of Lt-Col McGee's regiment and 19 EM attacked the Japanese soldiers in the Forestry Bldg. In both frays, the enemy retaliated by firing heavily at our men, using their mortars and machine guns, but to no avail. We suffered no casualty. The Japanese losses were not known.

The attack on Malaybalay was on. We got our first bitter taste of the chicanery Filipino Japanophiles and the PC were capable of during our initial operations in Malaybalay. It is this very knavery of the part of the PC and their agents which unfortunately marred our relations since then. At 9:30 AM, 15 January 43, 3rd Lt Feliciano Castelo (now of the 117th) and his men crossed the Sawaga River and marched towards the PC Barracks occupied by Filipino policemen under Prisoner of War 3rd Lt Juan Lagrama (PC, USAFFE). Lieut Lagrama offered to surrender all the arms and ammunitions in the custody of his policemen under certain conditions. While negotiations were in progress, Roque Asehero, confirmed Filipino spy, left unnoticed and reported the whole proceeding to PC Capt Alviar who in turn relayed the matter to Capt Yasiaka, the Japanese Commander. As a result thereof, the Japanese began shelling and machine gunning Lt Castelo and his men and the positions of our supporting units. Even under the heavy firing they were subjected to our men were in high spirits and stuck to their lines till the firing from the enemy's side ceased at 6:30 PM when darkness finally set in. In this single engagement brought about by the treachery of our brother Filipinos, the BCF lost five (5) men and seven (7) wounded. Casualty of the enemy was not known, but it was believed to be high.

At 6:00 AM, 22 Jan 43, a platoon headed by 2nd Lt Rosales Juni (117th) engaged in Kalasungay 60 Japanese soldiers coming from Malaybalay. Superior firing power of the enemy forced our men to withdraw. The BCF, which suffered no casualty, inflicted a loss of five (5) dead on the Japanese.

Things were happening fast and furious on the northern outskirts of Malaybalay, the area of the 2nd Inf Regt under Lt-Col McGee. While Lt Juni and his men were fighting the Japanese in Kalasungay, a platoon under 3rd Lt Ga, occupying a commanding position in Summang Hill, ambushed Japanese foot soldiers bound for the Forestry Building from the Normal School Building. Verified enemy casualties were 18 dead; on our side none. In this ambushing Corp Rajo killed a total of 12 enemy soldiers. Two (2) rifles were taken from the enemy dead.

Although the Japanese inside Malaybalay were strengthening their defenses and still maintained the aggressiveness (or a semblance of it) they were accustomed to in actions against the BCF, the morale of our officers and men rose to newer heights as days went on. Under cover of darkness our soldiers dug their own foxholes close to Japanese emplacements and managed to lay communication lines from their positions to the rear installations. Everyone was raring to take a pot-shot at the common enemy.

On 28 January 43, Lt Juni and his company and a platoon led by 3rd Francisco Azcona (117th) again engaged the Japanese in the vicinities of Sumpung Hill and the Forestry Bldg. Firing started at 6:30 AM and continued sporadically until 2:00 PM. As usual, the Japanese had superiority of fire and of weapons. In this encounter the group under 3rd Lt Conrado Tadeo (117th) captured one pistol, one Japanese saber, and one field glass all of which belonged to Japanese Capt Marai who was killed in the engagement. As this unit belonged to the regiment of Lt-Col McGee, the saber was awarded to him. Six (6) enemy soldiers were killed. Capt Gil Altamirano, aide to Lt-Col McGee, was captured and subsequently tortured to death by the Japanese. No other casualty was suffered by the BCF. The timely warning of Sgt. B. Matas to the effect that the Japanese had outflanked Lt Juni and his men saved the day for the BCF.

Per CPQ Field Order No. 3, dated 30 January 43, the general attack on Malaybalay by the 1st and the 2nd Inf regiments was ordered. The interest and safety of released prisoners of war, the civilians, and the non-combatants were as usual kept in mind. Parts of the said Field Order are hereunder quoted:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HEADQUARTERS, USFIP, BUKIDNON-COTABATO FORCE  
CPQ, BUKIDNON

ATTACK AND OCCUPATION OF MALAYBALAY

FIELD ORDER  
No. - - - 3

30 January 43  
3:57 PM

TO: CO's, 1st and 2nd Inf Regt, 1st Division, B-C Force

As we have given all the opportunities to the civilians and noncombatant elements of Malaybalay to evacuate the town before we commenced our attack, and having exerted efforts to contact the policemen, the Filipino Constabulary soldiers, the Prisoners of War and the high government officials of Malaybalay to change their color, but all these measures failed, and having exhausted all means to protect our fellow citizens and other non-combatant elements of Malaybalay, we have to accomplish our mission, therefore our legal and moral obligations regarding the protection of our fellow citizens and other non-combatant residents of Malaybalay now ceases and because of their stubbornness and refusal to abide by our repeated requests for their evacuation from Malaybalay, we have come to the inevitable conclusion that they have sided with

the enemy, thus losing their faith and loyalty to their country and to the United States. Do not let any accidental killing of our fellow citizens and non-combatants of Malaybalay cause you any feeling of remorse or regret because we have done everything in our power to protect and save their lives and properties and that you have no other objective than the liberation of your people and country from the clutches of the inhuman and treacherous army of the Imperial Government of Japan.

X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X

8. The policemen and the PC soldiers must not be fired at unless they are seen firing at us or they show signs of resistance. All policemen, PC soldiers and all other armed persons shall be disarmed and sent to the rear immediately....

(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATUN  
Brigadier General  
Commanding

OFFICIAL:  
(SGD) EDWIN D. ANDREWS  
Col, AG, USFIP  
Chief of Staff

The enemy by then was occupying several different buildings strategically located in Malaybalay town. The Japanese had dug for themselves foxholes and trenches. The civilians who chose to remain aside had also their own foxholes. Malaybalay was virtually a town of foxholes. It must be remembered that the town squatted on rolling ground with commanding hills close by, making sniping very effective. At 5:00 AM, 1 February 43, our forces closed in on the Japanese in their entrenched positions. When our two Cal 50 MG's barked into action the enemy ran to their foxholes and refused to show themselves up. The 1st Bn of the 1st Inf Regt which was then under Capt. M. O. Orbase (now CO, 1st Bn, 118th) succeeded in driving the Japanese and their Filipino allies from the PC barracks, occupying that and the Bakidnon High School grounds and the area west of the road near Governor Rubin's mansion. Except for the slight shrapnel wounds received by some of our soldiers, the PCF suffered no casualty.

The very day after the general attack on Malaybalay, one Japanese plane dropped bombs on our position at Kalasungay, resulting in the wounding of one of our soldiers. At 10:00 AM, the same day, 2 February 43, two Japanese planes reconnoitered above Malaybalay and then nosed towards Kalasungay where two more bombs were dropped. On 3 February 43, two bombers rained a total of 22 bombs on our positions at Casisang and Impalambang. The following day two bombers again appeared over Casisang and Impalambang dropping 34 bombs at random. Four of these bombs barely missed the station wagon of the BCF Commanding Officer who was on his way to the front. In all the bombings done, the BCF suffered no casualty.

Pressure of the enemy inside Malaybalay never abated. Our men, in their outposts or from some vantage points, sniped the enemy whenever he showed himself. On 6 February 43, Pvts Rafael Arboleda and Raymundo Asersi

crept to an enemy CP under cover of darkness, and threw one improvised ball grenade, thereafter known as the Flayer Ball Grenade because it was manufactured by Joseph Flayer of our Ordnance Section. At around 3:15 PM 7 February 43, mortar shells from enemy positions killed Pvt Pami Hugo and Marcelo Ngayao, seriously wounding Pvt Joaquin Tolosan, while in the act emplacing our cal 50 MG in the vicinity of Fortich Hill.

Before proceeding further on the activities of the BCF in Malaybalay, let us turn our attention to the units then operating in Cotabato. The officers and men of the 3rd Inf Regt (BCF) under Datu Udtug had also been actively engaging the Japanese all the while. Their field of operations reached as far as Camp Hagonoy in Digos, Davao and all along the Cotabato-Davao National Highway up to Pikit-Pagalangan. We in Bukidnon were constantly in contact with the 3rd Inf Regt in Cotabato. In fact, all our replacements for men incapacitated from active front line service came from Datu Udtug's unit in Upper Cotabato. Their activities were confined to ambushing patrols which brought a lot of casualties on the part of the Japanese. The PRA, on its part, also gave the enemy no quarters. The biggest encounter being that which occurred in Salunaya on 29 January 43, which resulted in the killing of 76 enemy soldiers and Japanese Capt Wisl, who was largely responsible for the wholesale slaughter of innocent people including the families of Lts Emilio Dar (now JO, Combat Co, Hqs Bn, 118th) and Alfredo Garinga (now CO, "G" Co, 2nd Bn, 118th) in Marbel and sitios of the NLSA in Koronadal. The PRA unit which participated in the engagement was led by 1st Lt Penafior Q. Briones and 2nd Lt Siphon Gayak.

On 31 January 43, the PRA consented to forsake the rank of General for its commanding officer and allowed itself to be merged with the BCF as the Lower Cotabato Sector. The PRA then recognized itself, placing Datu Mantil as the commanding officer with the rank of Major and Froilan Matas "G" Co CO with the rank of Captain. We in Bukidnon had not yet been informed of the joining of the PRA with the BCF when Mantil and Matas with their respective cliques parted ways on 6 February 43. As a result, Matas set up his own unit which retained the title of Lower Cotabato Sector, while Datu Mantil left Midsayan for CTQ, BCF, on 8 Feb. 43, arriving in Bangkud on 12 February 43. Immediately upon the arrival of Datu Mantil and his officers and men, they were all put on active duty in the Malaybalay Front.

Night raids and sniping activities continued in Malaybalay. Our Cal 50 MG's and Flayer Ball Grenades demoralized non-combatants inside the town, so much so that a goodly number of them managed to run away to some other safe place. On 15 February 43, at 5:00 AM another general attack was launched on Malaybalay. It must be borne in mind that at certain places where the topography or lay of the town permitted, our men occupied positions close enough to the enemy, permitting clear vision of what was in front and allowing exchanges of voices or shouts. Our men were in exceedingly high spirits and of great enthusiasm. Shouting and making all sorts of noise made macabre by the rat-tat-tat of MG fire and the explosions of effective Flayer Ball Grenades, our men taunted the enemy pinned to their foxholes, ridiculed the Japs for their poor marksmanship. It is undeniably true that while the Japanese had superior fire power, their fire power efficiency was below par. Exchange of fire between us lasted till late in the afternoon. In the afternoon of that attack Lt-Col Robert V. Bowler (now CO, "A" Corps, 10th MD) and Father J. E. Haggerty (Sj)



made observations from the CP of the 1st Bn, 1st Inf Regt. So enthusiastic over and all a-twitter were the front line people about that attack that Lt-Col McGee himself kept on advancing ahead of his men, so much so that he was dangerously exposing himself to enemy fire. When information to this effect was received at the CPQ through Major Garcia, the CO of the 2nd Inf Regt, the BCF CO ordered Lt-Col McGee recalled in order to keep him from unnecessarily flirting with death. Lt-Col McGee was not happy at having been ordered to fall back as he was at that time hectically engaged in the philippic pursuit of haranguing the enemy in this wise; "I am McGee, the McGee you've been looking for; if you want me, come and get me," and other taunting words. When Lt-Col McGee arrived at the CP of the 1st Inf Regt where the BCF Commanding Officer was, he was greeted by the latter with "I had recalled, Colonel, you were exposing yourself too much" to which Lt-Col replied, "Aw, the Japs couldn't get me." From that time on until the final cessation of operations on Malaybalay, the Japanese limited their movements and confined themselves strictly within their barracks or quarters.

On 17 February 43 our patrols and snipers harassed the Japanese quartered in the vicinity of the Nurses' Home, resulting in the death of one Japanese and six (6) policemen. On 21 February 43, a patrol of five (5) men sent out by Lt Felipe Ubaldo to reconnoiter the area south of the Capitol Building shot and killed an enemy sniper. Two men under Lt. Faustino Petindal shot and killed two enemy soldiers one of whom was about to climb an abocado tree. Pvt 1st Class Vicente Morales under Lt Joens Nobleza shot one Japanese and one policeman. A harassing patrol of 4 EM sent south of the Capitol was driven back by heavy enemy fire. Typewritten copies of BCF messages to Capt Alviar and policemen were thrown to the enemy soldiers who were seen to pick up some of them. At the same time the Little Flower Dormitory where another group of Japanese was huddled was attempted to be burned. Heavy firing from other enemy positions prevented burning. That 21st day of February was a day replete with action and excitement for our soldiers in the front. The men were determined to get Malaybalay at any cost. On 22 February 43 the platoon under Lt Ca installed a catapult to throw grenades and bombs to enemy emplacements. We had to resort to using bombs retrieved from the Maramag Landing Field as our supply of ammunitions was running low, and it was observed that big-sized grenades (Flayer) and bombs were very effective breaker of morale and hearts of the enemy and of their Filipino sympathizers. Lt Pablito Estacio and the platoon under him assisted by the Engineer Unit and the Ordnance Service, loaded electrically controlled bombs on a carabao. The carabao was driven by Pfc Nicomedes Tenorio into the heart of the enemy emplacements where the bombs exploded, causing an unverified number of casualties among the enemy. From 23 to 28 February 43 our men engaged the Japanese here and there. Our snipers too had been very active and accurate. Let one Japanese head pop up from the trenches of one yellow face show itself from the windows and out from somewhere our snipers would take their aim and score a hit. By February 28 the number of the Japanese in Malaybalay had been so depleted due to the vigour and intensity of our attacks and the accuracy of our snipers that the Japanese Garrison Commander had been frantically radioing and SOS for reinforcements. Those who had escaped from Malaybalay and had come to our side informed



us that at one time or another the Japanese Commander thought of surrendering, especially if the awaited reinforcement did not come.

It was during the month of February that the released prisoners of war with their families began escaping from Malaybalay in spite of the Japanese threat that anybody caught leaving the town would be killed on the spot. Every day saw escaping families including civilians going into Army territory. It was however on 23 February 43 that the biggest number of released prisoner of war reported to CPQ at Bangcud. This group was composed of Lt-Col Luis M. Delgado, Capt Crispino de Castro, 1st Lt. Alfredo M. Bustamante, 1st Lt Alfredo Baking (MC), 2nd Lt Malacas Medina (Sig C), 2nd Lt Franklin Labaon, 2nd Lt F. Abunda, 3rd Lt Sayusay, Sgts Regino Paclar, Miguel Collantes, and Andres Taron. All of these officers and EM, with the exception of Sayusay who had always been ill, reported for and were accepted into service.

Most of those that came out and reported to headquarters were asked about the conditions obtaining within Malaybalay. The following has been gleaned from the descriptions given by the evacuees: the policemen and

Inside Malaybalay

Although the force besieging Malaybalay shot their first volley on the afternoon of 12 Jan 1943, the attack on the enemy did not start in earnest until the 15th when heavy, concentrated firing from various directions around Malaybalay woke the people up from their sleep before daybreak. It seemed as though hell had broken loose, and the people were at their wit's end as to what to do. Those that had foxholes dug around their houses hurried down to them, while those living in the second stories huddled together indiscriminately in the central part of the middle rooms. Inside these rooms was perfect quiet broken only by the hardly audible whispering of someone cautioning the others not to move around too much. Outside, all was pandemonium, caused not by any confused running around of persons but by racket of bursting shells or ricocheting bullets striking against walls.

As daylight broke fear was clearly discernible in the faces of those in foxholes and those huddled indoors. A cessation of fire from around breakfast time to late afternoon took place, thus affording the people an opportunity to vacate their houses and to hide to the Capitol building and the houses in the Capitol grounds. With people rushing here and there, pushing goods-laden carts and littering the streets with their belongings, there was made confusion and great disorder. All day and the day after the firing was only sporadic.

Some released officers managed to have dugouts constructed under the provincial hospital. In these dugouts the officers and their families lived, slept, cooked, and ate for many a day. To step a few paces away from the dugout was to expose oneself as a target to the unselecting bullet.

During a lull in the exchange of fire it was bruited about that Gov. Rubin had received a communication from the CO of the guerrillas. But the nature of the communication was never known as no sooner had Gov. Rubin received and glanced at it then he packed his clothings and, together with his wife, ran to the Japanese in the Normal School building

where he turned over the letter to Capt Yasiaka and escorted himself and his wife.

On the fourth day and all succeeding days the guerillas, on the warpath again, commenced firing. Tracer bullets lined the sky as they dropped on the grounds. The firing was heavier and closer. The guerillas had occupied the nursery a little ways back of which was emplaced on a high ground a cal 50 MG, the vicinity immediately adjacent to the residence of Gov Rubin, the Constabulary barracks, the Cadets, as Sumung. So near were emplaced the troops of the attacking force that Lt-Col Delgado, Capt de Castro, Capt Sevilla, Capt Bitanga (CE), Capt Q. Cruz (QMS), Lts Bides and Medina, et al were all agreed that it was worse than Digos and that the two warring factions could not have been more than 30 meter apart.

The siege of Malaybalay became protracted. Every day the firing was just as heavy and thick as on the day before. The guerilla bullets were taking quite a toll not only on the Japanese and the policemen and the PC's but also among the civilians. Food supplies within were miserably short. So much so that rotting carcasses of a deceased horse and carabao provided a feast for the starving civilians and released prisoners of war and their families. Things became so hot, the non-combatants were so pitifully miserable, that most of the officer and EM just released from the Concentration Camp with their families and some civilians braved until dangers by literally running through hails of bullets and between two fires in order to get to safer territory and subsequently into the guerilla area.

On 1 March 43 we received information that a big number of Japanese soldiers arrived in Cagayan bound for Malaybalay. On the promise of Lt-Col Bowler to hold or check enemy reinforcements from the North, and with the presence of part of our forces in Dalwangan and Kalasungay, we felt assured that the Japanese in the besieged town would not get their reinforcements before we finally capture Malaybalay. Thus, instead of relaxing our pressure on the Japanese Garrison, we intensified it. Meanwhile, the Japanese troops bound for Malaybalay were able to pass thru the lines of the Sumilao Sector, the 11th Inf Regt upon which Lt-Col Bowler pinned his hopes. It now developed upon our Dalwangan-Kalasungay unit to check or hold the advance of the enemy. On 3 March 43, 3rd Lt Ramon Aquino (now S-3, 3rd Bn, 118th) reported contact with the enemy above Dalwangan. On 4 March 43, Lt Aquino again reported having ambushed the enemy at Wakat and his forced withdrawal to another ambushing position south. On 5 March 43, Lt Aquino reported another engagement with the advancing Japanese. Reinforcements were hurriedly sent to Lt Aquino on the night of 5 March, because we lost contact with him of noon that day. The following day, 6 March, Lt Siphon Gayak and his men encountered the Japanese reinforcements in Kalasungay. Our unit was forced to withdraw due to the superiority in number and fire power of the enemy. The road to Malaybalay lay open, and the Japanese reinforcements numbering over 300 entered Malaybalay at 5:00 PM, 6 March 43. At 10:00 o'clock that night, our men loaded two 100-pound electrically controlled bombs on a carabao which was driven towards the Little Flower Dormitory where the bombs and the carabao exploded, causing no little damage to the enemy. The arrival of reinforcements in Malaybalay and our lack of ammunitions

forced the withdrawal of our troops to more strategic positions, 8 kilometers south of Malaybalay, where we maintained a front line extending from Bugcaon to Linabo.

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CLOSING REMARKS

Almost all of those who took up with us armed resistance against our aggressor, save the new unfortunate brave who died in the field of battle and the few unscrupulous men who could not endure a life of sufferings and privations, are still with us in this Regiment or in another recognized army units. Mention of the fact that in the places occupied by our unit the civilian population, out of their own volition, gave and gave even when it hurts. The surrender of civilians within our occupied area could not be ascribed to their lack of faith in, or disloyalty to, our ideals, but rather to the effective use by the Japanese of the element of fear as weapon to batter down their resistance until they had reached the limits of their endurance.

Submitted:  
(SGD) SALIPADA K. PENDATON  
Major, Infantry, USPIP  
Commanding

A TRUE EXTRACT OF PAGES 139, 201 to 213 & 239 OF "HISTORY OF THE "A" CORPS, WESTERN MINDANAO, TENTH MILITARY DISTRICT, VOLUME 1" AS MADE FROM COPY NO. 4, BORROWED BY INVESTIGATION BRANCH, ACRD FROM Lt. Serapio J. Datoc, Corps Historian.

*R. L. Saillant*  
R. L. SAILLIANT, DAC  
23 May 51

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