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FIELD ARTILLERY

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REFERENCE TO

23<sup>rd</sup> F. A.

Extracted from Vol. I of

"TRIUMPH IN THE PHILIPPINES"

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But while December 7 meant "Pearl Harbor" to most of the world, it meant "Clark Field" to the Filipinos and the Americans in the Philippines -- the date to them, halfway around the world and across the international date line, was December 8, 1941. At almost the same moment that the Japs hit Pearl Harbor, they made their attack on Clark Field in Central Luzon, only fifty miles from Manila. There they knocked out the American Far Eastern Air Force with almost the same devastating effect they dealt the U. S. Pacific Fleet 5,000 miles away.

-Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, p. 34

The North Luzon Force, dispersed throughout the central and northern Luzon area, was commanded by Major General Wainwright. It included two units of the Regular Army, the 31st Infantry Regiment and the 192d Tank Battalion, a former National Guard Organization, as well as six units of the Philippine Scouts. These were the 45th and the 57th Infantries, (PS); the 26th Cav. (PS) and the 23rd, 24th and 88th F.A. Regiments (PS). General Wainwright also had the following Philippine Army Divisions:

The 11th Reserve Division under Col. William E. Brougher, AUS

The 21st Reserve Division under Brig. Gen. Mateo M. Capinpin, PA  
The 31st Reserve Division under Col Clifford Blumel, AUS  
The 71st Reserve Division under Col Clyde A. Sellsch, AUS  
The 91st Reserve Division under Brig. Gen Luther Stevens, AUS  
The South Luzon Force was under the command of Brig. General George Parker. It consisted of one Regular Army unit, the 194th Tank Battalion; one Philippine Scout unit, the 86th Field Artillery; the 1st and the 2nd Philippine Constabulary Regiments, and three Philippine Army Divisions:

The 1st Regular Division under Brig. Gen. Fidel Segundo, PA  
The 41st Reserve Division under Brig. Gen. Vicente Lim, PA  
The 51st Reserve Division under Col. Albert M. Jones, AUS  
The Visayan-Mindanao force was commanded by Col. William F. Sharp, with headquarters in Mindanao, and it contained no Regular Army units. It had one Philippine Scout Regiment, the 43rd Infantry; the 3rd Philippine Constabulary Regiment, and three Philippine Army divisions:

The 61st Reserve Division, under Col. Bradford G. Cynoweth, USA.  
The 81st Reserve Division, under Col. Guy D. Fort, PA  
The 101st Reserve Division, under Col. Joseph P. Vachon, PA.

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There were also elements of other divisions including the 2d Infantry, the 73rd Infantry and the 93rd Infantry.

The Harbor Defense Command, consisting of Corregidor and its satellite islands, was commanded by Brig. Gen. George F. Moore and was composed of two Regular Army Regiments, the 59th and 60th Coast Artillery; two Philippine Scout units, the 91st and the 92nd Coast Artillery Regiments, and the 11th U. S. Marine Regiment, which had just been moved in from Subic Bay.

Command headquarters feared that the single blow at Clark Field had virtually decided the course of the war in the Philippines. The 26th Cavalry, booted out of Fort Stotsenburg, moved into the nearby mountains, prepared to strike at the first enemy beach landing wherever it might come. On December 9, Nichols Field, another key army air base at Manila was bombed almost to destruction. The Japs apparently hoped to catch that part of the FEAF which had gone there for refuge. Group installation destruction, however, was all they accomplished -- but that was complete.

-Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, pp. h2, h3 & h4.

*D.F. 68*

There were also elements of other divisions including the 28  
Infantry, the 7th Infantry and the 3rd Infantry.  
The order between General, commander of Cavalry and the  
infantry units, was commanded by Lt. Col. George T. Howe and  
was composed of the 1st Cavalry Regiment, the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry  
Regiments, the 4th Cavalry Regiment, the 5th and 6th Cavalry  
Regiments, and the 7th Cavalry Regiment, which had  
just been moved in from the 1st.  
General headquarters feared that the enemy was at Clark Field  
and actually decided the course of the war in the Philippines. The  
8th Cavalry, based out of Fort Stotsenburg, moved into the area  
containing, prepared to strike at the first enemy plane landing wherever  
it might come. On November 12, Clark Field, another day after  
loss of Manila was bombed almost to destruction. The day apparently  
ended to reach that part of the 17th which had come there for refuge.  
Group installation destruction, however, was all they accomplished --  
but that was complete.  
-Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, pp. 12, 13 & 14.

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The Bataan Defense Force which was setting up the defense of Bataan, consisted of the 31st and the 41st Divisions of the Philippine Army and the 2d Philippine Constabulary Regiment, all under Major General George Parker.

The headquarters of the Philippine Department was converted into the Service Command for Bataan, under Brigadier General Allen C. McBride.

The NLF under General Jonathan M. Wainwright, at this point, had the 31st Infantry, Regular Army; the 45th Infantry, 57th Infantry, 26th Cavalry, 23rd Field Artillery, 24th Field Artillery, and 88th Field Artillery, Philippine Scouts; the 11th Division, 21st Division, 71st Division and 91st Division, Philippine Army.

Brigadier General Albert M. Jones, commanding the SLF, had the 96th Field Artillery, Philippine Scouts, and the 1st and 51st Division of the Philippine Army, with artillery reinforcement.

-Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, pp. 62 & 63.





The men of Layac had worked on their positions all during the night of January 5-6. At 8:00 AM their artillery sighted the Japanese coming down highway 7 from Lubao. They laid down a murderous barrage. Within an hour, the Japanese artillery began replying. The artillery of both sides thundered throughout the day. The 23rd Field Artillery's lone battalion was badly shot up and lost all but one of its guns. The battalion from the 88th Field Artillery, however, saved all its weapons. The 31st Infantry, in the center of the Layac line, took the bulk of the artillery punishment along with the left flank of the 71st Division. In the late afternoon, the Jap fire increased and infantry probed forward to test the American line. This was followed by a heavy infantry attack at the point where the 71st and the 31st were linked. The flank units of the two divisions began to deteriorate. The 3rd Battalion of the 31st, heretofore held in reserve, was moved up just before sunset to counterattack and fill the gap.

At 10:00 O'clock that night, however, an order was received for the three holding units to withdraw to the Abucay line. The 71st Division began to fall back first, while part of the 31st acted as a covering force. The order to withdraw was relayed by radio from the commanding officer of the 31st Infantry to the 26th Cavalry on its left. But the message was in code and the radio code had been changed that day without the change reaching the 26th, so that cavalry commander could not understand it.

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After a while, however his patrols reported that the 31st Infantry was moving out. By the time it was definitely determined that withdrawal was taking place, the 26th had been cut off and was out of contact with all other friendly forces. The cavalymen withdrew to the mountains in the west, and worked their way back through the rugged jungle country to the Abucay line without assistance, an operation that took three days.

Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, pp. 90 & 91.

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After a while, however, the patrol reported that the first  
was moving out. The time it was definitely determined that this  
diesel was taking place, the 20th had been out for some time  
and with all other military forces. The remaining vehicles to the  
mountain in the west, and worked their way back through the rugged  
terrain country to the Army. If a vehicle was damaged, an operator that  
took three days.

Vol. 1, Chapter 10, The Wilderness, pp. 30 & 31.

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The Leyac Force was organized on the line as follows:

The 71st Division, Philippine Army, consisting only of the 71st and 72nd Infantry Regiments.

The 31st Infantry Regiment, United States Army.

The 26th Cavalry Regiment, Philippine Scouts.

To the rear in support were the 23rd Field Artillery, Philippine Scouts, which had one battalion only; the 1st Battalion, 88th Field Artillery, Philippine Scouts, and the 71st Division's organic artillery.

-Vol I, Triumph in the Philippines, p. 85.

## South Luzon Force - Bataan Force - II Philippine Corps

organization later. On the afternoon of Dec. 21 Gen Parker's Hq. was in the form of a skeleton force. The following is a Brief Outline of Activities Prior to and During War.

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities on about Sept 1 a SLF Hq in skeleton form was created and functioned briefly. This Hq consisted of Brig Gen. Geo Parker, Lt. Col. C O Wilson, Lt. Col. H. D. Johnston, Capt. Arthur Christensen and Capt. Homer Uglow. Units to be included under this command were not inducted until somewhat later and the troops thus received practically no training before the war started. Only two regiments the 42nd & 52d Infs. were inducted on Sept 1 and no others immediately thereafter.

The elements of the command were drawn up as follows:  
 Nov 1 - 41st & 51st Infs. mobilized and started training, Nov. 24th - 43rd & 53rd Infs, 41st F. A and 41st & 51st Engrs. On Dec 1 the 41st and 51st Med. Bns. Signal Cos, Hq & Hq Cos, & QM Service Co, so that on Dec 8 the state of the SLF was: 41st Div complete less 1 Anti Tank Bn 51st Div complete less 1 Anti Tank Bn & 51st F. A. and 1st & 2d P. C. (inducted in Mid. Nov and assigned for training only) released at beginning of war.

The 41st & 51st Divs. were inducted and trained in S. Luzon what little training they did have and at the outbreak they were sent to their defensive positions on the beaches. The boundary between division running along a general line thru Lemeray & Pancipit Rs. - Id. in Lake Teal - Tegaytay and Lao Pinas inclusive to the 41st Div. The rest of the coastline was defended by the 51st Div. with Manila sector unoccupied due to location of the fortified Ids. On Dec 29th the 1st Reg Div was assigned to the beaches between Infanta & Mauban inclusive and was given the road net in rear of it.

On about Dec. 12 the Japanese landed at Legaspi after previously bombing Davao, Legaspi, Nichols Field, Cavite and sections in the SLF territory and started to move N towards the main part of Luzon by rail and by road. Units of the 52nd Inf were sent S to meet them - one Co. along the road and one Bn was split up - its elements being drawn and given different missions - to contact and delay the enemy as long as possible, destroy bridges and military equipment and impede the progress of the enemy as much as they were able.

The Second Phase of SLF activities began on Dec 24 when the enemy landed in force at Atimonan and Mauban. The units of the 52d sent S encountered many adventures of war not covered here, some being out off and breaking thru - others making their way N to join their

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organization later. On the afternoon of Dec. 24 Gen Parker's Hq. was moved to Bataan and the Bataan Force consisting of the 31st Div, 41st Div, parts of the Phil Div., Hq and other misc. units. Gen Jones took command of the SIF upon Gen Parker's departure (his Div. the 41st having reverted to the Bataan Force).

By the night of Dec 24th the "Js" had crossed the Mts. at Atimonan to Malibay and at Mauban had reached the zig-zag at Sampaloc. The enemy from Atimonan advanced in successive states and by nightfall of the 25th were at Lucena, Tayabas, 26th Candalaria, 27th Tisong and on the night of 27-28 contact was broken in that area as the troops were ordered to Bataan. At Mauban the 1st Inf less 1 Bn retreated to positions on the Laguna-Tayabas boundary night of Dec. 25, Louisiana 26th broke contact on the 27th and withdrew to Bataan via Pagsanjan, Sta. Cruz, Los Bancos and Manila. One Bn at Tigmauan remained there until the 28th with no contact and withdraw on the 28th. The regiments in the SIF were reshuffled on the night of the 27th and were shuttled into Bataan - no contact being made with the enemy. By Dec 31st Gen. Jones and his Hq. had arrived at Plaridel & contacted Gen. Wainwright. By order of USAFFE Gen Jones was put in command of remains of the 71st & 91st Divs, then at Baliuag and stayed there to cover the withdrawal of the SIF thru then Dec 31st - Jan 1. By morning of the 1st these units and Gen Jones arrived in Bataan and the SIF ceased to exist. (Note: Assg'd to SIF prior to this date and moved to Tagaytay pos. was the Prov. Constab. Brigade. Three days were absorbed moving in and thru more out - no contact being made with the enemy.)

As part of the 3d Phase of the SIF the Bataan Force existed from Dec. 24-Jan 6 its function having been to organize the position in Bataan and assist in their occupancy.

By the night of Jan 5-6 the last elements of the HLF had withdrawn into Bataan leaving the covering force at Layat Jct. exposed to the enemy. Organized from right to left in line the pos. contained the 71st Div, 31st Inf (US), and 26th Cav. At 8:00 A Jan 6 our art'y sighted the enemy and began to register on them and at 9:00 A.J. Art'y appeared on the road to be reinforced by other art'y units soon thereafter and a fierce art'y dual ensued. The "Js" also bombarded portion of the 31st Inf with superior fire and by nightfall the right of the 31st and part of the 71st Div had pulled back. At about 10 P. the entire line was ordered withdrawal behind the Abucay position which movement was executed in great confusion. The 26th Cav, not receiving the order was cut off and withdraw through the Mts. One Bn of the (29d) F.A. was badly shot up and lost all but one gun. The 1st Bn of the 88th FA retreated in order saving all guns.



The Main Battle Position previously organized, was occupied originally by the II Philippine units from right to left 57th Inf, 41st Division and 31st Div. the 57th turning its flank on the beach at Natabang and the 31st Div tying in with the I Corps at Mt. Habib. This position was shelled almost constantly daily particularly on the left flank of the 41st Div. and the right of the 31st Div. The J's effected a penetration in that sector and between the 41st Div. and 57th Inf left and the 31st Inf (US) and 45th Inf (PG) were sent in to counter attack at Abucay hacienda, the 21st Div. being sent in to reinforce the MIR on the front of the 41st Div. The counter attack was successfully, heavy casualties being inflicted on the enemy and mopping up operation were in progress when the retreat in the I Corps Sector made a withdrawal from the Main Battle Position to the Reserve Orion-Bagac pos. necessary. Some J's had infiltrated thru the II Corps, however, and it is probable that they might have cut thru the reserve Orion-Bagac pos. had the withdrawal not been made.

The withdrawal was accomplished with a considerable confusion during which aggressive action by "J" art'y, air corps and ground troops might have ended the war before the end of January. The position was occupied and divided into subsectors as follows from the beach near Linsay-North to Orion - to the Pantingan: SS-A under Col. Irwin-31st Inf. PA, PA Air Corps Bn, and PA Training Cadre; SS-B - Col Doenesf - Prov. Regt. U.S.A. Air Corps, SS-C Gen Blumel -41st Inf (to March 1), 31st Div. less 31st & 33rd Infs, 51st Combat Team, SS-D - Gen Lough - 21st Div. on Right - 41st Div. on left and 33rd Inf on extreme left flank prior to Mar. 1 after which it became Corps reserve and the 41st Inf went from SS-C to SS-D. The Philippine Division, part of which was to have occupied the front line was broken up as Corps and Army Reserve and was employed piecemeal wherever necessity dictated. Its Hq continued to exist under Gen. Lough but never until the final futile effort was it brought together in any attempt at concerted effort.

The Reserve Battle Position was further prepared and fortified after occupancy - lowlands flooded, trenches dug, camouflage created, barbed wire strung etc & patrol action was constant but not pressure was exerted until the first of April. Here as in the I Corps the "J's" entrenched and awaited reinforcements.

Toward the latter part of March enemy truck, tank and artillery columns were sighted on the roads and near areas and it was obvious that an offensive had been planned. This push came beginning April 3 at about 8 A with intensive shelling, dive bombing, high level bombing and a general attack in the 42d Inf areas and by nightfall these units had retreated in confusion down trails #6 and #29 to trail #8, the 42d Inf completely disintegrating and disappearing. The 43d Inf was contacted by Gen Lough and ordered to reorg. and moved back up #6 on April 4. However, it was again hit by mass artillery, broke up and disappeared. The 41st Inf. not so hard hit moved N along the road and was not attacked in force. On the night of April 4, the 33d Inf.



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in Corps Res. Along Tr #44, about 1 Km N of #6 & 44, was order N to reinforce the line, but was not heard from thereafter. On April 4th "J" tanks appeared along the Pilar-Bagac road, some started down trail #28 and went back, and a number worked down the Pilar-Bagac Road behind the MLR of the 21st Div along the Talisay R. The 21st Div then withdrew under pressure to the BRT on the slopes of Mt. Samat. In the face of these attacks and withdrawal by the night of April 4 the line existed with a large salient in SS-D and units were located as follows: 41st Inf on extreme left astride trail #29, a large Jap on its right to the 21st Div on the forward slopes of Mt. Samat, 51st CT, 32d Inf, Prov. AC Regt; 31st Inf PA AC Bn and the PATC. The 31st Inf US had been ordered from its bivouac area to Jct of trs #2 & 10 on April 4 and was in that area that night.

On April 5 the enemy moved down tr #6 and across the face of Samat and by night they had control of trail #64 to the CP of the 21st Div, and were working up the E slope of Mt. Samat. The extent of the penetration by the "Js" was not known exactly and a counter attack involving the 45th Inf (PS) up Trail #29 with tank support and the 31st Inf (US) up astride #44, thence up #64 to #44 - then up #4 to reinforce and establish the line. Before this could be accomplished in April 6 remnants of the 21st Div came thru the 31st Inf pos. and heavy fire was received from the enemy in Mt. Samat. Heavy pressure on the front and left of the 31st Inf forced its withdrawal to the S. bank of the San Vicente by nightfall of the 6th. The enemy also forced his way up trails #6 & #44 in April 6, the 1st Bn 57th Inf having been order to Jct #8 & #44 to be at disposal of Gen. Lough. Before the 57th Bn could reach Gen Lough, however, his Hq was cut off by the enemy on Trail 8 and the Bn of the 57th was forced to take up a defensive position behind the San Vicente R. at the Jct #8 & #46. The tank support of the 45th Inf arrived late and that unit was forced S on trail #29 and into the I Corps sector.

Thus by nightfall of April 6th situation was almost hopeless. On the extreme left the 45th Inf counter offensive up Tr #29 was nipped and it, with Gen Lough's Hq. was cut off from II Corps. The "J" had routed the 41st Div and followed it up trails #6 & #44 where the 1st Bn 57th encountered the enemy and held them N. of the San Vicente at Trail Jct #8 & #46. On the San Vicente a large gap existed and then the 31st Inf (US) had gone into pos. connecting with the 51st CT of Gen Bluemel on its right flank. Our arty had been overwhelmed and silenced and the 41st FA guns had all been captured.

On April 7 an attempt was made to organize a defensive line along the Patoc trail (#46) with 201st and 202d Engrs filling the gap between the 57th (2d Bn. in pos. with 1st Bn night of April 6) and 31st Inf (US) and SS-C units. The 26th Cav and 14th Engrs also moved up, the 26th at Jct #2 & #10 being turned over to Gen. Bluemel & the Engrs. to Col Tilly who was with the 57th Inf CP and its 3d Bn. attached to SS-C and Gen Bluemel. The "Js" followed up their aggressive move of the

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6th and not only cut trail #46 but staged a separate attack in the 32d Inf area in the right half of SS-C forcing the withdrawal of the 41st CT, along with the 31st (US) to the S bank of the San Vicente and extend a line with the 3d Bn 57th Inf, & 21st & 31st Engrs. The 201st & 301st Engrs, had failed to arrive at their position on the Patoc Trail before the enemy cut it and those units were scattered & disintegrated. Thus Gen Bluemel decided to continue the withdrawal to the S bank of the Mamala R where, after consultation with commanders of the 26th Cav, 57th Inf, 31st Inf (US) and Engrs, he decided to withdraw all elements to the Alangan R which long retreat was affected before dawn of the 8th.

April 8th found the line held behind the Alangan R. in a confused state due to hasty retreat and mistaken routes of withdrawal. It was obvious from the outset that this position was untenable. All 37 mm guns and automatic weapons had been lost, nearly all 155 mm, were of ammunitions. In addition the men were almost completely exhausted by the long marches and days without food. The 26th Cav, which had moved from #2 & #10 to #2 & #46 covered the withdrawal of other units & then withdrew to the above pos. itself.

It was intended that new position would be occupied with the 26th Cav, 57th Inf and 31st Inf in line & the 14th Engrs in reserve, but due to a mistake in retiring between new and old trails #20 a scramble ensued and the line was established with the 26th Cav and 14th Engrs astride trail #20, 31st & 57th to E of old #20 - a big gap to the 803d Engrs, PAC, 31st Inf PA and the 4th PG, (the 4th PG and 803d Engrs having been brought up during the night.)

During the morning of the 8th Js bombed the line heavily and the 4th PG and the 31st Inf PA pulled out. Enemy tanks & Inf followed up quickly down trail #20 and soon surrounded the position set that by the night of the 8th the entire line was untenable and further withdrawal became necessary. Orders were confused as were the troops who scattered badly. The bulk of them escaped down new #20 - others cross country. Col. Tilly, Col Brady & Col. Saint of the 57th Inf 31st Inf & 14th Engrs respectively managed to gather parts of their commands by the morning of the 9th. At 3 A, Maj. Christenson Ass't G-3 for II Corps met Gen. Bluemel at Jet #12 & #20 received order to surrender. Gen Bluemel was ordered to take up a position behind the Lamao R. but instead he left a screen and moved troops the rear where surrender came later that day.

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s/ Ruth H. Essary  
t/ RUTH H. ESSARY  
Captain WAC

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EXTRACT FROM DIARY OF MAJ. CALVIN F. CHUNN (PAGES 120-122)  
RECOVERED FROM CABANATUAN POW CAMP NO 1, ON 29 APRIL 1946  
PROJECT "J" ARCHIVE 999-2-214 BK 1.  
(Dec. 1941 and Jan. 1942)

Dec. 25-started at night for Betaan. Dec. 26-in Manila trying to buy tires for old trucks. Arrived at Balanga that night. Regt. CP established there. Batteries in positions vicinity of Abucay as anti-tank defense. Placed in group-ment with 23d FA under command of Lt. Col. Atkinson. Later 23d left with 31st Inf (US) for Hermosa battle & got shot up. 41st took 23d positions.

g Jan. 8-moved n & w of Abucay g 1800 yds. back of MTR. g Jan. 12-supported 42d & 43d Infs. No observation except a tree platform & 3 PA officers on MTR.

Jan. 13-artillery duel, 6 KIA in 3d Bn. by bombs. 1st Bn. on rt, 2d in center, 3d left. 1st Bn. had rice stacks over guns. No other cover. Japs used a harmless smoke shell to target in. Jones, 1st Bn. silenced 5 btrys. 1 afternoon, 2d Bn had mgunners KIA when they got out of fox holes. 3d bn. moved to end of Hacienda rd. (1st Lt. Davey to 3d Bn. Dec.22/ Promotions for Lts D. 19, Col. Moore later). Fired rolling barrages for attacks & special missions for Inf.

Jan. 24-D Btry. fired all night as shell to cover Inf. w/d. Rest of regt, w/d at dusk to bivouac west of Orion when they stayed night of 25. Jan. 26-to positions in rear & supporting Prov. AC & 23d Inf. Support firing; little counter battery. 1 gun disabled by fragment in tube. Ord. fixed in 2 days.

Jan. 28-Col Moore re'd. & ordered to I Corps as artillery commander. Col. Martelino also to I Corps as artillery supply. Lt Col D. W. Lockwood became c.o & Capt Larry Smarr, asst.

*gfc/evm*



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