

CHAPTER XIII

The capitulation of Bataan on 9 April dealt a grievous blow to both American and Filipino morale. While it had been clearly appreciated that the predicament of the sick and starving troops on the peninsula was growing increasingly desperate, we still clung tenaciously to the conviction that the miracle of reinforcements would -- must -- occur in time to avert the final disaster.

The reluctant realization that all the Filamerican forces were expendable now began to assert itself; intensifying, in the hearts of the few Americans at least, the resolution to stand firm and go down fighting.

On the afternoon of the 9th, General Chynoweth at Camp X, seven miles from Cebu City, was holding a conference with battalion and regimental commanders when a message was received stating that an enemy convoy of 3 or 4 cruisers and 11 transports was southbound through Panay Gulf. Only the night before Lt. Bulkeley's motor torpedo boats -- the only two remaining of the original squadron of six -- had engaged an enemy cruiser and several destroyers off Dumaguete. In spite of the tremendously unequal division of fire power they had succeeded in sinking the cruiser, although at the cost of two men killed, two wounded and one of the boats so badly damaged that it barely reached port. It looked as if this might be the beginning of the showdown.

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20th

General Chynoweth immediately handed the message concerning the convoy's approach to Lt. Col. H. J. Edmands, the former Philippine Constabulary officer who now commanded the Military Police Regiment occupying Cebu City and the heights to the west. This force had the important mission of delaying the enemy advance into the city long enough for the demolitions to be executed, after which the troops were to fall back through the hills on Bonbon where they were to remain as the pivot of maneuver covering the further movement of commissaries into the mountains.

On Chynoweth's orders, Edmands left the conference at once for his battle position, followed very shortly by the other commanders.

There was still a question whether the convoy would continue in its southeasterly direction past the tip of Negros, for Mindanao; or head north for the attack on Cebu. Comparing the various records of the subsequent action it would appear that the lack of cooperation and coordination between commands, so often evidenced during the campaign, was exhibited again on this occasion. Less than three hours after the first warning of the convoy, Colonel Edmands in Cebu had received sufficient additional information from the message center in the city to convince him that an attack was imminent; yet neither then nor later was this information relayed to his Commanding General, who had received nothing further than that the enemy was proceeding slowly down the southwest coast of Negros.

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MAP #13

VISAYAN FORCE

During the evening Colonel Edmands continued to receive reports on the movement of the fleet, which were confirmed when a P-40 which had paused at Lahug Field near Cebu City on a courier mission made several reconnaissance flights over the enemy ships.

About midnight Edmands called General Chynoweth, requesting permission to begin demolitions both on Cebu and Mactan Island, where certain naval stores were housed, including some of the torpedoes which had been removed from the submarines used in transporting food to Corregidor. Chynoweth replied that by no means were any demolitions to be started "until we are certain that this landing is coming to our Island". Who was to determine the "certainty" of the landing is left indefinite in the records.

Apparently not even then did it occur to Edmands to report the information he had received -- perhaps he was unaware that the messages had not reached the General. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that it was the responsibility of Colonel Edmands to keep his Commander minutely informed as to all changes in the situation. The first inkling Chynoweth's Headquarters had that the convoy had turned north came when, about daylight, terrific explosions were heard in the direction of Cebu City, followed, soon after 6 AM, by a phone call from Colonel Edmands informing the General that demolitions on Mactan Island had been completed! In his report of the action later Edmands stated that "the General seemed to be of the opinion that we were premature on our demolitions."!

Destruction of the Quartermaster Base and its associated

facilities, under Colonel Cook, were also in progress during this night. Colonel Cook, operating with direct responsibility to USFIP* and not under General Chynoweth's command, quite properly exercised his own judgment on his demolitions. All well prepared in advance, they were one hundred percent completed by the time the enemy landed on the morning of 10 April, including several ships and one tanker loaded with food and medicines for dispatch to Corregidor. These ships, as well as others in Iloilo harbor, had been ready and waiting to sail since 1 April. The plan** had been for the Air Force to send bombers up from Australia, bomb all hostile airfields on or about the night of April 1 or 2, then patrol the sea during the movement of the ships, which were to sail the night of the bombings, running a straight course for Corregidor.

This plan seems to have been sound in its inception and even yet appears to have afforded the most likely chance of success in running the Jap blockade at that stage of the game. True it did require meticulous preparation and minute coordination to carry it off. Weighing all the factors involved in the success or failure of the undertaking it is not surprising that the arrival of air cover from Australia, some two thousand miles to the south, was too late. It is a tragic coincidence that through a whim of fate the planes arrived at Del Monte the day after the arrival of the invasion force at Cebu.

* United States Forces in the Philippines. Designation changed upon departure of General MacArthur for Australia.

** See Appendix 6

In spite of the criticism* as to the practicability of the plan implied in the published story of two young Naval officers upon their return to the United States, and their lack of understanding of the organization and mission of the Cebu garrison, this plan had flexibility and reasonable assurance of success.

The planes had not appeared, so during the night of the 9th, with the invasion imminent, these ships, so hopefully loaded, were destroyed to prevent their becoming enemy prizes.

No equipment or supplies in any quantity fell into the hands of the Japanese in Cebu. Food warehouses were thrown open on that last night and the civilian population permitted to take anything and everything they could carry away. That which remained on the morning of the 10th was destroyed. The cargo ships which the Japs had brought to carry away their booty departed empty and such was the Nipponese fury at being thus thwarted that several American Army and Naval officers captured before the surrender were executed, according to report. Later, many others, including Colonel Cook, were tortured, beaten and threatened with beheading on several occasions.

Also included in the quartermaster destruction on the morning of the 10th were some 500 sacks of United States mails, mostly Christmas mails which had come up from Australia. This mail had been sorted in the Cebu Depot and prepared for dispatch to the various islands at the first opportunity, orders previously

* In a book composed of what General Chynoweth describes as "the most amazing inaccuracies" certain young officers have attributed this plan to the General. This is not correct. General Chynoweth had nothing to do with formulating this plan, and does not know to this day where it originated.

received from USAFFE having prohibited shipment of mail by air.

During the early morning hours reports began to come in at Visayan Force Headquarters of severe fighting taking place at Toledo, following landings at Pinamungajan of Japanese infantry supported by artillery and tanks. This was the "back door" to Cebu, on the west coast, which Chynoweth had from the first considered the most vulnerable spot.

(Map #14)

Landings were also effected on the east coast near Sibonga, where an excellent wharf had escaped demolition. A feint was made in the vicinity of Tanqui, from whence these transports, convoyed by mine sweepers, proceeded to Cebu Harbor where they landed infantry, tanks and artillery under an umbrella of air and naval support. The Military Police Regiment in Cebu City, armed only with rifles, two three-inch mortars and a few machine guns, would do well, General Chynoweth felt, to hold long enough for all demolitions to be executed.

During the evening of the ninth, two companies of Edmands' regiment which had been stationed on Mactan Island were ordered to abandon all equipment except their combat equipment and return immediately to Cebu via Mandaue pier some four kilometers north of Cebu City. Disregarding this order as to time, abandonment of equipment and landing place, they arrived the following morning at Pier 1, Cebu, simultaneously with the first armored bargeload of Japanese troops, who promptly opened fire with light cannon. Fully half the personnel of these two companies immediately

M A P #14 C E B U

(FINAL RESISTANCE POSITIONS)

qualified as long-distance sprinters, and carried out completely the previously disregarded order to abandon equipment. First Sergeant Felipe Fernandez, under heavy fire and with conspicuous gallantry gathered up these scattered weapons and threw them into the harbor to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

At 0500 hours on the 10th, Lt. Commander Slimmons, USN, in charge of demolitions on Mactan Island, was ordered by Edmands to commence the destruction. About an hour later, Slimmons informed Edmands that demolitions on Mactan were 100 percent complete.

Machine guns commanding the cheveux-de-frise and barbed-wire entanglements along the main arteries of traffic slowed the strong Jap advance through the city temporarily, but by noon conflagration started partly by our demolitions and enemy bombing and partly by vandals who fired a number of Japanese-owned stores, was sweeping the city routing the defending forces from most of their positions.

Contact had been lost during the morning with the elements of the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Infantry, near Talisay and repeated patrols failed to locate any members of this outfit. A request for reinforcements to Lt. Colonel Rufus H. Rogers, who was holding near Liloan with two battalions of the 83rd Infantry resulted in one company being sent to the northern extremity of Busay Ridge as a protection for Edmands' left rear. However, through some confusion in orders, apparently, this company was withdrawn the following night (11th).

Late in the afternoon the momentum of the Japanese drive

slackened, and by 6 PM it was evident that the enemy had withdrawn from contact. Edmands therefore took advantage of the lull to reorganize his troops in their second delaying positions on Landon Heights near Guadalupe during the night.

At Toledo, on the west coast, heavy fighting was still in progress. Major Ewa, an excellent combat officer, was in command of the one lone battalion* defending this point; his troops were well under control, effectively delaying the Japanese advance while inflicting heavy casualties. During the day Captain Russell Cracraft, Scudder's G-2, spent some time with these troops, returning to headquarters with the information that the overall situation was quite satisfactory, and with news of several incidents of heroic conduct on the part of Filipino soldiers. One lieutenant, whose name, unfortunately, is not of record, remained at his machine gun position covering one flank accounting for many enemy casualties, until over-run.

General Chynoweth, accompanied by Lt. Benson and Captain Tom Powell, Jr., also made an inspection of this entire front during the day, stopping at Uhling to confer with Colonel David** who, having just returned from Toledo, gave him substantially the same story which he later heard from Cracraft -- that Ewa had the situation well in hand. Apparently the only crack in troop morale was caused by the fact that the enemy could be seen pouring gasoline on all casualties and burning them. Since the Filipinos were,

* Third Battalion, 82nd Infantry

** Colonel Emigdio V. David, Commanding, 82nd Infantry Regiment

almost to a man, good Catholics, this was causing considerable agitation.

David felt that there was a strong possibility that the Japs might envelop Ewa from the south, blocking the crucial junction of the Toledo-Uhling-Cebu road, the only line of withdrawal for the Uhling troops. With this in mind Chynoweth agreed to move Colonel Grimes' battalion forward to an already prepared position on the heights near Puog commanding Toledo, from which vantage point he felt sure any Jap penetration into Ewa's rear could be prevented, and the Cotabaco front protected.

It was Chynoweth's plan to augment Grimes' battalion by moving Captain Mannon Sharp's troops in from Bonbon into well-concealed positions on the north road, to launch a counter-attack in the event Ewa should be forced back on Camp X.

Powell and Benson were eager to join Ewa and take a hand in the fight themselves and even Chynoweth was sorely tempted, but with virtually four fronts to consider he did not dare confine his attention to one locality in the event hell broke loose elsewhere. Accordingly, after some consideration, he turned back to the command post, much to the disappointment of Powell and Benson, arriving about the middle of the afternoon. He sent immediately for Colonel Grimes, went over the situation with him and gave him instructions to move forward to cover the Cotabaco road junction leading to David's position.

Grimes, having arrived from Bohol only the preceding day,

had so far had no opportunity to reconnoitre the terrain. Consequently he spent some time going over the map with Colonel Scudder, who was quite familiar with the island, before departing to take up his new assignment.

Orders were also sent to Captain Sharp directing his move from Bonbon. The feeble telephone system having disintegrated with the invasion, sole dependence had to be placed in runners. Although several were sent -- including one officer -- no acknowledgement of the order was received. It was presumed that the messages went astray -- which is a polite way of saying that probably most, if not all, of the runners "buckwheated".*

By dusk that evening (10th) so far as could be ascertained by the reports which were being received, the situation on all fronts appeared to be as satisfactory as could be expected. Just at suppertime a Jap plane swooped on the headquarters in a machine gun attack. Chynoweth and Tom Powell dove for the nearest foxhole. The fighter zoomed off and they climbed out and started their soup. After about two spoonful the Jap returned, this time leading a small V, and the soup was finished in the foxhole. Again the enemy departed and again the two officers resumed their dinner, only to be chased back to the trench for the third time in a few moments more. The attack was finally concluded with the General finishing his rice pudding to the accompaniment of machine gun fire, sitting in a mud puddle in the bottom of the foxhole. Chynoweth afterward described this meal as the "most progressive

* The nearest approach on Filipino tongues to "evacuate".

dinner" he ever ate.

These particular Jap fliers must have been new to the game or more than usually astigmatic, for their marksmanship was lousy. In spite of the terrific volume of fire devoted to this target not a soul in the area had been so much as scratched.

During the evening the trickle of news from the various fronts indicated that the Nips had -- in keeping with their usual custom -- settled down for the night. There was still no word from Sharp's battalion and efforts toward locating it were so far unavailing.

Late in the evening wild tales began to come in from the direction of Grimes' position. Persistent unconfirmed rumors indicated that the Japs had rolled up the Toledo front and had reached and over-run Grimes' position, scattering his troops. Flames shooting skyward from a small barrio a short distance to the west of the Command Post increased the fear among some that the Jap had penetrated to this point. Knowing the Filipino propensity for exaggeration and their tendency toward incendiarism under emotional stress, Chynoweth did not believe the rumors. On his reconnaissance trip that morning the General and Tom Powell had carefully checked on all bridge and road demolitions and the personnel responsible for their execution. They had found everything in order. It seemed incredible that the Japs could have gotten through. No explosions had been heard, which appeared to indicate that no occasion had as yet arisen to set off these demolitions, which were designed to cover Ewa's retreat.

Furthermore, the General considered the position to which Colonel Grimes had been sent so favorable, and had such implicit faith in Grimes' ability and sound judgment, that the increasing rumors of disaster were discounted wholly as native hysteria.

Near midnight, deciding to try to snatch a little rest against the demands of the next day, Chynoweth went down to his hut some hundred yards along the trail, leaving Hilsman and Scudder on the job at the command post.

About 2:30 AM all hell suddenly broke loose in the vicinity. Rifles, machine guns, and finally the two old mortars, opened up, firing frenziedly. Simultaneously another message came from the command post that the western front had collapsed. Although the General was stubbornly incredulous, he started at once for the command post to investigate, leaving Benson and Powell to gather up their few essential belongings in case it was necessary to move out.

On the trail he was almost run down by the Headquarters troops in utter rout. Attempts to halt them were futile. Directing the beam of his flashlight into their faces Chynoweth saw the fixed, glazed terror of stampeding cattle.

Shouting to Hilsman, who had taken cover in a nearby ditch, Chynoweth directed him to try to gather the troops up somewhere in the rear, if possible, and went on forward.

In a moment or two, he met Capt. O'Connor who was searching for him with the information that the remnants of the staff had

assembled nearby. As they approached a small hillside near the command post, Scudder called to him and guided them to the location. Joining him, Chynoweth found Captains Cracraft, English and Miner -- all that was left of Headquarters. Some 60 yards away, on the road, a dark blur which proved to be an enemy tank was firing rapidly.

There was no question now of rumor. This was fact.

As the little group stood there, considering the situation, Lt. Misa, commander of the Headquarters Company which had outposted the command post, arrived and reported that he had gone forward in an attempt to contact the reconnaissance patrol which had been sent out earlier in the evening and from whom nothing had been heard and discovered an enemy motorized column, headed by tanks, on the road. The patrol had disappeared.

Obviously something had gone haywire with the proposed demolitions. What had happened to Grimes and his outfit only time could tell.

The General's foresight in having an alternate command post designated some three-quarters of a mile from the road, on Hill X, served them in good stead now. Before retiring to this new position, Colonel Scudder on his own initiative, went back to the original command post, now only a stone's throw from the enemy tanks, gathered up maps and such papers as he considered important and completed the destruction of the radio set, while young Miner, also without orders, went forward to disconnect telephone wires within 25 yards of the Japs.

The Jap column reported by Misa proceeded without stopping and none of these troops were deployed in this area. Firing from the road continued, but it was all high. The teak-woods sounded as if angry bees were swarming, but no one was hit. An interesting sidelight on the events of this night was that only the untrained personnel stampeded; the trained personnel not even exhibiting visible signs of fear.

The almost vertical climb up to the alternate Command Post, completed just at sunrise, revealed a considerable group of civilian refugees already there. Most of the routed troops had taken refuge on the mountain, and there Misa found most of his detachments. He was bitterly ashamed of his men, and promised, "it will never happen again!"

During the morning of the eleventh, enemy columns could be seen moving along the highway below, but still no flanking patrols were evident in the vicinity of Hill X.

By noon reports were beginning to come in from most of the scattered Filipino units. The news was all bad. The Jap had blazed a clear path all the way across the Island from Toledo to Cebu, with an offshoot reaching up toward BonBon. One of our food dumps had been burned -- by the Filipinos!

This fire complex of the Filipino is something for a psychoanalyst to figure out. Again and again it happened, throughout the Islands, when the natives became excited or apprehensive. General Chynoweth terms it a reversion to some primitive experience when

fire was used as a weapon against enemies. Cebu was burned -- Iloilo was burned. It was not planned by the Americans. At a 61st Division staff conference in Iloilo early in the war the matter had been discussed and decided against -- in the belief that it would hurt the Filipino more than the invader. But Iloilo burned and Cebu burned.

Aside from the comparatively few fires started by Jap shells and bombs, the situation dictated that military stores and installations be destroyed to prevent their conversion to enemy use, but too frequently was the torch applied without justification or authority, apparently for the sheer joy and excitement of destruction by fire. This touch of arsonitis, together with the civilian incendiaristas and looters, added considerably to the hardship of the populace.

At the Command Post official reports coming in explained the debacle in the west. The demolitions groups had delayed execution of planned demolitions while waiting for the last of our own troops to clear. Jap tanks appearing literally on the heels of our retreating force routed the demolitionists. The bridges -- which would have delayed the Japs for perhaps a day -- were not blown.

Captain Sharp's battalion at Bonbon, which had been ordered in to reinforce Grimes along the north road, had stampeded northward nearly to Adloan without seeing a hostile soldier.

Of Colonel Grimes the story came, too, from eye-witnesses. Rejoining his battalion at dusk in the narrow defile west of Camp X

after the conference with General Chynoweth and Colonel Scudder, Grimes was met with the report that the enemy had already broken through in the west. Confident in the demolitions, Grimes placed no credence in the rumors and sought earnestly to restore the morale of his men. Announcing that he would go ahead on a reconnaissance, he gave orders for the battalion to follow him and started off down the dark road in his car. The battalion, apparently paralyzed with fright at the thought of the oncoming enemy, failed to obey and remained under cover in the woods. A short distance down the road this courageous commander met the Japanese truck column head on, without a chance to escape capture. Snatched bodily from his car, his maps taken from him at bayonet point, he was led away. So much is known. The remainder is rumor and conjecture. It was reported that the enemy executed him for refusing to divulge military information. For -- as the Japs would say -- "non-cooperation". To anyone who knew Grimes it was a foregone conclusion that he would not "cooperate" with the enemy. On the day of the surrender of the Cebu Force the Japanese Chief of Military Administration told General Chynoweth, upon his inquiry, that Grimes had "died".

Based upon personal knowledge of Grimes' actions on that night, General Chynoweth recommended him for the Silver Star. Later, as more reports of heroism above and beyond the call of duty developed, which in time were confirmed beyond doubt, the recommendation was changed to the highest award which could be given -- the Medal of

Honor.

"Burley" Grimes was esteemed and loved by those who knew him as a gentleman and an eminent soldier.

On the morning of the 12th, heavy detonations were heard, apparently offshore in the vicinity of Cebu City, where Japanese transports were still busily discharging troops and armor. Shortly afterward several planes of an unfamiliar type were seen in the sky. To the almost incredulous amazement of the little group of Americans on Hill X, the wings bore not the usual "fried egg" of Japan, but the white stars of the United States. Then the sickening realization dawned that this was the "air umbrella"* which was to have covered the flotilla of ships to Corregidor nearly two weeks earlier!

Rumor raced through the hills on succeeding days of docks and bodegas wrecked and set afire; of transports and a cruiser sunk by bombs in the harbor. But the Americans remembered the cases of milk and green vegetables, the vials of quinine and morphine which would have meant life itself on Corregidor, now lying on the bottom of the harbor.

When on the following day, 13 April 1942, the B-25s again appeared over Cebu, native rumors flew thick and fast of the "coming American offensive". But it was 30 months before the hills of Cebu again echoed the roar of friendly motors; and still another year before -- in August 1945 -- the few survivors of this little group

* See Appendix #7

of American officers saw their next white star.

By the afternoon of 12 April it appeared obvious that nothing further could be accomplished in the Hill X area. The enemy had the Toledo-Cebu road, which had been his main objective. Ewa, who had fought so well at Toledo, had withdrawn into the Uhling sector, which became of secondary importance to the invader, now that he had gained his primary objective. David had reached his rear area, north of the Toledo-Cebu road, safely and would await developments there. No reports had been received from Edmands, but it was assumed that the MP battalions were by this time in position on Busay Ridge, from which they were to fall back to protect the food dumps in the foothills northwest of Bonbon.

From Colonel Cook, who since the invasion had been placed in command of the eastern sector, including Edmands' and Rogers' regiments, came the information that Rogers' regiments had not been seriously involved and were now in position at Dita, near Adloan.

Since this appeared to offer the least impossible situation at the moment, it was decided that Visayan Force Headquarters should join Rogers. Viado, the forester, would be the guide. There were, he said, two possible routes. One lay through Bonbon -- the easier one -- but the enemy had been working on that road. The other, through Sipac and Sudlon, was very steep, but could be made.

The memory of that night is still a nightmare. The trail to

Sudlon -- a scant ten miles on the map -- seemed endless before dawn. Narrowing at times to less than a foot in width, the dim path clung tremulously to the dark cliffs; vast cold rock towering menacingly on the one side, infinity yawning on the other. There was no moon and the brilliance of the stars paled in the lurid crimson glow of the conflagration still raging in Cebu City.

The few hobnails there were, reasonably robust at dusk, were worn level with soles by sunrise. Improvised alpenstocks broke under too heavy strain or flew, endlessly spinning, into the gaping void. Hands clutched the cliff wall along narrower ledges -- only to find the rock crumbling under urgent fingers.

At Sipac, perched precariously atop its 3000-foot peak, the head of the column paused to wait for the straggling tail -- the cargadores, lagging under heavy food packs. Teeth chattered in the thin, frosty air, as sweat-soaked chinos clung damply to aching thighs and backs. Little Gordon Benson* the General's aide, his shattered shoulder still in a sling following his airplane crash, was an inspiration to everyone that night. His low, worn, flier's shoes affording no purchase on the shifting, slippery shale of the path, time after time he went down, landing almost invariably on the injured shoulder. Yet, throughout that long night he never whimpered. Scrambling up again with a laugh and a quip, he encouraged most -- and shamed some -- into accomplishing

*Lt. Gordon Benson, from Oregon, was a member of the 17th Squadron, 24th Pursuit Group. Flying a mission from Mindanao back to Bataan about 13 Jan 1942 he developed engine trouble due to lack of maintenance and crashed near Panay on return trip. He was one of the many who lost their lives in the sinking of the Japanese prison-ship Oryoku Maru in Subic Bay in December, 1944.

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that almost impossible trek without undue delay and with reasonably good cheer.

Just before daylight the party reached the edge of Sudlon Forest. White Horse Inn, the civilian refugee camp, lay not far within the rim of trees. Mess halls and cottages, constructed some time in advance, were teeming with frightened, worried, disorganized humanity. Only a few had the initiative and ability to assume the responsibilities of leadership. Outstanding among these were Mrs. Charlotte Martin, Tex Howell and Dr. Brown. Many others worked faithfully under supervision -- some neither worked nor cooperated.

General Chynoweth recalls Mrs. Martin particularly as the "good angel" of the camp. Holding a kitchen staff together by sheer force of her remarkable personality she established and ran the camp mess, bringing about an orderly and equable distribution of the food supplies in a situation marked previously by squabblings and selfishness. Cheerful, calm and resourceful, she was, in countless ways, literally a life-saver.

At Sudlon, Colonel Hilsman, who had been ailing for some time, became quite ill and unable to continue. Arrangements were made to smuggle him back to Negros where he would be safe and could recuperate. He was to make arrangements to maintain liaison between Negros and Cebu by sailboats, to be held in readiness at designated points along the coast. Having arrived safely on Negros, Hilsman reported that "organized resistance on Cebu had ceased." This possibly could have given Corregidor a misconception of the situation

and intentions of the defenders of Cebu.

At Sudlon the Visayan Force also lost most of its attached Navy personnel, General Chynoweth offering them the opportunity to leave for Negros while it was still possible to elude hostile forces, which were not present on the west coast of Cebu at this time except in small patrols. From Negros it might be possible to evolve ways and means of reaching Mindanao, and perhaps, Australia, where they could rejoin their own Service. After considerable discussion among themselves most of them decided to take the chance; one vital factor in the decision being the scarcity of food available for the Cebu troops.

Messengers arriving at Sudlon brought word to the General of Grimes' battalion. They were still intact in the jungle not far from where Grimes had left them. They indignantly refuted the rumor that they had run away, but they had apparently stayed quite securely hidden until this time.

Agents came in also from Lt. Colonel Deter, at the hospital. When the enemy landings had been reported, on the tenth, Deter had gone to Chynoweth for orders.

"I'd like to keep you at Headquarters, Dwight, but you know the medical requirements better than I," said the General. "Do what is best for your patients".

"Thank you, Sir. I'd like to be with you. But I'm worried about the new hospital, and the nurses should be gotten out, too".

At the hospital the Colonel organized a party to escort the nurses to Sudlon where Chynoweth found, them, safe, on his arrival.

Colonel Deter* then remained at the hospital with his male nurses, protecting his patients by sheer force of character when the Japanese came in.

The continuing arrivals of messengers delayed the departure of the Headquarters party from Sudlon for two more days, during which interim many of the civilians in the camp asked to be permitted to join in the guerrilla activities. General Chynoweth, of course, knew none of them, but Scudder did, and following his recommendations Chynoweth gave acting-commissions to several, among them Doctor Emilio Osmena, son of the (then) Vice-President of the Philippines.

Some of the Osmena boys were under suspicion, one of them having worked with the Japanese right from the start. But Chynoweth was always thankful that he had accepted Emilio; he became an indispensable "right arm". The Osmena family owned mines in the Cebu mountains and Emilio knew and could control the mountain people well. The constant patrolling of Jap planes frightened and demoralized the cargadores, who at this point were the life-line of supply. Only through Emilio's efforts and influence were these men kept on their jobs.

Eventually Chynoweth came to rely on Osmena so completely that even Scudder became alarmed and protested to the General, "That man has you in the palm of his hand. He knows your every movement. He could sell you out easily!"

* Later, after the surrender, Colonel Deter continued his work in prison camp. Many men, without doubt, owe their lives to this resourceful physician, whose own life was forfeited in the sinking of a Japanese prison-ship in 1944. General Chynoweth says of him, "He was an inspiration and a God-send to his associates. I never knew a finer man."

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The General replied, "I know it. But he can also keep us going at this critical juncture. I trust him, and I believe that trust is well-founded." He never had cause to alter his opinion.

During the daylight hours now the Japs patrolled all roads, using both cavalry and tanks. But at night they returned to the city. After dark, then, the foothills were aswarm with activity as the long cargadore trains, laden with food from the caches which Colonel Cook had established off the road, set out on the steep climb into the mountains. This was food which had come up from Australia, and excellent food it was. Unfortunately for the troops, the cargadores were sometimes of this same opinion, and while corned beef and similar items usually arrived at their destinations, it was rare indeed that the canned milk came through. It "got lost" enroute. Perhaps it would be well to emblazon on every school-room wall -- SOLDIERS MUST EAT!

Shortly before the invasion the Governor of Cebu had called on Chynoweth. Among other things, he told the General that he had approximately ten million pesos of government money which he planned to secrete in a cave at Camp X, and close the entrance by dynamiting. During the brief stay on Hill X on the 12th, Tom Powell scouted all through the Camp X area and located this cache. Through the imperfectly-blown entrance chests were plainly visible. Interrupted by the imminence of Jap motor troops before his reconnaissance was completed, Powell now asked permission of the

General to return to the cave with a few men and continue his investigation. Chynoweth agreed, directing Tom to bring back a half-million pesos for the maintenance of the troops and to destroy or conceal the remainder so that there would be no slightest danger of its falling into enemy hands.

On the morning of the 15th, Powell, with three soldiers, started back toward Camp X on this undertaking; accompanied by Sgt. Armstrong and C.P.O.* Wilson who were to try to secure the radio set which had been left at Hill X and gasoline to operate it. The remainder of the Headquarters party pushed on toward Cantupla in the Sudlon Forest area.

The food-transport system had now been perfected, as nearly as possible. Colonel Cruz had organized his intelligence net, with Lt. Misa's assistance, with agents spotted in every important barrio as well as in Cebu City, and with designated liaison posts in the hills to which they were to make their report on every important Jap movement. The location of the final CP in the mountains would continue to be a jealously guarded secret, known only to a chosen few.

Upon arrival at Cantupla the General was met with the reports that Rogers' positions at Dita were under attack, but that the situation was not yet serious and it was believed that he could hold sufficiently long for Colonel Cook to complete the removal of commissaries stored at Adloan. On the following day, however, Adloan was bombed, heavily and repeatedly. The reserve battalion

*Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy.

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which had retired to this vicinity following its disappearance from Bonbon now vanished again. Rogers' regiment collapsed. When the Jap artillery registered on them they simply evaporated. Rogers had done a magnificent job trying to hold them in position, but to no avail. They were untrained. There was no real morale. They had been under a political commander -- Rogers had been with them only a few days before the invasion. It was the same old story. No artillery -- no planes -- no training -- "we go home now, Ser" -- and they did.

Cook had stopped a bomb splinter at Adloan, but had found a horse to carry him and was now in the outskirts of the town, still trying to organize parties to rescue bits of the food supplies. He sent word that he would base his immediate group in the hills west of Adloan and would continue to get back as much food as possible.

The MP battalions, whose assigned mission was to protect the food dumps in Bonbon Valley, now appeared, to the General's amazement and vexation, at Cantupla. It developed that during the night of the 12th-13th, while still in position on Busay Ridge, Edmands had received information from runners that bodegas at Bonbon and Biasong had been burned, which he had interpreted to indicate Japanese penetration of the Bonbon Valley to his rear. Shortly after midnight outposts reported enemy columns converging on the position, the one on the right being very close. Accordingly,

Edmands had ordered an immediate withdrawal to the north and about 9 AM made contact with outposts of the 83rd Infantry. Three companies of the MP Regiment were missing at this time, having proceeded to Bonbon on the 11th instead of falling back on Landon Heights. Edmands' outfit, whose strength at this time was 250 men and 11 officers, reached Adloan at dusk on the 13th. Unable to gain contact with higher headquarters in the midst of an extremely confused situation in spite of the employment of numerous runners; with a depleted force and what was considered reliable information that the Japs were across his line of withdrawal to Bonbon, it is understandable that Edmands moved north to join forces at Adloan.

Directed by Chynoweth to proceed at once on his assigned mission to protect the food dumps, the fragmentary outfit departed, only to return a few days later still further depleted in strength, reporting that although they had reached their specified positions they had not located any food caches, had seen no American officers and no cargadores, and quoting civilian estimates of enemy forces moving through Bonbon valley from Biasong towards Adloan, varying in strength from 100 to 5000, with tanks and artillery. This was the force which had assaulted Rogers from the South on the 16th.

There were now remaining under Chynoweth's control in the mountain area approximately 120 men, out of 7000. More could have been reached, but there was barely food enough for these now. Other than the continuing food transport the situation was resolving itself into outpost duties, pending the opening of active guerrilla

operations.

O'Connor was left to outpost Cantupla with a party of about 20 men. Captain Weideman returned to the civilian refugee camp at Sudlon as intelligence and liaison agent for Headquarters. Outpost orders were to permit no strangers to enter mountain trails -- to annihilate small enemy groups. If large parties of hostiles appeared, not to become involved, but to send prompt warnings and vanish into selected hideouts until the coast was clear.

Maps of Cebu show a great forest area in the Balamban Mountains, which is designated a government preserve. There is only one thing wrong with it. It has not been preserved. Guerrillas need forest regions like the rabbit needs his briar patch, and Cebu was sadly lacking in this necessity. Cebu is the most thickly populated of all the Philippine Islands. The people are land hungry. Land poachers have cut and plowed away every spot large enough for a carabao to work. Patches of forest interspersed with clearings -- that is Balamban. But it was the best the island afforded.

A day or so after the arrival at the final CP, Tom Powell returned from his "fortune hunt". He reported that they had been unable to open the money chests, which had been found intact in the cave, and had therefore sent them back to Headquarters in charge of Corporal Gentry. Gentry should have arrived in advance of Powell, who had other adventures, but he had not shown up. Tom became greatly concerned, and Chynoweth hit the ceiling. One theory was that Gentry had gotten away with the booty. At the moment nobody cared

much if Gentry became a multimillionaire, but it was agonizing to think that the Japs might have gotten their hands on those chests.

Tom listened to considerable plain language from the General, and departed in haste to hunt for Gentry. No luck. No Gentry. The General moped and raged. Scudder chuckled at the thought of the little corporal with ten million pesos. Tom was in despair. When the gloom was deepest, in walked Gentry. He had gotten lost!

Prying open the chests revealed the contents to be, not ten million in Commonwealth currency, but one million of the emergency script which had been printed in several of the islands since the invasion. However, even emergency money would be of great help in paying the cargadores, hiring sailboats, and so on, and there was no knowing how many years of this guerrilla life might lie ahead. Half of the sum was burned; of the remaining half some was carefully distributed where the need was greatest -- to Osmena for his cargadores, to intelligence agents for emergencies -- the remainder, wrapped in banana leaves to simulate baggage, was in Scudder's charge.

After seeing Gentry off from Camp X with the money, Tom had gone on down to the main Toledo-Cebu road to investigate some of the neglected demolitions. He had set off one charge at a vital small bridge across a deep canyon, which would block the road for a day or so, and had begun work at another bridge on the high ridge just northeast of X when a Jap patrol, attracted by the first explosion, came hurrying up. Their approach being visible from his vantage point on the ridge, Tom prepared a hasty ambush. The patrol

walked straight into it -- the remnants scattered in utter confusion. Tom then touched off the mine under the second bridge.

Meanwhile, Major Laput, who now commanded Grimes' old outfit, showed up in the nearby woods with his troops. They too had heard the explosions. Feeling certain that the Nips would again return, Tom set to work preparing a second ambush, employing Laput's whole force.

Shortly an entire Jap battalion, supported by artillery, appeared. They, too, ran straight into the ambush, with drastic results. Reorganizing after their initial dispersion, they returned and fought with Laput's troops throughout the day. The Americans and Filipinos who were prisoners at the hospital on the mountain east of Camp X had grandstand seats for the entire performance, and later told of four truckloads of enemy casualties evacuated from the scene.

One of the mainstays of Headquarters at this time was a young Norwegian sailor named Jensen, who had swum ashore when his ship had been torpedoed some time earlier. He was cook, outpost, mess-officer, carpenter and liaison agent. There was literally nothing he could not do, and always cheerfully. Several times Chynoweth had asked him if he did not want to leave the island while there was yet time, but his answer always was "What you do, I do".

Early one morning the sleeping camp was roused by Jensen's loud shouts, "Get out of here, you monkey-devil!" Grabbing their guns, everyone ran for the kitchen area, expecting Japs, to find

Jensen angrily chasing a canjon, which had been raiding the supply boxes. The canjon, which is supposedly half-dog, half-cat, climbed a tree and sat barking derisively at Jensen's futile efforts to dislodge it, while the rest of the camp whooped with laughter at the anticlimax.

The rumor was current at this time that Jap patrols often simulated barking dogs. Scudder and Chynoweth were generally alone in the camp, the youngsters -- as the General called them -- all out on patrol. One day a most peculiar barking was heard in the nearby ravine. The two officers, fingers on triggers, ducked hastily and quietly into a prearranged hideout which commanded the ravine. Down the ravine, quite unconcerned, wandered a small Filipino boy with a puppy. Sheepishly the two men crawled out and returned to the CP.

During the last few days of April, messages signed by Colonel Valeriano, a P. C. officer who had been anti-American from the beginning, were dropped by plane into the mountain areas and were brought in to Headquarters by natives. These messages stated that "it is the American doctrine to surrender when resistance is hopeless". Soon after this Warrant Officer Allen, taken prisoner when the enemy overran the hospital, was sent up on parole into the mountains with a note to Chynoweth from the Jap commander urging that he "surrender to save life". Allen was returned to the hospital without a reply.

It was obvious now that the location of the present CP was becoming too well known for safety, and on 1 May a further move was made to a spot high in the mountains which had been, Osmena said, the hideout of the last insurrecto to surrender to the Americans some forty-odd years earlier. On the rim of a vast canyon, surrounded by enormous vine-draped trees, the Balamban river rushing through its rocky bed far below, CPZ was truly a delightful spot. A large, dry, well-ventilated rock cave provided a perfect refuge from the torrential rains which were now beginning to be a daily occurrence.

Powell, Benson and Osmena formed the liaison between CPZ and the various scattered outposts and intelligence agents. They alone knew its location. Armstrong and Wilson had set up the radio which they had recovered from Hill X on a lower level of the mountain where the mighty roar of the river would drown the hum of its gasoline motor. At this time the sending signal was too weak to be heard beyond Negros, but reception was very good. Twice daily Tom or Gordon brought up reports received from the Jap controlled Manila radio as well as from San Francisco.

Guerrilla preparations were in high gear now. Regimental commanders had selected their best and strongest men; food was gradually accumulating in the diversified mountain caches, thanks to Osmena's influence with the mountain people. The rainy season was restricting the range of Jap armor and motors to a circumscribed area near the larger towns, giving the mountain areas a brief respite

and more freedom of movement. By the end of the rainy season, Chynoweth hoped, more aggressive operations could be undertaken by the guerrillas.

The lack of shoes had become a major emergency by this time. A certain number being available on Negros, Benson and English were dispatched to secure them. Since Osmena was now wholly occupied with the organization and training of one of the new guerrilla outfits, this departure left Tom as the sole Headquarters contact. On 8 May he came into the CP with a haggard face and terrible news. He had stopped at the radio station just in time to hear General Wainwright's surrender broadcast from Manila. He had also heard KGEL, in San Francisco. The commentator there had raised the question as to whether or not it had actually been Wainwright speaking. Tom was lugubriously certain that it had been -- he knew Wainwright's voice.

This was a stunning blow. While they had all felt that Corregidor could not long survive -- unless the long-promised "aid" arrived -- the possibility of the order for the simultaneous surrender of the entire Archipelago had not even been considered. Since contact with Corregidor had been lost with the destruction of the Camp X radio on the 11th, there had been no warning of this catastrophe.

After much grave consideration General Chynoweth and Colonel Scudder concluded that Wainwright's order, issued under duress as it was, could not be considered legally binding and should be

ignored. The troops were so informed.

Code books and ciphers having been destroyed upon the abandonment of Camp X the radiograms informing the other Visayan Island commanders of the General's decision were sent in the clear, but in cryptic phraseology which, it was hoped, would not be too readily comprehended by the enemy. Christie, on Panay, never received his message, and Cornell's, on Leyte, garbled past comprehension, was necessarily disregarded.

Although General Chynoweth had not received official notification of the change due to being out of radio communication during this period, the Visayan Force, as such, had been abolished on 17 April and these other islands were no longer under his command. Prompted by the imminence of disaster, Corregidor had reconstituted the Visayan-Mindanao Force, with General Sharp in command, with a view to consolidating all of the Southern Islands and placing them, when it should become necessary, directly under General MacArthur, hoping thereby to ensure some continued resistance in the Philippines.