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EXPOSURE UNDER FIRE

An Official History of Signal Corps Photography in the Luzon Operations

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This is one of two Official Signal
Corps Histories on the Luzon opera-
tions. The story of communications
on Luzon is told in SIGNAL ACHIEVE-
MENT - LUZON.

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LANDINGS

Of all the diversified Signal Corps troops doing their jobs under trying conditions on Luzon Island in the Philippines---of all the troops of any arm or service, for that matter---none had a greater variety of combat experiences than the men of the Signal Corps Photographic Service.

They were in the midst of almost every battle, they were in the heart of the great Manila fire, they stood, and fell, on the targets of the Japanese artillery, they skimmed over the fighting in planes and jumped with the paratroops, they penetrated the enemy lines with the raiders, they went into battle with the Navy, and they were conspicuous at every historic ceremony and event of the liberation.

To accomplish the Signal Corps mission of making a photographic record of the war, 14 combat assignment units, two newsreel assignment units, two mobile laboratories and one photo repair section were sent into Luzon with the invading forces, and two more combat assignment units were scattered among ships of the Navy, approximately 22 officers and 38 enlisted men, in all. Virtually all personnel was from Detachment One (Photographic) of the 332nd Signal Service Battalion, and the 161st Signal Photographic Company.

Most of the units came in on the D-days of the various Luzon landing operations, and of these, the largest percentage landed on the beaches of Lingayen Gulf.

Scattered as they were through the different convoys, they pictured many enemy attacks on the ships, and suffered their first casualty on S minus two.* Technician Fifth Grade Earl G. Bates, taking still pictures of an air raid from the bow of an LST, was shot through the leg by a bullet from a strafing Jap plane.

In the high surf at the Lingayen Beaches, several photographers were knocked down as they struggled ashore, and their cameras were immersed in the sea. In previous operations, this would have put the photographer out of action.

But, for the first time, a mobile shop of the Camera Repair Section came in with combat reinforcement troops. They landed on S plus four and set up in tents at Pangaldan. Cameras immobilized by salt water were promptly restored to service. The Repair Section was unable, however, to repair one of the pieces of equipment carried in on its own truck, a 16 millimeter Bell & Howell projector that bounced off the weapons carrier and was run over by the truck behind it as the vehicles were racing for safety through enemy fire.

Another truck, carrying the film reserve of one of the combat units, received a direct hit from a mortar shell and burned. The unit had to be resupplied.

- 1 -

* Lingayen landing date was known as S-Day.
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If the landing was rough, the going, once ashore, was often rougher, for the photo units felt obliged to push through to the perimeters without delay.

The Officer-in-Charge of Unit B accompanied an 18-man patrol scouting San Jacinto, first day's objective of the 43rd Division. They ran into a Japanese defense position of 250 men at the river just out of town and in the ensuing fire fight lost eight killed and five wounded. The Photo Officer was one of the six survivors. When the town was captured the next day, Unit B's jeep was the first vehicle to enter.

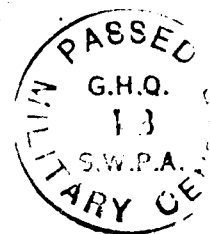
The ordered confusion of a landing scene was compounded by the magnitude of this one. Photographers, following the battalions to which they were assigned, lost all contact with their photo units. Some of them even lost their tactical units, and one, busily taking pictures, wandered far into enemy territory alone and wasn't aware he had become separated until he met an advance patrol on the way back.

Difficulties on the beach did not end on S Day. Newsreel Unit G came into White Beach on the evening of S plus four, in the midst of an artillery duel between warships in the harbor and Japanese 12-inch guns at Demortis. With the sudden fall of tropical darkness came an alert and blackout. Jap shells were pounding the beaches and the air was filled with the freight-train rustle of other missiles as the unit set out for Dagupan. Weaving in and out among piles of supplies and prone troops, the vehicles ground through the trackless sands of a beach already churned by artillery fire and countless vehicles. It became impossible to get through. The photographers made camp in the bedlam that was the beach.

The First Battalion of the 158th Regimental Combat Team set out the next day to silence the Jap guns at Demortis. With them went Photo Unit 10.

The Photo Unit Officer was with C Company. As they were crossing an open rice paddy just before noon, all the surrounding hills suddenly spouted Japanese artillery fire. The center of C Company was wiped out, instantaneously.

A motion picture cameraman and a still photographer were with A Company. This Company got it late in the afternoon. The Japs had waited until they reached a point where there was no cover. The Company was fast being obliterated as a withdrawal began over a half mile of open country under continuing enemy artillery fire. Radios, mortars, packs, ammunition, dead and even wounded had to be abandoned. The photographers kept shooting pictures, and managed, between the two of them, to get one wounded Infantryman to safety.



The motion picture cameraman got a bullet hole in his canteen, but they were otherwise untouched, although the Battalion had lost nearly half its men.

That battle continued until 28 January when Rosario fell to the Americans. The weakened 158th stopped there for a rest. Unit 10 started south in search of further combat to photograph.

Among the Photo units was one consisting of hand-picked men that had volunteered for the most dangerous assignments since their arrival in the theater. On Luzon, this unit, Unit F, was assigned to the Sixth Ranger Battalion, and when two Ranger companies landed in rubber boats, launched from PT boats, to scout Bolinao, and islands off Bolinao Cape, the Photo Unit Officer went with them. The landing was made at night, but he shot pictures of the preparations---loading the rubber boats and the Rangers darkening their faces---and of the securing of the Island of Santiago.

The one-by-one annihilation of the Japs stubbornly entrenched in the Cabaruan Hills was given closeup coverage by Army photographers, showing the enemy being routed out with small arms, flame throwers, dynamite and cans of gasoline.

During the Cabaruan operations, a jeep carrying photographers was following tanks into battle when intensified enemy fire suddenly forced the tanks to withdraw momentarily. They swung around in their tracks and, before the photographers could turn their jeep, a tank was upon it. The occupants jumped free, but all of the jeep that was salvagable was a single tire.

A Photo lieutenant in these operations reached for his canteen to get a drink of water during combat, but couldn't pry it loose from its holder. During a respite he discovered the reason---a bullet had passed through the holder and canteen.

One photographer crawled back to the medics with an Infantryman whose hand had been blown off, then returned to resume his camera work.

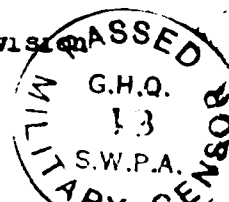
The lieutenant of Unit B and a T/5 motion picture cameraman, in the Unit jeep convoyed by a captured Japanese staff car full of guerillas, bypassed enemy forces to photograph guerilla activities in the town of Guimba, 10 miles within the Jap lines.

The townspeople gave a banquet and victory ball in their honor as the first invading Americans to enter the town. The mayor and leading citizens made speeches of welcome, with the Japs on all four sides of the city. Next day the guerillas escorted them safely back to the American lines.

Two Unit J photographers entered Tarlac the day before it fell without even realizing that our forces had not captured the city until after they had left. The town was virtually deserted, even the natives having fled.

Unit 8's lieutenant and a movie cameraman, covering the 37th Division

NEWS & PICTORIAL SECTION
- 3 - GHQ PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
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advance, were on the spot at Camiling when a body of 50 Japanese walked straight down a road into a newly-installed American road block.

Unit I's lieutenant and an enlisted man entered Bamban with an eight-man patrol two miles ahead of the main body. Japanese opened fire on them and the patrol was scattered. The two photographers made their way back alone. Next day they were caught in a regimental CP when Japanese artillery zeroed it in, but they escaped again.

Then they went on to Clark Field where photographers received a concentrated dose of fire. Two of them were pinned down on the south side of the field. Two more were riding in a tank destroyer with the Commanding General of the 37th Division. The tank destroyer just ahead of it struck a mine and was demobilized. They demolished it with their own fire to keep it from falling into the hands of the enemy. Americans were in one hangar of the field, the Japs in another, slugging it out. With the entrenched Americans was another photo unit. The tank destroyer with the General and the two photographers crept up almost between the two hangars, remaining there several minutes. When the photo unit in the hangar left, Jap artillery shells chased their jeep along the field, splashing geysers of earth just behind the careening vehicle all the way.

On a hill in the Fort Stotsenburg area, a Signal Corps motion picture camera was set up in plain view of Jap dugouts 400 yards away. Six 40th Division men were killed by snipers on that hill the day the camera was operating, and while the Photo Officer of Unit E was shooting pictures, one soldier was killed only 10 feet from him.

In the same area, Unit 8 was pinned down on the crest of a small knoll for nearly an hour by Japanese sniper fire and a few hours later was under direct machine gun and rifle fire during an enemy infiltration of our lines.

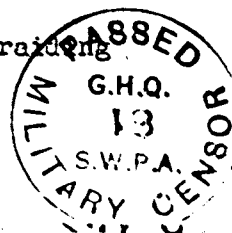
Unit A landed with the 38th Division on the western side of Bataan in Zambales Province, 29 January, and outran the Infantry to the town of San Marcelino so that they might photograph the triumphal entry.

After first resistance in this operation was met near Subic Bay, the Photo Unit pushed up the road with the 34th Regimental Combat Team and entered the town of Olongapo behind the first tank, capturing a Japanese garrison flag.

The following two weeks, these photographers recorded the bloody battle of Zig-Zag Pass. It was here that General MacArthur had fought his rear guard action to cover the withdrawal into Bataan. One of the cameramen photographed the mission of a regiment that was guided across the hills by a tribe of Negritos to encircle the Japs in the pass. For more than a week these troops were supplied only by air drops.

Members of the battle-toughened Unit F accompanied the Ranger raiding

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- 4 - GHQ PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
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party that penetrated Japanese territory on the daring delivery of American prisoners of war in Cabanatuan Prison.

T/4 Frank J. Goetzheimer, one of the smallest men in the Photo Service, volunteered to accompany the Ranger who shot the lock off the prison gate so that the raiders might pour in on the evening of 30 January. Then, with the first men to penetrate the place, he ran through the prisoner's quarters herding the bewildered inmates out the gate, taking zestful advantage of the opportunity for a T/4 to push around bewildered field grade officers. One of the liberated Americans was a major who had been photographic officer on the staff of the Chief Signal Officer when the Japs invaded the Philippines.

Previous critiques of this Photo Unit's operations were not without a suggestion of difficulty over the personnel's propensity to forget pictures for a more aggressive part in the fighting, but this time they were able to abandon their cameras with impunity, for most of the action took place after sunset. All of them helped to carry out sick or wounded.

Photographers were included when all officers participating in this raid were awarded the Silver Star and enlisted men Bronze Stars.

Captain Grover C. Nicmeyer and Sergeant Irving M. Wagon of Signal photographic volunteered to accompany the 11th Airborne Division on its perilous probing mission into the enemy's rear in southern Luzon. The landing was made at Nusugbu Bay on 31 January.

When Cavite was captured by the 11th Airborne, the eleventh and twelfth men into the naval base were the two photographers, but as the officer expressed it, "there were no Japs around anyway, so what?"

This two-man photo Unit, on the night of 21 February, boarded one of three sailing bancas with an officer and 30 men of the Recon Platoon on an adventure that was to culminate as the second spectacular prison delivery of Luzon.

All night they sailed to a point 40 miles behind the Jap lines. The next day they hid in a small town on the south shore of Laguna de Bay. That night, with 200 guerillas, they sailed north and west to a point about 11 miles from their objective, the internment camp at Los Banos, which was two hours away.

The raiders walked through rice paddies to the edge of camp.

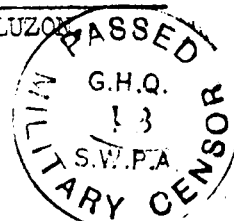
At 0645, six American Soldiers and 30 Filipinos stormed the gate. With them were the two photographers. The rest of the party followed.

At 0655, a reinforced Paratroop Company came down 500 yards from camp.

- 5 -

* See Official Signal Corps History, SWPA, SIGNAL ACHIEVEMENT - LUZON Prisoner of War Chapter.

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At 0710, 53 alligators full of fighting men came in on schedule from the beach.

The raid was accomplished by 225 men in all.

Everyone was needed for combat security on this* tense mission. Captain Nicmeyer led a machine gun squad in with him. Both photographers helped get prisoners out.

They shot pictures of the weak and sickly inmates carrying their meager belongings past burning buildings and they "were never kissed so much in our lives".

Coverage was curtailed by a shutter jamming on their Speed Graphic and by the swiftness of the raid, swift because the Japs reached the camp in force as expected, an hour after the raiders left with their 2,146 liberated inmates.

Both photographers were awarded the Bronze Star.*

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* Awards by authority of Sec II, GO 39, Hq, 11th Airborne Div, dtd 9 Mar 45.

INTO MANILA

As the 11th Airborne Division was landing in the south, photo teams in the Central Luzon Valley were racing not to keep up with, but to get ahead of, the assault troops so they could photograph the entry into Manila.

One T/5 was with an advance guard of 50 Infantrymen that dug in for a night at a cross road three miles south of Navaliches. When 20 trucks approached them from the east they thought their main body, last known to be north of them, had caught up by a different route. But a challenge to the convoy evoked a stream of Japanese expletives. As if at a signal, every man in the position began firing with mortars and light arms.

"I was scared stiff," said the cameraman. "It was so dark you couldn't tell who was shooting. We stopped the Japs, but because of the strength of the enemy, the officer-in-charge decided to withdraw before they could regroup. The men in front began falling back on us, and it was terrifying because we couldn't tell whether they were Japs or Americans. I had to leave all my heavy equipment, including cameras, under a nearby house. We walked all night through the rice paddies and in the morning we came out only about a mile north of where we had started, just in time to see the American troops approaching. I climbed onto the fifth tank in line to ride into Manila. Enemy fire became so heavy as we progressed, however, that I had to get inside the tank."

Another T/5 photographer, riding inside an M-7 tank, took over the .50 calibre machine gun and kept it in operation when the gunner alongside him was wounded.

A Photographic sergeant, caught in a sharp encounter with a Jap patrol just above Manila on 4 February, was lying in a ditch alongside a road when three Japs stepped out of a hedge nearby. Dusk and heavy foliage precluded pictures, so the sergeant aimed his gun instead of his camera at the Japs, who had started running. He brought down one and a BAR man felled the other two.

Some photographers didn't wait for the Engineers to build bridges across the rivers. They made rafts for their vehicles, or begged rides on amtracks. Refused priority on a ferry, the Unit I weapons carrier led a convoy of heavier photo vehicles a mile upstream to a ford. In the dark, the weapons carrier had to winch each of the other trucks across, then it took them four hours to get through the rice paddies back to the road on the other side, during which time each truck got stuck at least twice. Other Photo vehicles had to wait. The heavy repair van of the Photo Repair Section, for instance, after driving day and night, found itself stopped by a blown-up bridge of the last stubborn river north of Manila. However, it squirmed through the traffic jam to the front part of the column, ingratiated itself by serving coffee to the waiting troops through the night, and was the first vehicle of its size to cross the bridge the next morning.

- 7NEWS & PICTORIAL SECTION
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Two enlisted photographers obtained permission to try to enter Manila as early as 1 February, two days before the first troops, with a band of guerillas who promised to get them through. They started, but the guerillas weren't able to keep their promise and they had to rejoin their units.

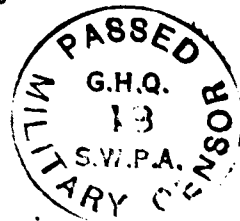
Of the first five vehicles to reach the BBB Brewery where the 37th Division established its CP on the outskirts of Manila, one was the jeep of Photo Unit B, another belonged to Photo Unit E. From there the photographers pushed on afoot.

A graphic description of the struggle of the Photo Units to beat the invaders into Manila, and of their early activities in the city, is contained in a report by the Officer-in-Charge of Combat Assignment Unit E.

...The 37th Division Mobile Recon Unit was there (San Fernando) ready to start for Manila ahead of the troops. Our jeep went along. We got held up at Calumpit for a while but managed to be ahead of the main body of the troops. I can't remember the dates anymore but we got to Bigaa about 1700 one evening (two days before we reached Manila). Both bridges across the Bigaa River were out, naturally, so the captain, CO of the Recon Unit, several of his men and I got to work on the railroad bridge, which was partly submerged, and by 2100 had it in shape enough to start moving some vehicles across. We worked like slaves. By 0100 we ferried 16 jeeps, practically inched them through. By 0300 we managed 12 37 mm guns. One of them slid off the planks and we had a hell of a time getting it back on the bridge. For the next two hours I led by hand every single man of an Infantry Regiment. I don't know who they were, I was too tired and sleepy to care. They couldn't balance themselves with their heavy packs, so, since by this time I knew every hole in the bridge, I had to take them. What got my goat was that at the end I couldn't get priority for my own jeep.

At Marilao we had the same problem. This time I had to go on my own. I met a guerilla colonel on a beautiful white horse who gave me about a dozen men to help me. We collected several bancas (native boats) and constructed a ferry. I got my jeep across but had a hell of a time to sell the idea to other units. But it didn't take long after I left. They put priority on it and I was told later that General MacArthur used it.

I almost got killed at Meycauayan. I drove into cross fire between Japs and our machine guns near the railroad station. My jeep was the first vehicle to get to this point. There was a big crater on the main road so I made a detour through the town. I still had plenty of daylight so again I engaged the guerillas and began to construct a banca ferry across the river running through the center of the town. Early next morning I got my jeep across. A couple more followed but I couldn't get any more

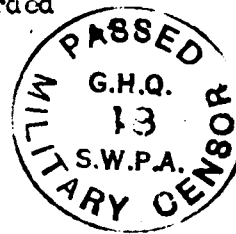


customers. I had a whole army of civilian volunteers to operate the ferry. The troops were using the railroad bridge down below. I ran into a Brigadier General (can't recall his name, he was with the 37th Division) who was mad because the troops were not getting across fast enough. I told him about my barge. He was elated and immediately issued orders for units to use it. I took off for Manila. I was ~~wasting too much~~ time and everybody else was getting ahead of me.

I reached Manila walking beside General B----- almost between the first two scouts. We stopped at the BBB Brewery. Well, the entire Division stopped there for two reasons. First, of course, was the beer which was being passed out, but second was that dirty yellow river ~~and the blown-up bridge~~. If you disregard the First Cavalry which entered Manila night before us (3 February), then I would be the first G.I. to get in. I got a couple of boards which I tied together with a wire, placed my camera, film and other things on top and with the help of a boy, waded across. Soon other men began to follow. I organized some civilians to help me round up some empty gas drums for a bridge but when an Engineer captain showed up, I joined the Infantry and we started for the town.

The Unit I walked in with was E Company, 2nd Battalion, 148th Regiment. We walked down the Avenida Rizal, made a detour to the railroad station in Tondo, which was burning. I stopped for a while to make some shots of the fire. The Japs left stacks of ammo there which were about to blow as I was shooting. I took off from there fast and just in time. It hit the clouds when I was about a block away. Of course I lost the Company and had a hell of a time finding them in one of the narrow streets near the Canal. They ran into some of the snipers and were working on them in earnest when I got there. S----- (T/5 still photographer) was with the Company. It was getting dark by this time so we sat down on the curb to take a rest since we couldn't take pictures any more. A few moments later the Japs across the Canal threw a knee mortar at us. It blew up about 12 feet away from us and that is where S----- got it in the leg. We pulled out of there fast. We had no aid men so a civilian doctor took care of S-----.....

I spent the first night in Manila working pretty hard. The Company was forced to move back several blocks from the Canal. It lost contact with the Battalion CP and the Battalion didn't know where the Company was. In short, we were lost and without help if something happened. We also had several wounded who had to be taken to the Medics. Since I couldn't take pictures, I decided to do that work. I found a Chinese driver with a truck, loaded it with the wounded and about half a dozen Jap prisoners we picked up, and started out through the dark streets looking for a hospital. I think it was the San Lazaro we found. There were some G.I.s with more Japs and they didn't know what to do with them, so I herded



them all (18) into the truck and went on looking for the Battalion. I finally found the CP at Bilibid Prison. Nobody wanted the damned Japs at the CP so I tried to get them inside where the American civilians were. I went around to the main gate just when the Japs were coming up the street with tanks. All hell broke loose there and I really don't remember how I got out of there. The Battalion CP knew now where Company E was but the Company still was in the dark. I had to get back and tell them, but I only had the frightened Chinese driver and that wasn't good. The Battalion asked me to stretch a phone wire on my way back but they didn't have enough of it to take it the way I came. A Signal sergeant came along with me and we got the wire through the Jap streets. It really felt good to stretch out on a soft bed finally.

Next day, after noon, I went across the Canal and joined the K and L Companies of the 1st Battalion. S----- (T/5 motion picture cameraman) was with me for a while until he ran out of film..... Several blazes started and we shot these while the troops were pushing on cleaning out snipers. We kept going east block by block very slowly. All this time the fire which we passed was spreading and closing up behind us. S----- pulled out of there just in time because soon we realized that we were cut off. We got across Dagmarinas Street under fire but luckily no one got hit there. We were herded in a narrow alley and the Japs were closing in on us. They had a machine gun pointing down every alley we had to cross going either north or south. To top it all, we had about 200 panic-stricken civilians in a building. I pleaded with them to make a break for it and get out but they were like sheep. They were all either blown up with the building or burned alive later. The fire was getting very close. Other side of the street was burning and our side was beginning to smoulder. Japs placed explosives everywhere and as the heat reached them entire buildings would fall apart. We had to get out of there. We decided to run south through the fire. I dampened my clothes with water from my canteen and ran through with the first squad hoping the terrific heat wouldn't blow up the film I was carrying. We got only as far as the next block. The first man to reach the next alley got hit just as he stepped off the curb. I don't believe he was ever taken back because at that very moment a Jap threw a grenade around the corner of the building. It rolled down the sidewalk toward me. It gave me just about enough time to reach half way down to the ground before it blew up, not more than six feet from me. Several men were hit. From the photo standpoint, the best things were only to follow but I quit here. I had to help carry the wounded and give the men with rifles a chance to shoot. My shooting wasn't important any more. We ran back to our original position and now we had no alternative - we had to make a break to the north across the Canal bridge which we knew was mined. We expected the Japs to blow it up as soon as we got to it. The strongest Jap concentration was in the Heacock Building where they built strong cement walls with gun slits in



them pointing in all directions. We tried to blast them out but couldn't do it so we threw smoke bombs at them to cover us up. I carried a litter with three other men and by some miracle we got across but I saw men behind me fall. Most of them got it in the legs and stomach. I believe the count was six killed, two missing and about 20 wounded. One lieutenant blew himself up with a grenade. The thing was faulty and when he had no place to throw it because of the men and the civilians, he held it to his stomach. I had his name in the captions but I can't recall it now. I shot my last hundred feet on the north or the safe side of the Canal. The wounded were being carried across the bridge under Jap fire.

Unit 10, which left the weakened 158th Regimental Combat Team at Rosario to go south in search of further combat, found it in Manila. Unit 10 teamed up with Unit 3 and entered the city the day after Unit E's adventurous arrival.

The narrative of these two units' experiences is also best told in the words of one who experienced it, the Officer-in-Charge of Unit 10.

As we drove down Avenida Rizal, the people flocked to the sidewalks, doors, windows and roof-tops. The reception we received is beyond description. Applause, shouting, hand clapping, cries of "Victory", made it sound like Broadway on New Year's Eve. But when the people saw "Mabuhay", the name of our unit jeep, they went wild. Mabuhay is a Tagalog word of cheer and greeting.

They threw flowers to us, the women rushed out with hot tea and coffee in their best China cups, the men with fistfuls of cigars and cigarettes and with bottles of liquor (brandy, rum, whisky, gin -- many imported brands). It was impossible to refuse. Some of the more aggressive maidens kissed us soundly as we rolled by. It was more than a conqueror's or liberator's reception; it was a hero's welcome.

The whole bunch of us were a little ashamed, a great deal embarrassed. The ovation seemed directed at us as individuals, and we didn't feel we deserved it alone. We couldn't help but think of the boys who paved the way for us with their bodies.

We continued working south, in the general direction of Jones Bridge, which civilians told us had been destroyed. By now we were meeting bursts of sniper fire, and mined intersections or Jap pill boxes made an occasional detour necessary. Around 1000 we were held up by considerable opposition, which soon developed into street and house-to-house fighting. We were in Binondo, Manila's Chinatown, so we drove the jeep up on the sidewalk in the shelter of a solid building, and covered the rest of the way on foot. The jeep made a good headquarters for film and food supply, enabling us to travel much lighter.



* * * * *

It turned out that a Jap woodpecker (machine gun) in Binondo church tower was holding up our advance, so the AT (anti-tank) boys brought up their 37 mm guns, the nearest thing we had to artillery. It was not until a couple days later that the Engineers got bridges in behind us that would support artillery or tanks or large supply trucks. We were consequently short on food and ammo.

* * * * *

I followed one of our BAR men upstairs in an old Chinese house, looking for a shot at the Jap positions. We drew fire instead, and splinters from the lattice-framed windows stuck in our fatigues. I decided it was too dark for pictures there. It was, too.

I reached the street just after a Jap mortar hit in the intersection where our 37 mm gun had been firing a few minutes before. The gun wasn't hurt, but the shell had clipped a couple of our men, and killed a Chinese bystander. Until then it had all been a show to the civilians. Try as we would, we couldn't make them take cover. They were so glad to see us, and wanted to watch. It was different, now. They kept their doors open, however, for us to duck into when necessary. They also brought us information as to the location of Jap snipers.

Some of our troops were preparing to cross the river at the Ongpin Street Bridge, so I joined them. They were again held up by Jap machine gun fire from Binondo Church and from Sam's Studio, across the street from it. The bridge was about 60 feet from us, with a barricade of wood and sheet metal, protected by barbed wire entanglements and mines. We would have to clear a passage before we could cross, and the Jap machine guns were covering the bridge barricade with a withering fire. I couldn't get any pictures from where I was, so I dashed across Ongpin Street, crouched low, and pulled up in the foyer of the Rex Theater. We were using the roof for a mortar CP, and it made an ideal vantage point for pictures, although the Japs constantly whipped it with machine gun fire. I crawled out on the terrace and shot a couple of pictures. You could see all over the entire city.

Just as I came down a lieutenant with a pair of wire cutters and a lot of guts, crawled up to the bridge, ripped part of the barricade aside, and passed through. Two or three soldiers slipped through the opening behind him. The Jap machine gun opened up again as I started to follow, so I ducked into a little hole in the wall and found myself in a barber shop. There were several Chinese men and boys inside, chattering and sweating out the war. There were also a half dozen Chinese girls of about 18 or 21, dressed



in white, and wearing Red Cross armbands. One brought me a cup of tea, and told me they were volunteer nurses. They were very pretty, and spoke excellent English, so I settled down to spend a pleasant few minutes.

One of the Chinese boys thought I could get a picture from upstairs, so with him as guide, I got my introduction to the mysteries of an old Chinese house. It was dark and the flickering flame of the candle was very inadequate as I stumbled along. First, we wriggled through a hole in the back of the shop into the building next door, then up a stairway with trap doors, down dim passages, up more stairs, and finally out on a roof garden, where I could almost look down on the bridge we were trying to cross. I took a picture, and was nearly blinded by flying concrete, chipped off into my eyes by Jap machine gun bullets. Apparently my position was more or less exposed.

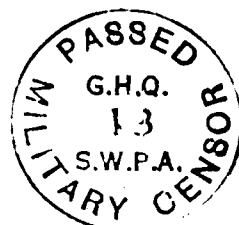
Led by my Chinese guide, I again reached street level, this time as the Infantry boys once more started to cross the bridge. One by one, covered by the others, we rushed through the bridge barricade and into the cover of doorways beyond. Lt. S----- (OIC of Photo Unit 8) showed up behind me.

Our mortars, trying to knock out the Jap positions in front of us, set fire to Sam's Studio at the corner of Ongpin and Rosario. This seemed to be the signal for the Japs to fire the city, and pillars of black smoke spiraled up to dim the sun.

Our crashing the bridge barricade opened up an avenue of escape to the trapped Chinese civilians in this section. We soon outflanked the Japs who had commanded the bridge, so that except for the mines, the bridge was comparatively safe. With the aid of some Chinese volunteer civilian police, the best organized and most helpful resistance unit we ran into in Manila, the mined section was quickly roped off, and the line of evacuating civilians began.

Here we first saw the results of war on civilians, the shattered bodies of men, women and children hit by shrapnel and bullets. Here also we saw the first atrocity cases, a preview of what was to follow. Children with heads cut off, mothers with breasts cut off, men bayoneted and hacked, or shot.

By now the fires had taken hold, and began to threaten the entire section. Jap machine guns still at strategic intersections prevented our use of the streets. Again we were held up. It was slow, bitter, house-to-house fighting from then on.



* * * * *

Lt. S----- and I tagged after an Infantry lieutenant who set out to locate one of these positions for the mortars..... There began a housetop reconnaissance patrol that I wouldn't wish to go through again, yet wouldn't have missed now that it is over. Covering each other with rifle, carbine, pistol and tommy gun, we inched our way over Manila roof-tops, toward the sound of Jap machine guns. We were partially camouflaged by the dense smoke from the raging fire. It was getting hotter as we advanced, and we were finally stopped short of our mark by the fire itself. The lieutenant lobbed a couple grenades, probably badly ineffective, at the still hidden pill box before we returned. As we jumped the last gap between buildings, we drew rifle fire, but no one was hit, so we left the lieutenant to direct his mortars.

We could now see that the fire would sweep the entire Binondo section..... It was a tragic, pitiable sight, but made terrific pictures for us.

The streets were clogged with pushcarts, wheelbarrows, horse carts, and a mass of humanity with bamboo carrying poles over shoulders, and impossible loads balanced on their heads, all heading to safety. The Chinese, rushing from their burning homes, were paying the price of freedom. It wasn't just a war between soldiers; it was a war in which the civilians pay. Many of us had tears in our eyes, and hatred in our hearts, because that day we saw the Japanese policy, "If we can't have it, no one shall." What many of us had referred to as the "enemy" that day changed to "the dirty little murdering yellow bastards."

Lt. S----- and I were both out of film and the fire was forcing our soldiers back, so we pulled out for the jeep. By now the entire skyline south of us was burning. The black smoke, which we later learned was from the drums of gasoline planted in all the major buildings by the Jap demolition squads, reached up over the entire city, with only the sun burning a red hole through the occasionally thinning mask.

That evening and all night long the explosions and fire continued. Our troops were forced to withdraw, by the heat of the fire, as far north as Azcarraga Avenue, where it finally stopped. There was enough light to read a newspaper in any part of the city that night. It was not until the next afternoon (6 February) that the ashes had cooled enough to again advance. It was difficult for us to find our way, because the landmarks of the day before were leveled to the ground. For blocks and blocks, each way, the city was in ashes and smoking rubble. The houses, where hospitable Chinese had offered us tea, or native fruits, had disappeared. The roof-tops over which I had crawled and clambered were gone also.



.....On 7 February 1945, the 148th infantry, whose CP was then in Malacañan Palace, crossed the Pasig River near the CP in assault boats and alligators. It was a hot time, with Japanese machine guns splashing lead and water in the faces of our soldiers. One alligator was sunk (a photographer from another unit took pictures of this) and on another, a couple of gunners were killed by bullets passing through the gun shields. H----- (T/4 motion picture photographer) and P----- (T/5 still photographer) covered the crossing. As far as I know, H----- was the only photographer who made the crossing that day. When the first assault boats were in the middle, they discovered the Japs had machine guns firing from our side as well as the Jap-held side of the river.

S----- (pfc still photographer) and I were holed up in the San Miguel Brewery, a few doors from Malacañan Palace, the afternoon of the crossing. The Japs were vigorously shelling the place, because of a 37 mm gun we had on the brewery wharf to cover the river crossing a couple hundred yards up-stream. The brewery had thick walls and made an ideal bomb shelter. It was a good place to spend the afternoon, but we didn't get many pictures. S----- made close friends with the plant manager, and staggered when we left that evening.

All over Manila, Army cameramen were establishing a record for the Photographic Service as the most thinly spread, widely dispersed organization in the combat area. A Photo lieutenant and enlisted man by themselves disarmed a band of so-called guerillas who were terrorizing one neighborhood. Reports came in of other photo personnel routing looters, sometimes at gun point, all over town. The Photographic Co-ordinator (a first lieutenant) and the Sixth Army Photographic Liaison Officer (a captain) wrested a spy of the Japanese away from a mob of Filipinos bent on lynching him, and turned him over for questioning. Immediately afterward, while they were still standing in the street with drawn automatics, the Chief Signal Officer accosted them and piled them into his already-overcrowded jeep to take them to Santo Tomas University where some of the most spectacular pictures of the Luzon campaign were waiting. Two members of Unit J obtained camera coverage of a Jap in civilian clothing being severely beaten by Filipinos. The same two photographers were themselves saved from a native mob, only the mob was menacing them with adulation and not malice, and their rescue was inadvertently effected by a Jap sniper. They had penetrated a side street that other soldiers had not reached. The grateful Filipinos, seeing their first Yanks, plied them with liquor and cigars. The cheering crowd quickly grew to uncontrollable proportions and began snatching at the photographers' uniforms in quest of souvenirs. The men were trying to protect their cameras. The situation was growing almost desperate when a Jap sniper opened up on the mob. That dispersed them and the photographers were able to make their getaway.

Still more extraordinary was the story told by the Photo Co-ordinator, a story given credence by the fact that a large percentage of the mines



planted by the Japs proved to be duds: "As I was driving along a Manila street," he reported, "I started to skirt an Engineers' excavation. To my astonishment, the Engineers dropped their tools and fled, shouting as they ran. I couldn't understand their warnings, but nevertheless I jammed on the brakes and quickly reversed the jeep. When the Engineers returned cautiously to the scene they told me I had run over a land mine, stopped, then backed up over it a second time without exploding it."

Newsreel Unit G headed straight for Bilibid Prison on entering the city, 5 February. Two blocks away from the Prison, they had to abandon their jeep and run a field of Japanese machine gun fire to the gate.

The scene inside was more hectic than all their cameras could picture ---freed prisoners of the Japanese, Japanese prisoners of the Americans, internees, evacuees, and sweating soldiers, milling around aimlessly and on a multitude of missions, among the dead and wounded of both sides. While they were shooting these scenes, nine captured Japanese were ordered taken to the rear. Ahead of them moved a T/5 movie cameraman, his eyes to the finder of his whirring camera, backing out the gate onto the street. The din of battle had become so commonplace he didn't notice he was stepping into the midst of a fire fight outside until a soldier alongside him fell shot. Then he was so unnerved that the Officer-in-Charge of the Unit, a first lieutenant, took over his camera and followed the prisoners. However, he found that he couldn't crouch and run through flying bullets and shoot pictures, too, and the prisoners' guards weren't waiting for photographers, so after a chase of two and a half blocks he gave up. Another T/5, from Unit 7, was injured in the Bilibid area while seeking shelter from Jap mortar fire.

Every unit in Manila shot copious pictures of the conflagration and accompanying flashes of land mine explosions from every angle. The fire was bright enough for a fair photographic image on Super Pan Supreme film at 1/100th of a second with an F 4.5 stop opening. Unit I returned from covering the fire to find that in its absence the neighborhood where they were living had been under Japanese shell fire and shrapnel had pierced the walls of their temporary home, wrecked a tripod in their room and lay all over their beds. Many rescues were made by photographers during the fire.

A War Department radiogram notified the theater that the first six Signal Corps photos on Manila received top play in American newspapers the day after they were sent from the Philippines by radio-telephoto.



SANTO TOMAS

The greatest concentration of photo personnel in Manila was at the Santo Tomas internment camp, a focal point of human interest, where the Photographic Service established headquarters.

When the deadly barrage of Japanese artillery fire was spreading death throughout the University buildings and grounds, the Chief Signal Officer, the Photographic Co-ordinator and staff, the Photo Repair Section, the Sixth Army Photo Liaison Officer and staff, Mobile Lab personnel, one Newsreel unit, and several photo combat units were there.

Photographers who were veterans of many beach heads described the shriek and blast of the well-aimed shells and the helpless wait in between them as one of the most harrowing experiences of the war. Possibly it was because of the large number of women, children and aged civilians who fell casualties. The internees themselves remained remarkably calm. The photographers saw so many things impossible for their cameras to catch that there was a feeling of disappointment among them despite the great volume of coverage.

One of them, a private, told how he was watching an American woman, about 55 years old, start from the shelter of a building toward a shack where her family had spent their internment.

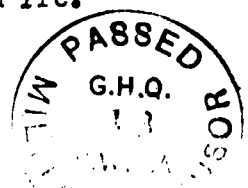
"Suddenly," he related, "a shell burst nearby. I saw shrapnel slice off both her arms just below the shoulders. She looked at her left side and exclaimed in a surprised tone: 'Oh, look, I have no arm!'"

"Before I could reach her she discovered both her arms were gone, and she collapsed. I got a doctor for her."

The Photo Co-ordinator and Sixth Army Liaison Officer were observing the shelling from a tower of the Administration Building. They came down and started across the grounds as another series of litter cases were being brought in, but they stopped short when they discovered, on one of the litters, First Lieutenant Charles Schuman, the Officer-in-Charge of Combat Assignment Unit 3.

Personnel of this unit had been the first Signal Corps troops into Manila. The unit divided itself between the two spearheads of the First Cavalry Division that incised themselves into the city ahead of all other troops on 3 February.

Lt. Schuman, with a T/5 photographer, accompanied the element of the 8th Cavalry Regiment that penetrated direct to Malacanang Palace. The 5th Cavalry Regiment elements that shot their way through to Santo Tomas, fought the Japs through the University campus and freed the internees there, were accompanied by the three other members of Unit 3, a T/3, a T/5 and a Pfc.



The two penetrations took all day and when they reached their objectives it was too dark for action pictures. About 150 8th Cavalry troops reached Malacañan at 1900 hours. The 5th Cavalry detachment was stopped for two hours by a Japanese road block at Far Eastern University before it broke through and entered Santo Tomas at about 2100 hours. Flash bulb pictures of the liberated internees welcoming the Americans were made through the night.

The next day, Lt. Schuman and the enlisted photographer at Malacañan had excellent combat picture material, especially when American M-4 tanks that had come with them blasted Jap barges on the Pasig River running past the Palace.

All the time, Jap heavy artillery was battering at the Palace. As he was shooting pictures, Lt. Schuman was felled by a shell fragment.

Both the 8th and 5th Cavalry elements were bottled up by the Japs. Few of the men in Malacañan thought they would get out alive.

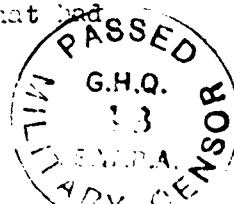
After 36 hours, they were still cut off, but reinforcements had reached Santo Tomas. Besides the Photographic Officer, three other men were now seriously wounded. It was decided to risk running the wounded through to Santo Tomas. Lieutenant Schuman had been lying in the quaking Palace grounds for 19 hours. A convoy of five tanks and one ambulance was formed. The enlisted photographer joined it in a jeep. He planned to take pictures of what was expected to be a running fight and, at the same time, evacuate the film already exposed.

The dash for Santo Tomas lived up to expectations as a hazardous one. Japs opened fire on the convoy. A carbine in the photographer's jeep was struck by a bullet. A wounded man in a litter above the photo officer's had a toe shot off in the ambulance.

Lieutenant Schuman was conscious when brought into the improvised hospital at the University. He asked one of the Photographic officers to explain to his wife that the wound was trivial. It was not, although he survived it; the shrapnel had lodged between the ribs next to the lung and he was later evacuated with it still in his body. This was the second wound Lieutenant Schuman had sustained in the Pacific. He was first awarded the Purple Heart in the Northern Solomons campaign.

Meantime, the bombardment of Santo Tomas was increasing in intensity. Risks without number were run by the photographers, but one T/5 distinguished himself by taking up a standing position, completely unprotected, in the open space 50 feet in front of the Administration Building to get motion pictures with the shells bursting all around. At one point he braced his back against the front tire of a truck for an angle shot, then he ran into the building to get pictures looking out on the scene, and when he returned to the truck he found shrapnel had ripped open the tire against which he had been leaning.

While in the building his camera was focused on an ambulance that had



just driven to the door when a shell burst in front of the vehicle. A Medic, standing nearby, was wounded and the camera captured the scene of his being taken to safety.

While the same photographer was making additional pictures from the tower, two direct hits pierced it, but both shells were duds. One, however, broke some bottles of chemicals in a tower laboratory and the fumes forced the photographer and four artillery observers to evacuate.

Photographic vehicles were struck by shrapnel. A tire on the Repair Section weapons carrier was torn and equipment inside damaged. As the Section personnel was changing the tire, two more shells struck 30 and 50 feet away, further damaging the vehicle. The tire changing was temporarily abandoned. The Section's van couldn't clear the gate and had to be left outside until American tanks knocked a hole in the wall through which it could be driven. One repairman had to be evacuated with combat fatigue, but he returned to duty before the Manila fighting ended.

Direct hits began striking the Gymnasium Building, which was filled with invalided old men, mostly suffering from beri beri. Several had just been wounded.

A nurse asked for aid in evacuating them and the Sixth Army Photo Officer organized the photographers for the job. Shells were striking the building and the majority of soldiers and civilians had taken cover as the cameramen brought out the patients. Many of them proved difficult to handle. One of those who refused to leave told a Photo sergeant, "I was a major under Teddy Roosevelt in Cuba and I never ran from any enemy then and I won't now!"

"Sorry, major, but you aren't running this time, either," the sergeant replied. "You're being carried!"

Fire broke out in the building. The photographers organized themselves into a bucket brigade and extinguished it.

During the height of the bombardment the Chief Signal Officer directed the disposition of many of the sick and wounded.

As the shelling of the University continued, Newsreel Unit G shot the longest sound story, from point of time, it had ever undertaken. It was a series of live sound interviews with freed internees. The story in itself was not overlong, but the rustle and blast of artillery, the planes overhead and the noise of battle, made only about 15 minutes of every hour usable. Light conditions permitted only morning shooting and the job required five days to complete.

The cast for the story was lined up on 7 February. On 8 February the Unit found three-fourths of those selected had been killed, and a new cast had to be rounded up.



The screech of shells overhead became quite commonplace during the filming. Everyone would hunch down, glance apprehensively skyward, and go on with the job.

Then, quite unintentionally, came an incident more realistic and authentic than most sound cameras have had an opportunity to record.

The Wall camera was making a closeup of Don Bell, interned American radio announcer, who had conducted the interviews. It was focused at six feet. In the midst of it came the screech of an approaching shell, louder than any of the others. Subject, cameramen, soundman, director, waiting interviewees, everybody hit the ground. Bell had been framed in a bust shot and he dropped below the camera's range. The shell exploded 75 yards away, to the right of the camera's range.

All this time, the battery-operated Wall was running by itself. As nearly as they can reconstruct it, the following sound track is believed to have been recorded:

(Shell screech.)

"Jesus Christ, duck!Duck!Here it comes!"

(Explosion.)

"Hey, is the Wall still running?"

"Sound is still on, too!"

"This is terrific. Let it run. Keep on, Don."

Bell got up, sat down before the camera again, and continued speaking.

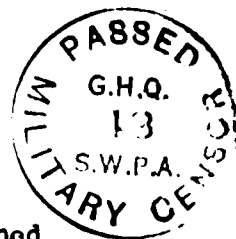
Driving into the University grounds during the filming of this story, the OIC of Unit G was warned by an MP that the drive in front of him had just come under fire. It looked safe, however. While the lieutenant was debating whether to chance it, a shell hit the middle of the road at about the point his vehicle would have been if the MP hadn't stopped him. That removed all doubts.

Pfc. Raymond A. Martin, one of the Unit 3 men, who came into Santo Tomas with the First Cavalry, was shot in the left leg by his own automatic pistol. It discharged in his shoulder holster when he leaned over to pick up a package of cigarettes, the hammer evidently having been tripped by his own clothing. His leg was amputated above the knee.

T/4 Stanley T. Lambert, a still photographer, suffered a slight shrapnel wound in the left arm at the University but refused hospitalization. The next day, in another part of town, his skull was pierced by a 40 millimeter enemy shell fragment that lodged against the brain. He was evacuated after an emergency operation.



NEWS & PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTION
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BATTLE OF MANILA



The Sixth Army Liaison Officer moved out of Santo Tomas and established headquarters at a "safer" place, near the Jockey Club. During a conference of Photo Officers there, the Jockey Club came under fire and a shell struck in the street outside the home they were using, killing a soldier and a Filipino and wounding a Filipino child. The Photo officers gave first aid to the child and took him to a hospital. A few nights later a nearby house was struck by another shell.

The only enemy plane to raid Manila after the American occupation dropped its bomb midway between Newsreel Unit G's officer's and enlisted men's billets, which were only a block apart. Both places were damaged. A flimsy wall and part of the ceiling blew in on the assistant Wall cameraman. The newsreel men were knocked out of their cots. But they all escaped injury. A tank company platoon bivouacked between the two billets of the Newsreel Unit bore the brunt of the blast. The 500-pound bomb landed directly on the tent of the captain commanding the tank company. All that was ever found of him was part of the head, half the neck and a shoulder with an identifying tattoo mark. The only other officer with the outfit, a second lieutenant, was wounded. The Newsreel Officer took charge, disposed of the seven dead and evacuated the eight wounded.

After the Japs had put the torch to the downtown Manila business district, they dug in on the other side of the narrow Pasig River which divides the city, and prepared for a fight to the death. They got it---the fight, and death. The Americans carried it to them from building to building, floor to floor, room to room. First, though, U.S. artillery battered their defenses ahead of the line troops.

Along the north bank of the Pasig, facing the Japs, American observation posts and machine gun nests were established on the upper floors of scorched and shell-scarred office buildings. From these vantage points, the whole pageant of battle spread out in an awesome vista of smoke, fire, explosions, and little men scampering from hole to hole with bullets spurting the ground around them. The OP stepped in debris on the sixth floor of the blackened First National Bank Building became a prized position for Signal Corps cameramen, well worth risking bullet-infested streets to reach it.

Once clear of the street, the OP was still no haven of safety. Cameramen framed themselves in the windows to get pictures and once a sniper's bullet broke a glass three inches above the head of a photographer, while at least twice our own guns, striking the other bank, blew window glass into the faces of Photo personnel, or sent shrapnel skimming past them.

The T/5 who had risked death so conspicuously at Santo Tomas voluntarily spent two nights at the OP with four artillery observers and no security guard to protect them from the possibility of Jap infiltration.

He was on hand when the Japs stripped a Filipino girl and lashed her to a pole in an archway of the Old City Wall the Americans were shelling. Our

forces ceased firing and the Japs, who needed to pass the archway, moved boldly back and forth behind her involuntary protection.* The photographer took motion pictures of the girl, looking fearfully over at the American side, but it is doubtful if her figure was big enough to discern on the film. He was equipped with only a four-inch lens. Six-inch Eyemo lenses were the longest that Detachment One of the 832nd had.

Artillery officers with a large field of fire to cover would often oblige cameramen by directing shells to targets most suitable for pictures.

As the fight to mop up Manila settled down to a bloody routine of blasting, burning and shooting the Japs out of building after building in the Ermita and Intramuros Districts, many of the photographers found themselves living a paradoxical life of daytime dangers and night-time luxuries.

Most of them had established themselves temporarily in Filipino homes. They would don fatigues and helmets and cross the river every morning to spend the day at the perimeter amidst the stench of rotting Jap corpses and the smoke and missiles of battle. When dusk ended picture possibilities, they would return to the effusive hospitality of their grateful Filipino hosts, who indulged them as lavishly as long-hoarded stocks would permit.

Even during the Santo Tomas bombardment, Unit J photographed the scene from the window of their home, only 50 yards away, playing Chinese checkers and sipping cool drinks between bursts.

Several days later, two members of this same unit obtained a complete picture story of the taking of one of the buildings of the Far Eastern University, and were directly under fire most of the time.

The best vantage point for these pictures was an adjacent building. It could only be reached by running a long field of enemy fire. The motion picture photographer, a tall, gangling T/5, turned to the still photographer, a short private, and said, "Well, we're here to shoot pictures of the war, aren't we? Let's go!" He started across the open stretch with strides that left his shorter comrade pumping along far behind through the whine of Jap bullets.

They reached the building safely. The movie cameraman took up an exposed position, standing beside a Japanese corpse, to get footage of a 105 millimeter gun mounted on a Sherman tank that was blasting the hidden enemy with direct fire.

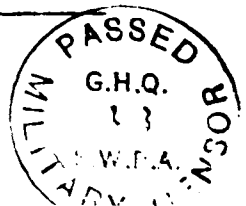
Twice snipers' bullets whizzed past him, but he was absorbed with finishing his scene. Then a third bullet ricocheted off a pillar behind him and grazed the cheek of an Infantry lieutenant standing nearby.

The lieutenant yelled, "Hey, I just got that God damned sniper's bullet

- 22 -

* Incident authenticated in files of G-2, XIV Corps.

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that was meant for you!"

For the first time, the photographer realized that they had been aiming at him. He dropped behind the body for cover.

Two other T/5 cameramen entered the most dangerous contest that had ever been held in Manila's Rizal Stadium, when American tanks rolled onto the field to clean out the Japs dug in beneath the stands. The photographers were afoot.

Afterward, one of them described the scene as "a setup for pictures. Everywhere you pointed your camera there was a frame full. You couldn't miss."

It wasn't until his footage was reviewed several weeks later that it was discovered that almost everywhere the camera pointed there was also enemy fire. The film showed Japanese tracer bullets coming right past the camera.

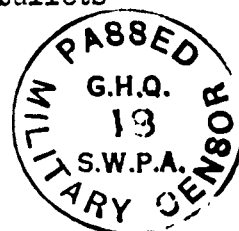
The only instance of barricaded Japs surrendering instead of fighting until extermination, was covered by a T/5 still photographer. He stood beside a loudspeaker with the 37th Division G-2 officers broadcasting a last chance to the enemy in a besieged building to give up before our artillery demolished the place.

Soon some Japs began emerging fearfully from the building. They started toward the loudspeaker and the camera, conferred a moment, then turned and began walking toward the 1st Cavalry on the left flank. Still smarting over the 1st Cavalry having beaten them into Manila, the 37th Division Officers were wild because the prisoners they had induced to surrender were going over to their rivals. (Later it was learned that the prisoners didn't cross to the 37th because the Japs themselves had mined the area between.)

Though it was only a short distance in the direct line the Japs were moving, the photographer had to hop in his jeep and skirt several blocks to reach the Cavalry sector. Fire had broken out along one street he had previously used and mortar shells that had been lying there were exploding, so he had to drive further around. He reached the place just as the first group of prisoners were being stripped, and shot pictures of them and the rest of the surrender.

No such scene, of a mass Japanese surrender, had ever been photographed before in the Southwest Pacific.

The same photographer, with another T/5 and a Pfc., all from Newsreel Unit G, was on hand for the liberation of 1500 civilians who had been held for nearly two weeks by Japs under fire in the Philippines General Hospital. The civilians were so overcome with joy they were completely unmanageable. Military police, trying to move them into an area of safety, were nearly over-powered by the joy-crazed people, hugging and kissing them while bullets flew all around.



The picture job was a nightmare. The civilians kept rushing the cameramen, patting their backs, kissing their faces, hands and clothes, in a surge of gratitude that the photographers kept protesting, because the soldiers who had actually freed them had gone on fighting into the next block.

Another high spot of camera coverage was the 129th Regiment's rubber boat assault across the Pasig on Intramuros, the Walled City. Members of Unit 8 were in the second wave of the assault boats. Pictures were made from the roof of the observation post building and from an exposed ledge on the sixth floor. The T/5 who had distinguished himself at Santo Tomas, was sniped at twice on the roof, then, while in the street photographing a 105 laying direct fire against the wall, he narrowly escaped death again from a huge piece of falling masonry that just missed his unprotected head. (Eyemo Photographers often removed their helmets in combat because the tin hats interfered with sighting through camera finders.) Soldiers were surprised to see him emerge unscathed from the cloud of dust and pulverized plaster.

He then crossed the river with the assault troops and on the other side received a deep flesh wound in the knee, but kept on shooting pictures. Another T/5 suffered an abdominal flesh wound from artillery fragments near the Army and Navy Club. He returned to duty immediately after treatment.

Striking pictures of liberated civilians were made on the other side of the river---a nun walking toward the camera with one hand all but torn off, the dazed expression of a monk who was one of two survivors of a large group of civilian men herded into a shelter and peppered with grenades and machine gun fire by the Japs.

Still more brutality was encountered by Unit I, accompanying a 37th Division battalion that was assigned to rout a body of Japs trying to cut our communications into Manila. The 37th Division troops chased the Japs northwest from the city, and the fleeing Nips wanted no living person left in their path to give information.

They blazed a sickening trail of atrocities. At one place a six-year-old boy came out of hiding and led the Unit I lieutenant to his mother and father, their heads bisected by sword slashes. At another they came upon a young Filipino woman and her baby, both nearly slashed in half.

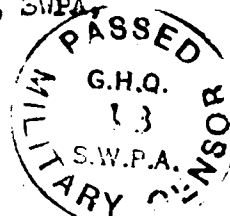
A letter of commendation from the War Department was received on the Manila coverage, both still and motion picture.* It was turned over to the Photographic Service with the added commendation of the Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area.**

- 24 -

* Letter SP5HP-2, subject: Commendation on Philippine Coverage, ASF, OCSigO, APS, dated 16 March 1945.

** Letter, subject: Commendation on Philippine Coverage, OCSigO, GHQ, SWPA, dated 6 April 1945.

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CORREGIDOR

In the midst of the Manila fighting, one of the most stirring chapters of the Philippines Campaign was covered by Signal Corps photographers flying in planes, jumping with parachutes and riding in landing barges--the recapture of Corregidor.

This was a natural job for rugged Unit F, which had been with the Rangers. They went to Mindoro to stage for it with the 503rd Paratroop Regiment. But Unit Q arrived at Mindoro to stage for a later operation, and 2nd Lieutenant Dick Williams, in charge of this unit, induced Lieutenant Lueddeke of Unit F to allow him to jump in the first wave. Lieutenant Lueddeke, it was decided, would jump with the reinforcements on D plus one. The three enlisted men of Unit Q were assigned to cover the operation from airplanes observing the bombardment and flying with the parachutists.

All the jumping cameramen were volunteers. All but T/4 Goetzheimer, were making the first jump on their lives. It turned out to be what one military officer, a specialist in this type of warfare, called "the most difficult jump in the history of parachute operations." Lieutenant Williams, T/4 Goetzheimer and Pfc. George W. Woodruff jumped in the first wave on 16 February. Pfc. B. Goen and Spl. Robert C. Lattman came down in the second wave.

Out of the planes, there was no time to be scared. The inexperienced photographer jumpers hanging from the chutes were frantically trying to remember the "training" they had been given--a few words of advice about guiding the chute and landing. The fierce wind was blowing them to sea, but in 32 seconds the 500 foot leap was all over and they were bashing into the ground amidst burning trees and jagged rocks. Lieutenant Williams hit half way down a cliff, burning his left arm slightly and receiving a minor injury to one leg as he struck a flaming stump. Pfc. Woodruff severely sprained his right ankle.

By the time the second wave jumped, the Japs had come out of the holes to which they had fled during the bombardment, and began shooting. Some jumpers were shot in the doorways of planes. Both photographers in this jump were fired upon in the air. Neither was hit. However, Pfc. Goen tore open his right knee in landing. All three injured photographers continued taking pictures, but the two enlisted men were in such pain they had to be retired. They refused treatment on The Rock because there were so many more serious casualties. They were later evacuated.

Lieutenant Williams and T/4 Goetzheimer made their way to a hill where they had an excellent panorama of the amphibious landing the same day.

The Lieutenant started down the hill for closer shots. Japs opened up on him with a machine gun. He took cover in a shell hole where he found a parachutist with a injured back being treated by a Medic who was unable to evacuate him.



After an hour, a new menace appeared. Our Naval guns began blasting the nearby Jap pill boxes and the three men in the holes were in danger from our own shell fire. The Lieutenant made a break for it, up the hill, and returned with T/4 Gootzheiser. Then the two photographers and the Medic carried the injured chutist through the flying shrapnel to safety.

Down below, on the beach, Photo Combat Unit A was landing with the 34th Infantry of the 24th Division, with which it had landed on Mariveles the day before. It was their third landing in three weeks.

Their officer killed three Japs with his pistol.

Lieutenant Lucoddeke and Pfc. Morris Weiner started for Corregidor with the 1st Battalion of the 505rd for a jump at 0900 on D plus one, but in the air, the Battalion received radio orders to return to Subic Bay and make an amphibious landing instead. This was considered more feasible and safer in the light of the tactical situation then. They hit the beach at 1630.

Lieutenant Williams made his way to the beach to meet them. He was having a drink from a bottle of brandy his fellow officer was carrying when the Japs opened up on the beach with mortar and light arms fire. Everyone scattered. Lieutenant Williams and Pfc. Weiner found themselves alongside each other, digging in with their hands.

"You hit?" asked the enlisted man.

"No. Are you?"

"I don't know. Something just hit me in the back."

It turned out to be a spent bullet that had rolled between them, and it was still so hot that it burned the enlisted man's hand when he tossed it away.

Lieutenants Lucoddeke and Williams didn't meet again until they reached the C1 on the Rock's topside. By then, when Lieutenant Williams returned the bottle of brandy to Lieutenant Lucoddeke, it was practically empty.

Two photographers from a third unit obtained additional air pictures of the Corregidor operation from transport planes.

While the battle raged on The Rock, three tiny little liaison planes tossed in the high wind and ducked dangerously low over the bitter fighting. In one of them was the Chief Signal Officer, and in the other two were a private and a T/4 who volunteered to cover the action from the low flying cubs. The private, after he had shot 400 feet of film, became so air sick he had to be brought back. Another private, waiting to carry his film, volunteered to finish the job in his place. The CSigO and the T/4 remained in the air until their planes had barely enough gasoline to get them back and all the movie film and still packs were exposed.



Some of the best shots of the jumping chutists were obtained from the Cubs.

The next day the T/4 went up again to photograph further operations, inducing the pilot to fly very low over the fighting despite severe air currents that spoiled much of the movie footage, but produced excellent stills. The enemy fired on them but did no damage.

In the face of warnings all along the line, General MacArthur penetrated enemy fire on Bataan the first day of the Corregidor landing to reach a point where he could get a boat to go in with his troops. A Signal Corps photographer was with him. But the party was not able to get through because of a blown bridge.

Only the coverage from the planes and the beach reached the mainland the first day. The parachutists were all cut off from the beach. Lieutenant Williams, T/4 Goetzheimer and Cpl. Lautman reached it the next morning, under fire all the way, and Lautman carried their film back on a PT boat.

The photographers who remained shared a good life with the fighting men. There was no water and each man had to make the two canteens he carried in, last for two days until more was dropped by parachute. Swarms of flies got into food, water and open mouths until planes sprayed the island with insecticide. When the men slept, they slept in their chutes. Banzai attacks were frequent and exploding arsenals ripped the whole island, flinging bodies of Americans and Japs high into the air. It was impossible to obtain pictures of these deadly blasts because they came without warning and in unpredictable places.

On D plus 7, T/4 Goetzheimer, the little photographer who had led the way into Cabanatuan, and who had also jumped in the first wave on Corregidor, was evacuated with combat fatigue, and running a fever of 103.

He was later awarded an Oak Leaf Cluster for the Bronze Star he had won at Cabanatuan, as were Cpl. Lautman and Pfc. Goen. Pfc Woodruff was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart Medals. Goen also was given the Purple Heart. Lieutenant Williams, off on another operation was awarded the Bronze Star, in absentia, but when told of the ordered decoration, he didn't believe it. Pfc Weiner received the Bronze Star* for his gallantry in the Cabanatuan raid.

Critiques from Signal Corps Photographic Center, Long Island City, N.Y., described Corregidor coverage as "excellent" and "terrific".*

- 27 -

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- * Awards by authority of Sec I and II, GO 36, Hq Sixth Army, dtd 4 Mar 1945
 - GO 39, Hq USAFFE, 21 Feb 45, and Sec VII, GO 29, Hq Sixth Army, 24 Feb 45
 - ** Letter, SPSAFPR 062.2, SCPC, to CinC, SWPA, dated 15 March 1945.

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FATAL FINALE

Two significant ceremonies in the Luzon campaign were recorded for history by Signal Corps cameramen---the turning over of the Philippines government to President Sergio Osmena by General MacArthur in Malacañan Palace, and General MacArthur's return to Corregidor and the formal raising of the American flag there.

Eighteen Signal Corps photographers, including the Unit G sound camera crew, covered the Malacañan ceremony from every angle. To light the huge ceremonial room in the Palace, every light the Photographic Service had in the area was utilized, plus all the commercial illumination equipment that could be borrowed.

Immediately after the ceremony, the Photographic Co-ordinating officer boarded a waiting plane to safeguard all the film direct to the United States.

The Theater Photographic Officer and the theater's ranking script writer, a captain, had left for SCPC a few days before to edit all Philippines footage into a documentary picture. The Co-ordinating Officer joined them there to assist. The photographic officer who was rescued from Cabanatuan, choosing to remain in the Philippines, took over direction of Signal Corps Photographic Service and was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

Since early in the Luzon campaign, all footage had been going direct to Army Pictorial Service, unprocessed, to expedite its showing in the United States. It was waiting there for the theater representatives to edit into a production.

In addition, the Photographic Service sent back to the United States everything of a military nature culled from about 2,000,000 feet of captured Japanese film. All captured film was viewed by the Photo Service. A complete print of the Japanese propaganda picture, *DAWN OF FREEDOM*, was captured, but much of the seized film concerned such unmilitary subjects as flower pollination, with an occasional Donald Duck cartoon or pre-Pearl Harbor American features like *GONE WITH THE WIND*. About 126,000 feet were sent to the U.S., much of it duplicated. Captured film continued to inundate the Photo Service for many weeks.

Many Japanese propaganda books were seized, giving the Army photographers an opportunity to study the enemy's still photography. Samples of these were sent to the War Department, too. The Theater Photographic Officer rated enemy still photography from good to excellent. The Japanese war movies showed very little combat, contained a lot of staging and over-emphasized ceremonies, scenes of generals in conferences and rear area scenes. Artillery shots were used over and over. Expert American opinion was that Japanese war photographers are prone to "firehose" their cameras, producing amateurish effects, and that editing of enemy film was inferior.

A quantity of photographic equipment used by the Japs was captured, or



rather, recaptured, since the preponderance of it was American material taken from commercial establishments in Manila.

Average strength of a combat unit was one officer and five men comprising two still and two motion picture photographers and a utility man, news-reel units one officer and nine men, including the sound camera crew as well as the regular still and motion picture photographers.

Each unit was self-sustaining, having packed approximately 30 days' field rations, although, by the time some reached Manila, their rations were extremely short.

A scarcity of vehicles forced some units to go into combat with less than authorized transportation.

Most photographic officers and men were armed, by choice, with only a .45 automatic, usually carried in a shoulder holster. Carbinos and M-1 rifles, prescribed by T/O's, were generally considered impractical for photographers.

The Speed Graphic and Model Q Eyemo were standard equipment, although six Q Eyemos had been converted to Model Ks with aluminum parts made by Ordnance. Photographers prefer the Compact Turret Eyemo, or, as a second choice, the Model K since it is lighter than the Q.

Wide-angle lenses would have been welcomed for combat photography. Some 10-inch telephoto lenses were used to good advantage on Speed Graphics.

Unit J had a 400-foot motor driven Eyemo on an Akeley tripod mounted on the back of a jeep. It proved highly satisfactory for moving the camera quickly, and some experimental trucking shots were made at 32 frames per second, but the jeep in motion was too rough.

A PH-501/PF Simmons special combat still camera was used on Corregidor and proved superior for that type of operation because of its lightness and the protection of its working parts. Disadvantages of it reported by the cameraman were inadaptability for filters (he taped on a Graphic filter the second day of the operation), bad parallax on closeups and the difficulty of getting used to the long ride of the shutter release, a plunger that appears to have exposed when it has only opened the interior blind. Most photographers disliked the combat camera, chiefly because the negative is only $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ instead of 4×5 .

In the opinion of the Officer-in-Charge of the Repair Section, 50 per cent of the Photographic Service cameras were in such condition that they should have been retired from service.

The experiment of bringing a Repair Section detail along with the



advance proved highly successful. Ordinarily, a broken camera puts a photographer out of action until it can be sent to the rear area for repair and returned, which is usually the duration of an operation. At one time or another, the repairmen restored to service nearly half the cameras in the Luzon operations. Approximately 100 pieces of equipment were processed. When the Section ran out of ground glass, it improvised successfully by washing Japanese photo plates and treating them with emery stone. The Section also serviced Air Force, Engineer, YANK MAGAZINE and war correspondents' cameras. Usual camera damage was from immersion in salt water, concussion, or fungus. Fungus would appear, in some cases, overnight.

The Section, part of the 3292nd Signal Base Maintenance Company, had its officer and two enlisted men with the advance. Four other enlisted men of the Section carried on rear echelon work.

Photographers were discouraged from attempting to make their own repairs because lack of training made them prone to damage the delicate mechanisms.

Greatest loss of equipment was from pilferage, not combat. Six cameras, several vehicles, tools, personal gear, supplies, lenses and film were stolen.

Photo Laboratory Unit 1 of the 161st Signal Photo Company came in at Lingayen on S plus one and set up at XIV Corps Headquarters. The unit consisted of three enlisted men, a three-and-a-half ton truck loaded with supplies, a two-wheeled trailer for a lab, and a FL-92, seven-and-a-half kilowatt power unit.

The Mobile Lab of the 832nd Signal Service Battalion landed at Lingayen on S plus 18 with a specially designed 34-foot semi-trailer containing negative developing room, printing room with enlargers and contact printers, Temprite cooling unit, small drum-type dryer and print sorting room. A water pump, a gravity feed tank converted from an airplane belly tank and two PE-75 power units were carried. The unit comprised one captain and 19 enlisted men, including attached photographers. It opened laboratory operations at General Headquarters in San Miguel.

On 5 February, Lab Unit 1 took over at San Miguel so the larger lab could roll down to Manila. At San Miguel, Lab Unit 1 processed three times its anticipated volume of work, preparing all important still exposures for immediate submission to the Public Relations Officer. Each man worked as much as 20 hours a day.

Photo laboratory facilities leap-frogged over great distances, like other Signal installations, to keep up with General MacArthur's advancing headquarters. When the Luzon operation opened, the main still lab was at Hollandia. After preliminary prints had been made by a mobile lab in the combat zone, negatives were safeshipped back to the main lab for the bulk printing requirements of the Theater. However, the 832nd's Mobile Lab, in



its previous operation, had inaugurated facilities in Leyte, and from this start, a fixed lab installation had been built. By 17 January this further advanced lab was able to take over the bulk work and the Hollandia outfit prepared to move to Manila.

From the opening of the Philippines campaign, 20 October, to 16 March, the mobile facilities processed 324 film packs, made 3,396 four by five prints and 5,030 eight by tens. From 31 October to 31 April, the Hollandia Lab processed 1620 film packs, made 138,000 four by fives and 37,000 eight by tens. From 17 January to 9 April, the Leyte Lab processed 1200 packs, and made 16,000 four by fives and 4,000 eight by tens.

Two combat units were scattered among Navy ships to round out coverage. One of the men of these units was originally assigned to one of the three destroyers that capsized in a typhoon with heavy losses of life, but in a last-minute change he went aboard the Cruiser Santa Fe instead. The commander of the Third Fleet messaged all ships to co-operate with the Signal Corps photographers, and response was whole-hearted. Most of the ships had photographic dark rooms they made available to the Army men.

The photographers assigned to the Navy were at sea on and off for about two months and photographed not only support of the Luzon operations but strikes all over the Western Pacific.

Other photographers, operating alone or in smaller groups than units, were given special assignments. One accompanied General MacArthur, another covered Engineer activities, two more were at I Corps Headquarters.

A radiogram to General MacArthur from the War Department described the photographic coverage "from Hollandia to Manila" as "the best ever obtained in any theater."

In a letter quoting the radiogram, the Chief Signal Officer wrote:

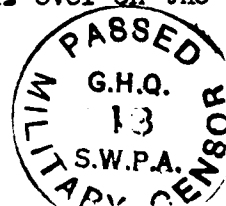
"It is desired to convey to all photographic personnel who participated in providing this still and motion picture coverage the commendation of the Commander-in-Chief and of the undersigned."

From the first landings through the Battle of Manila, the Photographic Service had maintained its traditionally low casualty rate. Although several photographers had been wounded, none was killed and the losses were in no proportion to the combat exposure of the cameramen.

But after Manila, the luck of the Photo Service ran out.

First Lieutenant Robert E. Field, sent to Panay as one of two film couriers for Unit I, offered to supplement their camera coverage while waiting. At Iloilo, suburb of Iloilo, Infantrymen were preparing to attack a Jap position behind a stone wall on 19 March, and Lieutenant Field ran up ahead of them to the shelter of the wall itself so that he could picture them advancing. While he was changing his film pack, a palm tree fell over on the

- 31 -
NEWS & PICTORIAL SECTION
GHQ PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
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wall. Already weakened by tank fire, the wall gave way. He did not see it falling and it crashed onto him, causing injuries from which he died a few hours later. Lieutenant Field had survived a previous wound* in the South Pacific and had been awarded the Bronze Star.**

In the same sector, on the same day, T/5 Howard F. Klawitter, with Unit I, stood erect to get a picture while everyone else was taking cover, and was pierced by a .25 calibre projectile that entered his left torso and lodged in his right breast pocket. He died the following day.

During the fierce fighting around Baguio, Signal Corps photographers themselves killed Japs and took prisoners as well as pictures, but the action cost them three more casualties.

T/4 Hugh M. Morton, motion picture photographer of Unit 5, covering the 25th Division's operations in Balate Pass, was struck in 20 different places by rocks and debris from an explosion in a Jap pill box he was photographing as the Infantry attacked. Except for a fragment hole through one forearm and a cut mouth, his wounds were not serious.

A few days later, a Unit 5 T/5 in the same area was crawling back from the perimeter for a new supply of film, and, thinking he had reached a safe point, stood up. The burst of a Jap shell wounded him in both legs.

On 17 April, Second Lieutenant Gordon W. Sofield was proceeding with a reconnaissance party along Route 9 near Bauang, when one of the party's three tanks fell off an embankment.

Unknown to the recon party, two Jap tanks, cut off by them on one side and by a blown bridge further on, decided on a suicide attack. With explosives lashed to the front of each tank, they came roaring around a curve, all guns in action. The Photo Officer, Lt. Sofield, was taking pictures of a blood transfusion being administered one of the American soldiers in the tank accident, as the Japanese burst upon them. A 47 millimeter shell decapitated him and tore off one arm. Spraying death from their guns, the two Jap tanks rammed the two remaining American tanks. In the ensuing explosions, the Photo Officer's camera was destroyed.

That officer had already known at first hand, when he went in, how suddenly death can strike combat photographers. He was the other courier with Unit I on Panay when his comrade was killed a month before.

NEWS & PICTORIAL SECTION

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- 32 -



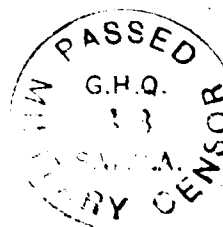
- * Purple Heart by authority GO 22, Hq, 37th Div, dated 12 Apr 44.
- ** Award by authority GO 196, Hq, 37th Div, dated 15 Sept 44.

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HISTORIAN'S NOTE

Since the completion of this history Pfc Wilbur B. Goen, member of combat-toughened Unit F, winner of the Bronze Star, the Oak Leaf Cluster and the Purple Heart (mentioned on page 25 and 26) was mortally wounded in action on 3 June 1945 in Northern Luzon.

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