

On 17 Nov. I was relieved of command of I Battery. It was put under command of Lt. Bruns and moved to Fort Hughes. I was assigned to command D Battery. The armament consisted of 2 twelve inch disappearing guns permanently emplaced in 1910, guns shooting out over the sea. On 28 Nov. I was sitting in a movie when an orderly came in and announced there would be an officers call for the 59th immediately. We were told that a large convoy of Japanese vessels was heading south in the North China Sea and that we would move to the gun emplacements in the morning. So we were alerted and in the field a week before Pearl Harbor!

We were not on an immediate alert, however, but we were in a position to meet any enemy attack without long range warning. We stayed in this condition, know as "Alert Charley" until Sat. 6 December. This happened to be my weekend in Manila. I stayed at the Great Eastern Hotel and had a fairly pleasant weekend. A juke box favorite of the day was "Beat Me Daddy With a Solid Four". I saw "Blood and Sand" starring Rita Hayworth. Returned to the Rock on the usual 3 PM boat.

My Executive Officer, Lt. Aikran [?], and I were sleeping outside the battery in a tent. At this time, my battery as well as the others were maintaining a 24 hr. watch of not less than two men. About 2:30 AM on Monday 8 December (7 Dec. in the States) this watch came to my tent and told me Pearl Harbor had been attacked. Remembering the Panay incident, I said, "Oh hell, some stupid Nip has taken off with a light aircraft out of a rice paddy and created a disturbance!" Whereupon, I went back to sleep. Later in prison camp, I met a young enlisted man who had been on duty at the wireless station in the Philippines when the news of the attack came in. He said that the Pearl Harbor operator had kept repeating: "Air raid-no drill! Air raid-no drill!"

When I awakened next morning our small receiving set was bouncing with the details of the Pearl Harbor attack. But apparently, after the initial announcement, very little was said. I could never see then or later how Japan could hope to win a war against us. Their methods of transportation and cultivation and their manufacturing potential were so low that all they could hope to do was store up material with which to hit us. We sold them the necessary items with which to build up their war machine but they had no sustaining power. So I was still incredulous!!! Around ten o'clock in the morning, we observed over Manila, 30 miles away, a full-scale and unopposed air attack on the Naval Air Base at Cavite. After which a formation of Nip bombers flew arrogantly by the Rock just out of range of our guns. When I saw the rising sun of Japan on those bombers and realized how little we had to oppose them, I knew a war had begun.

On 19 December, I sent a radiogram to my wife saying, "Am okay!" On 12 December we were issued service gas masks which we never had occasion to use but whose plastic containers proved very useful later on. On 13 December, 27 bombers approached Fort Hughes. This was evidently a feint because the formation split and [we] sustained no damage. Cavite was wiped out and the survivors came in Malinta tunnel on the Rock late

that night. On 14 December, 17 bombers passed over Fort Frank, very high. On 15 December, 18 bombers were over Manila, visible to us but not very close.

About this time, the troops went on field rations. Capt. Owen instructed the houseboys at the quarters to keep the bath tubs filled with water in case of fire. We later bathed in these tubs of water for two weeks, until the water became very insanitary, indeed!

The Army and the Filipino skippers had long been butting heads. All the channels out of Manila Bay had been mined for many months. At this time, the mining was strictly up to date and operational. At 1 AM on 16 December, the SS Corregidor, carrying 760 refugees, attempted to go thru the mine field without asking clearance. This request would have been granted. The Lieutenant who was on watch in the mine casement, on sighting the SS Corregidor called his superior, who in turn, called the seaward defence commander, Col. Bunker, requesting information as to whether he should de-activate the contact mines in the channel. With a lifetime of experience with the Filipino, going back to the '98 Insurrection, Col. Bunker said "No!" My first knowledge of this affair came when my duty watch called me at 12:55 AM. The Corregidor had struck one of our mines and in the four or five minutes it took to reach my battery command post, the vessel had sunk. Approximately 500 lives were lost. The 260 or so who survived came on the Rock. Thereafter, we had no trouble with unauthorized Filipino boats attempting to traverse the channel.

The following is an e-mail sent to Frank Steiger September 30, 2005 by Kerwin M. Ronquillo providing further background information regarding the above incident:

Hello Frank, I lost family members in the SS Corregidor. The 760 so called refugees were actually-mostly college students attending schools in Manila, colleges like Ateneo, La Salle, Santo Tomas, San Juan de Letran, Assumption, St. Pauls, St. Josephs, UP (University of the Philippines), etc. Usually, students would come home for Christmas vacation, given it was December and Christmas was just week ahead. This is a regular event even up to now 65 yrs. later. Students study in Manila and come home to the other regions of the country for the Christmas Holidays. Also due to the fact that Pearl Harbor was attacked a week before, many parents of these college students told their children to come home. We lost 3 relatives, two young women in their college years and their uncle, who was sent to bring them back home. If there was anybody at fault, it would be the captain of the ship who left the dock near Pasig River in Manila ahead of schedule. It was to leave the port with a ship escort to guide it through the mine grid. It left without an escort. It is said that he, the captain was worried about getting bombed by japanese airplanes so he left early. We really don't know the exact reason but his decision to leave without waiting for an escort cost several hundred young innocent lives. Thanks for sharing your uncle's diary. I love reading history and enjoy personal accounts of what happened during the years of WWII in the Philippines.

On the 19th of December, 15 bombers went out over Fort Drum from Manila. On 22 December, the Cabcaben air raid occurred, during which it was reported (from now on you

could hear any number of rumors) the Japs used concrete bombs and cast iron bullets. Eighty Jap transports were reported off Lingayen.

Life went on in the Battery. On 17 December, I wrote Ottly a letter which she received in March. On 18 December, I had a full chest x-ray in an attempt to diagnose a psychological dyspace [?], which was of long standing ailment. Why I'll never know, since certainly nothing could have been done about it if the report had been positive! I changed my allotment from \$150 to \$210. I read "Orphans of the Storm" by Florence Horn [?] and noted in my diary that Ottly should read it. We heard on 23 December that Hitler had relieved his top generals and was taking over the command himself. There had been heavy reverses in Russia and Lybia.

On 24 December, 5 bombers came over the Rock at 1 PM. Eight bombers bombed the French steamer Si-kiang at Mariveles at 3 PM. The 1st battalion of the 31st Infantry arrived on the Rock from Manila where they had been fighting. U. S. Armed Forces in the Far East and the Philippine Dept. moved into Malinta Tunnel. Smoke and fire were plainly visible from Manila at 11:30 PM.

Xmas Day, 25 December; the troops had a good turkey dinner and 2 bottles of beer per man. Hong Kong surrendered. The war was going from bad to worse! By 27 December there was plenty of rank in Malinta Tunnel! On 28 December, the President asked for a complete report of the situation.

In the battery, we heard the rumor that a convey 100 miles long was on the way. We just couldn't believe that the United States could be in the situation to permit the Japs to go on as they were. I gave Chaplain Cleveland \$5 to send a radiogram to my wife instructing her to buy a new Chevy since we knew that civilian goods would become scarce as the U. S. manufacturing turned to war goods. We heard another rumor that two divisions of American troops had landed in North Luzon.

On 28 December, Tojo's bombers visited the Rock for the first time. The raid lasted from 12 noon to 3 PM. There were 30 casualties on the Rock. The water, phones and power were knocked out. My tent was destroyed. (Note a small shell fragment in my diary and the resulting powder burn there.) Lt. Keen of the Marines and 25 men plus 4 air-cooled anti-aircraft guns were attached to (?). (*this word in the manuscript was illegible*) We moved our clothes from the quarters to the battery. On 31 December, an anti-aircraft battery of the 60th Coast Artillery was in position in my immediate vicinity. It was commanded by Capt. Robert Glassburn. He was a regular Army officer, as had been his father before him. On this night, we gathered in his tent and had a coke and bourbon. This was to be our last drink for a long time. I went to bed early and slept well.

January 1, 1942; had a shave and a clean uniform. One Jap observation plane over Kindley Field on the Rock at 8 AM. Good turkey dinner at 5 PM. Living at Battery Cheney, Fort Mills, now. "D" battery mans Cheney.

January 2; Slight rain in the morning and low clouds all day. Second raid, a surprise raid, at 1:50 but on a small scale. Alert all afternoon. Titus got shrap in the shins.

January 3; Raid number 3 at 12:52. Hit on no. 5 machine gun but no casualties. Three enemy planes downed. Two waves of bombers over Cheney. Glassburn's tent was knocked out.

January 4th; Raid number 4. Bombs over Cheney at 1:30. Had a bath in the week old water at the quarters - pretty dirty. By now any sense of accountability was long gone. A detachment of Marines were in possession of a brand new 3/4 ton truck which they had no doubt "liberated" from its owner in Manila. During an air raid they abandoned it and one of my corporals (Hall) "borrowed" it for the duration. It served us well. Was shot out from under us several times and finally died a hero's death. Of this more later.

January 5th; Raid number 5. Planes near at 7:30 AM, which is the earliest yet. I moved secret documents from the barracks to the battery. Lt. Aikman went to Malinta Tunnel in a jeep for the enlisted men's pay. I went to Malinta Tunnel for \$119 cash and increased allotment to \$248.10

January 6; Air raid number 6. Lasted from 1 to 4 PM. Water not too plentiful. Hit at Battery Geary kitchen and 26 men were killed. General Wavell commands the Far East Forces including USAFFE!

January 7th. No aerial activity. Jap airplane carrier 40,000 yards out just opposite Mariveles at 6 PM. The insolent SOBs, just out of range! I took last bath in water at 8L which has been in tub since December 26 - stinks!

January 8th. No air. USAFFE (?) says "BIG PUSH IN MAKING." Our lines at north end of Bataan peninsula. No water in which to bathe or laundry. I have Lino [houseboy] iron uniform each day.

January 9th. Wrote to Ottly. Major Edison estimates six months for American Expeditionary Force. Artillery fire plainly audible from Bataan. No Jap air. FDR would send one million ships and thousands of men if he had them!

January 10th. No air activity. Took bath in one quart of water and changed clothes. Barge load of pistols and shotguns arrived bottomside from the mainland. We got ten shotguns and also some dried fruit.

January 11th. One Jap observation plane running lights on, very low, sighted over the Rock at 6:30 AM in an attempt to draw fire and learn the exact position of our guns. We did not fire. Several air alarms but no bombs.

January 12th. No air activity. Went to Middle Sector with Capt. Schenck regarding beach defense. To Kindly Field for powder cans and water as our supply of water has been knocked out, almost from the first raid. *[All coast artillery guns of that period had powder charges contained in sheet metal vessels of 10 to 12 inches in diameter and 5 to 6 feet in length with pressure sealed lids. These made ideal containers for almost anything.]*

January 13th. Taking our truck, we went to Bottomside for water. After filling a truck with a load of powder cans at the basic source, we started home. I decided to stop by the quarters of Bill Stecker who was stationed there. I stopped the truck by the quarters and started up the walk. I was challenged by a sentry. I identified myself and said that I was calling on Lt. Stecker. Just at this moment, General and Mrs. MacArthur came around the building. The General told us that Lt. Stecker was in the field and that he was occupying the quarters. He was very pleasant to me. This is the only time I ever saw General MacArthur.

January 14th. This was the coldest morning since I had been in the Philippines. Fort Drum fired ten rounds on a Jap ship in Manila Bay at 3 PM. They had authority for only 10 rounds and while waiting authority for more, the ship got away. Raid no. 7 occurred from 12:30 to 2:30. We got three out of nine bombers. They dropped two out of three sticks in the ocean. Their bombing heretofore has been painfully accurate.

There was some air but no bombs. Fuse (?) 30, mechanical, not powder-train, is good if you have it. (We don't). Rumor has it that Hawaiian forces are being reinforced and bravely await another attack.

January 16. Much air activity but no bombs. Order "anti-aircraft will not fire on observation planes because it disturbs the nerves of the people in Malinta Tunnel." Heavy artillery fire on Bataan at night. General MacArthur's official message "Help will come."

January 17. I wrote to Ottly in the evening. Went to Middle Sector command post with Lt. Keen to mail letters and take shower. Inspection in ranks and quarters from 8 to 10 AM. Titus, Martin, Blackburn and Martelle [*Harold Martelle of Bentom Harbor, Michigan*] volunteered for Bataan and were refused. Heavy air and artillery over Bataan. Got 100 books from the post library.

January 18. Sky overcast - misty rain. No Jap airplanes over Corregidor. It is reported we go on two meals a day. Wish I was in L. A.

January 19. Soup, bread and jam for dinner. Three meals a day for awhile yet. No air alarm but one 2 motor bomber escort seen passing over China Sea at 1 PM. No air alarm on Rock. Bataan quiet. We listen to radio KGEI Fairmont (Frisco) daily.

January 21. James' birthday. Quiet. Col. Bunker and Majors Edison and Simonds came to dinner. Simonds is my artillery group commander and is a graduate of the Naval Academy. [*Crossing services was at this time seldom done.*] Edison is a graduate of West Point and is my battalion commander. Col. Bunker is Commander of the Seaward Defences. In spite of my being a very green reserve officer, these men have supported me at all times to the fullest extent and in a friendly manner.

January 22. Diaries are to be turned in every 30 days. I shall discontinue this book.

January 23. Philippine sunsets and cloud effects are the most beautiful I have ever seen. I sit on the parapet and watch the sunset every evening. [*Note how George's observations of the weather and the outdoors are a part of his being. He used to open the door when it was raining and stand for a long time watching it. He would tell me how he had watched the sunsets in the Philippines and about the rain on the roofs of the prison camps he was in. In his last years he would stand in the open door and cry when he watched the rain. it always touched me deeply.*]

Copied at Kentzujj on January 1, 1944 from a true copy in possession of Kenneth L. Boggs, Capt. 60th CA (AA):

Hq. USAEF, 15 Jan. 1942

Fort Mills, P.I.

Subject - Message from General MacArthur

To: All Unit Commanders.

1. The following message from Gen. MacArthur will be read and explained to you.
2. Help is on the way from U. S. Thousands of troops and hundreds of planes are being dispatched. The exact date of arrival of reinforcements is unknown, as they will have to fight their way thru Japanese attempts against them. It is imperative that our troops hold out until these reinforcements arrive.
3. No further retreat is possible. We have more troops in Bataan than the Japs have thrown against us. Our supplies are ample. A determined defense will defeat this enemy's attack.
4. It is a question now of courage and of determination. Men who run away will surely be destroyed, but men who fight will save themselves and country.
5. I call on every soldier in Bataan to fight in his assigned position, resisting every attack. This is the only road to salvation. If we fight we will win, if we retreat we will be destroyed.

MacArthur

January 25. We eat cracked wheat "from American Red Cross to the people of China." Very good!

January 27. Lt. Col. Porter, now chemical warfare officer, commanded "D" Battery of the 59th in the last war. It was 155's Howitzers.

February 6. The Japs opened fire with two 105's from Ternato. First shell fire against the Rock.

February 21. Corregidor theme song "I'm Waiting for Ships That Never Come In." Thirty-four men are killed in Fort Frank tunnel by a ricochet which the Nips got into the tunnel.

March 12. Bill Owen wanted me to go to Bataan with him so we took the necessary shots. He made the arrangements. Completely equipped with gas masks, pistols and so forth, we left the Rock about 10 AM. Small boats are still going back and forth. We landed at Caboaben and proceeded by scout car to the outpost line of resistance. We met several officers we had known coming out on the Pierce. Some survived the operation. We looked out into enemy territory but saw no one. We rationed and stayed overnight with a 155 battery commanded by an officer we knew from the Pierce, Capt. Coleman. The ration issued was absolutely inadequate.

March 13. Visited the provisional infantry regiment created from air force troops who had lost their aircraft. Regardless of a man's technical ability he should be required to take the normal thirteen week training in basic infantry and it should be called to his attention periodically that the time may come when he will be forced to fight on the ground simply for his own survival. Home at 10 PM. Song heard on Bataan:

We are the battling bastards of Bataan,

No mama, no papa, no Uncle Sam,

No aunts, no uncles, no cousins or nieces,

No pills, no planes, no artillery pieces,

AND NOBODY GIVES A DAMN!

March 14. MacArthur left for Australia

March 15. I was on duty as field officer of the day in the seaward defense command post.

March 24. Air raids resumed. From the battery we could see our barracks. Since we evacuated them, the Army engineers have stored five tons of TNT therein. On this day we had a normal raid with what sounded like a good hit topside. After the raid was over and we came out to look around, someone said, "Captain, they've blown up our barracks." I got out

a telescope and looked Topside. I saw what was obviously a kitchen and said, "Oh, they've just blown off the side of the barracks." Then someone else said, "But Captain, that is not our kitchen!" The kitchen I saw was B Battery's kitchen! Which meant that our entire barracks, quarters for 200 men, had been obliterated!

March 25. Japs try night bombing.

March 26. Evidently new Jap bomber squadrons are being brought into this area. They start at 20,000 feet but in about three days, those still in the running are up to 27 or 28,000 feet!"

March 28. Major Glassburn logged 265 planes over the Rock in 24 hours.

March 29. Sunday. Played good records on Corporal Bell's phono for 2 hours.

March 30. Just about sundown three Nip bombers evidently in recon came in low. We got one on the incoming run. He hit water on North Channel in plain sight. Another sustained a bad hit and very obviously hit water in Manilla Bay. The third was seen smoking and losing altitude. I later heard rumors that the Nip radio was really jumping that night! In any event, it showed me that had we had reasonably up-to-date weapons, we would certainly have given the enemy a very rough time.

April 8. Big ammunition dump afire at Marivales. Took one of my Lts. [*Bruce Nixon*] to the tunnel in an uncontrollable and violent state of combat fatigue at 10 PM. Earthquake at 12 PM.

April 9. Ottly's birthday. Wrote letter to her. Bataan folded. At about 3 PM. the Japs opened artillery fire on the Rock from Bataan.

April 10. Many barcas and small boats from Bataan bringing survivors.

April 11. Capt. Webster C. Sayers, Medical Corps, joined my battery from Bataan.

April 12. Private Plank [?] from Battery [?] committed suicide at 8 AM.

April 15. We listen to KREI each night. The platitudinous nothings mouthed by the commentators about "China's brave fight" make me sick. Why in the hell, didn't we give them the help five years ago that they need to fight the Japs instead of selling Japan all the materials she wanted with which to fight China?

April 19. We had considerable amount of antiquated armament on the Rock and contrary to public opinion, we also had some very capable if not brilliant officers. An ordinance Captain attempted to fire 12 inch coast artillery mortars from Battery Geary in an anti-aircraft role. The attempt was unsuccessful because of the inherent characteristics of the guns but I chuckle to think what an uproar it might have created in Tokyo if it had succeeded?

May 2. Battery Geary sustained a direct hit and was blown up. One of the gun barrels weighing fifty tons was lifted 100 feet and drifted laterally about 200 feet to the middle of the golf course Topside. Of one hundred men only seven survived. The shock could be felt at my battery which is half way around the Rock. Corregidor is now the "most bombed area on earth" according to KGEI!

May 5. A Jap battery on Bataan fired all afternoon. I finally got a fire mission and was able to reply with fifty rounds during the early evening. One of my men was killed during the encounter, Pfc. Cavo. Enemy fire stopped about 6 PM. I was later told in prison camp that the Nip battery had been knocked out. Told by American troops who were still in Bataan but, of course, I have no proof. My battery ceased fire at 6 PM. At 8 PM, I received a phone call from regimental headquarters informing me that Nips had landed Bottomside. No immediate action was desired but I was told to be ready to move out as an infantry company on notice to defend the beach. A succession of these messages, found me moving out at 11 PM as an infantry company under Major Glassburn.

May 6. We moved from Topside to Middleside and spent four hours in Middleside Tunnel. At daylight we moved to Malinta Tunnel. Bob Glassburn's battery was ahead of me and it sustained five or six casualties just before daylight. Corregidor surrendered at noon. We were still in the Tunnel.

May 7. Took shower and got bag of gear. Dewey, Glassburn, Bryan, Lt. Dewey, Hamilton, Aikman, Eddington and I spend the night in Artillery Engineers Lateral. Plenty of food.

May 8. Left Malinta tunnel 10 AM on Nip order and hiked to 92nd Garage. Very hot - no water.

May 9, Saturday. Dick Pulnar [?], Guerny Smith and I are on space of one blanket at 92nd Garage.

May 10. Takes one to six hours for water from a half inch pipe for 10,000 men.

May 11. "Guam blisters," a form of sunburn, prevalent.

May 12. Five hundred Filipinos dying daily at O'Donnell. A burial detail of 2,000 men ordered.

May 13. On work detail in Barrio (village at Bottomside) for Nip engineer, Lt. Shuay Miyabe.

May 14. Four details gathering all types salvage from all parts of Rock. I have 5th detail sorting and classifying and storing. Lt. Miyabe bosses from my detail. We converse and I find him very intelligent. He speaks no English but understands it well. He answers my by drawing little pictures. This he can do with great speed and skill. He hits the point with very little effort. I asked him when he expects to go back to Japan and he draws a picture of a

ship with torpedo from a submarine coming at it. So he doubts that he can be sure of getting home at all!

May 15. Other details loading food and small arms on boats at South Dock. Captain Covington of Quartermasters Corps says Corregidor had enough food to last at half rations until July 4th.

May 16. Major Pysick, U. S. Marine Corps, is the Nip interpreter.

May 22. Laid off detail after 9 days. Rain from 9 to 2 AM.

May 23. Leave 92 garage at 10 AM to board Jap freighter at South Dock. Had two cans of milk on the pier. Boarded the Hokku Maru at 4 PM. Sitting in the small boat going out to the ship, I saw a Jap guard coming and took my pen out of my pocket to hide it under a blanket. He saw the movement and got my pen.

May 24. Left Corregidor at 6 AM. Landed outside Manila 30 feet off shore. Had to wade to shore and all got quite wet. We were marched 5 to 6 miles through Manila up Dewey Blvd. This was to show the Filipinos our disgrace. We were dirty, poorly dressed, almost all had dysentery and were forced to stop and relieve ourselves on the roadside-motley mess! The Filipino women were crying, many held their index and middle fingers in the sign of a V before their faces. They showered us with food but we were not allowed to pick it up. Our destination was Bilibid prison where we arrived a 3 PM.

May 25. Bilibid with Dick Fullmer, Gurney Smith, Paul French, and Shelby Cullison.