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**SUBJECT:** 200<sup>th</sup> and 515<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery (Anti-aircraft) Deaths, in Battle, as POWs, and post-Liberation

**RE:** This paper addresses the oft heard statement: "Of the eighteen hundred men who went to the Philippines, less than half would return. Within a year, one third of them had died."

**Table 1.**

|              | Total Deaths | Battle Related |     | Immediately Following Surrender | Unknown | Prisoner of War Deaths   |          |   |  | After Liberation | Finding of Death |               |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|-----|---------------------------------|---------|--|----------|---|--|------------------|------------------|---------------|
|              |              | KIA            | DOW |                                 |         | Deaths in Camps  |          | Hell Ship Deaths                          |  |                  |                  |               |
| Officers     | 63           | 0              | 0   | 0                               | 0       | Philippines<br>Japan   | 14<br>12 | 26  | Oryoku Odyssey:<br>Oryoku Maru<br>Enoura Maru<br>Brazil Maru<br>Arisan Maru<br>Shinyo Maru | 37               | 0                | 0             |
| Enlisted Men | 766          | 21             | 3   | 6                               | 1       | <b>Philippines</b><br>Camp O'Donnell<br>Cabanatuan<br>Palawan<br>Massacre<br>Other Locales<br><u>22</u><br>493<br><b>Other Countries</b><br>Manchuria<br>Korea<br>Taiwan<br>Japan<br><u>37</u><br>63 | 556      | Arisan Maru<br>Shinyo Maru<br>Other Ships | 120<br>35<br>17  | 172              | 2                | 5             |
|              | 829          | 24             |     | 6                               | 1       |  | 582      |   |  | 209              | 2                | 5             |
|              |              | <b>Note 1</b>  |     | <b>Note 2</b>                   |         |  |          |   |  |                  | <b>Note 3</b>    | <b>Note 4</b> |

**1** - Martin Trujillo died of wounds suffered at Clark Field while Billie Black died of wounds he received on Bataan. Felipe Sisneros was evacuated with the severely wounded on the Mactan. He was hospitalized in Australia until October 1942. Returning to the States, he was sent to Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, Colorado. He died there in March 1943. Five men, although given a DOW classification by the Government, died while being held in prison camps, and therefore, not counted in the "DOW" section in the Table 1., but rather, are counted in the "Deaths in Camps" section: William Hawley, Barney Prosser, and John Keeler's deaths occurred at Camp O'Donnell. Jose Lucero died at Cabanatuan. Jack Fleming and Robert Mitchell died of the wounds they suffered in the December 7, 1944 bombing of Hoten Camp in Manchuria.

**2** - A few of the men whose death dates occur immediately following the surrender of Bataan or Corregidor were given an official death classification of “Killed in Action” by the Government. Men who were executed were also given “KIA” classifications, and it may be that these men were executed upon surrender, however, it is simply not wise to make assumptions without adequate testimony or evidence as to the cause of death. With that in mind, it is also impossible to say, how many of the 6 men whose deaths occurred immediately following the surrender of Bataan died on the “Death March” although at least 2 are believed to have perished on that March. The 6 who died immediately following surrender does not include the group of men executed upon arrival at O'Donnell.

**3** - Just liberated, William R. Taylor died when the B-24 ferrying him from Japan to Manila crashed at sea near Formosa in September 1945; while Patricio Quintana died at Letterman Hospital in San Francisco in October 1945.

**4** - Two men presumed dead by the Government post-war were last seen in the custody of the Kempiti (Japanese Military Police) at Bilibid Prison, a processing station as well as a POW camp, where it is known men were taken to be tortured, especially in the case of Guerillas, which one of these men was believed to have been. A third man may have died in a bombing raid on December 26, 1941, before the withdrawal into Bataan was completed.

Only those men who were surrendered on Bataan were imprisoned at Camp O'Donnell. Not all of the 200th's men made the Death March. Up to one hundred men were sent to the camp by truck in order to prepare the camp for incoming prisoners. Of these men, several were executed upon arrival after a “shake down” and the men were found to have items of “Japanese origin”. Several others were immediately selected for details to other towns or Provinces, and were never interned at Camp O'Donnell although they were surrendered on Bataan. A handful were patients at the field hospital on Bataan when Bataan was surrendered. They would eventually be removed to Bilibid and were never interned at Camp O'Donnell.

Approximately 107 men made their way to Corregidor, either ordered there before the surrender of Bataan, or made their way there after the surrender by whatever means possible, escaping the Death March. A few men are known to have been surrendered on Bataan, began the Death March, escaped, and made their way to Corregidor. There were also men who began the Death March, escaped, and fought on as Guerillas in the jungles, some were later captured, and a few eluded the Japanese until liberation.

The first months of imprisonment, April through July, saw the highest death rate among 200th Enlisted men — at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. In the month of May 1942, 127 Enlisted men died at Camp O'Donnell. At Cabanatuan, June (66) and July (82) were the deadliest months.

About 58% of Officer deaths occurred on “Hell Ships”. While the greatest number of deaths occurred on the Arisan Maru, the officers who sailed on the Oryoku Maru in December 1944 and survived the sinking and bombing, would yet face the sinking and bombing of the Enoura Maru, before finally reaching Japan on the Brazil Maru. One of the survivors of this group of men died at the port of Moji just after the ship docked. In the month following the Brazil Maru's arrival in Japan, several men died due to the conditions suffered on these ships, or from wounds they received in the bombings.

Because survivors did not speak freely about their experiences to their families after the war — they were expected to “get on with their lives” — obituaries can be unreliable sources of information, in that, family

members do not understand that Bataan and Corregidor were not one and the same, and that men on Corregidor did NOT make the Death March.

After the surrender of Corregidor, prisoners were held as virtual hostages — in the open, exposed to the elements with little to no food and water — while General Sharp's surrender of Mindanao was effected. The best chance at obtaining food was to volunteer for burial details. After their transfer from Corregidor to Old Bilibid Prison in Manila, the men were marched to the train station, loaded into cattle cars — an experience that mirrored that of those surrendered on Bataan — and then marched approximately 20 kilometers to the Cabanatuan prison camp. As on Bataan, men on Corregidor were conscripted to details throughout the islands after surrender, so Cabanatuan may not have been their first prison camp, although they might have wound up there at a later point in time.

Reporters who do not do their homework will repeat the same errors in written and video reporting. For instance, the number of miles of the march sometimes grows from 63 miles to over 100 miles; reporters obviously confusing kilometers with miles. Opting to go with the eye grabbing headline, “Bataan Death March”, the sacrifices of men throughout the Philippines who also became prisoners of war, as well as those lost at Guam, Wake and in the Battle of the Java Straits in the first five months of the War are overlooked; to say nothing of the Civilians who were interned or who perished.

**Table 2. 200<sup>th</sup> and 515<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery Survivor Deaths for First Ten Years Following Liberation**

| 1945 | 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949 | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | TOTAL |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 3    | 6    | 8    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 4    | 2    | 3    | 40    |

1945: Does not include the 46 men who died while POWs that year, or the 2 men who died following liberation (see Table 1.)

1946: Does not include the 5 men the Government gave a FOD (Finding of Death) Classification in 1946 (see Table 1.)

These numbers may change slightly as obituaries or other death records are found. Recently, a man noted to have died in 1950 was found to have actually died in 1956.

**SUMMARY**

Of 1,816 200<sup>th</sup> and 515<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery (Anti-aircraft) men identified:  
 829 deaths (46%) — 24 battle-related; 803 as POWs (44%); 2 post-liberation  
 988 survivors (54%) — 40 deaths post-liberation for 10 year period (4%)