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The Miner Warriors of the Philippines

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The Miner Warriors of the Philippines

DONALD CHAPUT

The resistance movement in the Philippines was one of the largest and most effective during World War II, and in the Pacific Theatre certainly proved the most troublesome to the Japanese. Some of the resistance members, and many of its leaders, were men associated with mining: owners, members of the boards of directors, superintendents, foremen, drifters, dynamite crews, even truck drivers. The reasons for this important mining influence in the guerilla forces have not been well understood, nor appreciated, not even in the mining profession.

PHILIPPINE MINING 1900-41

Prior to the 1930s the Philippines was not considered a promising mining country. Copper had been known and worked in the Suyoc-Mankayan area of North Luzon, but sporadically, and never with reasonable profit. Over the centuries gold had been mined at such locations as Baguio, at Paracale in Camarines Norte, and on Mindanao, but never with huge investments and efficient equipment. The modern mining era began early in the 1900s when John W. Haussermann became convinced of the gold riches of Benguet.¹ By the late 1920s Haussermann was a success, but most mining experts still considered this a fluke. For example, Maximo Kalaw pointed out that even in the 1920s most geologists and

1. Benguet Consolidated was organized in 1913, paid its first dividend in 1916; this firm took over Balatoc in 1926. See "Gold in the Philippines," *Fortune* 12 (August 1935): 58-61. See also *Philippine Mining Year Book* (Manila, 1939), which contains considerable comment on Haussermann.

mining engineers were convinced that the Philippines "was not a mineral country."²

The world economic disaster of 1929-33 led to revelation of the fantastic mineral riches of the Philippines. Depressions usually lead to further mineral exploration for a variety of reasons. The skeptical are convinced that in troubled times only precious metals retain value. And, the masses of unemployed have little to do and often take to the hills and deserts in search of gold and silver.³ This Depression-prospecting relationship was widely publicized at the time. For example, *Fortune* magazine in 1935 stated that "mining increases at times of depression." And Hardy's 1936 study, *Is There Enough Gold?*, wrote of "the stimulus the depression has given to gold production."⁴ Another factor that encouraged investment and prospecting was that prices for equipment and services had declined because of the Depression.⁵

An even greater impetus to prospecting was the United States Executive Order of 5 April 1933, which in effect took the government off the gold standard. In less than a year, gold went from \$20.67 to \$35.00 an ounce. Haussermann, whose mines at Benguet and Balatoc had been storing their gold in San Francisco managed to arrange a settlement with the government. The firms had been told that all gold mined before 28 April must sell at the \$20.67 price. Haussermann argued, successfully, that the Philippines was not part of the United States and should obtain world prices for its product.⁶

These legal changes led to drastic escalation in the Philippines, as mining fever hit the Manila stock exchange, and hundreds of companies were formed. For example, in 1932, a total of 16,566 mining claims had been located. The next year, when the price of gold was allowed to float, 42,737 claims were located.⁷ The boom was on.

2. Maximo Kalaw, "Fallacies in Mining," *Philippine Forum* 2 (January 1937): 34-35.

3. For example, in California during the Depression the state published books and leaflets to show the individual miner how to invade the hills and deserts.

4. *Fortune* 12 (August 1935): 58-68; Charles O. Hardy, *Is There Enough Gold?* (Washington, D.C., 1936), p. 3.

5. This is a main ingredient according to A. V. H. Hartendorp, *History of Industry and Trade of the Philippines* (Manila, 1958), p. 33.

6. Summarized in *Fortune* 12 (August 1935): 105. See also Hartendorp, *History of Industry*, p. 33.

7. *Philippines Herald Year Book*. 29 September 1934, p. 154.

There were ups and downs on the stock exchange, but not in the mines. Haussermann's operations at Benguet, Balatoc, and Ipo uncovered huge amounts of gold, and John Marsman's empire around Paracale was more than successful. Another commercial giant, Andres Soriano, owned several firms at Paracale and on Masbate. By 1939, the Philippines was one of the world's leading gold producers. Among United States producers, the rank was California, the Philippines, Alaska, and South Dakota.⁸

Base metals, too, profited from the interest in gold mining. The new roads in Mountain Province led to discovery of one of the world's leading copper deposits, operated by the Lepanto Mining Company. By 1940 the huge Lepanto copper output was all being shipped to Japan.⁹ Even iron ore was found and mined during this era, especially fields in Camarines Norte, Surigao, and Samar. Like copper, all of the iron ore output was for the Japanese market.¹⁰ Also developed was a huge manganese operation on Busuanga, a rich chromite deposit in Zambales, and a lead mine on Marinduque.¹¹ Not only in gold was the Philippines making a reputation in the world metal market. In 1936 the Philippines was twentieth in the world in base metal production; by 1938 the Philippines ranked sixth, a fantastic rise in less than a decade.¹²

By the outbreak of World War II, therefore, the Philippines was one of the new world leaders in mineral production. The United States absorbed most of her gold and chromite, and some manganese, but Japan purchased most of her base metals, especially copper and iron ore. The newness of this mineral success was evident in the lack of efficient, large-scale milling, smelting, and refining centers in the Islands. For example, not a single pound of iron ore was processed in the Philippines but was sent as raw ore to Japan. Some of the Lepanto copper was milled into a concentrate before shipping to Japan, but most copper ore was also sent to Japan without being treated.

8. *Philippine Journal of Commerce* 16 (April 1940): 23.

9. Donald Chaput and Benjamin Gray, "When Copper Supplanted Gold," *Philippine Studies* 32 (1984): 273-89.

10. Donald Chaput, "Samar's Iron Mining Beginnings," *Leyte-Samar Studies* 15 (II 1981): 185-92.

11. Useful summary in "Mineral Resources of the Philippine Islands," *Scientific Monthly* 54 (April 1942): 295-302.

12. Robert Aura Smith, "A Stock Pile Under the Flag," *ASIA* 39 (September 1939): 497-99.

Of course the administrators and managers were Americans; some were oldtimers like Haussermann, others were long-time residents like Courtney Whitney, and others, like the Cushing brothers, were recent arrivals from California, over to capitalize on the gold rush.

The Chamber of Mines published several *Philippine Mining Year Books* before World War II, filled with hundreds of summaries of companies, photos of men, mines, and plants, and lists of managers, engineers, and other administrative personnel. Almost to a man the mining personnel at the management level were Americans, while many of the medical and accounting staff were Filipinos. There had been no strong mining tradition in the Philippines, so it was only in the 1930s that many Filipino young men began to study mining.¹³ It goes without saying that the bulk of the employees at all mines were Filipinos. They were the laborers, the bearers, the cooks, the guards, the guides, and in some cases the foremen.

The mining population of the Philippines is difficult to gauge, although there are several authoritative estimates. Charles A. Mitke, prominent engineer in the Paracale gold region, stated that at the outbreak of war about 50,000 Filipinos and 1,500 Americans comprised the mining industry. John G. Dowling, the *Chicago Sun* journalist who arrived in Northern Luzon with the liberation forces, estimated that the greater Baguio area had 10,000 miners employed in 1941.¹⁴

HORAN AND CUSHING

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines began at several points in Northern Luzon: at Aparri, Vigan, and Lingayen, and quickly ran over most military opposition on the route towards Manila. One of those cut off by this rapid thrust was Colonel John Horan, commander of what remained of the Baguio garrison. At first

13. At the outbreak of war there were dozens of Filipinos studying mining in the United States. One Filipino, Nestorio Lim, got a mining degree from the University of Minnesota in the 1930s, worked in the Baguio region, but spent most of the war in Manila at the Bureau of Mines, where he meticulously kept track of Japanese mining activities.

14. Mitke's account in *Engineering & Mining Journal* 146 (December 1945): 120-22. John Dowling's account appeared in the *Chicago Sun*, 6 March 1945, as part of his series on Northern Luzon.

Horan and a few men tried to punch through Japanese lines, but were unsuccessful. On New Year's Day of 1942, Horan explained the situation to his remaining officers, and released some of them to try their luck at joining the Fil-American forces in Bataan.¹⁵ Then Horan, a few officers, and some dozens of Igorots from Kiangan and Banawe headed into the hills. He had two trucks, eighty-four men, and practically no supplies. This was the beginning of what would develop into one of the major resistance units of World War II.¹⁶ Forced to abandon their trucks, the group finally reached Kiangan a few days' later. They then learned that there were many American miners and lumbermen around Mankayan, about 60 miles away in the Lepanto copper mining region.

Horan began to think in terms of armed resistance, based on organization and planning. Horan had been authorized to "take the mountain trails" and resist, but he had been forbidden to enlist more men in the Philippine Scouts, a unit of the United States Army. However, he later recalled, "I was given carte blanche as far as the Philippine Army was concerned."¹⁷

Enthusiastic and optimistic, Horan headed for Mankayan, stopping at Bontoc and other populated areas on the way, appointing men to take charge, and in general establishing law and order. Horan was, so far as he knew, the senior United States Army official in the region. He arrived at Mankayan on 16 January and found two large groups of miners, those from Suyoc Consolidated Mines and those of Lepanto. They were neighbors, but not particularly fond of each other. Horan at once forced a unity of purpose in the region:

They agreed to help organize a guerrilla regiment of Igorots to harass the Japanese by blowing up bridges, roads on overhanging cliffs, creating avalanches above road fills and hillside, ambushing troops or supply columns and destroying warehouses and supply dumps.¹⁸

Here, thought Horan, was the basis of a strong resistance group. He took them all in as part of the Thirty-first Infantry Regiment

15. Col. John Horan, "The First Five Months of Guerrilla Warfare in Northern Luzon," a handwritten account prepared from notes taken during the war. I have a copy of this account provided by Col. Horan in 1983. In almost every situation where the account can be double-checked, Horan is accurate.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

("Casual"), a unit of the Philippine Army. His plan was to use the mining company management as his military hierarchy. Thus, each mine superintendent became a major, each graduate engineer a captain, each foreman a lieutenant. The "platoons" would consist of the many Igorot tribesmen reporting directly to their foremen.

The regiment was divided into three battalions, one centering around the Lepanto copper mines, another at Suyoc, and the third near the Batong Buhay and the Rainbow Mines group. The day before the collapse of Corregidor, Horan received permission for the creation of his regiment, but Wainwright's Headquarters designated this the 121st Infantry regiment, Philippine Army; most of Horan's requests for commissions were also approved.

Horan would be forced to surrender in a few months, and his regiment would be scattered, but his initial work with the mining personnel bore poisonous fruit for the Japanese. Most of the mining engineer-officers continued as guerrillas, some of them were killed, and others survived the war as major resistance leaders.

One incident in this early phase indicated the assignments Horan gave his new regiment. He knew the Japanese would be interested in the Lepanto copper mines. He ordered Captain William Peryam (formerly of Lepanto Mines) to take a crew and destroy the smelter and machine shops, and "complete destruction" of the copper facility. According to Horan, Peryam moved swiftly: "my orders were executed 100 percent." However, Major Scholey, the former superintendent at Lepanto, bitterly opposed Horan's order to pour all the copper concentrate into the mountain streams. Scholey maintained that the war would be over in three months and he would be held responsible for the waste. Horan prevailed: the concentrates were thrown into the rivers, and Scholey left the unit, tried to escape to China, but was captured and imprisoned by the Japanese for the rest of the war. The Scholey incident was one of the few disagreements that Horan had with his miner-warriors.¹⁹

Aside from Scholey and Peryam, other officers in this first batch of miner-warriors included C. C. Heinrich of Suyoc Consolidated; Dell Brown and Oswald Sika of Ipo Gold Mines; J. R. Needham, formerly of Paracale Mines; John O'Day and C. L. Elliott, of Philippine Iron Mines; J. B. Harrison of Cal-Horr Mines;

19. Ibid. See also Chaput & Gray, *Philippine Studies* 32 (1984): 273-89.

and George Barnett, a mining engineer who would command an infantry regiment at the end of the war.²⁰

Once the Lepanto copper concentrates had been flushed down the streams, Horan decided to ruin all local roads and bridges, thus preventing the Japanese from reopening the copper mines. Lieutenants Klugge and Sika, both mining engineers, spent days in the hills with their platoons, blasting road fills and bridges and causing avalanches. The "soldiers" who carried out the actual work were praised by Horan: "We had plenty of dynamite and Igorot miners who knew how to use it."²¹

Col. Horan was eventually forced to surrender, in compliance with an agreement General Wainwright made with the Japanese after the fall of Corregidor. Horan, though, was able to have most of his troops and officers disappear into the hills. On 14 May 1942, Horan hiked four hours to Lubuagan, where he surrendered to Col. Watanabe. Here he was told that due to his demolition efforts, all motor and horse traffic on the Baguio-Bontoc road had been stopped.²²

Horan was the official link, the legitimizer, but others in the Philippines, almost from the beginning, decided to resist. One of these was Walter Cushing, a mining engineer from Los Angeles. Before the outbreak of war Cushing had been manager of the Southern Cross Mine north of Baguio; later of the Rainbow Mines in Abra. Cushing and his brothers James, Charles, and George were all in mining in the Philippines, were part Mexican, and were fluent in Spanish. Walter also learned to speak Igorot and knew the geography of Northern Luzon well.²³

Cushing, with 200 armed volunteers, collected thirty scattered American soldiers south of Abra and began to work his way down the coast. On 1 January 1942, near Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, they ambushed a truckload of Japanese soldiers. Cushing, Candonino Gaerlan, and other Ilocano leaders then planned an ambush at Candon, Ilocos Sur, where ten Japanese trucks were destroyed, and they also killed a general.²⁴

20. Much of this is from *Philippine Mining Year Book, 1939*.

21. Horan, "Guerrilla Warfare." Horan's pride in his destruction of the Lepanto copper works was premature. The Japanese were very successful in mining and shipping copper during the war.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Mines Register* 20 (New York, 1940): 802.

24. Russell W. Volckmann, *We Remained* (New York, 1954), p. 30.

Cushing, Gaerlan, and others were acting on their own initiative, with no knowledge of any other resistance anywhere. Word of the Cushing ambushes reached Horan and he arranged a meeting with the fiery mining engineer. Horan later referred to Cushing as "the finest officer of our regiment." He commissioned Cushing a major, but Cushing insisted on freedom of action, as he did not want to get tangled in army bureaucracy.

Horan and Cushing got along well, and gradually Horan leaned on him more than on any of his regular army officers or on the other mining engineers. When Horan was pressured into surrendering by Gen. Wainwright, he let it be known that Cushing was now in charge. Even then Cushing opted for a more vigorous role:

He said he would assume nominal command under those conditions but would put Peryam in charge so his own actions would be unlimited.²⁵

Cushing was himself killed in an ambush near Jones, Isabela, in September of 1942. But by that time Cushing had been one of the most prominent in the Islands in the growing resistance movement. He was a worthy successor to Horan, personally had established contacts in Manila, and was a serious threat to Japanese security. Horan called Cushing a "god-send." The eventual commander of the guerrilla movement in Northern Luzon, Col. Russell Volckmann, referred to Cushing as the "granddaddy of the guerrilla movement."²⁶

OTHER MINER WARRIORS

There were many dozens of mining types scattered throughout Northern Luzon during the war. Some mention of a few of them will indicate how varied and important a part they played in the resistance movement. Early in the war Gregory Swick and Richard Green, miners near Baguio, had been imprisoned at Camp Holmes. In 1943 Col. Volckmann helped "spring" both men and commissioned them as officers. Green was particularly in demand, because

25. Horan, "Guerrilla Warfare."

26. *Ibid.*, and Volckmann, *We Remained*, Chapter 3. Dowling, who traveled with the guerrillas in 1945, called Cushing "the mother and father and brains and guts of guerrilla warfare in North Luzon"; *Chicago Sun*, 7 March 1945.

he was a demolitions expert. He later blew up the Manila train, many bridges, and was a key man in guerrilla actions.²⁷

Early in the war Col. Volckmann was a refugee, who had escaped from the evils of Bataan and was gradually inching his way to North Luzon. He was weak from exhaustion and malaria. He found refuge, care, clothing, and friendship near a barrio called Uding. Five American families were there hiding, all from the Itogon Gold Mine. Volckmann also received excellent medical care from Dr. Perfecto Biason, the mine doctor at Itogon.²⁸

John Patrick O'Day had been a miner in Zambales during the 1930s, a talented engineer who was favored by Volckmann. By the end of the war, O'Day was commander of the Sixty-sixth Infantry Regiment and in early 1945 led the assault that recaptured the Lepanto copper region from fierce Japanese opposition. O'Day was tough, probably too tough, as there were many complaints about him from the civilian Filipino population.²⁹

George Barnett, another gold miner, by late 1945 was in command of the 121st Infantry Regiment, which was active in La Union and Ilocos Sur. Barnett's regiment was as heavily involved in actions as any unit in Northern Luzon.³⁰

Most mining men in the guerrilla movements were in Northern Luzon, because that was the region of intense gold and copper mining before the war. But mining people were present and were often in positions of leadership in other parts of Luzon.

The district commander in Pangasinan was Major Charles Joseph Cushing, brother of Walter Cushing. After the fall of Bataan, Cushing joined the movement of Lieutenant-Colonel Thorpe and eventually rose to head the Pangasinan guerrilla. In March of 1943 the Japanese proudly announced that Cushing had learned the error of his ways and surrendered to Imperial troops. This was partly true. The Japanese had captured his wife Mer-

27. *Chicago Sun*, 16 March 1945. Green had been a mine foreman near Baguio before the war. See also Volckmann, *We Remained*, pp. 148-49, 211.

28. Volckmann, *We Remained*, p. 85.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Diary and letters retained by Dr. Alejandro Dario, who served with Cushing and later Barnett. Dr. Dario rose to the rank of major in the Philippine Army. I have copied most of his material and interviewed him twice in Los Angeles in 1983. See also Chas. A. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines: 1941-1945* (New York, 1972), p. 480. This is a poorly organized book but contains two complete, significant World War II intelligence reports on Philippine guerrilla operations.

cedes. This forced Cushing to surrender, but he disappointed his captors by walking in alone.³¹

Hugh Straughn was a successful mine owner and manager in the 1930s, with profitable coal and nickel operations in Zambales, Laguna, and Tayabas. Straughn took to the hills of Rizal and Laguna provinces, and using some of his mining staff and scattered Filipinos and Americans wandering in the hills, he put together an effective guerrilla force. He was captured by Japanese forces in August of 1943 and for days the Japanese propaganda sheet, the *Manila Tribune*, carried interviews with Straughn and pretended that this capture ended the guerrilla movement.³²

Harry McKenzie was a mining engineer in Laguna when war erupted. He took to the hills, joined the unit headed by Robert Lapham, and by the end of the war Major Harry McKenzie was second in command to a large force in four provinces. McKenzie was one of the guerrilla leaders personally decorated by MacArthur, especially for the part his unit played in the liberation of the prisoner of war camp at Cabanatuan.³³

Throughout Luzon there were dozens of effective, large resistance forces. But we should not lose perspective and conclude that mining personalities predominated either in number or significance. Some units were headed by Filipino civilians, such as Governor Roque Ablan in Ilocos Norte or bus driver Marcos Agustin (later known as Marking); other groups were founded by United States officers or enlisted men, such as Lapham's Guerrilla and Anderson's Guerrilla; others had the enthusiasm and talent of local heroes like Candonino Gaerlan of Ilocos Sur and La Union; some units were founded by disbanded elements of the Philippine Army, such as the groups headed by Captains Guillermo Nakar and Manuel Enriquez. And the overall command, the USAIFP-NL, at war's end was headed by a regular United States Army officer, Col. Russell Volckmann.

Yet, strewn throughout all of these units were hundreds of men who had been connected with the mines, from owners such as Hugh Straughn to the hundreds of Igorot tribesmen who used

31. *Manila Tribune*, 13 March 1943. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 418, includes captured Japanese documents.

32. *Manila Tribune*, 6-7-11 August 1943, even carried photos of Straughn.

33. *Free Philippines* (Manila), 4-5 June 1945. His obituary is in the *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 1972, III, 23.

their demolition skills on so many occasions. And, although Volckmann was the head of the largest resistance group, its founding by Horan was based on the local mining hierarchy, and its basic structure was maintained, which is why men like Walter Cushing, George Barnett, William Peryam, John O'Day and other mining personalities played such a key role in the success of the USAIFP-NL.

Although early guerrilla actions and organization were makeshift and haphazard, the existence of such units was welcome news at Allied headquarters in Brisbane. Early in 1943 Gen. MacArthur gave support and credibility to the guerrilla movement when he placed Col. Courtney Whitney in charge of coordinating the Philippine guerrilla movement from Australia.

"Court" Whitney had a variety of careers. A native of Washington, D.C., Whitney was in the United States Army, later the Air Service, from 1917 until 1927, with much service in the Philippines. He became a lawyer and a power in Philippine legal services in the 1930s. George Malcolm of the Philippine Supreme Court recalled that Whitney was only a so-so lawyer, but he had a sharp mind, nimble wit, and "gentlemanly appearance."³⁴ He developed a close friendship with the MacArthur family during his years in Manila.

The mining boom of the 1930s enticed Whitney, and he became a leading investor and a board member of a dozen or so gold operations in Northern Luzon. For example, in 1937 he was vice-president of Southern Cross Mines near Benguet; manager of the mine was Walter Cushing.³⁵ In 1940 Whitney was legal spokesman for Consolidated Mines and went to Washington on their behalf regarding a purchase of chrome ore by the National Defense Board.³⁶ Whitney knew almost all of the upper echelon mining men in the Philippines, and he considered himself one of them. At one time in the 1930s he had each of the Cushing brothers on his payrolls.³⁷

MacArthur outlined Whitney's job on 24 May 1943, in General Sutherland's office in Brisbane. Whitney was charged with the organization, supply, and coordination of guerrilla activities

34. George A. Malcolm, *American Colonial Careerist* (Boston, 1957), pp. 72-73.

35. *Mines Register* (New York, 1937), p. 137.

36. *Philippine Journal of Commerce*, August 1940, p. 42.

37. Courtney Whitney, Jr., to author, 25 March 1983.

throughout the Philippines; the development of an intelligence network; and the countering of enemy propaganda.³⁸ Whitney, described as "fiercely" loyal and devoted to MacArthur, would later become his military secretary and spokesman until after the Korean War.³⁹ The Philippine resistance movement was massive and effective, and much of the credit must go to Colonel Whitney. His knowledge of the Philippines, and his personal familiarity with such miner-warriors as James Cushing, Charlie Smith, and Wendell Fertig enabled him to make timely decisions for the most successful guerrilla operation in the Pacific.

One of the most widely traveled of these miner-warriors was Charles M. Smith. He was a mining engineer on Masbate when war erupted, and he found his way to Australia. In early 1943 he was recruited by his old friend, Col. Whitney. When Chick Parsons went to the Philippines on his important 1943 espionage mission, Smith went along. His job was in the Davao region of Mindanao, where he set up a radio network before returning to Australia.⁴⁰

Most of 1944 Smith was in eastern Samar, where in addition to commanding a guerrilla unit he was also charged with providing data on Japanese shipping in the San Bernardino Straits. He was successful in every aspect of these Samar activities.⁴¹ Col. Allison Ind, in one of the intelligence classics of World War II, has a chapter entitled "The Charles Smith Way."⁴² Courtney Whitney, Jr., who was with Smith during the Chick Parsons escapade, considers him one of the great heroes of the war.⁴³

James Cushing was the third of the Cushing brothers, miners all, who were active in the resistance efforts. He was master mechanic for Mambulao Consolidated in South Luzon. Before the collapse of Corregidor, James was commissioned a captain by Gen. Bradford Chynoweth. Cushing made his way to Cebu, where by war's end he commanded a large, powerful force.

In the early phases of resistance Cushing shared power with

38. Courtney Whitney, *MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History* (New York, 1956), pp. 90-92.

39. *Current Biography* (New York, 1951), pp. 654-56. Major General Whitney died on 22 March 1969.

40. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 127.

41. Donald Chaput, "Samar in World War II," *Leyte-Samar Studies* 12 (I, 1978), 14-29.

42. Col. Allison Ind, *Allied Intelligence Bureau* (New York, 1958).

43. Courtney Whitney, Jr., to author, 25 March 1983.

Harry Fenton, a former soldier and ex-radio announcer. As the war progressed their differences grew. Fenton tended to be isolated and dogmatic, sometimes cruel in his treatment of civilians. After reports were funneled back to Australia by Parsons and others, Col. Whitney began to favor Cushing, who was eventually promoted to colonel in charge of the Cebu Area Command.⁴⁴

Cushing was involved in one of the war's most bizarre incidents. His men captured Admiral Fukudome and eight other high officers, whose plane had crashed off Cebu. Japanese authorities threatened to destroy the entire civilian population of Cebu if the Admiral and his party were not released. Cushing complied, but only after many documents had been decoded. For his decision Cushing was demoted by Australian headquarters to buck private. His rank was restored at the end of the war.⁴⁵

The leading intelligence report during the war described Col. Cushing as a mining engineer of "mediocre accomplishment." He had a quick temper but was quick to repent. He was a strong leader and was well liked by his men and by the civilians. This wartime analysis concluded: "He is a good leader and controls his combat personnel completely."⁴⁶ Cushing had married a Filipina before the war. He died enroute to Manila in 1963, in poverty and largely forgotten.⁴⁷

MINDANAO, PANAY, MASBATE, BUSUANGA

The largest resistance group in the Philippines was on Mindanao, headed by Wendell Fertig. A native of Colorado, Fertig came to the Islands in the mid-1930s and in 1938 was appointed general superintendent of the Santa Rosa Mining Company.⁴⁸ In 1940 he opened an office in Manila as a mining consultant. He had a fine professional reputation, and he, wife Mary, and their children settled in for the good life in an exciting country.

44. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, pp. 475-79.

45. Manuel F. Segura, *Tabunan: The Untold Exploits of the Famed Cebu Guerrillas in World War II* (Cebu City, 1975). Segura was a major in Cushing's command and praised him highly.

46. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 475.

47. Obituary in *Manila Times*, 29 August 1963, and *New York Times*, 30 August 1963.

48. *Philippine Mining Year Book 1939*, p. 148.

Early in 1941, with war rumors abounding, Fertig was called into active service as a lieutenant colonel in the Corps of Engineers. He served on Bataan until the collapse there, then was assigned to airfield construction on Mindanao. When Wainwright surrendered, Fertig took to the hills near Lanao. When he was brought into contact with Capt. Luis P. Morgan, the Mindanao guerrilla was born.⁴⁹

In the next few years the Mindanao group grew to enormous size, with dozens of units and thousands of men from Davao to Zamboanga. Fertig had been able to quell rivalry and at the same time harass the Japanese. His strength, size, and influence were such that he often controlled large cities, had a small coastal fleet, operated powerhouses and printing presses, circulated money, collected taxes, and maintained law and order. During much of the war, Fertig controlled more of Mindanao than did the Japanese.

Chick Parsons and Charlie Smith visited Fertig in 1943 as part of the secret mission from Australia to gauge Japanese strength and the degree of guerrilla resistance. Fertig, Parsons, and Smith were old Manila buddies, but Fertig was insulted and depressed when Parsons told him that "Australia" wanted to know if Fertig were capable of command. Fertig told Parsons, "I *am* in command."

Part of Headquarter's worry about Fertig was that he either promoted himself, or allowed others to do so, to the rank of "Major General, U.S. Army." This was a common problem in resistance movements, where the senior in rank was supposed to be considered the leader. And, for Filipino troops and civilians, more status would be associated with the higher rank. Fertig's problem was that there were dozens of majors and lieutenant colonels in his command; by being "Major General" he had rank on everyone. A compromise was reached: Fertig was promoted to full Colonel, and placed in command of the Tenth Military District, which included Mindanao and several adjacent islands.

When the Allied invasion force approached the Philippines, the Japanese, and most Allied experts, believed that MacArthur would select Mindanao as the invasion site, largely because of the size and success of Fertig's command. The selection of Leyte instead was one of the tactical surprises of the Pacific war.

49. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 527.

The saga of Fertig and his command is complex, as Mindanao was huge, and the number and variety of Fertig's problems were many. Fertig believed that his strained relations with Australian Headquarters were because he was a reserve officer, and the regular officers were jealous of his success. As his biographer stated: "they surrendered; he fought."⁵⁰

Claude Fertig, Wendell's brother, lived on Masbate with his wife Laverne before the war. He was general manager of the Capsay Mine, a gold operation. The Fertigs were close friends with Cyril and Louise Spencer; Spencer was an engineer with the I.X.L. gold mine on Masbate.⁵¹

With the coming of war, Fertig was called to active service as major of engineers, responsible to the Sixty-first Division on nearby Panay. Soon thereafter Spencer was commissioned a captain, and most of the mining engineers from Masbate were placed under Fertig's command. They gradually withdrew to Panay. There were several dozen wives, missionaries, teachers, doctors, and other non-Filipinos who spent most of the war in the Panay hills.⁵²

Most of the guerrilla units on Panay that were involved in fighting were all-Filipino. Governor Confesor and Col. Peralta headed a powerful civilian and military resistance movement that the Japanese were never able to squelch.

Col. Peralta drew up a table of organization that took full advantage of the Masbate mining engineers now in the Panay hills. Fertig was in charge of the Corps Engineers, and he organized his corps into the following units: Arsenal, Maps, Fuel, Staff Schools, Shops, Supply, Air Base, Division Engineers, Railway Engineers. Mining engineers headed all of these units.⁵³

These sections had complicated tasks, with little or no equipment. For example, the map section under Capt. Spencer charted every road, bridge, stream, pit, and timber stand on Panay, and by the end of 1943 was in daily contact with Headquarters in Brisbane. The Division Engineers blew up thirty-seven truckloads of Japanese soldiers during the war. The main function of the railway engineers, was to keep the Japanese from operating the rail-

50. John Keats, *They Fought Alone* (Philadelphia, 1963), quotation on p. 188.

51. Much of this Panay information is drawn from Claude E. Fertig, "American Engineers with the Filipino Guerrillas," *Military Engineer* 41 (September-October 1949): 366-68.

52. Louise Reid Spencer, *Guerrilla Wife* (Chicago, 1945), Chap. I-IV.

53. Fertig, *Military Engineer*, pp. 366-68.

road. This they did, and had a major impact on the shipping of rice from the center of the island.⁵⁴

The large number of American civilians in the hills worried Headquarters in Australia, as well as Col. Peralta. For example, Laverne Fertig gave birth to a girl on 9 January 1944, and Louise Spencer was pregnant at that time. At least twenty American men, women, and children had been killed in Japanese attacks. In March of 1944 Col. Peralta ordered Fertig to organize all American civilians for evacuation to Australia. They left by submarine on 18 March 1944; Louise Spencer gave birth to a boy in Brisbane less than two months later.⁵⁵

The first weeks of the war led to a panic on the gold mining island of Masbate. In retrospect, it seems that some of the alarm and panic was instigated locally by looters and bandits. Several mines were plundered of their gold before the Japanese arrived. However, at the I.X.L. mine, the managers got in touch with Governor Pecson. He concealed the gold in the Masbate jail. The gold traveled during the war, spending some time in a septic tank, later in a warehouse. After liberation, the gold was dug up and sent as a regular consignment to the San Francisco Mint.⁵⁶

A bloody incident in the Philippine war occurred at the manganese mine on the island of Busuanga. This mine was developed in the 1930s by Japanese capital, and the Philippine-Nippon Mining Company was one of the prewar cornerstones of the "Philippine-Japanese Friendly Movement."⁵⁷ The Japanese foothold in this part of the Islands was strengthened by their interests in the fishing waters off Palawan. Therefore, before the war began the Japanese presence was strong, and resented, on Busuanga and Palawan.

By mid-1942 a resistance force of over 200 men had been secretly organized at the manganese mine, under Carlos Amores, a policeman at the mine. Because the Japanese learned about the organization, Amores decided to strike first. He ordered an armed revolt on 13-14 September and hundreds of Filipinos participated

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid. A much more detailed account, with considerable human interest, was provided by Spencer, *Guerrilla Wife*, pp. 209-43.

56. Summarized from A. V. H. Hartendorp, *Japanese Occupation of the Philippines* (Manila, 1967), pp. 432-37.

57. Smith, *ASIA* 39, p. 499.

in a bloody attack on Japanese troops and civilians.

The official wartime report reads:

Armed with clubs and rocks and a few pistols, the guerrillas killed all the Japanese at the mines and many in the town. The mine entrance was blown up with dynamite, and considerable stocks of ore were destroyed.⁵⁸

About twenty Japanese had been killed at the mine. The guerrillas went into town, killed dozens of Japanese, and then surprised several Japanese fishing launches while docking.⁵⁹

In all, the mine was burned and blown up, the mine wharf at Aran destroyed, bridges dynamited, all mining machinery ruined, and Miamoto and Shimimato, the leading Japanese mining experts in the Philippines, were killed along with almost a hundred of their countrymen.

The Japanese sent in reinforcements and scattered the guerrilla, but the manganese mine was useless. Amores led a band of about 100 men to Palawan. There he was made head of a company in the Palawan Special Battalion. A wartime intelligence report described him as "quiet, intelligent, a good leader and pro-American."⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

A few more examples will demonstrate the varied background and guerrilla role of some of these mining types scattered throughout the Islands. Arthur Zayco was a mining engineer in the Bicol zone, "lazy but cool, capable, loyal." He built his own radio set and was known as "Comote Bill" or Juan Gomez. H. Gemperle, a Swiss, was president of Surigao Consolidated, a gold firm. He joined Peralta's command as a lieutenant colonel in charge of all supply on Panay. Alvin Farretta, a mining engineer from Baguio, was with Thorpe in 1942, then with the Hukbalahap, later Anderson's Guerrillas, still later on assignment in Samar. Farretta was later awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by MacArthur. Simeon Macolor, a mining engineering graduate of the University

58. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 506.

59. A good summary is in Hartendorp, *Japanese Occupation*, pp. 384-85.

60. Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance*, p. 506.

of the Philippines was with the Special Battalion, and "regarded as one of the better officers on Palawan."⁶¹

The mining profession suffered a great indignity in the last phase of the war when the Bureau of Mines, a wing of the Bureau of Science Building, was devastated. The Japanese Navy fortified the building and never surrendered, and the structure was pulverized by Allied air and artillery fire. The director of the Bureau of Mines, Quirico Abadilla, was killed during this fighting, as were several other staff members.⁶²

Some members of the mining profession, and their families, were killed or taken prisoner in the first phase of the war. The largest concentrations of mining families were at Baguio and Paracale. The Japanese used both sites as gathering places for alien civilians, and in January these civilians were taken to Manila, most of them to the internment camp at Santo Tomas. From Paracale, for example, a dozen were taken by ship to Manila. Hartendorp entitled one section of his work "The 74 who hiked to Manila." This group, mostly from the Paracale and San Mauricio mines, included thirty women and fourteen children.⁶³

It is difficult to gather accurate statistics, but almost 100 miners and families seem to have been imprisoned during the war. Because mining had become so important in the Philippines, the mining engineer families were probably the largest occupational group in Santo Tomas. During the war and at liberation the mining press in the United States tried to keep its readers informed of those imprisoned. A few, such as H. Foster Bain, mining consultant to President Quezon, had been exchanged early in the war.⁶⁴

Among those imprisoned for the duration were Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Mitke. He had been manager of mines at Benguet and Masbate as well as a consultant to the United States High Commissioner. Mitke was a seasoned mining executive, a dignified, intelli-

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 495, 561, 570. Farretta's award is listed in *Free Philippines* (Manila), 5 June 1945.

62. H. Foster Bain, "Mining Bureau at Manila suffered Heavily in War," *Engineering & Mining Journal*, December 1946, pp. 66-67.

63. Hartendorp, *Japanese Occupation*, pp. 130-32.

64. Bain, former head of the U. S. Bureau of Mines, was a close student of Asian mining. See his "Japan's Power of Resistance," *Foreign Affairs* 22 (April 1944): 424-32, published shortly after his release from Santo Tomas. For lists of prisoners see *Engineering & Mining Journal*. April 1945, p. 122, and May 1945, p. 106.

gent member of long standing in his profession, not given to exaggeration. His statement as to life in Santo Tomas is a grim reminder of a bitter three years: "We were persecuted, starved, and some of us killed."⁶⁵

Capt. Ralph Keeler was one of the best known mining men in the Philippines. For years he was Philippine correspondent of the *Engineering and Mining Journal*, mining editor of the *Manila Daily Bulletin*, and the force behind the first *Philippine Mining Yearbook* (1939). Keeler joined the U.S. Army Intelligence Service in 1940, was wounded and captured on Bataan, and imprisoned. He died when a Japanese prison ship was sunk in December of 1944.⁶⁶

Among the most tragic of deaths was that of A. F. Duggleby, an Australian graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, who early in his career worked in the California Mother Lode mining region. In the Philippines Duggleby was a successful manager of the famous Benguet Consolidated and later developed gold and chromite deposits at Balatoc and Masinloc. Because of his seniority and experience Duggleby became an officer of the Executive Committee in Santo Tomas, and for three years walked the fine line between the wishes of the prisoners and the brutality of the Japanese. He and several members of the committee were arrested, shot without trial, and buried in a shallow trench. H. Foster Bain, himself a former inmate of Santo Tomas, later wrote that Duggleby and the others were shot as noncollaborators: "If so, they were gloriously guilty, to their great credit and the honor of our profession."⁶⁷

Throughout the Philippines resistance groups arose, and in many cases mining personnel figured prominently either in their origin or in their evolution. Mining was a new, active profession in the Islands, enlarged by the enthusiastic gold rushes of the 1930s. Mining personnel, with their knowledge of explosives, general technical know-how, and familiarity with mountain and valley, had a variety of talents of immediate use in guerrilla warfare. Most of those miner-warriors known to us were Americans, as they filled most of the administrative and supervisory posts in the Islands.

65. Quote from *Engineering & Mining Journal*, May 1945, p. 116. For other Mitke information see *ibid.*, February 1943, p. 116, and *Economic Geology* 40 (May 1945): 234.

66. *Engineering & Mining Journal*, December 1945, p. 119.

67. *Economic Geology* 40 (June-July 1945): 307.

After the war the Geological Society of the Philippines reorganized and in January of 1946 created a library and a museum. The library was named in honor of Quiricio Abadilla, late Director of Mines, and the museum for A. F. Duggleby, spokesman for the Santo Tomas prisoners. Both men, leaders in their profession, were killed in the last days of the war.⁶⁸

Dowling, the *Chicago Sun* columnist, interviewed hundreds of guerrillas in Ilocano country in the last phase of the war. He was impressed with the talent and spirit of the miner-warriors. After three years of brutal Japanese occupation, the guerrilla forces not only survived but expanded. Many of those still in the hills were miners. Dowling added that there were also many soldiers there, "but that is the definition of a soldier."⁶⁹

68. *Philippine Geologist* 1 (March 1947): iii-iv.

69. *Chicago Sun*, 6 March 1945. He also wrote, "It is surprising how, when the soldiers surrendered, the miners didn't."