

Pacific Theatre

Part 17: Manila

in which we find it necessary to destroy the city in order to save it

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My unpopular opinion, from internet research anyone can do

Picking up from where we left off last time we learned that the kindly, wise and impeccably honest OSS were using Japanese actors to film fake naval battles. This made Leyte Gulf a rather underwhelming topic to cover. If the reader will forgive me I won't cover every beat-for-beat as the Americans trundle across the Philippine archipelago and will skip to the bit where they reach Luzon. There's enough to be getting on with here as is.

With the Luzon campaign the ONI decided to play a game of "Hide the soldiers". Let me try to break this down: Yamashita is said to have had **262,000** troops at his disposal on Luzon. Yamashita decides that he's not going to fight the Americans as they land on the coastline (heaven forbid), nor as they approach Manila. Manila is a big city, around a million residents, lots of flammable wooden buildings and the surrounding area is flat so he determines this is not the ideal location for a battle. He's going to pull his men out of there and have them split into three main forces, hiding in the mountains to the north and east of the capital. **Where no one could see them or count them.**

*"As the Americans converged on Manila from different directions, **they found that most of the Imperial Japanese Army troops defending the city had been withdrawn to Baguio**, on the orders of General Tomoyuki Yamashita, commander in chief of Japanese Army forces in the Philippines. Yamashita planned to engage Filipino and U.S. forces in northern Luzon in a co-ordinated campaign, with the aim of buying time for the build-up of defences against the pending Allied invasion of the Japanese home islands. **He had three main groups under his command: 80,000 men of the Shimbu Group in the mountains east of Manila, 30,000 of the Kembu Group in the hills north of Manila, and 152,000 in the Shobu Group in northeastern Luzon.**"*

Bear in mind that the Japanese have been on Luzon for years now and, if this were a tropical atoll we would expect to find they had built an enormous multi-storey underground base with multiple entrances and exits, gun ports, air ventilation, copious supplies that could feed literally thousands of men for months on end, power systems with generators and fuel lines and electrical lighting, running water, barracks, wash-rooms, laundrettes, armouries, a war room and so on. There would be some unimaginably complicated bunker/tunnel network bored straight through solid rock, presumably going for miles.

Indeed, after living comfortably on Luzon since '42 with ample supplies of men and materiel coming in from the motherland, one could imagine the entirety of central Luzon would now be a web of intersecting tunnels – presumably reaching in and out of Manila. Again, this is the Japanese we're talking about, think what they can (allegedly) build on Iwo Jima, the Solomon islands, that mountain in China and elsewhere.

As such, you might expect Yamashita to simply blow a trumpet and have all the Japanese soldiers march underground, rather like that ridiculous scene in the Dark Knight Rises where the entire Gotham City police department go into the sewers to look for Bane's terrorist group. They could go to ground, spook the Americans at the lack of opposition and then pop up two weeks later in the night to ambush them.

But no, obviously nothing like that happens. There aren't even any tunnels / secret lairs under Manila! A city usually has a bunch of utility tunnels, sewers, pipes, basements, underground storage areas and so on. That should then be used (and presumably expanded via digging) to help the Japanese as this is a key part of their fighting style. But no, there's no tunnel fighting. As always. How strange.

Instead Yamashita (as per the above quote) splits his men into three teams.



Yamashita, giving commands to his men.

These are in order of size:

Kembu Group (30,000 troops) – sent to the mountains north of Manila.

Shimbu Group (80,000 troops) – sent to the mountains east of Manila.

Shobu Group (152,000 troops) – sent to the north-east of Luzon. $1+5+2=8$



That's your 262,000 men. What are the casualties of the Luzon campaign? Let us turn to Wikipedia where we find in the Battle of Luzon summary:

*"The Battle of Luzon was a land battle of the Pacific Theatre of Operations of World War II by the Allied forces of the U.S., its colony the Philippines, and allies against forces of the Empire of Japan. The battle resulted in a U.S. and Filipino victory. The Allies had taken control of all strategically and economically important locations of Luzon **by March 1945**, although **pockets of Japanese resistance held out in the mountains until the unconditional surrender of Japan**. While not the highest in U.S. casualties, it is the highest net casualty battle U.S. forces fought in World War II, **with 192,000 to 217,000 Japanese combatants dead (mostly from starvation and disease)**, **8,000 American combatants killed, and over 150,000 Filipinos, overwhelmingly civilians who were murdered by Japanese forces, mainly during the Manila massacre of February 1945.**"*

The bulk of the Japanese... die... from starvation and disease. And only 8,000 Americans are killed. The Americans go up against 262,000 men (not counting the 17,000 or so in Manila under the naval commander Iwabuchi) and they only lose... 8,000 men.

I mean.

Come on.

Are you serious? The Japanese walk into the mountains and die of starvation. After three years of preparation. We need to look into this more closely, one batch at a time.

Wikipedia doubles down:

Strength	
280,000 ^[2] ^[failed verification]	275,000 ^[2] ^[failed verification] 232 tanks ^[3]
Casualties and losses	
 37,870 ^[a] (8,310 killed, 29,560 wounded) ^[4]	 226,050 (217,000 dead (mostly from diseases and starvation), 9,050 captured)
 5 (killed in non-combat accidents) ^[5]	232 tanks lost

8,310. They capture **9,050** Japanese, somehow. That's probably the biggest haul of Japanese POW's we've seen in the entire war. How on earth did they manage that? Normally they commit suicide with grenades rather than let you arrest them. Maybe they were so starved they forgot to pull the pin?

KEMBU GROUP

Rikichi Tsukada was the head of Kembu Group. His bio explains that he evaded all capture and actually turned himself in, post-war. Nothing about a trial or imprisonment or anything so he did alright, just like all the other Japanese commanders. It notes he died at the age of 65, in 1958.

The page on Tsukada also tells us bare fragments of the fate of the 30,000 Kembu Group troopers:

*“From November 1944, Tsukada became commander of airborne operations training for the Teishin Shudan and commander of the **30,000 man Kenbu force defending central Luzon and Clark Field against the Americans** during the Philippines campaign. **A portion of this force, the 750-man 2nd Raiding Brigade**, was an elite commando force assigned to attack American air bases in Luzon and Leyte. It inflicted numerous casualties **before they were annihilated**. In March 1945, Tsukada was promoted to lieutenant general; **however, by early April his command had been largely annihilated**, and he ordered his remaining men to fight as independent guerrilla units in the mountains west of Clark Field. The Alamo Scouts of the Sixth US Army were assigned to capture him, but **he escaped** and turned himself in after the surrender of Japan.”*

So... he had 30,000 men... but they were annihilated sometime between November of '44 and April of '45. What happened to them? Clark Air Base was captured in January of '45. So what happened? Did everyone get slaughtered when the American retook the airbase? There's very little mention of it on Wikipedia, although the page on the history of Clark Field mentions:

“During the American attack on Clark, tunnels were dug beneath its surface and it was from this point that the Japanese made their final defence.”

Ah, underground tunnels. Of course. **Dug last minute with boxcutters.**

Wikipedia has a page on the 2nd Raiding Brigade troops. We can learn about their history. It gives us this marvellous “photograph” of the troops in action:



"IJA Paratroopers Teishin Shudan in Palembang February 13-15, 1942" - original [here](#).

Splendid, splendid. Very genuine and not a drawing / collage. I'm sure doing the baggy trousers was tricky. All the folds, you know.

Their saga is worth a read... I enjoyed "To aid communication in the dark, officers were equipped with harmonicas" and "Most transports made it to their designated drop zones, but 18 out of 35 aircraft were subsequently shot down or crashed".

Ultimately all the paratroopers of the Brigade are scattered all over the place (from Ormoc Bay to Negros) with maybe 127 or so men surviving out of the original 2,475 men but its all very unclear and without much in the way of specific order of battle. The two and a half thousand paratroopers the main article details also contradict the idea that Tsukada had "750" of them but whatever.

I tried searching around for images of Clark Field, as in the battle for it in '45. I was able to find [this photo via Flickr](#), which has the caption:

"Parafrag bombing at Clark field, Jan. 1945. Consolidated B-24 and North American B-25 bombers and Douglas A-20 fighters of the U.S. Army 13th, 5th, and 7th Air Forces attack Jap-held Clark Field on Luzon Island and other airdromes in the Philippines in cooperation with the ground invasion. The American airmen shot down 104 Japanese planes and destroyed 252 on the ground. Here parachute bombs are descending on Japanese planes during a raid on Clark Field."



Always interesting to see how underdeveloped these sites are. Is that meant to be the main airstrip in the distance? The grey horizontal strip? What's with the planes jumbled around in the forest? Where are the personnel? I guess they are in the secret underground tunnels. Who is even taking this photo – is this from a camera strapped to the underside of an American bomber? Are those parachutes carrying anything? Are the parachutes actually there or an edit? **Fake.**

Here's another one:



“Aerial view of Clark Field, WWII, Luzon, Philippines” - Original [here](#).

A weird image this one. You want to follow the link and blow up the original nice and big on your monitor. It's like several photos mashed together and blended so the perspective is all crazy and makes me sea-sick to look at it. Check out the ghostlike way the buildings in the bottom right corner appear. Is this a collage? Then I realised I'm looking at a massive airbase and you can't see a single person, despite the resolution. You should be able to see people... but they're all gone. Clark Field is... a ghost town (spooky music plays, lightning crackles outside).

So that's all very strange even without getting into the “underground tunnels” which hid the (checks notes) 29,250 troops of Kembu Group.

You can watch [this short video clip from YouTube channel CriticalPast](#) which is historical stock footage of “views of Clark Field and environs, Luzon, Philippines, after liberation by U.S.”. Note the lack of any kind of bombing. Or damaged planes.



Or the weird idea that the Japanese put western numbers on their planes for identification.



What you don't get is much in the way of footage/photography of anything happening at Clark Field. I assume the whole site was completely abandoned by the Americans in '41 and sat dormant. Some Hollywood set dressers show up and park some replica planes here and there in a field, take

some pictures, boom: A “Japanese Air Base”. They did it on the cheap though and didn’t bother to have any Japanese hang around. Or show any corpses / signs of battle.



Pictured: Lestrade makes 30,000 Japanese troops disappear, by looking for them.

SHIMBU GROUP

Shizuo Yokoyama was the head of the 80,000 man Shimbu Group. His bio explains that he was sentenced to death but got off:

*“At the end of the war, Yokoyama was arrested, taken before a military tribunal in Manila, and charged with war crimes due to the various atrocities committed by Japanese forces during the Japanese defence of Manila. **He was found guilty and sentenced to death. However, Yokoyama's death sentence was never carried out. In July 1953, Yokoyama's death sentence was commuted by President Elpidio Quirino and he was allowed to return to Japan. Yokoyama served another six months at Sugamo Prison before being pardoned entirely in December 1953.**”*

So that would be 8 years after the war, that Yokoyama was a free man. Interesting. I think the Funny Number is the code to indicate he was never even detained. The same article also directly contradicts the main Luzon Campaign page by telling us that Shimbu Group didn’t have 80,000 men, it only had 40,000 men – of which 6,500 survived:

*“However, in 1944, as the situation in the Pacific war continued to deteriorate for the Japanese, portions of the IJA 8th Division were sent to Truk, **where they were largely annihilated by lack of food and American air raids.** The remainder of the division was transferred from Manchukuo to the Philippines under the command of General Yamashita Tomoyuki's 14th Area Army, and under the **name of “Shimbu Group”, was wholly made responsible for the defence of southern Luzon.** Suffering severe casualties, the remnants of the command was assigned to the IJA 41st Army in March 1945. Yokoyama was responsible for defending Manila against the U.S. Sixth and Eighth Armies. Most of the defenders in Manila were the Manila Naval Defence Force, commanded by Adm. Sanji Iwabuchi. While, **Gen. Yokoyama retreated to the Sierra Madres to control the hills east of Manila and its water source, the Imperial Japanese Navy's troops held out in Manila. The Shimbu Force would continue fighting after Manila fell in the Battle of Wawa Dam. In 3 months of fighting, the Shimbu Group in the Sierra Madres started off with 40,000 troops was reduced to just 6500 men.**”*

Was it 80,000 or 40,000 men? That's quite a jump. But hey, details. Maybe they were all Siamese twins.

Shimbu is tasked with defending the water supply of Manila by holding Wawa Dam. As per the [Wawa Dam Wiki page](#):

“The Shimbu Group under Gen. Shizuo Yokoyama would have three forces to hold east of Manila. The Kawashima Force under Gen. Osama Kawashima with 9,000 troops would hold Ipo Dam and surrounding areas north of Montalban, the Kobayashi Force under Gen. Takashi Kobayashi with 12,000 troops would be tasked to hold the center line around San Mateo and Wawa Dam, and the Noguchi Force under Gen. Katsuzo Noguchi with 9,000 troops would protect the southern area around Antipolo.”

Erm. So. $9 + 9 + 12$. That's 30,000 men. Not 40,000, let alone 80,000. Wikipedia doesn't even bother to argue with me:

Strength	
40,000	30,000 ^{[5][3]}
Casualties and losses	
<i>USAFIP-NL forces</i>	<i>Imperial Japanese military</i>
315 killed	~ 7,000 killed
1010 wounded	

1010 wounded, nice. Iron Man armour for the Americans at this stage of course, so only 315 (3+5 = 8?) dead. So of the 30,000 Japanese troops there are actually 23,000 survivors? What? So how did they lose? They were only up against 40,000 Americans!

Now I will attempt to explain the nonsense about dams. There are two dams: Wawa and Ipo.

The page on [Wawa Dam](#) explains that this is the location of the “big battle” between the Allied forces and the Japanese. This is because the dastardly Japanese withheld water from the citizens of Manila (for some reason, apparently just out of spite, it's unclear why as this didn't benefit them at all. Nor is it explained how – did they walk into a control room at the dam and switch the water flow off?). So we learn:

“By April 18, Gen. MacArthur cabled Gen. Krueger that water rationing has begun in Manila, and the southern part of the city beyond the Pasig River was no longer receiving any water. The capture of Wawa Dam has become a high priority.”

So Gen. Krueger saddles up and they head to Wawa Dam to bust some skulls. Fine. Except -

“Unknown to MacArthur, upon completion of the Ipo Dam in 1938, Wawa Dam no longer supplied Manila with water but became a local irrigation dam. If Wawa Dam was to be connected it could only supply 15% of the needs of Manila. In the confusion and breakdown of communication, it took MacArthur 4 days to clarify that Ipo Dam was the primary objective. This forced Krueger to shift units around on April 22, with the 43rd Division to move north and replace the Gen. Cunningham's 112th Cavalry.”

Now 1938 is obviously long before the Japanese attack the Philippines and the war breaks out. McArthur is in the Philippines. He's living in Manila. With his boyfriend. He knows the area. I'm not saying he needs to know the minutia of local water supply chains but I find it odd that the US

Army has no clue how Manila is supplied. It's not like the Japanese changed the setup during their occupation. So the American troops under Krueger are heading off to a dam that doesn't actually do anything important. We now have a problem: if the dam isn't responsible for supplying Manila with water, what are the Japanese doing there in the first place? Why are they defending a local irrigation dam that has no wider strategic value? The ONI clerk writing this nonsense realises this a bit too late and tries to write himself out of a corner:

"The confusion also drew Yokoyama to commit mistakes. Instead of throwing his forces to defend Ipo Dam, he instead concentrated his effort in defending Wawa Dam."

The Americans not knowing what infrastructure was important... meant that the Japanese... got confused... and defended the wrong site..?

OK.

That makes no sense to me, but that's why I'm a fringe conspiracy theorist disinformation spreader, not a Proper Historian™.

The Japanese, naturally, excavated an entire mountain range to make secret tunnels and "no girls allowed" pillow forts to hide out in:

"Japanese forces created a network of tunnels and artillery sites with strong points at Mounts Oro, Pacawagan, Mataba, and Yabang. These tunnels and caves would have retractable 105mm and 155mm artillery pieces which would cover the Marikina Valley and lower hills, and would be supported by machine gun nests. Such fortifications were manned by about 25 Japanese troops."
[5][8][11]

*The American and Philippine forces learning from the New Guinea and Solomon Island campaigns relied on aerial and ground assaults on these strong points. US Army 5th Air Force pilots **"skip bombed"** these tunnels by releasing their napalm bombs at a low altitude, and **bounce the bombs into the cave entrance**. This followed by ground troops shooting high explosive shells, white phosphorus mortars, and flamethrower units.*[5][8]

*This tactic proved to be highly effective, but still bogged down American forces on each hill for days and event at times weeks. **On one instance for a two-day campaign alone, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade took 137 caves and blew up 446 outlets.**"*

I thought I may as well leave those citation markers in. The 30,000 Japanese are hiding in tunnels. Of course. Can we see any footage of this? Or photographs? After burrowing through a mountain range like Bugs Bunny the results would be quite impressive and people would want to visit. Imagine the speed the Americans would have needed to "take" 137 cave bunkers AND blow up 446 "outlets" (do they mean entrances and exits to the tunnel complex?) in the space of 48 hours.

You can imagine the Phoenician commanders chuckling to themselves watching the American troops spend days on end hiking around in heat, sweating, lugging explosives and rifles and blowing up hundreds of caves that contain nothing more than fruit bats and spiders. "Well done lads, that must have been a really dangerous underground base entrance, congrats on collapsing the entrance!". Then they point at a nearby mountain. "Oh no! Another cave! Better go there next!". What japes.

You can read the [whole order of battle for it here](#), but don't expect to be any the wiser of what happened. Wikipedia tries to palm it off as "the Japanese hid in tunnels and the Americans used a

combination of artillery, flamethrowers, napalm dropped by planes and tanks to kill them all”. This is dubious by itself – the Japanese were dug in and prepared to fight to the death, so why not more casualties on the American side – and also doesn’t explain why if only 7,000 men are killed then what happened to the remaining 23,000 men of the Shimbu Group? Apparently they just “retreat” (not very Japanese) and melt away into the hills. Or something. Maybe they are still there to this day? Who knows.

Anyway, as we’ve established that Wawa Dam is an unimportant site to defend and that Ipo Dam is the prize for supplying water to Manila you want to control, what happens at Ipo Dam? Well, you get this:



Battle of Ipo Dam [edit]

On May 19, 1945, during [WWII](#), the dam was captured in the Battle of Ipo Dam. The [Yay Regiment](#) of the [Marking Guerrillas](#), under the command of Col. Marcos V. Agustin, and the [43rd Division](#), supported by the [Fifth Air Force](#), captured the water source intact from the Japanese defenders.^[1]

Very helpful. In depth analysis there. No real information about what went down and the old photo is from May of 1940 based on the date in the bottom left corner.

Reading about the [Yay Regiment](#) gives us a bizarre narrative about Valeria Panlilio, an Irish-American-Filipino lady who was an investigative journalist in Manila in the 1930s and enjoyed “*dressing in a sharkskin suit or brightly coloured pants to flout her defiance of the conventional Filipino (and American) idea of a woman's role*”. She is also an American spy, which she maintains under Japanese occupation doing radio broadcasts for the Japanese but “inserting coded messages” into her readings for someone (unclear who) to hear. She then flees and “*She left her three children in the care of an American couple, Herbert and Janet Walker, who had not yet been interned by the Japanese because of their advanced ages*”. Sure, the Japanese occupations were famously lenient on the elderly. Presumably Walker as in Walker Bush? She becomes the wife and second in command of a brash, ex-boxer-ex-taxi-driver guerilla fighter Marcos Villa [Augustin](#) and they go on a roaring rampage of revenge against the Japanese.

What’s that? Sounds like a story? Like something a bored clerk made up to pad out the lore? How dare you reader, this is serious business. Go and read [the saga of Valeria "Yay" Panlilio](#) and you’ll be convinced she’s legit.

You can read this long article about the campaign for Ipo and Wawa. It helpfully clarifies that the Shimbu Group troops were simply entombed in their tunnels, thanks to the Americans lugging around crates of TNT from the Acme Corporation:

“Still, aircraft hits were not enough to do the job. Typically, the soldiers still had to go in themselves and seal the caves. Immediately after a bombing or shelling, they would toss in WP grenades or use flamethrowers or bazookas at the entrances, and then ignite several hundred pounds of TNT. When the last entrance was sealed, the Japanese would suffocate.”

This is the same sort of narrative we get from the tropical atolls and places like Saipan. Where are the Japanese? Underground. What happened to them? We sealed them in. Presumably the Japanese are entombed to this day – interesting that the Japanese government never bother to repatriate the corpses. Also begs the question of how we know how many were killed. I guess they punched a ticker on the way into the caves.

We also learn the true reason for the urgent push to Ipo:

“The air-ground coordination had played a crucial role in this campaign, and Krueger gave due credit to the Fifth Air Force, saying that its attacks had “made possible the early capture” of the dam. What he did not know was that its commander, Lt. Gen. George Kenney, had his own strategic reasons for the final attacks, according to Kenney himself. In his 1949 memoirs, General Kenney Reports, he writes: “I told [Gen. Ennis] Whitehead that I wanted water in [Kenney’s Manila] pool so that I could invite him down for a swim before dinner sometime and suggested that he get in touch with Krueger and offer to put a couple of hundred planeloads of Napalm on the Jap positions and burn them out. I thought if the job was done on a big scale the Nips would not have time to blow up the dam and Krueger’s troops could then turn the water on, Manila’s water problem would be solved, and we could go swimming.... I never did dare to tell Krueger what impelled me to hurry up his attack on the Ipo Dam.”

Paints a picture doesn’t it? The author then has to try and explain the inexplicable: why didn’t the Japanese simply blow up the dam when they began to lose control of the position?

“Notwithstanding Kenney’s claims, it remains a mystery why Kawashima allowed the dam to be taken intact. Certainly, it was no gift. The gate was wired with hundreds of pounds of TNT, and, on the day of its capture, four Japanese were killed at the site of the detonating device. Furthermore, two small banzai attacks were repulsed that night.”

Makes total sense. The entire dam is wired to blow (allegedly) and you have troops stationed at the detonation point, but they don’t bother to do anything when the Americans close in. Indeed, the Japanese failed to detonate any of the dams but this is just human error of course:

“Again, a communications problem would seem to be the most likely explanation. Either late on the 16th or early on the 17th, Kawashima had given up on the dam and ordered the withdrawal of his forces to a point three miles farther east. But the dam was not blown—and it was not the first to be left intact. In February, the Japanese had failed to destroy the Novaliches Reservoir, Balera Filters, and San Juan Reservoir, in spite of indications that they had planned to do so. Perhaps, at that time, they could have been excused for underestimating the rapidity of the U.S. advance. But there was no such excuse now. Considering that the final attack had taken place over 11 days, and that the Japanese had no hope of reinforcements, the failure to destroy Ipo Dam was a major blunder.”

If the order was to retreat you may as well blow the dam as you go. The point is to cause chaos and delay the American advance. By pure coincidence there are Funny Numbers on the post-battle tally of Japanese:

“Again, a dam had been captured intact. That evening, the troops defending Wawa Dam acted on orders issued by Yokoyama the day before to all Shimbu troops. It was time to withdraw. Yokoyama had lost nearly half his force—his best-trained and best-equipped soldiers. Of the remaining 26,000 men, Smith estimates, only 13,000 were in organized units. Another 5,000 were too sick or wounded to fight, and about 8,000 had disbanded into independent groups that were

trying to make their way to northern Luzon or just roaming the area, scavenging for food. Perhaps Yokoyama thought his men would find food in scattered locations throughout the Sierra Madre."

The article then makes some vague accusations of the Japanese troops becoming roaming cannibals – it's a rule of ONI story telling that Japanese turn cannibal when the going gets tough – but I've previously covered how this is always war atrocity propaganda and hearsay. "A friend of a friend said that some Japanese done did eat a man", that sort of thing. It's on par with "He was seen on a moonlit night outside the village he was, consorting with the Devil!" Very Hammer Horror.

To summarise: the Shimbu Group plotline makes little sense, either tactically or in terms of the numbers involved. Why is it 80,000 men one minute, then 30,000, but the army group is defeated and needs to run for the hills after only suffering 7,000 casualties? Where did these remaining men go? Where are their tunnels? At best we're looking at a situation where the Shimbu Group numbers are *heavily* padded, but frankly I suspect we're looking at a "ghost" army that only exists on paper.

SHOBU GROUP

Last but not least, Shobu Group. This is Yamashita's big battle group hiding up in north-east Luzon. We know that Yamashita is hiding out in the town of Baguio, so let us turn first to the [page on the town itself](#). We read:

"Following the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941, the Imperial Japanese Army used Camp John Hay, an American installation in Baguio, as a military base. The nearby Philippine Constabulary base, Camp Holmes, was used as an internment camp for about 500 civilian enemy aliens, mostly Americans, between April 1942 and December 1944.

By late March 1945, Baguio was within range of the American and Filipino military artillery. Between March 4 and 10, United States Fifth Air Force planes dropped 933 tons of bombs and 1,185 gallons of napalm on Baguio, reducing much of the city to rubble. President José P. Laurel of the Second Philippine Republic, a puppet state established in 1943, departed the city on March 22 and reached Taiwan eight days later, on March 30.[31] The remainder of the Second Republic government, along with Japanese civilians, were ordered to evacuate Baguio on March 30. General Tomoyuki Yamashita and his staff then relocated to Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya.[33]

A major offensive to capture Baguio did not occur until April 1945, when the USAFIP-NL's 1st Battalion of the 66th Infantry, attached with the United States Army's 37th Infantry Division, the USAFIP-NL's 2nd Battalion of 66th Infantry, attached with the US 33rd Infantry Division, and the USAFIP-NL's 3rd Battalion of the 66th Infantry, converged on Baguio. By April 27, 1945, the city was liberated and the joint force moved on to liberate the Trinidad valley.

Baguio is the site of the formal surrender of General Yamashita and Vice Admiral Okochi at Camp John Hay's American Residence in the presence of lieutenant generals Arthur Percival and Jonathan Wainwright."

You can see the Funny Numbers immediately. It also is interesting that the Japanese stick to the American-built facility (in the sense that they are playing a role in an American production so it makes sense to use their own bases).

You can look up the town of Bambang in Nueva Vizcaya and find that its page's [history section](#) doesn't even mention Yamashita.

At least we have the page on the Battle of Baguio, so that's something. Must have been a huge battle, right? What with the 152,000 men Yamashita had.

Units involved	
 Sixth Army ^{[2][8][9][10]} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I Corps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33rd Infantry Division 37th Infantry Division 	 Fourteenth Area Army ^[2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23rd Infantry Division 58th Mixed Brigade
  United States Army Forces in the Philippines – Northern Luzon ^[2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11th Infantry Regiment, USAFIP-NL^[2] 66th Infantry Regiment, USAFIP-NL^[2] 	
Casualties and losses	
	Over 2,000 killed ^[2]

No American losses... around 2,000 Japanese killed!?

This doesn't make much sense. Yamashita had 152,000 troops in his local group alone. The [2] link here takes us to this page which tries to explain the American victory as being a combination of gruelling, point-to-point attrition destroying one Japanese sniper nest at a time on the road to Baguio along with the idea that Japanese had all their supply lines cut and essentially starved to death:

*“The Japanese opposing the reinforced 33d Division were no longer in the shape they had been at the end of February. The 58th IMB and the 23d Division had both suffered heavy losses during March, losses that **probably stemmed largely from lack of food and medical supplies rather than from combat action.** By mid-March Japanese supply problems on the Baguio front had progressed from bad through worse to impossible.*

*First, supplies had moved westward over the new Baguio-Aritao supply road far more slowly than anticipated, a development attributable in large measure to Allied Air Forces strikes on that road and along Route 5 north and south of Aritao. Second, operations of the 66th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), along Route **11** north from Baguio, and the activities of the **11**th Infantry, USAFIP(NL), in the Cagayan Valley, had made it virtually impossible for the Japanese to bring any food into the Baguio area from the north. Third, the Japanese tried to do too much with the limited amount of supplies available on the Baguio front. They were attempting to supply 23d Division and 58th IMB troops along the MLR; send certain military supplies north up Route 11 for the 19th Division; feed 14th Area Army headquarters and a large civilian population in Baguio; and establish supply dumps north and east of the city against the time of eventual withdrawal.*

*Almost inevitably the principal sufferers were the front-line troops. **By mid-March the best-fed Japanese combat troops on the Baguio front were getting less than half a pound of rice per day***

as opposed to a minimum daily requirement of nearly two and a half pounds. Before the end of the month the troops on the MLR were down to less than a quarter of a pound of rice a day. Starvation and diet-associated diseases filled hospitals and sapped the strength of the combat units. Generally, effective frontline strength was far lower than reported ration strength indicated. Medical supplies were consumed rapidly, and by the end of March, for example, there was virtually no malaria prophylaxis left in Baguio area hospitals.

*Looking upon the situation on the Baguio front with frank pessimism, Yamashita in mid-March directed inspection of terrain north, north-east, and east of the city with a view toward preparing a new defence line. His attitude became even plainer when, on or about 30 March, he ordered Japanese civilians and the Filipino puppet government to evacuate Baguio. **Indeed, the future on the Baguio front was so bleak by the end of March that almost any other army would have withdrawn to new defences forthwith, thereby saving troops for future battle. But not so the Japanese. Yamashita decided that the existing MLR would be held until the situation became hopeless.***

This is a good explanation for normies. They'll accept this at face value (although that's not saying much, people normally accept any old nonsense at face value). The Japanese are insane and stupid, so they are unable to work out supply lines or get more food shipped in from Taiwan or Japan itself. They have no navy, no air force, no resupply. There was no forward planning in the event the Americans invaded. There was no use of supply caches. Everyone just has to stoically hunker down on a hillside near Baguio and starve to death gradually while the Americans march towards them.

Back on the Battle of Baguio page Wikipedia tells us:

“Yamashita, along with 50,500 men of the Shobu Group, held out against the American advance in northern Luzon until 15 August 1945. On 3 September 1945, one day after the official Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay, Yamashita formally surrendered Japanese forces in the Philippines at Camp John Hay's American Residence in the presence of lieutenant-generals Arthur Percival and Jonathan Wainwright.”

So he starts out with 152,000 men – the Americans kill around 2,000 and he still has 50,000 with him as of mid-August? What happened to the other 100,000? Are they all dead on the road between Manila and Baguio? If so, why the low American casualty rate, that would have been an absolute meat-grinder! Again this isn't making sense. How have the Americans pushed forwards so much when he still has so many troops left? If he has these troops with him then why aren't they starving? Where is he getting the food from? Or if they are starving, why aren't they pushing forwards in a last ditch banzai to fight the Americans rather than sitting there waiting, getting weaker, being picked off one defensive point at a time?

These numbers are so off they remind us of [Miles' analysis of Napoleon's battles](#) in his paper of 2016. This wasn't the first time huge battles have been faked, and it wasn't the last.

Another point: remember from earlier when it talked about 9,050 Japanese being captured in the Luzon campaign? OK. So, what happens to the 50,500 guys Yamashita had with him? Did the Americans kill 41,450 of them?

Back to the [“hyperwar” web page link](#) and it talks about the Battle of the Irian River:

“The Irian Gorge was the best natural defensive position along Route 9 between Bauang and Baguio, but was only belatedly recognized as such by General Sato. Beginning on 16 April he frantically sent reinforcements to the Irian, apparently acting under Utsunomiya's orders to make

a last desperate stand at the river. Practically every able-bodied soldier in Baguio was sent forward, troops were removed from outposts along the Arboredo, Agno, and Ambayabang Valleys, and about half the strength was taken from defences along Route 11. All in all, the Japanese may have dispatched more than 1,500 men to the Irisan, although probably no more than one-third of that total was actually present on the battleground at one time."

With Irisan they try and make out it's important but the Japanese only commit 1,500 men (the other 150,000 are too busy starving to death) and then maybe only actually 500 guys show up.

What else... the drive north also involved various other battles such as the Battle of Bessang Pass which gives us this:

Strength	
United States Army Forces in the Philippines - Northern Luzon	73rd and 76th Infantry, Japanese 14th Area Army ~ 2,250 Japanese troops
Casualties and losses	
USAFIP-NL forces	Imperial Japanese military
119 killed 220 wounded ^{[1]: 556}	2,600 killed ^{[1]: 550}

Again, Iron Man armour, a cheeky 11 in the number of Americans killed and more Japanese killed than were supposed to be in attendance in the first place. All very credible.

The Battle of Balete Pass give us this quote:

"According to Ogawa, "When Balete was about to be captured, those unable to move were left to die after much pain and agony. Some of the more fortunate were given potassium cyanide or hand grenades to dispose of themselves quickly." The Americans took the Balete area on 31 May 1945.

The Japanese lost 7,750 at Balete Pass, and 5,410 at Salacsac Pass. The Battle of Balete Pass incurred the death of 685, and the wounding of 2,090, 25th Division American soldiers between 21 Feb. and 31 May 1945. The Battle of Villa Verde Trail, or the Battle of Salacsac Pass, cost the American 32nd Division, 825 killed, and 2,160 wounded. The casualties among Filipino Commonwealth regulars, Constabulary and guerrillas were 285 killed and 1,134 wounded in battle. The Japanese 10th Division and 2nd Tank Division were finished as effective combat units."

You can see what I mean here – even with this medley of battles the Japanese are only losing a couple thousand men each time. Somehow, 100,000-odd Japanese are killed (or starve? Or die from disease?) and Yamashita ends up surrendering in August.

There's little in the way of evidence about the American push towards Baguio, you only get the usual anecdotes and "military training drill" style photographs like this:



Note the clarity of the photograph compared to what we normally see. This proves they could take decent photographs in the 1940s: it didn't have to be a blurred mess. Also note that this could have been taken anywhere. Regardless of location, this is what I mean by the "training exercise" photography – Americans squatting in the brush, squinting at the horizon and gripping a rifle. It proves nothing. It could have been taken in the Hollywood hills and probably was. Remember Lookout Mountain?

What about Baguio itself then? Well we do have photographs of the town post-conquest, so let's examine some:



"WWII destruction of Baguio, Philippines, July 20, 1945. Photograph taken from Kisad Road looking northeast across the northern end of Burnham Park." Original [here](#).



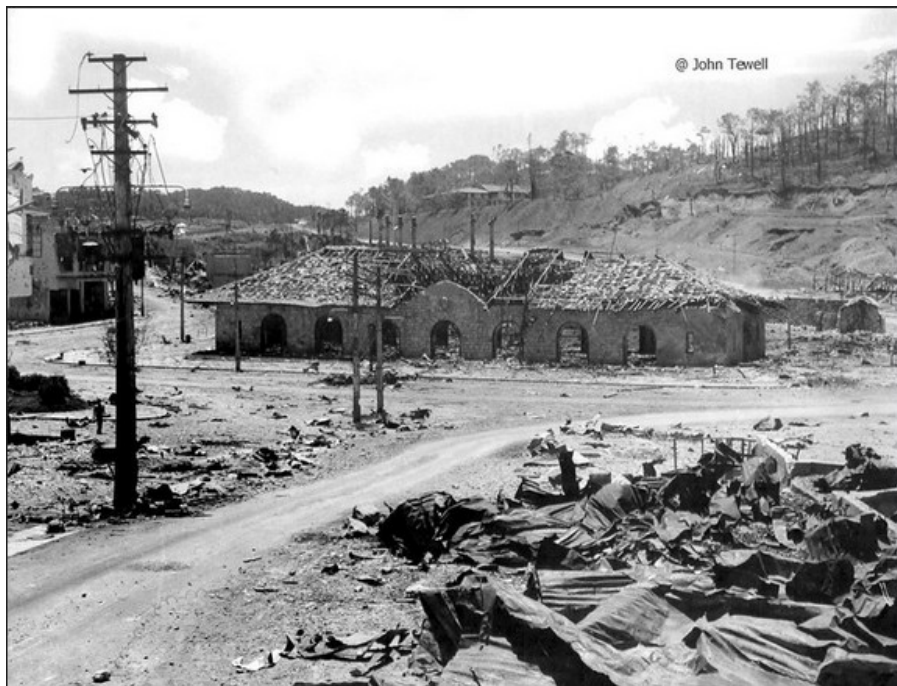
“War destroyed Baguio, Philippines 1945” – original [here](#).



“Soldiers looking at the ruins of the western section of Baguio.” - original [here](#).



“Baguio City, Northern Luzon Island, Philippines showing WWII bomb damage to the city, July 20, 1945.” - original [here](#).



“Devastated Baguio City as seen from Session Road, Luzon Island, Philippines, April 27, 1945.” - original [here](#).



"April 27, 1945 - "Close-up View Showing Bomb Damage to A Section of Baguio." - original [here](#).

The last one looks more like a scale model set to me, but the rest from ground-level seem reasonably legit. What stands out are two things: first, the lack of any human casualties. No corpses in the street. Nor are there any signs of life e.g. birds in the sky or dogs (alive or dead) wandering the dusty (presumably corpse-filled) ruins.

What was the quote again?

*"Between March 4 and 10, United States Fifth Air Force planes **dropped 933 tons of bombs and 1,185 gallons of napalm on Baguio, reducing much of the city to rubble.**"*

Now you could say Baguio looked like it'd been shelled for sure, what with the collapsed buildings and obviously there's been some destruction here, but it doesn't look like the place was hit with napalm/incendiaries. See for example the first, fourth and fifth photos which show foliage (e.g. the trees) and wooden utility posts for electrical/telephone lines are standing. **What we see is very limited destruction, which could have been caused by a tornado or by pulling down of slums. That is what most war footage is.**

You're also not seeing any signs of... how to phrase it... a "mass exodus". Remember "The Walking Dead"?



You don't need to have read the comic or have seen the show: zombies attack, everyone flees the city. That means traffic on the roads, that means traffic jams. Things get more chaotic, everyone has to exit their vehicles on foot or get eaten. Different situation and level of technology here, but the point is: nobody is on the roads, nobody is visible having been struck by bullets / shells / napalm while fleeing, there are no cars or carts or horses. Baguio had somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000 people living in it around this time. Where are they in the photos?

One explanation would be: the Americans levelled the city but gave the citizens warning they were doing so beforehand so everyone could walk out safely. Then they blew up a bunch of buildings with conventional artillery and any Japanese actors being used on location there were given ample time to relocate before the shooting started.

If we watch this YouTube video from "HistoryFlicks4u" we see this theory is very likely – the (wait for it) **33rd** Division of the US Army are filmed setting fire to buildings with flamethrowers and firing at random buildings from nearby hilltops using tanks and artillery. They bomb Baguio and then walk in to the polite applause of the natives. Really, applause? With smiling, clean, not traumatised civvies? Hmm. More likely: actors paid to star in the footage. The "lone Jap surrendering" is impossible to ID. Is that even a Japanese person? Or a native? What we don't see is any sign of Japanese troops duking it out with the Americans in Baguio whatsoever.

A final point: if hundreds of thousands of Japanese troops are shot or starve to death in the countryside around Manila then you would have to have one of two consequences. Either:

A) The corpses are left where they lay down to die and rot – creating disease outbreaks, vermin problems and a future for Luzon where the hills are full of skeletons. Skeletons wearing sun-bleached uniforms and dog tags. Skeletons surrounded by rusting rifles, grenades, mess tins, swords, moth eaten Japanese flags and so on. Just picture it. This would be a big issue for the Filipinos because they'd be dealing with the stench and infections of literally hundreds of thousands of corpses marinating in the tropical heat. They would then need to burn the bodies or bury them or do something to deal with this. In years to come there would be tourist traps where you could go visit the "hill of fifty thousand corpses" with gaudy signs or official plaques to commemorate the site. Think of Cambodia giving guided tours of the killing fields or the Auschwitz camp.

B) The Japanese government, post-war, go cap in hand to the Filipinos and apologise for the whole invasion/occupation thing. They ask for authorisation to gather up their quarter million war dead and ship the remains back home for proper burial. Families back in Japan would be petitioning the government to action this. The press would cover it. Japanese would visit the areas to look for their lost relatives. Grieving widows, etc. If the governments wouldn't action this then charity or religious organisations might get involved. The local Filipinos wouldn't want all these foreign skeletons grinning at them from the woods and you'd have some mass interment or graveyard built for them.

Think it through. Now realise neither of these things happened. The war ends and the corpses just blink out of existence, along with all their kit and hardware. Woosh!

Gone.

Just like that.



“Just like that!” - Lestrade makes all the Japanese troops vanish. Audience applauds, red-headed magician’s assistant beams and pouts.

Right, so to summarise I’ve just shown how the entire 262,000 man army of Yamashita basically vanishes into mist the moment you try and look into the topic properly. A year ago I would have scoffed at that being impossible, but these days I am jaded by Phoenician shenanigans and take it in my stride.

(goes to walk off stage)

(pauses)

Sorry, what’s that? Manila?



“I mean that’s obviously going to be fake as well...”

Alright, fine, you probably got into this thinking it was going to be all about the Manila Massacre. I appreciate that. So: Manila. The idea is that swashbuckling treasure-hoarding pirate king Yamashita ordered his men to split into three teams and hide in the hills leaving Manila for the Americans – but! But! A plot twist: there is a fourth contender. A man who decided to disobey orders and fight to the last man. A man determined to hold Manila in a suicidal fit of stubbornness. A man who wasn’t

going to let things like chain of command or the remotest possibility of success get in the way of some ultra-violence.

This guy:



Rear Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi – original [here](#).

That's the official Wikipedia mugshot. Bizarre photo, right? What is going on here? A paste up? The level of detail on his face compared to his hat looks dodgy as hell. His mouth and especially the "smile lines" around his mouth look like a drawing! But we know the Japanese aren't good with cameras, right?

This gives us a riddle: no real photo... because... he never existed? Or there was a Mr. Iwabuchi in the Japanese Navy back then but they didn't want his real face shown to a future audience? To keep the real player anonymous, perhaps? Something to chew on.

Iwabuchi, as per Wikipedia:

*"...was a rear admiral in the Imperial Japanese Navy during the Pacific War of World War II. He committed suicide after facing imminent defeat during the Battle of Manila. Units under his command committed the **Manila massacre**."*

It wouldn't be a proper episode of Pacific Theatre without a decent massacre. And:

*"Once American forces had landed on Luzon and had begun converging on Manila, welcomed and assisted by Filipino troops of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and Philippine Constabulary, the Japanese supreme commander for operations in the Philippines, **Lt.-General Tomoyuki Yamashita** gave Iwabuchi a direct order to withdraw from Manila without combat. Yamashita wanted to consolidate his forces, and to avoid being trapped in urban warfare in down-town Manila with close to a million civilians. However, Iwabuchi repeatedly refused to obey orders.*

Citing shame at having lost Kirishima, Iwabuchi stated that he could redeem himself only by holding his position to the death."

They are fanatically loyal, the Japanese. Except when they repeatedly disobey direct orders from their superior and try to hold a poor defensive position squandering manpower and resources.

"Together with the under-equipped and ill-disciplined 15,000 marines and 4,000 Imperial Japanese Army stragglers under his command, he found several good defensive positions in the historic Intramuros area of the old city of Manila, including the massive walls of colonial Fort Santiago. During the Allied artillery bombardment of Iwabuchi's positions, thousands of civilians were killed. Thousands more were killed in the crossfire, and thousands were killed by Japanese forces in reprisal for the Allied attacks in what came to be called the "Manila Massacre" "

That's the key thing here: the "rogue" Japanese mostly hide out in the old city, the "Intramuros" area of Manila. Intramuros is the Spanish fort that modern Manila formed around, essentially. The Americans, feeling especially American that day, decide to obliterate the entire site with extreme application of firepower. There were civvies in Intramuros but hey, what can you do, right? Can't make an omelette without breaking a few eggs. I wonder, was Iwabuchi's body ever found and identified?

"After many days of building-to-building combat, more than 16,000 Japanese defenders were killed, and by 26 February Iwabuchi committed suicide at his command post, using a pistol pointed to his mouth, although his body was never positively identified. He was posthumously promoted to vice admiral. "

Never identified. So... we don't know what happened to him. You can see where this is going.

By the way, the "Kirishima" that Iwabuchi is sore about (thus causing his rebellion and the massacre) is the IJN Battleship Kirishima. Worth a read, it's involved in the usual nonsense (e.g. Guadalcanal) and was sunk by the American battleship the USS Washington. The Washington essentially sails up in the dark and shoots the Kirishima at close range, causing it to flood and list to starboard at 18 degrees before sinking. The crew, including Iwabuchi, are evacuated beforehand and you can read about the wreck where we learn:

"Kirishima's wreck was discovered by Robert Ballard during an expedition to map the wrecks from the Battle of Guadalcanal in 1992. She lies upside down, with her bow section missing from the bridge forward due to a magazine explosion. Her anchor chain is wrapped around her stern section. Ballard's investigation of the wreck unfortunately was aborted due to a technical emergency, resulting in the dive only lasting some nine minutes. This severely limited any information or images obtained. A further expedition to the wreck by Paul Allen's RV Petrel in January 2019 provided detailed information on both the damage received during the battle and confirms the subsequent detonation of her forward main magazines during the sinking process."

Refer back to my paper on Guadalcanal for the endless nonsense of Ballard/Allen and the ludicrous death-grip they have on discovering essentially all the major Pacific war wrecks. Always these two guys. Again, only in 2019 is a major ship discovered and documented (aka: render some photos on a laptop). The '92 trip was technically first (at least, in the sense they claim to have found it) but conveniently aborts in 9 minutes and they didn't have pocket money to dive again the next day. Nobody else cared to look for the battleships. Come on!

Anyway, now you know about the mysterious pencil-sketch called Mr. Iwabuchi and his bullshit backstory of the Kirishima, let's take a look at the stats for the Battle of Manila:

Commanders and leaders	
 Douglas MacArthur	 Tomoyuki Yamashita
 Oscar Griswold	 Sanji Iwabuchi †
 Robert S. Beightler	
 Verne D. Mudge	
 Joseph M. Swing	
Strength	
35,000 US troops	12,500 sailors and marines
3,000 Filipino guerrillas	4,500 soldiers ^{[2]: 73}
Casualties and losses	
1,010 killed	16,665 killed (counted dead in Intramuros alone) ^{[2]: 174}
5,565 wounded ^{[2]: 195}	
Civilians:	
100,000 killed	
250,000 total casualties ^{[2]: 174}	

1,010 killed on the American side. Didn't we just see that number above? Yep. Page 9, Wawa dam. 16,665 to really lean into the Funny Numbers. A quarter million civilian casualties. Oof. Remember kids: if the Americans say they are coming to liberate your city then you probably want to run very far away in the opposite direction! But maybe it wasn't 250k, maybe it was actually significantly less. We shall see.

From Wikipedia:

*"The Battle of Manila (3 February – 3 March 1945) was a major battle of the Philippine campaign of 1944–45, during the Second World War. It was fought by forces from both the United States and the Philippines against Japanese troops in Manila, the capital city of the Philippines. **The month-long battle, which resulted in the death of over 100,000 civilians and the complete devastation of the city, was the scene of the worst urban fighting fought by American forces in the Pacific theatre.** Japanese forces committed mass murder against Filipino civilians during the battle and American firepower killed many people. Japanese resistance and American artillery also destroyed much of Manila's architectural and cultural heritage dating back to the city's founding. Manila became **one of the most devastated capital cities during the entire war, alongside Berlin and Warsaw.** The battle ended the almost three years of Japanese military occupation in the Philippines (1942–1945). The city's capture was marked as General Douglas MacArthur's key to victory in the campaign of reconquest. To date, it is the last of the many battles fought within Manila's history."*

There are two key things to understand.

1. The bulk of the devastation is found in the "Old City" called Intramuros.
2. The Americans bombed the hell out of Intramuros with artillery.

Artillery being used to target and flatten a section of a city can be done without there needing to be a single Japanese soldier present. Or civilians.

The Japanese, allegedly, put up some barricades and tried to construct a runway:

*“Iwabuchi had 12,500 men under his command, designated the Manila Naval Defence Force, augmented by 4,500 army personnel under Col. Katsuzo **Noguchi** and Capt. Saburo **Abe**. **They built defensive positions in the city, including Intramuros, cut down the palm trees on Dewey Blvd. to form a runway, and set up barricades across major streets.** Iwabuchi formed the Northern Force under Noguchi, and the Southern Force under Capt. Takusue Furuse.”*

I’m unclear what the point of the runway was. They didn’t have any planes. There was no air force to be deployed, so that is immediately weird as a waste of time and resources. If you’re determined to die at the hands of the superior force, wouldn’t you just, I don’t know, banzai charge at them or drive into them in stolen vehicles firing your rifle? Why even bother with defences?

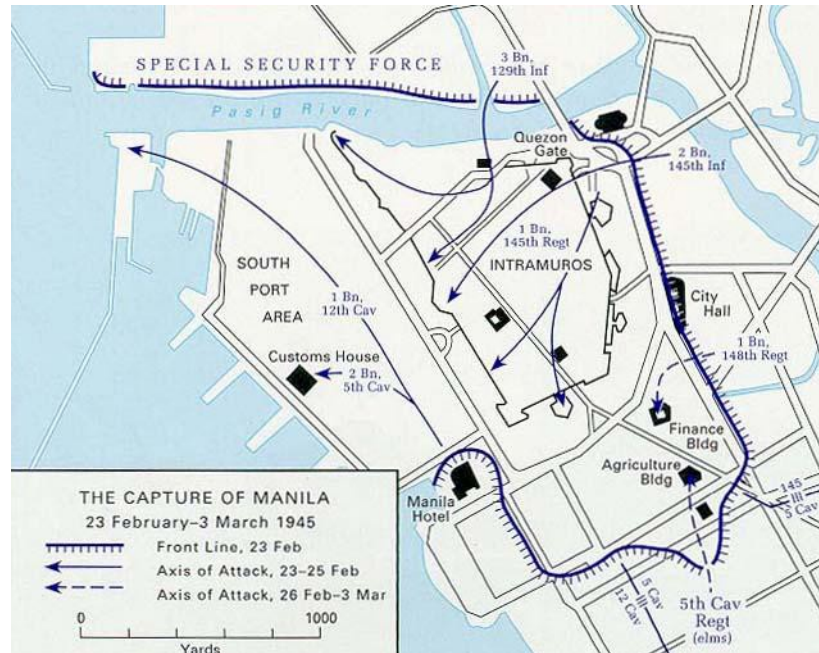
To emphasise how we’re talking about a small section of a large city, here are two maps. The first is a US Army map of Manila from 1943:



[Original here.](#)

If you zoom in carefully to where the piers are sticking out from the Port District, just north-east of them you find the old city of Intramuros. That's where the Japanese are hiding.

Wikipedia give us this map of Intramuros:



[Original here.](#)

You can see what I'm trying to say. It's a small section of a large city. Here's an aerial photograph of Intramuros from the 1930s, to give a sense of its size and, in a sense, isolation from the main city:



Original here.

This fits with other events (e.g. the El Paso shooting) where they like to pick a site which is isolated to carry out a trick. Even if it appears to be in the middle of a bunch of people, if you make the massacre occur inside the castle walls, as it were, you can hide things from view.

Now I'm going to pre-empt people going "Silly Lestrade, the battle for Manila occurred across the city" - yes there are other "flashpoints" of contact but the meat of it occurs in Intramuros. For example you have the San Tomas Internment Camp which you can read about. It's not very credible. I liked the bit where a typhoon destroyed everything but they were immediately saved by a one-off Red Cross Aid Package that gave them butter and fresh meat and they were able to rebuild the site. It's the usual stuff about everyone starving, eating insects, but also doing hard labour and being allowed out of the prison camp to forage for weeds then voluntarily walking back into the prison.

Reading about San Tomas we learn about the Americans arrival – look who we find:

*"The U.S. rushed to liberate the prisoner of war and internee camps in the Philippines due to a common belief that the Japanese would massacre all their prisoners, military and civilian. A small American force pushed rapidly forward and, on February 3, 1945, at 8:40 p.m., internees heard the sound of tanks, grenades, and rifle fire near the front wall of Santo Tomas. **Five American tanks from the 44th Tank Battalion broke through the fence of the compound.** The Japanese soldiers took refuge in the large, three-story Education Building, **taking 200 internees hostage, including internee leader Earl Carroll, and interpreter Ernest Stanley.** Carroll and Stanley were ordered to accompany several Japanese soldiers to a meeting with American forces to negotiate a safe passage for the Japanese out of Santo Tomas in exchange for a release of their 200 hostages. During the meeting between the Americans, Filipinos and Japanese, a Japanese officer named Abiko **reached into a pouch on his back, apparently for a hand grenade, and an American soldier shot and wounded him.** Abiko was especially hated by the internees. He was carried away by a mob of enraged internees, kicked and slashed with knives, and thrown out of a hospital bed onto the floor. He died a few hours later."*

I'll bet he did. Very credible that they executed him during a negotiation as "he had a grenade". I love that it's a Stanley and a Carroll running things at San Tomas, this fits wonderfully with everything I've written. It's always Stanley, or Perry, or Webb or Carroll. Or Kennedy. They tell us people at San Tomas hated Stanley, believing he was a spook. He ends up tricking the Japanese into thinking they are being allowed to live and re-group with the rest of their regiment but then leads them into an area full of guerillas who kill them, so that's a nice guy.

*"In the words of an American military officer, the **British missionary of the "Two by Twos" Ernest Stanley was "the most hated man in camp."** He **"spoke Japanese fluently. Always in the company of the Japanese, he spoke to none of the prisoners during all the years of incarceration. On the eve of the liberation, he conversed and laughed with everyone, including high-ranking American Army officers. Speculation arose that he was either a spy or a member of British intelligence."***

Couldn't make it up. I would suggest that Stanley was the guy on the ground RUNNING the camp, in the guise of "translator". Stanley lies to the Japanese that they can safely leave to regroup with other troops in Manila and then walks them into a kill-zone:

*“Stanley became the essential mediator in the negotiations between the Japanese in the Education Building of Santo Tomas and the American forces ringing the building and compound. His negotiation efforts initially failed, and American tanks bombarded the building, first warning the hostages within to take cover. Several internees and Japanese were killed and wounded. The next day, February 4, Stanley, going back and forth between Americans and Japanese, negotiated an agreement by which the 47 Japanese soldiers in the building would release their hostages but retain their arms and be escorted by the Americans 1st Cavalry Division led by 1st Lieutenant Burt Kennedy to Malacanang Palace **thinking it was still in Japanese hands**. Stanley led the Japanese out of the building and accompanied them to their place of release, an event recorded by a photograph that **appeared in Life magazine**.*

The formation was getting lost, and upon reaching Legarda Street near present day Nagtahan Flyover, the Japanese prison guards headed by Col. Toshio Hayashi, were ambushed by Filipino guerrillas. The angry crowd joined in later and 63 Japanese troops were killed.”

They had... **Life magazine**... on hand to photograph the camp liberation? Right. Let's have a look at this guy:



“Ernest Stanley (white shirt) leads Japanese soldiers out of Santo Tomas after an agreement with the American army to allow the Japanese to depart Santo Tomas peacefully after releasing their internee hostages.” - original [here](#).

Interesting hairline you've got there buddy. Zoom in.



Nice. Someone's put a square "face" mask over the face of the actual guy. You can literally see it's a square insert when we zoom in like this. The mask is a different colour of skin to the rest of the face (see his forehead, just below the hairline). Stanley, if this is actually him, got edited to have a fake face to keep his identity secret. Creepy, right?

No information on this guy, but my guess he is Montague Ernest Stanley, peerage, grandson of Admiral Edward Stanley, of the Stanley Baronets, Isle of Man. Meaning, THE Stanleys. Finally, I found this:

SAVED 221 HOSTAGES

UNARMED IN NO MAN'S LAND



MR. ERNEST STANLEY

As the U.S.A. forces advanced on Manila after their successful landing at Luzon, 221 Allied hostages were held by the Japanese in the University Building in the Philippine capital. They were in great danger, but following negotiations by a British Missionary between the American Commander and Col. Hayashi, of the Japanese Army, they were eventually released unharmed. In the course of these negotiations the Missionary walked unarmed across No Man's Land, and his exploit has earned world-wide commendation.

The Missionary was Mr. Ernest Stanley, whose home is at Lower Farm, Ab Leuch, near Evesham. He had been interned in Santo Tomas Camp since the invasion of the Philippines by the Japanese in 1942.

Born at Bretforton forty-three years ago, Mr. Stanley is the third son of Mr. and the late Mrs. George Stanley. He attended Bretforton School and was later employed as a market gardener. When he became 21 he went to Lincolnshire where he passed out as a Missioner and afterwards served at several places in England. In 1928 he left for California, where he remained for two years, and subsequently went to Japan as an undenominational Missionary. There he lived in Tokio and the surrounding districts, and learned the Japanese language and kindred dialects.

He was last home in 1935 and after 12 months leave returned to the Far East, and in June, 1941, moved from Japan to the Philippines and continued his undenominational teaching in and around Manila.

With the capture of the Philippines by the Japs, he was interned and was employed by his captors as an interpreter at the camp. During the whole of the time he was there his father received only one card and one letter from him. Some indication of the conditions in the camp is contained in a message by a War Correspondent who said that "Doctors among the internees were giving death certificates showing the cause as malnutrition, but the Japanese insisted that the certificates should be falsified and be altered to read 'natural causes'... The most pitiful sight is the frail spindleg-legged children. Internees say their diet consisted of rice and salt water and that the Japanese delighted in slapping their faces and even making them bow to Japanese civilians."

Interviewed by a "Journal" reporter, Mr. Stanley's father and sister stated that they had been inundated with messages and newspaper cuttings regarding Mr. Ernest Stanley, and the credit which was undoubtedly due to him for his courageous action.

They are proud to think a member of their family should have so distinguished himself.

No match on the picture, as you see. Forehead way too high in the first one. They try to sell him as a gardener turned missionary, but it isn't very believable. Missionaries are often agents in disguise.

It is a common front, and many later accused him of being an agent. He was allegedly a POW for three years. They make up a fake father and hometown for him, but don't bother faking a mother.

The San Tomas article also mentions the Miss U Spy Network which refers to [Margaret Elizabeth Doolin "Peggy" Utinsky](#), whose entire page is worth a brisk skim through. It's obvious bollocks (e.g. the gangrene anecdote alone) invented by ONI clerks, but I appreciate plenty of people would believe it uncritically. The reader of this series should see with clearer eyes.

Anyway, back to [the main article on Manila](#).

Some nice quotes:

*“Early on **6 February**, **General MacArthur announced that "Manila had fallen"** in fact, the battle for Manila had barely begun. Almost at once the 1st Cavalry Division in the north and the 11th Airborne Division in the south reported stiffening Japanese resistance to further advances into the city.”*

I like MacArthur telling everyone he's won after 3 days.

*“On 5 February, the 37th Infantry Division began to move into Manila, and Griswold divided the northern section of the city into two sectors, with the 37th responsible for advancing to the south, and the 1st Cavalry Division responsible for an envelopment to the east. The Americans secured the northern bank of the Pasig River by 6 February, and **had captured the city's water supply at the Novaliches Dam, Balara Water Filters, and the San Juan Reservoir.**”*

Poor General Krueger, chasing Ipo and Wawa Dam. It was Novaliches, Balara and San Juan that were special all along! Funny how that never comes up. By mid-February the Americans are fighting for a steam-powered power plant and the Japanese are now blowing up buildings out of spite:

*“On 7 February, Gen. Beightler ordered the 148th Regiment to cross the Pasig River and clear Paco and Pandacan. **The bitterest fighting for Manila – which proved costliest to the 129th Regiment – was in capturing the steam-driven power plant on Provisor Island, where the Japanese held out until 11 February. By the afternoon of 8 February, 37th Division units had cleared most of the Japanese from their sector, but the residential districts were damaged extensively. The Japanese added to the destruction by demolishing buildings and military installations as they withdrew. Japanese resistance in Tondo and Malabon continued until 9 February.**”*

The power plant on Provisor Island is the [Manila Thermal Power Plant](#), whose Wikipedia page doesn't even mention any fighting taking place, bitter or otherwise. Strange, you might think it would need repair work after a gunfight. More strange still is how some YouTube videos mention that the plant was completely destroyed in the fight (at 5:46). When Wikipedia talks about the fight there and the various buildings across Manila being blown up as the Japanese retreat it is referencing the 1995 book “The Battle for Manila” by “Connaughton, R., Pimlott, J., and Anderson, D”. Sadly this has not been scanned and uploaded on Anna's Archive but I did find [this review of the book](#) which I quote:

“Unimaginably horrible atrocities brought agonizing death to some one hundred thousand civilians. I remember the corpse-clotted rubble and the stench, but I had no certain notion of the extent or bestiality of these murders until revealed in this well-documented book. Thousands of females of all ages were raped, often their crotches knifed open, then raped again and again as

they slowly bled to death. Infants and toddlers were tossed up only to be speared on bayonets. Men were hosed full of water, then stomped to death as water spurted from every orifice. Buildings were set afire and the people shot and bayoneted if they fled into the open. The authors point out that Manila was witnessing "a system extensively rehearsed in China; Senko-Seisaku, a three part paradigm of "kill all, burn all, destroy all" (p. 132). Manila was to be Nanking all over again."

Yeah. So. Nanking was atrocity propaganda invented by the Americans and Chinese post-war. I've covered that one already. It's not complicated. What the reviewer speaks of (i.e. referencing this very accurate and objective text) about men getting filled with water and stomped on so they pop like water balloons or babies being tossed mid-battle onto bayonets for jokes is cartoonish emotive gibberish for small children and the mentally infirm. It's like the Holocaust mythos with the cage with the bear and the eagle or the Jewish toddlers being sewn up into footballs and kicked to death in a Nazi physical education class.

My point being: if "The Battle for Manila" is presenting obvious atrocity propaganda hearsay as reality then I can't really take it seriously as a source.

Wikipedia then clarifies that the Americans rapidly lost patience with taking Manila "softly softly" and instead just bulldozed the old city:

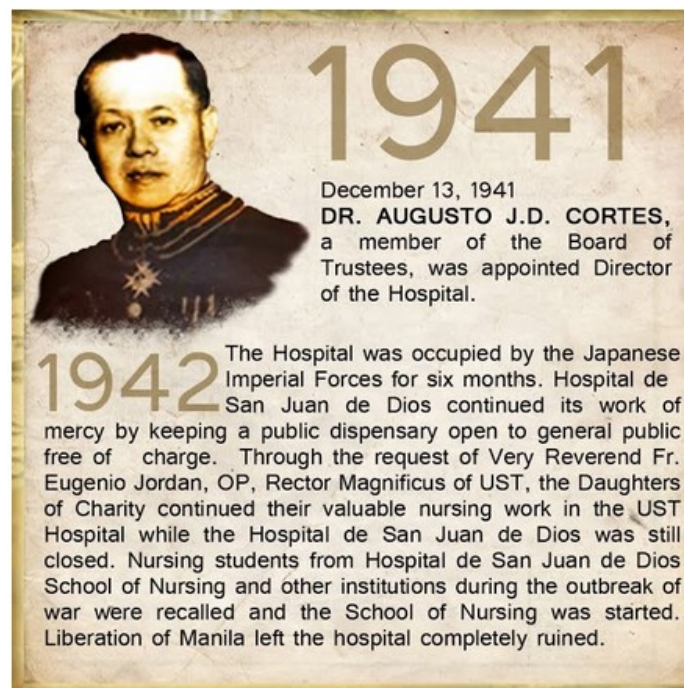
*"Trying to protect the city and its civilians, MacArthur had stringently restricted U.S. artillery and air support. **Yet, by 9 February, American shelling had set fire to a number of districts.** "If the city were to be secured without the destruction of the 37th and the 1st Cavalry Divisions, no further effort could be made to save buildings, **everything holding up progress would be pounded.**" Iwabuchi's sailors, marines, and Army reinforcements, having initially had some success resisting American infantrymen armed with flamethrowers, grenades and bazookas, **soon faced direct fire from tanks, tank destroyers, and howitzers, which blasted holes in one building after another, often killing both Japanese and civilians trapped inside, without differentiation.**"*

So the battle starts on February 3rd. By February 9th, the Americans start blasting the shit out of Manila with tanks and howitzers. They continue to do this until March 3rd (3 / 3 of course). Consider the amount of damage and loss of life that was caused entirely by the Americans tactics. You know, the same faction that bought the Philippines from the Spanish Empire, betrayed the native guerillas who thought they were getting independence and then waged a multi-decade long military campaign of suppression of the Filipino people to keep it their colony. They turn up after the Japanese "take over" and even though they flatten chunks of the capital they are still the good guys. Incredible PR technique. The Americans were very crafty, however, so before anyone could think to start criticising the American "rescue" effort they started talking about the Japanese being psychopaths and beasts – thus, we get the legend of the Manila Massacre. It's not complicated.

*"Subjected to incessant pounding and facing certain death or capture, the beleaguered Japanese troops **took out their anger and frustration on the civilians caught in the crossfire, committing multiple acts of severe brutality, which later would be known as the Manila Massacre. Violent mutilations, rapes, and massacres of the populace accompanied the battle for control of the city. Massacres occurred in schools, hospitals and convents, including San Juan de Dios Hospital, Santa Rosa College, Santo Domingo Church, Manila Cathedral, Paco Church, St. Paul's Convent, and St. Vincent de Paul Church.** Dr Antonio Gisbert told of the murder of his father and brother at the Palacio del Gobernador, saying, "I am one of those few survivors, not more than 50 in all out of more than 3,000 men herded into **Fort Santiago** and, two days later, massacred. **The Japanese forced Filipino women and children to be used as human shields into the front lines to protect Japanese positions. Those who survived were then murdered by the Japanese.**"*

(deep breath) Hoo boy. OK. Let's do it.

San Juan de Dios Hospital leads us to the historical page of the hospital website which helpfully gives us a timeline of the site with key events on various years. We go to the entry for the 40's:

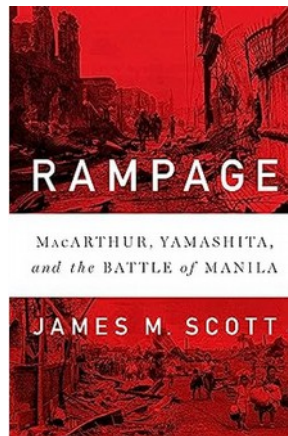


So from '42 onwards the hospital was closed... and the building itself was destroyed during the American bombardment. Nobody was there to be massacred. The next entry is regarding 1952. The hospital itself does not bother to mention a major incident taking place in 1945.

Santa Rosa College tells us: "*the building was destroyed by the initial bombing of Manila in 1941 forcing the sisters to transfer the school to Sta. Mesa.*" - i.e. the building was destroyed back in '41, there was no college to conduct a massacre in by 1945.

Santo Domingo Church was destroyed (along with the monastery next to it) on Dec 27th, 1941 and wasn't rebuilt until 1954. Any valuables, artefacts, artworks and personnel of the church were relocated to another church in the region. No massacre happened here, there was no church standing in 1945.

Manila Cathedral tells us "*This incarnation of the cathedral was reduced to rubble by the Japanese in a scorched-earth defence in 1945 during the Battle of Manila, as the Second World War neared its conclusion.*" - this quotes the 2018 book "Rampage: MacArthur, Yamashita and the Battle of Manila" by James M Scott and I think we should take a look at it.



This book *can* be found on Annas Archive so we load that up and find (as a source Wikipedia heavily relies on, written by a Proper Historian™) that it's retarded emotional prose written by a hack. I'm going to quote two extracts from this fiction and I want you to have a shot of rum every time you get to something improbable, stupid, obviously invented or a plot beat you might find in a cheap airport novel. Or maybe don't do that because you'll get liver failure:

*"In the **ruins of Santo Domingo**, the Japanese again attacked the civilians with bayonets, this time without any ruse of leading them inside the church. One of the marines stabbed Calalang's nine-year-old daughter Aurora in the hip. "You've hit me," the girl cried and started to run.*

The Japanese gave chase, but Calalang pounced, striking him. Another marine bayoneted her twice in the back, knocking her to the ground. Enraged troops stabbed her five more times in the breast, groin, abdomen, and thigh. Calalang watched helplessly as the Japanese marine caught up to her daughter and plunged his bayonet into her again and again until she died. Troops then killed her mother, Victorinia.

*The Japanese returned **to the ruins of Santa Rosa College** and brought back a second group of civilians, followed by a third, each one suffering the same fate. In addition to women and children, Japanese targeted some of the medical staff from **San Juan de Dios Hospital**, who until now troops had spared. "Doctor, doctor," one Japanese marine shouted amid the ruins, summoning the few surviving physicians before marching them across the street. Troops **then returned to the ruins**. "All nurses come out," the Japanese ordered."*

They're killing them in the ruins you see. Presumably while being shelled. And:

*"That same day marines grabbed the last Filipino men out of **San Agustin Church**, including scores of sick and elderly along with thirty-four priests. The Japanese herded them into a warehouse for the night before prodding them the next evening to the Plaza McKinley, at the corner of Aduana and General Luna streets, in front of the ruins of the Manila Cathedral. There they forced seventy men into the larger of two underground bomb shelters and the remaining seventeen into the smaller. "Don't sit down," one of the officers barked as troops fired a pistol in the air. "Just stand up and all will be able to go inside." The smaller shelter measured roughly six feet wide and ten feet long. After the last man climbed inside the dark dugout, the marines rolled an oil drum in front and shovelled dirt along the sides.*

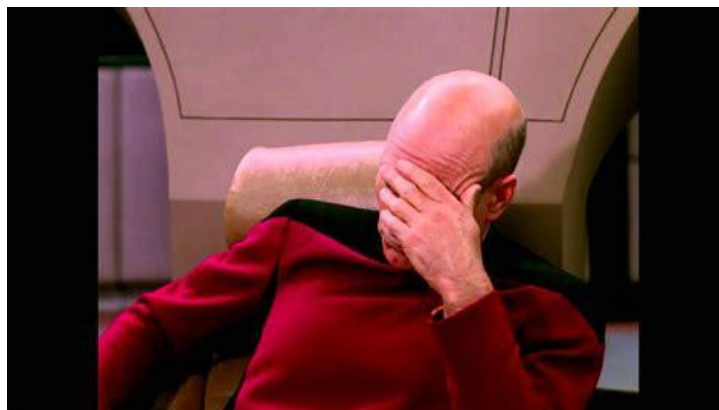
"There was no room we were packed in so tight," recalled Epifanio Gutierrez, Jr., an eighteen-year-old Spaniard. Troops paced atop the shelter seconds before several grenades rolled down the two ventilation shafts. One of the priests asked what it was. He began to repeat his question when the bombs exploded. "Those killed," recalled Father Jose Barullo, "were mutilated beyond

recognition.” Seventeen-year-old Spaniard Emilio Carceller, who was crammed inside with his twenty-year-old brother Eduardo and forty-five-year-old father, kicked the oil drum away from the entrance. A marine outside opened fire into the dugout. “I am hit in the eye,” Emilio cried as he collapsed dead.

A bullet tore into his father, killing him, too. The Japanese tossed in more grenades. The explosions deafened the few dazed survivors and filled the air with dust and the acrid smell of gunpowder. The marines departed. Throughout that night, the survivors listened to explosions and rifle shots as the Japanese attacked other shelters filled with refugees. “The worst part of it,” recalled Father Barullo, “was that we could hear the Japanese laughing.”

The next morning the marines returned, pouring sand down the ventilation holes to suffocate the survivors. Even after the captives dug small air holes, the men inside struggled to breathe, conditions made all the worse by the tropical heat and the press of bodies. The men guzzled bottles of Jerez wine that the Japanese had stashed inside the dugout, while a priest that afternoon took confession. Several of the refugees decided that the only hope was to slip out under the cover of darkness. “We made up our minds that night that if we were going to die we might as well die outside in the open,” Barullo said, “breathing fresh air, where we could see the heaven and see the sky.”

A similar horror unfolded nearby inside the larger bomb shelter, where the Japanese had crammed seventy men in a dugout that measured barely five feet wide and fifty feet long. The Japanese likewise dropped grenades inside and shot those who tried to escape. Marines then shovelled earth in front of the entrances to bury alive the few survivors. Father Belarmino de Celis, injured by shrapnel, tore his habit to make a bandage. The air inside was thick, and the thirty-seven-year-old Spanish priest feared he might suffocate. He pulled himself through the tangle of bodies toward the shelter entrance where he dug with his fingers. “I was able to make a small hole,” he said, “and then I lay down there with my mouth near the hole for respiration.” The sun finally rose, but dawn brought no relief from the misery. “Many were still breathing and almost all of them were asking for water,” Father Belarmino recalled. “Nobody was asking for food.” Artillery shook the shelter, and dirt dropped inside through the overhead timbers. One by one the others began to die. Day turned to night and then day again. Conditions inside the dugout deteriorated as the bodies began to rot. “A profound silence prevailed,” recalled Julio Rocamora, the only other survivor. “There were no other signs of life; nothing but darkness and flies and stench.” The two survivors dug a hole out on the night of February 22, after enduring three days in the earthen tomb. The men crawled to the nearby ruins of the Department of Justice, where Father Belarmino set off to find food and water for them. “I did not find food, but I found water in the tank of a toilet,” he said. “**As I drank I could feel my strength coming back.**”



...I can't even.

Who wrote this tripe?

This guy. He did it:



Well done, respectable historian James M. **Scott**. Well done. I can't believe you wrote this bad quality prose and made money from it and got quoted as a reliable historical source. May you live out your days well and I hope your wife and kids never realise you made it all up for the money.

Onwards:

Paco Church doesn't even bother to mention anything happening in 1945 which makes any massacre that supposedly occurred there rather underwhelming.

St. Paul's Convent and St. Vincent de Paul Church don't have their own pages but we do have an entry for St. Agustin's Church (site of the dramatic multi-storey bomb shelter filled with priests and exploding barrels from Mr. Scott's novel) which talks about the Japanese setting up a machine gun post in the doorway and holding some priests inside as hostages.

Unclear why you'd need the machine gun post if you had the hostages, or why you would even keep hostages if you were going to fight to the death but whatever. The Church of St. Agustin was supposedly damaged in an earthquake in 1880. I say allegedly because Wikipedia helpfully gives us this "photograph" of the church post-quake:



“San Agustin Church after the 1880 earthquake” – original [here](#).

Yeah, so that’s a drawing. Someone has literally drawn in cracks on a building. I like how they had to ink in the upper left window. That’s not shadow, that’s solid black.

Why am I getting strong “real estate scam” vibes from Manila?

To summarise then, we’ve got a situation where a small section of a big city is systematically levelled flat by explosives, the Americans blame the Japanese for needing to do this due to using human shields or being very good at urban warfare or something (despite not being trained properly, having no supply lines, no air or artillery support, no armoured vehicles and being completely outnumbered and outgunned). The Japanese are all busy running around inside this small area bayoneting babies and gang raping women and incinerating priests while simultaneously being very disciplined fanatical warriors who don’t need water or food or sleep and don’t break rank and run away in the face of insurmountable odds.

The buildings in old Manila were maybe perhaps possibly occupied by Japanese sharpshooters barricaded inside with human shields or maybe perhaps were empty old buildings. No matter: the Americans flatten them leaving burned out ruins, but this doesn’t actually hurt the Japanese as they are still able to march around in the open every day looking for civilians to murder. There are lots of healthy, mobile civilians to be hunted and killed, despite being hemmed in a small walled area for

weeks with no supply lines or power or running water and constantly shelled. That's the pitch. Make sense? Yeah? No, didn't think so.

We read on:

*"By 12 February Iwabuchi's artillery and heavy mortars had been destroyed, and with no plan for withdrawal or regrouping, "each man had his meagre supply of rations, barely sufficient arms and ammunition, and a building in which his life would end..." 1st Cavalry Division reached Manila Bay on 12 February, but it was not until 18 February that they took **Rizal Stadium**, which the Japanese had **turned into an ammunition dump**, and **Fort San Antonio Abad**. On 17 February, the 148th Regiment took the **Philippine General Hospital**, freeing 7,000 civilians, the **University of the Philippines Padre Faura campus**, and **Assumption College San Lorenzo's original Herran-Dakota campus**."*

This is Rizal, being captured. Note there is no sign of ammunition dumps, or Japanese. It's empty:



"U.S. troops at the Rizal Baseball Stadium, Manila, 16 February 1945" - original [here](#).

Frankly I'm suspicious that all the troops and the tank are just pasted in (due to the white halo/glow effect), along with that dodgy band of foreground rubble. Yeah, it's another Lookout Mountain paste-up.

You can watch [this clip on YouTube by HistoryFlicks4u](#) entitled "Battle of the Ballpark and Action Near Intramuros During the Fall of Manila WW2 Combat Footage". It's interesting because we see the usual method of filming US troops walking around and doing live fire drills with the background audio track of "generic combat noises" added in. The explanation is that the Japanese are mostly holding out in a park, at Rizal stadium and inside Intramuros (again, not a city-wide battle going house to house). Here's a screenshot of the troops walking across the (empty) stadium. Can you spot the ammunition dumps?



Or here?



The narrator tells us “the Japs, estimated to number over 100, were equipped with machine guns and knee mortars”. From 1:24 to 1:35 we get footage of a completely empty stadium, with several tanks shooting into the stands. We see the dust being kicked up by the impact of the American machines guns shooting the empty seating section:



If you keep watching you see some Marines sheepishly walking around the empty stadium. Later in the same video we learn the Americans shoot at an “ice house” (cold storage) by the river:



This reinforces my impression that the military are levelling specific sites or goofing around empty stadiums (presumably as part of a rebuilding/investment deal later) and the bulk of the city is left unscathed. I’m also seeing no Japanese.

This video clip from YouTube showing footage from the US troops in Manila shows nothing to contradict my position, it’s another “training exercise” type film where they walk around and shoot cannon at empty buildings or machine gun an empty dugout. It culminates in the dramatic defeat of the Japanese at Fort Drum (in Manila Bay, on April 13th.)

The reality being, there was an empty island covered in concrete which the troops blow up:



Well done lads. Brave. That abandoned chunk of concrete wasn't going to kill itself.

Speaking of forts – Fort San Antonio Abad was a busted-up fort from the 1800s. This is an aerial shot of it pre-Japanese occupation:



A key strategic location. I'm sure that was very difficult to take, what with only having tanks, planes and artillery.

The [Philippine General Hospital](#) bit sounds impressive but then you realise it was operational throughout the war and treated everyone, including Japanese. So... it was a big hospital, in a major city. Lots of people inside it, working or recovering. The Americans turn up... hey presto, we've liberated everyone inside.

Moving on:

*"Iwabuchi was ordered by Gen. Shizuo Yokoyama, commander of the Shimbu Group, to break out of Manila on the night of 17–18 February, in coordination with counter-attacks on Novaliches Dam and Grace Park. **The breakout failed and Iwabuchi's remaining 6,000 men were trapped in Manila.**"*

The reader will recall that originally he had over 16,000 men. Now it's 6,000 or so, inside Intramuros specifically. The 10,000 were... killed? I guess? Somewhere. Unclear where. Are the bodies in the rubble of the collapsed buildings? Was there a proper head count? Any repatriation to Japan?

"By 20 February, the New Police Station, St. Vincent de Paul Church, San Pablo Church, the Manila Club, City Hall and the General Post Office were in American hands. The Japanese retreated into Intramuros on the night of 19 February, and the Manila Hotel was liberated on 22 Feb., but MacArthur found his penthouse in ashes. Only Intramuros, plus the Legislative, Finance, and Agricultural Buildings, remained in Japanese hands."

I love the mental image of MacArthur going to all this effort to get his old bedroom back only to find his beloved penthouse in ashes. It was all for nothing! My bespoke interior design, ruined!



“U.S. troops fighting in the Walled City, Manila, 27 February 1945” - original [here](#).

Not so much fighting as bulldozing a path through rubble.

*“The assault on Intramuros started at 07:30 on 23 February, with a 140 gun artillery barrage, followed by the 148th attacking through breaches made in the walls between the Quezon and Parian Gates, and the 129th crossing the Pasig River, then attacking near the location of the Government Mint. The fighting for Intramuros continued until 26 February. **On 23 February, the Japanese released about 3,000 civilians held as hostages, after killing most of the men in the group. Colonel Noguchi's soldiers and sailors killed 1,000 men and women.**[11]”*

I’m amazed they had any civilians left alive, what with the constant bloodlust and raping and so on. They missed a trick here, they should have played the cannibalism card as well – claimed the Japanese ate the civilians to stay alive.

*“**Iwabuchi and his officers committed suicide at dawn on 26 February.** The 5th Cavalry Regiment took the Agricultural Building by 1 March, and the 148th Regiment took the Legislative Building on 28 Feb. **and the Finance Building by 3 March.**”*

They never ID’d the body, so we have no idea if he committed suicide. I’m probably overthinking the battle ends specifically at the site of the Finance Building... on the 3rd day of the 3rd month. This seems almost... symbolic.

*“Griswold and Beightler were not willing to attempt the assault with infantry alone. Not expressly enjoined from employing artillery, **they now planned a massive artillery preparation that would last from 17 to 23 February and would include indirect fire at ranges up to 8,000 yards as well as direct, point-blank fire from ranges as short as 250 yards. They would employ all available corps and division artillery, from 240mm howitzers down.** (...) Just how civilian lives could be saved by this type of preparation, as opposed to aerial bombardment, is unknown. The net result would be the same: Intramuros would be practically razed.”*

Yep. They flatten it. Realise this is admitted after they talk about the civilians being released. So somehow the 3,000 civvies are let out alive on the last day of the six day bombardment. But yes, do go on about “muh human shields” and how it was the Japanese killing people and you were trying to reduce casualties or something.

*"That the artillery had almost razed the ancient Walled City **could not be helped**. To the XIV Corps and the 37th Division at this state of the battle for Manila, **American lives were understandably far more valuable than historic landmarks**. The destruction stemmed from **the American decision to save lives** in a battle against Japanese troops who had decided to sacrifice their lives as dearly as possible."* [13]

*American artillery and military operations, according to one estimate, **may** have caused 40 percent of total non-combatant Filipino deaths during the battle."*

I would like to think that the Phoenicians made an effort to evacuate as many civilians as possible prior to the Intramuros district from being stomped but... yeah. I don't think they cared that much.

*"Before the fighting ended, **MacArthur** summoned a provisional assembly of prominent Filipinos to Malacañan Palace and in their presence declared the Commonwealth of the Philippines to be permanently re-established. **"My country kept the faith,"** he told the gathered assembly. **"Your capital city, cruelly punished though it be, has regained its rightful place—citadel of democracy in the East."***

He's such a dick, honestly. I cannot ever mock him enough.

The “Aftermath” section of the article then screws up and admits (or innocently makes a mistake, as the normie will retort) that the Japanese dead were all found entirely within Intramuros:

*"The battle left 1,010 U.S. soldiers dead and 5,565 wounded. At least 100,000 Filipinos civilians were killed, both deliberately by the Japanese in the Manila massacre and from artillery and aerial bombardment by U.S. and Japanese forces. **16,665 Japanese dead were counted within Intramuros alone.**"*

Come again? 16,665? That would be all of the “rebel” Japanese. So... what? Were they all hiding in Intramuros? The quote a few pages back talked about the breakout of Feb 17th/18th failing and Iwabuchi being trapped with around 6,000 men inside Manila. Were they all stationed in Intramuros and the breakout was attempted after 10,000 were killed initially? If they're all in Intramuros, what's this stuff about street fighting across the city? And so on.

Another possibility to consider with the Battle of Manila is that prior to the old city being flattened, the Americans shipped out the treasures, artwork and so on:

*"Filipinos lost an irreplaceable cultural and historical treasure in the resulting carnage and devastation of Manila, remembered today as a national tragedy. **Countless government buildings, universities and colleges, convents, monasteries and churches, and their accompanying treasures dating to the founding of the city, were ruined. The cultural patrimony (including art, literature, and especially architecture) of the Orient's first truly international melting pot – the confluence of Spanish, American and Asian cultures – was eviscerated.** Manila, once touted as the "Pearl of the Orient" and famed as a living monument to the meeting of Asian and European cultures, was virtually wiped out."*

All those treasures lost. I wonder.

It's interesting also that despite this Stalingrad of the East, with 100,000 killed in Manila and something like a quarter million civilian deaths overall the population of the Philippines completely ignores the impact of World War 2. As per Statista:

1935 = 13 million

1940 = 14.6 million

1945 = 16.1 million

1950 = 18.5 million

Weird, right? Here's something else weird:



"Destruction of the Walled City (Intramuros), 1945." - Go [here](#) and zoom in.

This is a high resolution photograph of Intramuros after the battle. Get it up via the link and blow it up on your screen.

Now. Look.

Do you see any vehicles, wrecked or otherwise? Or people? Stray dogs? Or birds? Soldiers on patrol? Aid workers checking the ruins? Scavengers looking for something useful? Any sign of human life whatsoever? Can you see any corpses? Can you see how roads are swept clean? Any pot holes / craters from all the shelling? I looked at this photo for a while and then my brain spat out a response and I don't know, it's pretty weird but I'll tell you what I think: I'm going to suggest this is not a photograph of Intramuros from the air. This is a photograph of a carefully constructed scale model. That's why it's lifeless and empty. It has a... a *dinky* feel to it. Like a toy set. They made a miniature model of "war torn Intramuros" and photographed that.

That, [or as we saw with Dresden](#), it is pieced together ruins from other events. All you need is some real ruins, as from tornados, floods, or abandoned cities, and you piece those together to create whatever you want. You then splice in a couple of real buildings from the city in the background, to make it look real. And parts of Intramuros may have really been shelled. These

cities come up for planned gentrification, as we know. It allows for rebuilding at great profit. We saw that even in New York City in 2001, when they did it right in front of our faces in peacetime. Shock and awe! People will see whatever you tell them. If they had told us termites had brought down the twin towers, most people would have believed it rather than be called conspiracy theorists.

This previously linked YouTube video goes to great lengths to list alleged Japanese psycho behaviour and gives a weird rewrite of the Intramuros Liberation (in his version Philippine Guerillas go into Intramuros and saves the hostages rather than the Japanese releasing them). He has lots of splendid footage of various monuments that have been shelled or raked with machine gun fire (again, no evidence of any Japanese only that the Americans were shooting at the buildings which we have ample evidence of). The video ends with this shot of Intramuros:



Again, I have a problem with this. The flat featureless sea, the silhouette ships that seem off in scale, the clean swept roads and the toy town buildings – this is another scale model. Or paste-up. Or combination of the two.

Here's another photo of Intramuros:



“Intramuros, Manila, Philippines, Just after the Battle for Manila 1945” – original [here](#).

This is more zoomed out so it's harder to check for signs of life on the streets (possibly those blotches around the bridge?). That said, the rubble of Intramuros is visibly different to the toy set above. See how it's contained destruction? Large sections are flattened, some key buildings are standing. Yes there are other buildings damaged in the foreground, but I mean in terms of Intramuros being smashed. Also conveniently next to the piers for offloading and loading goods and manpower. In case you wanted to get anything bulky out of there and back to America in a cargo crate for instance. Those two photos don't even match, in my opinion. Many key buildings have moved in the damaged area.

To round this off, I think with Manila you were looking at a very carefully managed operation where the US military goes in, bombs some empty locations (e.g. the Rizal stadium), the Japanese are allegedly located inside one specific section of the city which is then blasted to smithereens and after a few weeks of shelling it's "job done". There may well have been deaths of civilians, I'm even open to the idea that there were some Japanese troops set in place to get shot to add to the realism of the bit. What I'm not going to agree to is that Yamashita had this massive army that vanished into mist and I don't find the official narrative of the Luzon campaign remotely credible.

They probably used it as an opportunity to smuggle various valuables (not to mention Yamashita's Gold) out of the country and made up a bunch of ghost stories about atrocities afterwards for public relations. A master stroke really – the "Phoenician Americans" are now the good guys, liberating the Philippines and getting their paws on the country's resources and military bases going forwards without having to worry about the increasingly competent local armed forces pushing them out.

We're nearly there reader. This pretty much wraps up the Philippines saga. Now we can get back on the boat and head on to the showdown at Okinawa.

More to Come.

[Outro Music](#)

