



Philippine Air Diary

By EUGENE SOUBERMAN

CLARK FIELD, DECEMBER 13, 1937, Four years prior to the Japanese Attack. The main runway had not yet been paved. By 1941, there were few other changes.

(Photo - USAF)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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*View of the area of Del Monte Field, left of the Agusan River Ravine and at right angles to it.
(Photo - USAF)*

1940—Lt. Col. Charles Backes, USAAF, was the Commanding Officer of the PAAC. Lt. Oscar Sales, PAAC, commanded the 9th Observation and Attack Squadron, based first at Clark Field, and later at Cebu.

1941—Zablan Field was reserved for primary and basic flying training. The advanced flying school was, at first, at Clark Field and then was transferred to Maniquis, at Cabanatuan. PT13s, used for both training and observation, were obtained. Midway through 1941, the PAAC had 142 pilots and 64 aircraft. Its units were disposed as follows:

<u>Base</u>	<u>Squadron</u>	<u>Commanding Officer</u>
Zablan	1st School	Lt. Andres Cruz*
Zablan	2nd Depot	Lt. Ramon Zosa
Zablan	3rd Depot	Lt. Jose B. Ramos
Zablan	4th Air Base	Lt. Arsenio Sebastian
Zablan	5th Photo	Lt. John Setzer
Maniquis	7th School	Lt. Benito N. Ebuén
Maniquis	8th Air Base	Lt. Napoleon De Leon
Maniquis	10th Bombardment	Lt. Pedro Q. Molina
Batangas	6th Pursuit	Capt. Jesus A. Villamor*
Lahug	9th Observation and Attack	Maj. Oscar Sales*
Lahug	11th Air Base	Lt. Victor Aya-ay
Manila	PAAC Headquarters	Lt. Jonas A. Victoria
Manila	PAAC Supply	Maj. Mariano C. Reves

* Base Commander

Captain Henry B. Fisher was the United States advisor to the 1st School Squadron. He lived with his family at Nichols Field and commuted to Zablan Field daily by P-26.

The 7th School Squadron was the advanced training unit and the 6th Pursuit was newly activated.

During 1941, the PAAC received twelve P-26As (6th Pursuit), two P-12s (Zablan Field), two B-10Bs (10th Bombardment) and two O-46s (9th Observation and Attack). It was intended that P-35As would be transferred to the PAAC from the USAAF, but they never were.

Part II United States Army Air Force Units in the Philippines

May 6, 1941—The Philippine Department Air Force was activated under the command of Brigadier General H. B. Claggett. It was intended to build the air forces in the Philippines up to four pursuit groups and four bomb groups. The sole Navy air unit in the Philippines was Patrol Wing 10, equipped with PBYs.

July, 1941—The 20th Pursuit Squadron received 31 P-40Bs.

September 2, 1941—Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 5th Air Support Command was activated.

September 12, 1941, Evening—Nine B-17Ds of the 14th Bombardment Squadron arrived, under the command of Major Emmett (Rosie) O'Donnell.

September 16, 1941—The 24th Pursuit Group was organized under Major Orrin L. Grover.

During September, fifty P-40Es arrived.

October 10, 1941—Only two airfields were capable of handling bombers, Clark and Del Monte. Del Monte had a grass airstrip with a deep canyon containing a river at the east end; no other facilities, not even housing. Nichols Field was being built up. San Marcelino Field was a “dry weather only” field.

October 19, 1941—Twenty-four P-40Es left San Francisco for the Philippines, aboard a freighter.

October 28, 1941—The Philippine Department Air Force was redesignated the Far East Air Force.

November was a more active month. The 21st and 34th Pursuit Squadrons and the 15th Bombardment Squadron arrived. The men of the 27th Bombardment Group (Light) also arrived. However, their A-24s never came. They went to Australia, instead.

November 3, 1941—General Lewis Brereton arrived to take command of the Far East Air Force.

November 4, 1941—General Sutherland, MacArthur’s Chief of Staff, told General Brereton that war was unlikely before April, 1942.

November 9, 1941—Aircraft in commission: nine B-17Ds, 72 P-40s, 28 P-35As, two squadrons of B-18As, plus spares.

November 10, 1941—All units were ordered on alert.

November 15, 1941—The Pursuit Squadrons were alerted.

November 26, 1941—Colonel E. L. Eubank led twenty-six B-17Ds into Clark Field.

November 28, 1941—A “blackout” was established in the Philippines.

November 30, 1941—The War Department issued a “possibility of war” warning.

By this time, fifteen air bases were either in use or under construction, in addition to the PAAC bases:

<u>Field</u>	<u>Units</u>
San Miguel	
O'Donnell	
Malabang	
Zamboanga	
Iba—	3rd Pursuit Squadron
Rosales	
Nichols—	20th Air Base Group, 2nd Observation Squadron, 17th and 34th Pursuit Squadrons
San Marcelino	
Zambales	
Del Carmen—	21st Pursuit Squadron
Clark—	28th and 30th Bombardment Squadrons, 19th Bomb Group, 20th Pursuit Squadron, 24th Pursuit Group
Neilson—	Headquarters Far East Air Force, 36th Air Base Group, Philippine Air Depot, 27th Bomb Group
San Fernando	
Ternate	
Del Monte—	14th and 93rd Bombardment Squadrons, 5th Air Base Group



*P-35A assigned to Lt. B.D. Wagner, Commanding Officer of 17th Pursuit Squadron, Nichols Field, 1941.
(Photo - Lt. Col. G.H. Armstrong)*



P-26 and P-35 Aircraft assigned to the 17 Pursuit Squadron, at Iba Field, 1941.
(Photo - Lt. Col. Armstrong)



*B-10 at Iba Field, 1941.
(Photo - Lt. Col. Armstrong)*

December 1, 1941—There was a total of seven radar sets in the islands. Only one of the sets was operational, at Iba Field and consisted of one SCR 270. The radar was capable of showing aircraft bearings, but not altitude. Another radar was at Lake Taal, but was not operational due to a lack of communications. Radar sets were enroute to Aparri and Legaspi for installation.

Aircraft in the Philippines: thirty-five B-17Ds, eighteen B-18As, nine A-27s, twelve B-10Bs, approximately 105 P-40s, sixteen P-26As, 48 P-35As.

<u>Fighter Units</u>	<u>Commanding Officer</u>	<u>Aircraft</u>
HQ, 24th Pursuit Group	Lt. W. D. Putnam	---
3rd Pursuit Squadron	Lt. H. G. Thorne	P-40E
17th Pursuit Squadron	Lt. B. D. Wagner	P-40E
20th Pursuit Squadron	Lt. J. H. Moore	P-40B
21st Pursuit Squadron	Lt. W. E. Dyess	P-35A
34th Pursuit Squadron	Lt. S. H. Marrett	P-35A

The A-27s, a version of the "Texan" trainer with a 750 horsepower engine, had been ordered by the Thai government, but were diverted to the U.S.A.A.F. and were assigned to the pursuit squadrons as trainers. There were no spares available for them.

B-10s or B-18s were also assigned to the pursuit units.

The 17th Pursuit had two B-10s and two A-27s.

Part III Fighter Diary

December 3, 1941—Unidentified aircraft were detected; interception was attempted, without success.

December 4, 1941—More "bogies" were spotted but no interceptions were made.

The 21st Pursuit Squadron began to receive P-40Es to replace their P-35As.

December 6, 1941—More "bogies" were chased.

All air units were alerted and guards were increased.

Colonel H. H. George warned the men of the 21st Pursuit Squadron of the possibility of war, "in a matter of hours."

December 7, 1941—Lt. General Brereton took command of the U. S. Air Forces Far East.

One B-18A, flown by Lt. Col. R. T. Elmore, commander of the 5th Air Base Group, made a reconnaissance of Mindanao. He reported, "Everything peaceable."

A "combat alert" was ordered for December 8th.

The 20th Pursuit had eighteen P-40Bs in commission.

Another "bogey" was reported.

About midnight, word was received of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

December 8, 1941—

0030—The men of the 17th Pursuit Squadron were having a "half-way" party to celebrate the midpoint of their tour of duty in the Philippines. They would be going home in a year. The party was held at the "Carabao Club," the officers club at Nichols Field. Announcement of the Pearl Harbor attack interrupted festivities.

0230—The 21st Pursuit Squadron, commanded by William E. Dyess, was alerted and told of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

0400—The 3rd Pursuit Squadron, from Iba Field, took off in their P-40Es in an attempt to intercept enemy bombers that had been spotted by Iba radar. No contact was made. It was later determined that the bombers had been flying at a higher altitude than was believed at the time.

0500—Lt. Gen. Brereton reported to Headquarters for orders. He spoke to Gen. Sutherland but did not see MacArthur.

Dawn—Godofredo Juliano and two other pilots of the 6th Philippine Pursuit flew their P-26As from Zablan Field to Clark Field for instructions. They were told to reconnoiter along the coast from Lingayen Gulf to Bataan. They saw nothing and returned to Zablan after daylight.

Three six-plane flights of the 17th Pursuit took off from Nichols Field and patrolled North of Clark.

0715—Brereton returned to headquarters. He was told to stand by.

0925—The 17th Pursuit landed at Clark Field, having made no contact with the enemy, and refueled. They were followed by the 20th Pursuit.

Twenty-five Japanese Army Air Force bombers attacked Tuguearao, Tarlac and Baguio.

0930—Enemy bombers were reported 25 to 30 miles off the west coast of Luzon, apparently heading for Manila. Each of the Pursuit Squadrons scrambled eighteen planes. The 17th was ordered to patrol over Manila Bay. Neither the 20th Pursuit's P-40Bs nor the 17th Pursuit's P-40Es made any contact. The 17th landed at Nichols, refueled and took off for Clark Field. They could not land at Clark and diverted to Del Carmen, where they spent a very uncomfortable night outdoors.

1030—A flight of sixteen aircraft from the 21st Pursuit took off for Clark Field.

1035—A second flight, including Lt. Sam Grashio, took off. Both flights of the 21st climbed to 24,000 feet. The second flight made contact with the enemy and shot down three dive bombers. Lt. Grashio's plane got a hole in one wing.

During the day, the 21st received four P-40Es. Many of their new aircraft had not been flown before and there was an ammunition shortage. It appears that the 21st was flying a mixture of P-35As and P-40Es, at this point.

1130—About this time, there was raid by Japanese Navy bombers of the 11th Air Fleet based on Formosa. It consisted of 54 "Betty" and 54 "Nell" twin-engined bombers, accompanied by 84 A6M2 "Zeros." They approached Clark Field from the west, at 20,000 feet. Several of the 6th Pursuit's P-26As headed for Clark Field. The 17th Pursuit took off from Nichols Field in their P-40Es to patrol the Bataan area. They arrived after the raid, made no contact, and landed at Del Carmen. The 34th Pursuit, from Del Carmen, patrolled over Manila, along with the 3rd Pursuit from Iba Field. The 3rd landed at O'Donnell Field. The results of this raid were eight P-40s destroyed on the ground, five shot down, and three crashed on landing. One enemy bomber and several fighters were claimed destroyed. Lt. Donnelson of the 3rd Pursuit claimed two enemy aircraft.

1145—P-35As of the 21st Pursuit scrambled from Del Carmen to cover Clark Field, but arrived after the end of the attack.

1215—Clark Field was raided by 54 enemy bombers and 34 "Zeros." The bombers came over at 22,000 to 25,000 feet in two waves, fifteen minutes apart. The "Zeros" formed a third wave. The men of the 20th Pursuit tried to take off to intercept. Lts. Joseph H. Moore, R. B. Keator and E. B. Gilmore succeeded. The next four pilots were caught by bombs while taking off. Four or five of the enemy aircraft were shot down. Ten of our fighters were destroyed on the ground and fifteen of the seventeen B-17Ds on the field were destroyed. Most of the 25 to 30 miscellaneous aircraft, including B-10s, B-18s, O-52s, O-49s, O-19s, OA-9s, A-27s, a Sikorsky amphibian, two Beechcrafts



P-26A with unnamed Filipino Pilot.

(Photo - Boeing P 28976)



A-27's of the 17th Pursuit Squadron, Nicholas Field. These planes were destined for delivery to Siam and are shown with Siamese camouflage markings, believed to be dark green and dark earth.

(Photo - Lt. Col. Armstrong)

and O-46s, were destroyed. (The two Beechcrafts were cannibalized and later made into one flyable aircraft.)

Six 3rd Pursuit P-40s, returning to Iba to refuel, were caught in a bombing raid. Only Lt. Krieger's plane landed safely. Two "Zeros" were probably shot down. Only two 3rd Pursuit P-40s remained. The Iba Field radar was destroyed.

Nichols Field was evacuated as being too exposed. Only an auxiliary airstrip was open at Clark Field, and it was so dusty as to be almost unuseable. The 34th Pursuit moved to a canyon one mile north of Del Carmen. The air raid warning system broke down almost completely. Forty-two to fifty-three P-40s and three P-35As were destroyed. Seven "Zeros" were claimed.

December 9, 1941

0001—Several Japanese aircraft, probably "Mavis" flying boats, attacked Nichols Field. Only eight to ten bombs were dropped and little damage was done.

0430—Six P-40Es took off from Florida Blanca, a dirt airstrip near Del Carmen. Dust on the field was so thick that it required five to ten minutes to settle after a landing or takeoff. The pilots were Lts. William J. Feallock, Sheppard, Cross and Lodin, of the 17th Pursuit, and two others from the 20th Pursuit. Lt. Feallock had been assigned to Headquarters, U. S. Army Air Forces, Far East, but was continuing to fly with the 17th Pursuit. Lt. William Lodin was killed when his P-40 taxied at an angle to the runway and struck a dike at the edge. Apparently, he had been blinded by dust.



P-35A Assigned to Lt. B.D. "Buzz" Wagner, Commanding Officer of the 17th at Nichols Field, 1941.

(Photo - Lt. Col. Armstrong)



*P-40B at the Philippine Air Depot, 1941.
(Photo - Lt. Col. Armstrong)*

0513—Lt. Grant Mahoney, on reconnaissance, reported an enemy landing at Vigan. Fighters scrambled to oppose it. Lt. Meritt was killed when his plane exploded. Lt. Sheppard and another pilot encountered three enemy bombers off Vigan and downed two. In the fight, Lt. Sheppard's radiator was punctured and he had to bail out, Lt. Morgan McCowan was killed on landing.

0530—Seven "Nells" bombed Nichols Field and got away without being intercepted.

Dawn—The 21st Pursuit sent up a flight. Lt. R. D. Clark was killed on takeoff, another plane cracked up.

0800—A B-18 went up from San Marcelino Field with Gus Heiss and F. E. Timlin.

Late Afternoon—Lt. Julianio left his two men at Clark Field and returned to Batangas. At that time, the field was being repaired, the fires were out, and anti-aircraft guns were being set up. There were no oxygen supplies at Clark Field.

December 10, 1941

0600—The 17th and 21st Pursuit Squadrons took off from Clark Field in their P-40Es and P-35As, along with five B-17Ds, to attack Japanese troops and shipping at Vigan. The B-17Ds bombed enemy shipping and the fighters made three runs against the ships. On the last pass, Lt. Samuel H. Marrett was killed when a ship that he had just strafed blew up. He was the only American pilot to be lost on this mission. Another man on this flight was J. P. Dale. Later in the day, the 5th Air Group, Japanese Army Air Force, began to use Vigan Field for fighter operations.

WINTER — 1968

Morning—Captain Dyess damaged an enemy aircraft during a flight.

1115—Lt. Sheppard (17th Pursuit), Lt. R. S. Wray (21st Pursuit), Capt. W. M. Rowe, and at least seven other pilots from the 17th, 21st and 34th Pursuit Squadrons, took off for an interception mission over Manila. Several enemy aircraft were claimed destroyed, and Lt. Sheppard's P-40E was damaged. They landed at Clark Field.

About the same time, Lts. J. H. Moore, C. P. Gies, and two other 20th Pursuit pilots took off, during a bombing raid, to protect Clark Field. They engaged five enemy fighters and Moore shot down two. He was also credited with saving the life of one of his companions who had parachuted.

1145—Zablan Field was attacked by a number of "Zeros." Four of the 6th Philippine Pursuit's pilots managed to take off in their P-26As; Captain Jesus A. Villamor and Lts. Jose Gozar, Godofredo Julianio and Alberto Aranzoso. During the ensuing fight, Lt. Goser's guns jammed, a common occurrence, and he determined to ram an enemy plane. As it happens, his P-26 was too slow to catch the intended victim. The Filipinos disrupted and beat off the attack, then landed at Zablan.

A bit later, the Zablan Field units moved to Wack Wack Golf Club in Rizal Province. They remained there until December 23, 1941.

1230—Lt. Boyd D. "Buzz" Wagner, Capt. William E. Dyess and Lt. William Feallock were among the pilots who intercepted a Japanese bombing raid over the Manila dock area.

They were supposed to meet another flight, but contact was never made. Dyess' guns were not functioning, and a number of the 34th Pursuit's P-35As could not be flown. As Wagner, Dyess and Feallock came in for a landing at Nichols Field, very low on fuel, Feallock spotted a number of "Zekes" over Zablan. He retracted his landing gear and flaps, and turned into the "Zekes" hoping to give his companions a chance to land on the bomb-cratered field. His guns were frozen and after about six circles at low level, his plane was badly shot up and afire. Feallock bailed out at 400 feet altitude over Calumpit. He was injured and was assigned to headquarters as Gen. Sutherland's aide for the next few weeks.

The 21st Pursuit was ordered to Lubao Field. Lubao was incomplete, but work was carried on round the clock by the squadron's personnel and 300 Filipino laborers.

1440—Thirty-four "Zeros" strafed the Manila area. One was shot down by anti-aircraft fire.

1445—Eighteen "Zeros" attacked Del Carmen and one was shot down.

1458—Twenty-seven "Betties" bombed shipping in Manila Bay.

1500—Twenty-seven "Betties" bombed Nichols Field.

1510—"Betties" bombed Cavite.

The weather was bad all day. This was the rainy season.

Night—Lt. Grant M. Mahoney, of the 3rd Pursuit, flew a reconnaissance mission and noted heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire.

December 11, 1941

During the day, Lt. Mahoney and others of the 3rd Pursuit, took off from Nichols Field to bomb enemy forces near Legaspi. They had rigged bomb racks on their P-40s.

Unfortunately, when the time came the bombs would not release. The 3rd strafed, instead, and destroyed an enemy flying boat and a radio station. They were able to land safely, despite the bombs still on the racks.

Mahoney sent a cable to his mother from Manila: "Everything all right. Have a safe job."

The Distinguished Service Cross was awarded to Dale, Gies, Keator, Moore, Wagner, Goser, Villamor, Marrett and Mahoney.

That night, Major Sales was killed when an observation plane in which he was taking off struck a cable. (The takeoff was attempted without lights.)

Due to bad weather over Formosa, there were no bombing raids.

December 12, 1941

0830—Lt. Cesar Basa, 6th Philippine Pursuit, was sent off on a reconnaissance in his P-26A from Batangas Field. The rest of his squadron remained on alert at Batangas.

1030—The Filipinos spotted a formation of fifty-four enemy bombers approaching in two equal vees, at ten thousand feet. Five P-26As were operational and these were immediately manned by Villamor, Juliano, Antonio Mondigo, Geronimo Aclan and Manuel Conde. They gained altitude just in time to encounter the second vee of twenty-seven bombers, escorted by seven "Zeros." Villamor, Conde and Aclan went after the bombers and were pursued by four of the "Zeros." In the meantime, Juliano and Mondigo had gotten into a dogfight with the three other "Zekes." Mondigo's P-26A was shot down and he parachuted out. As he dangled, he was approached by enemy fighters. Seeing this, Juliano fired then and decoyed them away, saving Mondigo's life. Juliano's P-26 was riddled and his guns rendered inoperative, but he managed to land at Zablan, as did Villamor. Aclan evaded a "Zero" in some clouds and landed safely at Maniquis Field.



One of the U.S. "Flying Forts" destroyed on the ground. 19th Bomb Group, Mareeba, Australia (August 1942).

(Photo - Doug Logan)



Japanese 20 MM shell damage to B-17 wing in air combat, March 1942, 19th Bomb Group. (Photo - Logan)

Conde escaped from another "Zero" and landed at Batangas. About 1100, Lt. Basa arrived, low on fuel. The fight was on and he was shot down and killed. One Japanese plane was shot down during the fight. The "kill" is usually credited to Captain Villamor.

A Philippine Air Force Base has been named for Basa. The Filipino fighter pilots were awarded the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster for their fights of December 10th and 12th. After the war, they were awarded the Philippine Golf Cross with Bronze Anahaw Leaf.

Following this engagement, the 6th Pursuit evacuated to Langilang Elementary School in Batangas Province, and then to La Loma, until December 23rd.

1130 to 1200—Sixty-three Japanese Navy bombers bombed Clark Field.

1200—Fifteen Japanese fighters attacked Maniquis and destroyed eleven out of seventeen aircraft there. One of the raiders was shot down by ground fire.

1305—Twenty-seven "Betties" encountered heavy clouds over Manila and bombed Batangas instead.

Afternoon—Lts. Gilmore and Straus shot down two enemy aircraft over Del Carmen.

"Buzz" Wagner shot down two Japanese Army Air Force "Nate" fixed-landing-gear fighters.

Aircraft in commission: twenty-two P-40s (six more being repaired), five to eight P-35As, and several P-26s.

After December 12th, the 17th, 21st and 34th Pursuit Squadrons were consolidated and operated as one unit.

From December 12th through the 21, the 3rd, 21st, and 34th Pursuit Squadrons operated in daily reconnaissance over southern Luzon. The 17th and 20th operated similarly over Luzon, during the same period.

December 13, 1941

Dawn—Del Carmen Field was raided.

1030 to 1100—Japanese Army bombers attacked Clark Field, Baguio and Tarlac.

WINTER - 1968

1230—The Japanese Navy attacked Del Carmen, Clark, Nichols, Cabanatuan and Batangas Fields.

"Buzz" Wagner took off, probably from Clark Field, alone, to Aparri. He was credited with destroying four enemy fighters and strafing an airfield.

1325—Twenty-six "Betties" bombed Del Carmen.

1352—Twenty-six "Betties" bombed Olongapo.

1444—Twenty-six "Betties" bombed Nichols Field.

1430 to 1500—Fourteen "Zeros" attacked Nichols Field and Camp Murphy. A P-40 intercepted them.

December 14, 1941

1115—Twenty-six "Betties" bombed Del Carmen. A little while later, shipping in Manila Bay was attacked.

1400—Fifteen "Zeros" attacked Del Carmen and Nichols Fields.

The Japanese established air bases at Aparri, Vigan, Tuguearao, Legaspi and Davao. During the day, nine "Zeros" commenced operations from Legaspi.

Lt. Jose Gozar, flying a P-26, was credited with engaging three enemy aircraft, downing one, and driving off the other two.

Aircraft in commission as of noon G.M.T. (2000 local time): Mindanao—six B-17Ds, one B-18; Luzon—one B-18, eighteen P-40s, six P-35As, two O-52s and three O-49s.

December 15, 1941

A few Japanese planes raided Del Monte Field.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—four B-17Ds, one B-18; Luzon—one B-18, two B-17Ds, seven P-35A, sixteen P-40s, two O-52s and three O-49s. Two more P-40s were in need of repairs.

December 16, 1941—

Lts. Church, Straus and Wagner attacked Vigan. In the course of the action, Lt. Church's plane was hit and set afire by anti-aircraft fire. He bombed anyway, instead of bailing out, and was killed. One enemy aircraft was shot down, twenty-five destroyed on the ground by dive bombing and strafing.

John L. Brownell of the 17th Pursuit was sent by Gen. Sutherland to Del Monte with a P-40E to "act as General Sharp's reconnaissance." Sharp was the commander in the southern Philippines. Brownell removed two of the machine guns, the radio, and other equipment from his P-40E, to lighten it. On his arrival at Del Monte, he was shot at by anti-aircraft machine guns at the field. He escaped without injury to himself or his plane. Until the end of February, 1942, Brownell was the only fighter pilot regularly operating in the southern Philippines. His recon missions covered Palawan, Cebu, Zamboanga, Davao and Mindanao, flying every two or three days. Little was to be seen, except at Davao harbor. On one mission, he saw thirty-four major vessels there, including three battleships, four cruisers, seven destroyers and four transports. He saw no aircraft carriers.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—seven B-17Ds, three B-18s, one C-39; Luzon—nine P-35As, one B-18, twenty-one



19 Bomb Group B-17's on late December (1941) mission from Del Monte, Mindanao to Lingayan Gulf, Luzon. Target: Japanese landing areas. (Taken by 127 camera on first mission by Cpl. Logan) (Photo - Logan)

P-40s, one O-52, three O-49s and two A-27s. Two P-35As, two B-18s, one B-17D and two A-27s had been placed in commission.

December 18, 1941—

0300—Two B-18s and one C-39 left Nichols Field with a number of passengers, mostly pursuit pilots (including Lt. Mahoney) heading for Australia.

During the day, Lt. Boyd Wagner had an engagement with several "Zeros" while flying his P-40. He became an ace.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—Two B-17Ds, one B-18; enroute to Australia from Mindanao—ten B-17Ds, two B-18s and one C-39; Luzon—one B-18, nine P-35As, twenty-one P-40s, one O-52, three O-49s and two A-27s. Two B-17Ds had been commissioned.

December 19, 1941—

Planes from the aircraft carrier *Ryujo* raided Del Monte. They claimed six USAAF planes shot down and five burned on the ground. Other raids were carried out on Nichols Field, where they claimed eight bombers destroyed, and Camp Murphy.

All but two or three of the P-40s at Clark Field (about nine) were sent to San Marcelino for maintenance. They were led by Lt. Sheppard. One, flown by Lt. Rowland, was destroyed on landing. Rowland returned to Clark Field flying a P-35A with a bent propeller and one landing gear strut replaced by a timber.

One C-39, two B-18s and one B-17D left separately for Del Monte. General Claggett was a passenger on one of the B-18s. He carried reports for A.A.F. Headquarters with him. One of the B-18s was destroyed and the other damaged on the ground at Del Monte.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—three B-17Ds, Luzon—nine P-35As, twenty-three P-40s, one O-52, three O-49s and two A-27s. In the past 24 hours, two P-40s and one B-17 had been commissioned; one B-18 was destroyed and one damaged.

December 20, 1941—

Afternoon—Japanese bombers lightly bombed Nichols Field.

Lt. W. A. Cooke was killed in the air. He had held a pre-war glider endurance record.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—one P-40; Luzon—eight P-35As, nineteen P-40s, three O-49s and two A-27s. Three P-40s were being overhauled and one O-52 had been damaged.

December 21, 1941—

Lt. Walter Coss of the 20th Pursuit Squadron walked onto Clark Field. He had been shot down near Aparri over a week before.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—two P-40s (one from Luzon); Luzon—twenty-one P-40s, eight P-35As, three O-49s and two A-27s. One P-40, was commissioned.

December 22, 1941—

Two P-35As were taken out of commission and two P-40s were placed in commission.

December 23, 1941—

0500—Several Do.24 flying boats of the Royal Netherlands Navy arrived at Davao Harbor to attack Japanese shipping. They had taken off from the Netherlands East Indies. It appeared to them that U. S. aircraft had recently completed an attack. Several fires were seen. It seems doubtful that a U. S. attack had taken place.

Morning—The 24th Pursuit Group sent twelve P-40s and six P-35As, armed with fragmentation bombs, to attack enemy landings at San Miguel Bay.

Afternoon—Lts. Gilmore and White led a reconnaissance mission. On returning, two P-35As crashed while landing.

Philippine Lt. Jose Karge shot down an enemy plane while on reconnaissance.

Aircraft in commission: Mindanao—one P-40; Luzon—nineteen P-40s, five P-35As, three O-49s, two A-27s. Two P-40s had been damaged landing, one was in maintenance and one had returned from Mindanao. Three P-35As were in maintenance.

December 24, 1941—

All flyable aircraft at Clark Field (fifteen A-27s, P-35As, P-40Bs and P-40Es) were dispatched to a secret airfield near Lubao. None of the pilots had ever been there. It was so well camouflaged as a sugar cane field that it could not be located from the air. The planes were diverted to Neilson Field. One plane, piloted by Lt. Marable, cracked up. The aircraft was destroyed and Marable was injured. The rest went on to Del Carmen.

At Del Carmen, a number of unflyable P-35s were lined up to act as decoys for enemy bombers.

Afternoon—Two PBV "Catalinas" flew in from Manila to evacuate Gen. Brereton, Col. Eubanks, and others, to Darwin, Australia. The PBVs were probably from the U. S. Navy's Patrol Wing 10.

The Philippine Army Air Corps was ordered to destroy its remaining aircraft and join U. S. forces retreating to Bataan. They assembled at Rodriguez Park, Bataan, and were organized as a Provisional Infantry Regiment commanded by Maj. Pelagio Cruz. They were attached to the 71st Infantry Division at Agloloma Point.

December 25, 1941—

John Brownell spotted three "Mavis" flying boats on the water south of Davao and attacked them. Of his four guns, only one would fire; but he made three passes. Two of the flying boats took off and so did three "Zekes." Brownell got one bullet through his cockpit canopy, his left aileron cable was cut by another. He discovered the cut cable while landing at Del Monte. Nothing unusual was seen at Davao.

Corregidor was heavily bombed but Bataan was not. Lubao's runway was now 3,500 feet long.



Singosari aerodrome, Malang, Java, January 1942. They came in fast and low with no warning, strafed, then dive bombed and killed two more B-17's.

(Photo - Logan)

WINTER — 1968

December 26, 1941—

While on a reconnaissance mission, Capt. Dyess and Charles Sprague shot down a dive bomber. Dyess' P-40 got three bullet holes.

Three O-49s, piloted by Lts. Stafford, Dillard and Owen, flew from Neilson Field to Corregidor.

Nine P-40s from Clark Field flew to Nielson where two crashed. The remaining seven flew to Bataan.

Later in the day, one A-27 flew reconnaissance from Neilson Field. On return, it was damaged while landing. Later it was flown to Corregidor by Lt. James McAfee of the 27th Bombardment Group.

Clark and San Marcelino Fields were abandoned, along with much equipment.

December 27, 1941—

Lubao was the only important field operating on Luzon. Reconnaissance missions were still being flown.

December 28, 1941—

Capt. Dyess shot down a "Zero." His P-40 was damaged again.

Eighteen enemy aircraft bombed the port area of Manila during the morning. No U. S. aircraft could be seen from the ground.

A dispatch claimed that a total of eighty Japanese aircraft had been shot down and seventeen destroyed by anti-aircraft fire. The claim is believed to be exaggerated.

December 29, 1941—

Blackout regulations in the Philippines were rescinded.

December 30, 1941—

Corregidor and Mariveles were bombed. American truck convoys were also attacked.

Capt. Dyess and another pilot strafed a Japanese truck convoy. They made two passes and destroyed seven trucks.

December 31, 1941—

Coss, Blanton, Cruzel, Dale, Neri, Gies and Gilmore were ordered to Australia. At 1500, they took off in a twin-engined Beech piloted by Capt. Louis J. Connelly, formerly of Philippine Air Lines. Their first stop was Del Monte.

Aircraft in commission: Lubao—nine P-40Es, five P-35As, one P-40B down for an engine change; Orani Field—two P-40Es and one twin-engined Beech; Bataan—one twin-engined and one single-engined Beechcraft; Manila—two P-40Es down for repairs for forty-eight hours; Nichols Field—one O-52.

January 1, 1942—

0400—The evacuation flight which had begun the day before took off from Del Monte for Tarakan, Borneo. Their route from Tarakan was to Balikpapan, Macassar, Laepang and Darwin. The weather was very bad throughout the flight. The passengers were picked up at Darwin by a B-24 and flown to Brisbane.

About this date, William Feallock flew a PT-13 from Corregidor to Bataan and transferred to a P-40. He continued on to Cebu, carrying messages from MacArthur to the commander of the Visayas.

Corregidor was bombed. Several interceptions were attempted, with no success.

Lt. Hennon strafed enemy armored vehicles near Cabanatuan.

Lt. Rowland strafed barges and shot down an enemy plane near Alabat. His plane was damaged and he made a forced landing in the bay.

January 2, 1942—

Dawn—Feallock flew his P-40 into Del Monte from Cebu.

A second evacuation flight was set up. Lts. Kiser, Anderson, Hennon, Sheppard, McFarland, Wagner, Rowland, Irvin and Sprague were the passengers. The weather was still very bad. The twin-engine Beechcraft was in very poor condition. Part of one wing leading edge had been replaced with sheet metal, and there was some doubt that the plane was airworthy. The cabin was loaded with five-gallon fuel cans which were poured through a hose into the right wing tank while in flight. The flight made it to Banjarmasin, where the passengers were transferred to a PBV and flown to Surabaya.

About this date, the 20th Pursuit moved to an airfield at Mariveles. It had been constructed by widening a road that ran through some rice paddies. They began building revetments, as they expected reinforcements from the U.S. The 20th also began to salvage a Navy J2F "Duck" which had been partially sunk in the harbor by strafing.

Manila was occupied by the Japanese.

January 3, 1942—

Lubao Field was abandoned.

The eighteen aircraft of the 21st Pursuit Squadron were equally divided between the 17th (Pilar Field) and 34th (Orani Field) Pursuit Squadrons. The 220 men of the 21st Pursuit were reassigned to infantry, as the Air Force Battalion of the 71st Infantry Division. They were issued what weapons were available, mostly M1903 rifles and a few machine guns, and very sketchily trained. Several weeks later, they were reconstituted as the 21st Pursuit Squadron, with five P-40s. They were used for supply drops, reconnaissance and bombing.

Sixty Japanese aircraft bombed Corregidor. Three were claimed shot down.

January 4, 1942—

1200—Two nine-plane flights of P-40s took off from Bataan to intercept enemy fighters near Corregidor. The first flight was led by Lt. Woolery and the second by Capt. Dyess. Woolery's flight made an interception, but the results are unknown. Dyess' flight made no contact. Both flights refueled and Dyess' flight went to Bataan Field. Woolery's flight headed for Del Monte. En route Lts. Wilcox and Cole crashed.

Twenty-one enemy aircraft bombed Corregidor. Four were shot down. It is not known if this was the same raid opposed by the 1200 flights.

By this time, food was in very short supply. The men were eating monkeys and lizards.

January 5, 1942—

Fifty-two Japanese bombers attacked Corregidor.

U. S. aircraft attacked enemy ships off Davao. They claimed to have damaged a battleship and sunk a destroyer.

The Japanese claimed that only five U. S. aircraft were left in the Philippines.

January 6, 1942—

0646—Lt. Powell and Capt. Rowe took off from Pilar Field in their P-40s for a reconnaissance of northern Luzon. While on the mission, they encountered six enemy bombers. Lt. Powell's P-40 was damaged and he had to parachute out. Capt. Rowe landed at Orani, since Pilar's runway had been destroyed.

A second Japanese destroyer was reported to have been sunk by U. S. aircraft.

Fifty enemy planes bombed Corregidor, Olongapo and Mariveles.

AIR ATTACK ON BATAAN

January 7, 1942—

Bataan Field was raided by enemy bombers. Two U. S. fighters took off but were jumped by escorting fighters.

The Japanese announced that they had one cruiser damaged and one submarine sunk, not a battleship damaged and two destroyers sunk.

January 8, 1942—

0900—Three P-40s, flown by Capt. Rowe, Lt. Posten and another, took off from Pilar Field for a reconnaissance of the west coast, Iba, and Tarlac. During the flight they spotted and attacked six enemy bombers, damaging three of them. They then strafed enemy troops and landed at Bataan.

No enemy bombing raids were reported.

January 16, 1942—

0700—Five P-40s, led by Capt. Rowe, took off to provide air cover for our troops. They strafed a road and chased off a Japanese observation plane.

January 17, 1942—

During the night, Col. Vance took off from Bataan in an A-27 and crash-landed at Del Monte.

January 18, 1942—

0800—Capt. Rowe and another pilot flew a convoy protection mission in a pair of P-40s. They claimed a "Zero" and two dive bombers probably destroyed.

January 19, 1942—

Lts. M. J. Anderson and J. M. Hall flew a mission.

One of our pilots, and his aircraft, was lost. One enemy plane was claimed shot down.

January 21, 1942—

Late in the day, P-40s bombed Neilson Field, which was being used by the enemy.



Topper. Dirty, tired, and overworked. Over a hundred hours of combat missions in March 1942.

(Photo - Logan)

January 23, 1942—

Aircraft in commission: nine P-40Es, two P-40Bs, and at least two P-35As.

January 26, 1942—

Two P-40s attacked three enemy dive bombers, downing one and damaging the other two.

In the afternoon, seven of our fighters from Cabcaben took off to attack Nichols Field. One crashed on takeoff. The remaining six destroyed thirty-seven enemy aircraft, returned to Cabacaben and refueled. They took off for a second raid, but when they reached Nichols, they found that the smoke was so thick that they were unable to bomb.

January 27, 1942—

Two bombers arrived at Del Monte from Australia with a load of ammunition, a Consolidated LB-30, serial number 40-2376, commanded by Lt. Ben I. Funk. AL609, commanded by Lt. Wade; and a B-24A, serial number.

1300—The two bombers took off for Darwin carrying two officers and thirty-nine enlisted men. Approximately twenty B-17s, B-24s and LB-30s evacuated people from Del Monte, between December 20, 1941 and April 15, 1942.

February 1, 1942—

Three more heavy bombers delivered ammunition to Del Monte.

Night—Four P-40s from Bataan made three separate raids on landing barges in Agloloma Bay. Pilots participating in the raids were Lts. Brown, Baker, Grashio, Glover, Posten, Stinson, Stone and White.

February 6, 1942—

Cabanatuan Field was completed. During February a large number of auxiliary airstrips were established on Mindanao. They were set up on the Sayre Highway from Cagayan to Malaybalay. There were approximately a dozen around Del Monte and another six, forth miles from Davao.

Capt. Rowe and another pilot, in a pair of P-40Es, dropped medical supplies to troops in northern Luzon. They were attacked by two "Zeros" but were able to lose their attackers.

Lt. Baker overshot the airstrip while landing his P-40. It burned, but he got out somewhat injured.

February 8, 1942—

1525—Several P-40s took off. Lt. White's P-40 crashed while landing, but he got out all right.

February 9, 1942—

Six P-40s and a PT-13 photo plane took off from Cabcaben. The PT-13 was piloted by Capt. Villamor, with Master Sergeant Juan Abanes as photographer. The P-40s were led by Ben Brown. Their mission was to photograph artillery on Cavite. While returning to base, they were attacked by six enemy fighters. The left wing of the PT-13 was damaged but Villamor landed it safely. The P-40s shot down all six of the "Zeros." Lt. Earl Stone, Jr., and his P-40, was lost. The pictures came out well.

February 13, 1942—

Between Bataan and Cabcaben Fields, there were five P-40s, one O-1, a Bellanca, a Beechcraft, and a few other aircraft. Three of the P-40s and the miscellaneous planes were at Bataan.

Captain Joseph H. Moore had raised the sunken Navy J2F "Duck" at Mariveles. It was repaired and used for supply flights. They named it the "Candy Clipper."

Capt. Dyess had named his P-40 "Kibosh."

Late February the 26th Cavalry's horses and mules were killed and eaten.

February 25, 1942—

0830—Cpts. Rowe and Dyess dropped medical supplies to men in northern Luzon, with their P-40Es. Capt. Rowe's P-40E was damaged by a "Zero."

March 2, 1942—

Dyess, Posten, White and Grashio bombed shipping near Olongapo. Dyess had a 500 lb. bomb; Posten had fragmentation bombs. They sank a 100-ton motor vessel and damaged other ships. White was shot down. Grashio tried to bomb Grand Island, but his "frags" would not release and he returned to Mariveles.

Dyess flew two more missions that day, the last at twilight with John Burns. They destroyed a transport. Lt. Burns crashed while landing. Three others also crashed at Mariveles that day.

Capt. Dyess described his P-40E, "Kibosh," as being painted olive drab and having 65 to 70 bright blue patches.

March 5, 1942—

A P-40 was constructed by cannibalizing a number of unflyable P-40s. Two P-35As arrived on Bataan from Mindanao. The total aircraft present were two P-40s, two P-35As, one J2F, and a few miscellaneous planes.

March 11, 1942—

A bomber from Batchelor Field, Australia, piloted by Lt. Harl Pease, Jr., arrived with supplies and evacuated sixteen men. S/Sgt. D. H. Logan was crew member/gunner on this flight.

March 13, 1942—

A bomber with supplies for the Philippines, piloted by Capt. H. C. Godman, went down at sea. Five crewmen survived.

March 14, 1942—

Capt. Rowe was sent in a P-40B to scout Clark and Neilson Fields for bombers based in Australia. He reported that the Japanese were using both fields and was ordered not to make any attacks on his own.

March 17, 1942—

Three Flying Fortresses were reported to have landed supplies at Bataan. This is very doubtful, since existing fields were too small for such large aircraft. Several supply flights did come in using a Beech 17, a Bellanca, and a J2F. These were referred to as the "Bamboo Fleet."

Late in March, 1942—

A few Japanese Navy dive bombers attacked Del Monte. Little damage was done. There were no buildings at the airfield. The living quarters were three miles away, and the planes were well camouflaged.

March 23, 1942 (approximately)—

Lt. John P. Randolph and Lt. Raymond "Lou" Gehrig flew a PT-13 from Bataan to Iloilo. They remained overnight and, when they awoke, found that they had been cut off by a Japanese landing. They remained in a house during the day. When Japanese troops searched the area, they hid under the front steps. That night they escaped to Negros Island aboard a banca, got word to Del Monte. The next day, John Brownell flew to Binalbogan and picked them up in a P-35A. He blew the tail wheel tire while landing. Both of Brownell's passengers rode the baggage compartment to Del Monte.

March 27, 1942—

Three crated P-40s had been brought into the port of Gingoog by a small steamer. Gingoog had a 2,500 foot airstrip. They were to be assembled within a week. These were the only aircraft received in the Philippines after the war began.

April 7, 1942—

The airfields on Bataan were shelled by enemy warships and all aircraft were grounded.



Scratch one bomb-sight and one bombardier. 19th Bomb Group, May 1942. 7.7 MM holes in nose. (Photo - Logan)

April 8, 1942—

Late in the day, Lt. Jack Donaldson loaded six 30 lb. fragmentation bombs on "Kibosh" and bombed the enemy. "Kibosh" was destroyed in a wheels-up landing on Cebu.

It was obvious that the remaining planes would have to evacuate Bataan.

2130—Capt Moore flew the remaining P-40 (the made-up one) to Cebu and remained for the night. He was followed by O. L. Lunde in a P-35A, with a passenger, probably R. B. Keator, in the baggage compartment. The remaining P-35A had three men aboard, "Hank" Thorne, Ben Brown, and another. The "Duck" flew out with six men aboard. One of them was Carlos P. Romulo. The "Duck" was later flown to a beach near Cagayan, from Bataan, with nine aboard. With this load a flight of 150 miles was necessary to gain 200 feet altitude.

April 9, 1942—

Noon—Bataan surrendered.

Afternoon—Moore flew his P-40 from Cebu to Del Monte. When he arrived, he found two P-40s made of parts of damaged aircraft and two of the P-40s that had been landed at Gingoog.

April 12, 1942—

Gen. Wainwright dispatched two small aircraft with 150 lbs. of documents, from Corregidor to Mindanao. The papers were to be delivered to Gen. Sutherland, personally, in Australia. They arrived in Australia on April 19, 1942. One of the aircraft was a Beech 17 and the other was probably a Bellanca.

Capt. Moore was among a number of people evacuated. They left aboard several B-25s and B-17s which had flown to Del Monte, a few days before, from Australia. In the intervening time, they carried out a series of attacks on Japanese forces in the Philippines.

April 13, 1942—

A B-24 arrived at Del Monte and departed for Darwin with thirty-nine aboard, including John L. Brownell and William J. Feallock. The last B-24 flight from Del Monte took place a day or two later.

April 29, 1942—

Two Navy flying-boats arrived at Corregidor to evacuate personnel. They loaded up with thirty nurses, four female civilians, and seventeen officers, mostly specialists—including code experts. Both aircraft flew to Lake Lanao, Mindanao, to refuel. One was damaged there, and its twenty-five passengers and three crewmen remained. The other flying-boat, with its passengers continued on to Australia. One passenger left behind was Col. Stuart Wood, Gen. Wainwright's assistant intelligence chief.

The five P-40s at Del Monte flew after April 9th. It appears that they cooperated with the B-17s and B-25s that left the Philippines on April 12th. It is probable that they continued flying and fighting, right up to the end of the campaign, but the author has no details of their activities. If anyone has additional details about the Gingoog P-40s, or the end of the campaign, the author would appreciate hearing from them.

17th Pursuit Squadron Personnel, December 8, 1941 Original personnel from Selfridge Field

K. J. Gregg—transferred to HQ, FEAF before the war, died at Cabanatuan.

Boyd D. Wagner—died November 30, 1942.

George H. Armstrong—prisoner, released, living in Great Falls, Montana.

Russell Church—died at Vigan, shot down by A.A. fire.

McInnes—prisoner.

Sloan—died at Bataan, while on the ground, during an attack.

Carl Lichter—

Charles E. Trostel—transferred to an Observation Squadron at Clark Field, before the war.

William J. Feallock—presently a Colonel, USAF.

Bruce—died in a B-17 crash while on leave in New Zealand.

John L. Brownell—living in Tucson, Arizona.

Grant Mahoney—died, possibly in India.

Hauson—killed in bombing raid at Nichols Field.

Raymond Gehrig—believed living in the eastern U.S.A.

William Sheppard—believed living.

Walter Colpitts—prisoner, released.

Strauss—killed in air raid on Darwin Australia.

Walter L. Coss—

Gerald McCallum—killed at Surabaya, February 27, 1942.

Keenan—killed aboard USS Langley, off Java.

Joined the 17th P.S. about February 15, 1941

Holbrecht—killed.

Phillips—prisoner.

William Stone—killed over Bataan, February 10, 1942.

David L. Obert—believed living in Chicago.

Posten—

William Glover—prisoner.

Nathaniel H. Blanton—

Jack D. Dale—

Kruzel—

Rowe—

Kiser—evacuated to Surabaya, January 2, 1942.

Joined the 17th P. S. about July, 1941

Jerry Brezina—killed at Bataan.
 Majors—killed at Bataan
 Erickson—prisoner.
 Wyatt—shot down by our A.A. fire over Bataan.
 Krantz—prisoner, released.
 Crosby—prisoner, released.
 Powell—living in Phoenix, Arizona.
 Hughett—prisoner in Indo-China, released.
 Leyrer—prisoner.
 Hennon—died in the U.S.A.
 Joseph McClelland—prisoner, died.
 Messmore—
 Burris—prisoner, released.
 Tucker, prisoner.
 Manley—died in plane crash, cause unknown.
 Balfanz—died.
 William Lodin—died in a takeoff accident, December 9, 1941.
 Wilcox—killed at Bohol, January 4, 1942.
 John Vogel—
 Page—killed at Bataan.
 James Rowland—killed on Java, February 1, 1942.
 James Ross — prisoner, released.
 Gillette—prisoner, released.

Joined the 17th P. S. November, 1941

Culp—prisoner, released.
 Halsey—prisoner, released.
 Wolfe—prisoner, released.

Ground Officers

Gillespie—prisoner.
 Hall—prisoner.
 Connors—prisoner.
 "Doc" Phillips—prisoner, died.

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