



"SURRENDER AT BAGUIO"

A Record of Events and Proceedings Relating to the
Surrender of Japanese Forces in the Philippines

At Baguio, Luzon
3 September 1945

[Compiled by Robert Gerwig.]

Three months after Adolf Hitler's dream of a Nazi-dominated world collapsed in Europe, Emperor Hirohito admitted to the world that Japan's long-planned program of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" had come to an embarrassing and bitter end. On the morning of 10 August 1945, Radio Tokyo broadcast an official message indicating the desire of the Japanese Government to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration.

After preliminary arrangements had been completed in Manila, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander in the Pacific Theatre, directed the surrender of the Japanese Government to the United States to be held aboard the U.S. battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945, and delegated to the Commanding General, United States Army Forces, Western Pacific, the responsibility for receiving the surrender of all Japanese forces in the Philippine Islands.

The site considered most appropriate for the formal ceremonies was the U. S. High Commissioner's Residence in Camp John Hay, on the outskirts of Baguio, former "summer capital" of the Philippines, atop the more than mile high mountains of Northcentral Luzon. It was in this vicinity that General Tomoyuki Yamashita, highest commander of the Imperial Japanese Army in the Philippines, had maintained a last stronghold before his withdrawal to the inner recesses of Mountain Province. The concrete walled mansion, erected in 1937 and occupied by High Commissioner Francis B. Sayre, had been used as the headquarters of a Japanese officer in charge of the Baguio Internment Camp during its Japanese occupation.

Lt. Gen. W. D. Styer, commanding U.S. Army Forces, Western Pacific, having been invited to witness the ceremonies in Tokyo Bay, delegated to his Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Edmond H. Leavey, the distinction

of receiving the surrender of the Japanese forces. The Office of his Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (Maj. Gen. W.A. Wood, Jr.) was selected to coordinate the various agencies required to accomplish the surrender and Col. Geo. H. Bishop, Jr., G.S.C., was designated to superintend the details, assisted by other officers of this section.

The principal factors involved in the surrender were: (1) Contact with, and transportation of, Gen. Yamashita's party out of the mountains to Baguio; (2) accomplishment of the instrument of surrender; and (3) transfer of the Japanese delegation to the status of prisoners of war and subsequent detention.

The draft of the instrument of surrender was dropped over the Japanese headquarters of Northern Luzon by a U.S. air liaison officer during the last week of August. The American outpost closest to Yamashita's final command post was that manned by the 3rd Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Division, northeast of Kiangang, under the jurisdiction of the Luzon Area Command. Maj. Gen. R. S. Beightler, Jr., Luzon Area Commander, supervised final arrangements for contacting the Japanese leader. Gen. Yamashita's group was met at Kiangang at 0900 Sunday 2 September by Col. Barlow (Chief of Staff, 32nd Div.), Lt. Col. Robinet (Executive Officer, 128th Inf. Regt.) and Col. Dreyer (AFWESPAC). The party was divided in two groups, Army and Navy respectively. The Army group consisted of Gen. Yamashita, his chief of staff Lt. Gen. Akira Muto, assistant chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Naokata Utsunomiya, three staff officers, two secretaries, two interpreters and three orderlies. The naval group was composed of Vice Admiral Denhichi Okochi, Rear Admiral Kaoru Arima, two staff officers, a secretary, an interpreter and two orderlies. The Army and Navy groups were made necessary because of disunity between the commands, each service jealously guarding its own rights and not recognizing authority of the other to surrender the combined forces.

WJ

The party was transported, in successive stages, by truck, sedan, C-47 air transport and jeep by way of Bagabag and Luna to Beguio, where they arrived at the Mansion House at 1700, 2 September. Here a search for concealed weapons revealed a live hand grenade in an orderly's field bag. The officers turned over to Col. Bishop their ceremonial sabers and, under the supervision of Col. F. M. Smith, commanding the John Hay Military Reservation, ten officers of the party were housed on the second floor of the High Commissioner's Residence. The remaining eleven individuals were quartered in a tent area under supervision of the 127th RCT (32nd Div.) In addition to their samurai swords, the Japanese officers transferred to Col. Bishop, for safe-keeping ₱9,200 in Philippine currency and \$1050 in U. S. Currency.

In the background, technicians of the U.S. Signal Corps had been busily occupied establishing radio, teletype, telephone and wire communications between Baguio and the outside world, having transported all their heavy equipment over the mountain road from San Fernando on the Lingayen Gulf to Baguio. Also present were more than a score of war correspondents, radio announcers and other representatives of the press, insuring immediate world-wide reception of the news of the surrender.

To further heighten the dramatic impact of the occasion, word was received that Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, hero of Bataan, and Lt. Gen. A. E. Perceval, who had been forced to surrender the British base at Singapore to Gen. Yamashita, along with Lt. Gen. Styer, would fly to Luna on the western coast of Luzon and proceed from there to Baguio by car. The ceremony, having been scheduled for 0930 3 September, was delayed pending the arrival of these distinguished officers.

In the meantime, the Japanese delegation did not possess what they considered to be official knowledge of the Japanese Government's surrender to General of the Army MacArthur (which had actually been accomplished at 0908 2 September)

until a wire from the Secretary of the General Staff, General Headquarters, Army Forces of the Pacific, was received and delivered to Gen. Yamashita early Monday morning 3 September. Even after such notification, Col. Bishop was called in for a hurried conference at 1030 Monday morning with reference to the precise wording of the instrument of surrender. The Japanese objected to the language in Paragraph 3 of the document, but the objection was finally withdrawn. Also raised was a point to the effect that none of the party considered themselves authorized to represent the Imperial Japanese Government. Upon explanation that, as highest commanders of the Imperial Japanese Government's forces in the Philippines, their authority was adequate, Gen. Yamashita and Vice Admiral Ckochi signified their readiness to sign the instrument at the formal session.

Gen. Styer, accompanied by Generals Wainwright and Perceval, arrived at Mansion House at 1145 hours, at which time the four ranking officers of the Japanese delegation were directed to proceed to the mahogany-panelled drawing room in which the surrender document was to be signed.

Prominent visitors, official witnesses and correspondents were all in place at 1155 when the Japanese officers took their places at the surrender table. At 1200 hours 3 September, the official American party, comprising Lt. Gen. Styer, Lt. Gen. Wainwright, Maj. Gen. Leavey and Lt. Gen. Perceval of the British Army, took their places at the table.

With newsreel operators, photographers, correspondents and the official reporter recording the ceremony, Gen. Styer formally opened the proceedings and then introduced Gen. Leavey, who in turn greeted Generals Wainwright and Perceval. Gen. Leavey then called upon Gen. Wood to read the instrument of surrender. Clearly and emphatically, Gen. Wood intoned the terms of the document while the Japanese representatives listened impassively. Immediately upon the conclusion of the reading of the document, Gen. Leavey asked Gen. Yamashita and Admiral

Okochi if they were ready to append their signatures to the instrument of surrender. Gen. Yamashita merely grunted and nodded in assent. Col. Bishop placed four parchment copies of the instrument before the Japanese general, who inked the first signature at 1205; the copies were then placed before Vice Admiral Okochi, who added his name.

At this point, Gen. Leavey announced his acceptance of the surrender, then signed the four copies, presenting to Generals Wainwright, Perceval and Styer the fountain pens which he had used on the first three copies. The official seal of the U. S. Army Forces, Western Pacific, was affixed to the documents at 1210, one copy delivered to Gen. Yamashita--highest Japanese officer present--for transmission to the Japanese Imperial Government, following which Gen. Leavey announced the conclusion of the surrender ceremonies. Col. Bishop immediately called on the officer in charge of the Military Police unit to escort the Japanese, who were now officially prisoners of war, out of the room, under guard.

The ceremony came to its close when Lt. Generals Styer, Wainwright, and Perceval and Maj. Gen. Leavey left the room.

Three hours after the completion of the surrender ceremony, Yamashita and his ranking subordinates were driven to the Luna airstrip, from which they were flown to Nielson Field, Manila, and thence transported Monday evening to New Bilibid Prison, 36 miles south of Manila, where they arrived at 2000 hours.

Thus ended the ceremonies that brought to an end in the Philippines active hostilities which had begun with the bombing by the Japanese of Clark Field shortly after the notorious Pearl Harbor raid forty-four months earlier.