

The End

The Japanese force remained almost invulnerable inside the tunnel, creeping out for surprise attacks only at night. Hand to hand combat continued 24 hours a day through the nine-day battle.

"You had to tie a wire around your wrist and run it over to the next foxhole, then pull on it to make sure someone was awake there before you took a rest," Anderson said.

In a week's time, thousands had died in direct combat. The Army strategy, to "bomb 'em out of their buried position," worked poorly against the forces in the virtually impregnable Malinta tunnel. Anderson, and everyone else who took part in the assault on Corregidor Island, received an individual unit citation. It was a posthumous award for at least half of the original landing party.

Anderson was discharged from the Army on August 11. He planned to leave the Pacific Theatre for the United States immediately.

The plan did not succeed.

Japan surrendered on August 14, freezing all military movements in the Pacific. Anderson left for home 8 days later.

There was no lengthy mop up operation during the 2nd Battle of Corregidor. Unlike many battles on Pacific islands, there was no problem in fixing a precise moment of victory.

"They blew the tunnel up. From there on, we were coasting," Anderson said.

At 11:05 a.m. on Feb 26, Corregidor Island was rocked by a powerful underground explosion. The Japanese, dying of thirst in the tunnel and unable to escape, had set off several tons of munitions.

"Fire rolled out to within a few yards of our position, and dirt and rocks rolled out for the better part of an hour. We were lucky. They thought it would bury every one of us," Anderson said.

A brief attack against the few Japanese survivors followed. The Army estimated the enemy dead at 4509. No wounded.

"They put in there that we took 19 prisoners, but I don't think we took anyone alive, to tell you the truth about it," Anderson said.

The battle to recapture Corregidor started on February 16, ended in smoke and fire on February 26 after "nine straight days and nine nights" of combat. The second battle of Corregidor Island – the battle that was heroic but no defeat – was over.

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Tulsa World,

Staff Reporter,

Friday, Feb 17, 1978 quoting E.G. Anderson at this website:

http://corregidor.org/rock_force/taromen/anderson.html

