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THE BATTLE OF TUE TOE

by Lee Bin Sin.

The Principle factor contributing to the Battle

After the occupation of Hankow, the enemy contrived to employ lightning tactics to finish the battle of China at the earliest possible date. By using force as well as diplomacy, Japan was determined to overcome our resistance, and to realise her, so called 'New Order' for east Asia and the triple alliance of China, Manchuria and Japan. Therefore in the spring of this year the enemy succeeded in occupying King Chung and in advancing to Kang Nam to pave the way for capturing Nan Chang, with her ultimate objective the occupation of Changsha. But owing to the general offensive executed by our forces on all fronts, especially owing to the consecutive successes by the 84th Army in the 5th war zone (north of Wangho River), Hankow was being immediately threatened. This compelled the enemy to alter her original plans, cease her Kang Nam offensive and centralise her strength in Central China and at the same time reinforce the Central China front by the troops from the lower Chang Kwung, and once more assemble their forces at How Kum, On Look, Ying Chan and Ching Chang and this time attempt to annihilate our army of the 5th war zone. This would enable them to move their main forces elsewhere.

But we foresaw this scheme of our enemy, therefore we concentrated our main forces at Tue Toe, preparing for any eventuality, and this lifted the curtain on the battle of Tue Toe.

The Geography of Tue Toe

The mountain ranges of Taihung and Tungpark are the most logical battle ground for any army in Honan, should they be in our hands, Hankow would be threatened and our position in southern Honan strengthened and stabilised, therefore they are the primary objective for any

contending armies whether attacking or defending.

The Yong-Farr highway is the main arterial Highway within these ranges connecting the east and west. To the east it leads to Hankow, to the west to Central China. It is the main highway of Central China linking up the east and west.

Yong Fun is an important city of north Hopic, the twin cities of Tue Toe are important cities leading to Yong Fun, therefore, strategically both our forces, as well as those of our enemy seek to control them.

A Comparison of strength and plans of the opposing forces.

The enemy in Central China sought to strengthen the outer defences of Hankow and then advance to capture King Yung, paving the way for the western advance, thus threatening Suechun and Shensi provinces, destroying our main forces at northern Hopic and then spreading out in a wide encirclement to trap us at Chung Yong and exterminate the forces defending Tue Toe.

Our immediate task would be to shatter this objective of our enemy, and to entice her to advance into the flat country of Toe Yong where we could wage a counter encirclement movement to exterminate her. For this is the war of attrition to wear down the strength of the enemy, enabling us to concentrate our forces elsewhere and to develop a favourable circumstance for our counter encirclement movement, isolate the forces of our enemy and extinguish the whole lot of them.

Enemy forces

3 rd Division
15th "
16th "
A " unidentified.
Deu Dang Regiment
4th Cavalry "
over 200 Artillery
" 400 Airoplanes
" 100 Motor Transports.

Chinese forces

31st Army
11th "
45th "

Position of the two armies preceding battle.

From winter of last year to the end of April this year, our forces including the 84th, 39th & 45th Armies, a total of more than seven divisions in strength concentrated at the old city of Fun Kung Dim, situated between the Tai Hung and Tung Park ranges, following the western bank of the Chung Gar River and the Fun Go and Tin Ho How line directly facing the enemy. For a period of six months we used guerilla tactics to harass the enemy, however, no major progress was achieved on either side. But from early March, with our loss of Chung Chang the main strength of the enemy shifted to Kung Nam and they attempted to occupy Chungsha and to menace Chingsha. But the left wing of our forces, taking advantage of this opportunity, by employing the two divisions of the 84th Army and a part of the 45th, was ordered on the move. Capturing the two temples in the city situated on the east bank of the Chie River and the enemy line at Yee Gar Dim, launching an offensive at Sheo Gar Dim and further making a frontal attack at Ying Shan.

At this moment part of our army (including the 13th and 85th Army) has already reached the territory north east of Doe Young. The enemy realising that Hankow is in serious danger, therefore withdrew her troops which had intended to advance southward, and shifted them on to OnKwee and King Chung abandoning her southward advance plan and instead launching a major offensive in northern Hopic. Dividing her forces into three columns, one advancing to Tin Ho How, one to Har Yee Bay and one advancing northward from Jong Chong spreading out north and south of ~~the~~ Tue Toe and following the east bank of the Yung River. On April 29th began the big battle of Tue Toe.

High lights of the battle . The first stage. Enemy on the offensive .

Previous to April 30th, a unit of our 84th Army moved out to the attack at Man Gar Dim and around Sun Dim, and immediately came into

contact with the enemy. A bloody battle continued for several days until 30th. The 173rd, 174th divisions fought gallantly, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy up to May 2nd. Then the battle line shifted to Har Yee Bay and Ching Lung Shan, where more than 2,000 of the enemy were killed.

On the same morning, the 15th Army pushed on to Ko Sing and Tin Ho How to reinforce our line, and the 85th Army pushed on to Tong Wong Dim, Tai San Temple and Ting Toy City, effecting a juncture with the 15th Army, there co-ordinating our attack.

From that day on, the whole line developed into the fiercest battle. The enemy concentrated her strength in the central sector, aiming to capture Har Yee Bay and ultimately break our central front.

But the 173rd and 174th divisions bravely counter-attacked. For four days the battle continued. With hand grenades, rifles and all weapons at their command, our soldiers fought gallantly, shouting as they fought, with never a moment of rest. The flying dust and smoke completely covering the sky and hiding the sun, blood and flesh on all sides and corpses piling up mountain high, the ferocity of this battle was unprecedented. More than 4,000 of our enemy made this their burial ground. But our losses were not negligible either. Over 3,000 of our gallant boys will never see daylight again.

The enemy used poison gas and bombing planes, but this failed to dislodge our troops from their defending area. They stood solid as the mountain.

The enemy also attempted to turn our left flank by employing part of her forces advancing on to Tin Ho How, but this immediately met the determined resistance of our 13th Army, who here slaughtered more than 2,000 of the foe.

On the 3rd, the enemy with reinforcements at Tin Ho How managed to reach the white temple, but here again they encountered our resistance.

During the 4th and 5th, the enemy continued to reinforce her Tin Ho How lines and make a frontal attack at our 84th Army. Thus we were compelled to make an orderly withdrawal, to entice the enemy to advance to the west bank of the Chung Gar River, there we waited for the enemy to cross. After inflicting heavy casualties in mid stream, the enemy employed an umbrella of ~~air~~ ^{air} planes as well as heavy artillery, to try and effect a crossing, but our forces on the east bank at Sar Chow successfully repelled all attempts.

More than 1,000 of the enemy lost their lives on the west bank; still more in mid stream, which gives an indication of the tremendous losses suffered by our enemy.

Smarting under this defeat, the enemy used balloons and large quantities of poison gas and ~~air~~ ^{air} planes to aid them in this battle. The roaring of cannon continued throughout the day, but our forces remained in their original position unmoved, successfully frustrating all attempts by the enemy to effect a crossing on this river.

However, owing to the enemy's superiority in numbers, our main forces on the east bank of the Yung Ho were compelled to give up Young Sun city, Fung Lock Ho, Chung Shio Dim, Far Gar Dim, Joe Gar Jup and Har Dim Poo on the 6th of May.

On the 7th, the following day, part of the enemy already reached Tock Gse Gong, Mar Gar Jup and the vicinity of Chung Gar Dup. At the same time the enemy north of Chang Chung and Young Che, advancing to capture Tin Gar Jup, Bun Chung Gong; came into contact with 127th division of our 45th Army at the north of Tin Gar Jup where another fierce battle was waged. ~~While~~ ^{Another} part of the enemy forces ~~was~~ following the east bank of the Young Ho advancing rapidly northward.

Our plan was to ~~entice~~ ^{lure} the enemy into coming into the flat country of Toe Young, so that we could encircle them. Therefore ordering one division of our 39th Army to advance quickly to Mow Tse Fun

and Song Ho preparing to hit the enemy at its left flank at Chung Gar Jup. The bulk of our forces were placed to the east of Tie Hung Mountain ready to launch an offensive. The 45th Army was to withdraw from the south of Toe Young ~~enticing~~ ^{persuading} the enemy to advance north. On the evening of the 8th, the enemy forces at Tong Young, with a vanguard of cavalry totalling 3,000 strong had already reached Chung Gar Jup, Tsai Young Foo and its vicinity. The enemy at Wong Tar Jup had already reached north of Chong Ho and Mow Tse Fun.

The Army headquarters ordered the 45th Army to withdraw according to plan. To simplify directions, the Army headquarters moved from Doe Young to Tue Young Dim.

At the same time the 84th Army was ordered to move their line to Man Fook Dim and Tong Shin market and Sang Shee Dim Fun deliberately exposing part of this force to entice the enemy to advance westward.

Part of our forces laid a trap at One Tom market highway assisting the main force of our army to deal a severe blow on the western advance of the enemy. The Army Headquarters at Tong Park Mountain was to strengthen the strategic town of Tin Ho How and to squeeze the enemy advancing westward.

On the 9th, our army carried out ~~their~~ ^{its} plans by ~~enticing~~ ^{persuading} the enemy to advance, making skirmishes with them so as to wear down their strength. On the evening of the 9th, the enemy advanced northward with its major forces already occupying Toe Young, separated into many columns, infiltrating to the west of Toe Young advancing to Tai Ping Dim and Tong Ho Shin. The cavalry regiment of Shui Doe also moved to Sun Yea.

We immediately ordered the 45th Army to move to Tai Ping Dim and Woo Young Sun dealing a severe blow at the enemy here.

The principle strength of the 84th Army shifted to Ping She and KeeYee market and Tin Gar Dong to halt the enemy.

~~At the same time the forces under General Sun Chong Lin were to~~

At the same time, the forces under General Sun Chung Lin ^{was} ~~was~~ to defend Hong Ho Chin and Sun Yea was to be defended by General Pit Ting Fong. These troops made contact with the enemy and after several ferocious engagements successfully repulsed the enemy in these sectors.

On May 11th, 12th and 13th, the enemy began to show a decline in fighting spirit, this halted their attack at Fong Ho Tin and in the vicinity of Doe Young and so enabled our forces to carry out a successful encircling movement.

THE SECOND STAGE .Our encirclement and the counter attacking stage.

When the enemy had advanced thus far into our territory, her communication lines were rendered complicated and extended; also owing to the successful destruction of the transportation lines by our forces during our orderly withdrawal, the enemy failed to repair them in time. Her food and munitions were running low. From all sides the enemy faced encirclement by our forces. To the north, at Tong Ho Sin forces under General Sun Lin Chung, and the defense guard of General Pic Ting Fong pursued the enemy. To the west our forces under General Quo Dun with the 45th army and the 33rd group, made a crossing of the river and advanced eastward. To the south, the enemy was confronted by a strong force of our army, including the 39th and part of 34th placed at Tai Hong Mountain. From the East she was immediately threatened by the 13th army stationed at Tong Park Mountain and in addition the people's defense guard and the guerrillas of the region of Tue Toe arose to harass the enemy. Weary after many days of battle, her casualties mounting high, facing our forces from all sides, the enemy realised the cause to be lost. The spirit of her troops was demoralised and she was compelled to retreat on the 16th and 17th from Toe Young southward, passing through Won Ton and Li Sun.

In the course of her retreat she encountered our forces placed at Tai Hung and Tung Park Mountains, this was a trap running from north

to south which completely shattered and demoralised her, with the result that she was compelled to retreat to On Look, Mar Ping and Ying San before she could reassemble her forces.

Part of this enemy force withdrew to Hankow, therefore Tue Toe and the surrounding territory was once more completely in our hands.

Our only regret was that our pursuit of the enemy was a bit slow, failing to stampede her at Tue Shin

The enemy's dream of encircling and exterminating our forces ended in discomfort, ~~confronting them~~ with heavy losses, including 42,000 dead and many captured by our forces. ^{This was} a disaster seldom equalled in the past. Our success was largely owing to the strategy of our ~~leader~~ leader Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek. ^{This} with the heroic spirit of our troops made victory ^{possible.} ~~inevitable.~~

Chapter 2.

Guerilla Fighting of the 39th Army in Ta Hung Shan

The beginning of the Guerilla Fighting.

Towards the end of April, the enemy, employing the 3rd, 13th and 16th divisions, together with the 4th cavalry regiment, dividing into four columns advanced onto Tue Toe, with the main objective of isolating our forces in the Ta Hung and Tung Park regions and to capture Yung Fung. The Ta-Hung Mountains are situated to the south west of ^{Shin} ~~Tue~~ Shin, to the east flows the ~~Yung~~ ^{Hung} River while opposite to the west flows the Yung River; southward are the ~~King San~~ ^{King San} and Tung Shan mountains while the north is flanked by the Tung Park Mountain.

This region has been the setting for many battles in ancient times. On May 10th after the enemy had infiltrated into Toe Yung and continued to advance to Sun Yea and bypass Yung Fung, our troops received orders to remain in the Ta Hung Mountain regions and take full advantage of the rugged and easily defended terrain, to carry on large

scale guerilla activities, menacing the Yung Far Highway and cutting off the enemy supply lines, and thereby dealing the enemy a fatal blow and shattering her scheme of a successful westward advance.

When the enemy vanguard reached Sun Yea, she met the full force of our army. Added to that her supply lines were being continually harassed by our guerillas, making it difficult for her to receive any supplies. Confronted with this situation, the enemy took to a new strategy, aiming to destroy our guerilla base in the Tai Hung Mountain.

Her 13th division advanced to the south from Toe Young while the 3rd division Quon Shong Dim, Lock Yung Dim and Koo Sing Fun, advanced to the west to cooperate with the 13th. This lifted the curtain on ~~another~~ bloody battle.

The Bloody battle of Tai Hung Shan

After May 10th, the outer defences of the guerilla bases in Tai Hung Shan were penetrated by the enemy from north, south and west. A ferocious battle ensued. Many of our officers and men heroically went down fighting. But the gallant and laudable dead must for ever be remembered.

A recapitulation is here in order.

1. The siege of Tsun Char Wun. At dawn of May 11th, part of the enemy's 3rd division, consisting of five to six hundred infantry, advanced on Liu Dim northward, but met the first ~~battalion~~ ^{battalion} of the 56th division, who resisted gallantly, killing more than seventy. The remnant of the enemy fled to Chin Gar Won near Chung Gar Dim.

The second ~~battalion~~ ^{battalion} of the same division successfully isolated the enemy, who taking advantage of the high wall, was determined to resist. For two nights we lay siege to this city, the enemy attempting to break this siege, but meeting only with failure.

On the morning of the 13th, as our troops were advancing on this city, a political organiser, Yee Chink Won from this ~~battalion~~ ^{battalion organized}, organised

the local people to cooperate in the attack. Finally all but one of the enemy were exterminated and twelve rifles were captured, the rest being destroyed or burnt during the battle. Unfortunately this organiser gave his life for his country in this siege. More than ten civilian guards lost their lives with him. The loss in officers and men was heavy too, but we succeeded in exterminating the enemy, and loyally discharged our duty. ^{AND left} Leaving behind many deeds of valour for the emulation of future generations.

2. The battle of Kai Ming Temple.

On May 15th our forces advancing northward to make contact with the enemy in the region of Toe Yung and Tong Sin Market, met a part of the enemy's 13th division, with about 3,000 men, and a vanguard of 200 cavalry and an artillery unit fleeing southward from Toe Yung. At nine a.m. of that day they got to the Tai Ming Temple in the north west of the Mow Tse Fung region, here this enemy force came into contact with our 202nd ~~batt~~ battalion of the 34th division.

The enemy laid down a heavy barrage of fire, particularly concentrating her aim at the Tai Ming Temple. The defenders of this place were the 5th company, who made a determined stand up to twelve o'clock, noon. The enemy executed several bayonet charges in the scramble for this strategic temple. Three or four times it changed hands. The officer defending this place realised that he was holding a key position in the battle for this region. He was therefore determined to resist to the last man.

~~Inflicting~~ ^{were inflicted} Heavy losses on the enemy until about three o'clock in the afternoon, when the enemy fire became more intense, and our defences were ^{shattered.} ~~entirely destroyed.~~ When the enemy received reinforcements it sealed the fate of this battle and completed the glorious chapter of this heroic 5th company, who, surrounded by the enemy on all sides, went down one by one in unselfish sacrifice for their country.

3. The prolonged battle at Sun Jup, Bow Gar Jup, and Mar On Shan.

On May 15th, a unit of the enemy's 15th division, 1,000 strong, together with four pieces of field artillery, advanced from Toe Yung passing Won Tom ^{and} aiming for Sun Jup and Bow Gar Jup. ^{It} came into contact with our 335th ~~battalion~~ of the 56th division. The enemy laid down a heavy barrage of fire at our position in the Fie Fung Mountain. Her infantry followed up with a ferocious frontal attack and a ~~fierce~~ ^{fierce} battle was staged for two hours.

Three times actually we came to hand to hand grips with the enemy, and owing to the coolness and the undaunted spirit of our officers and men, we succeeded in repelling them. The enemy losses here consisted ^{ed} of corpses piled up mountain high, but our losses were also heavy.

At dawn on the 16th, the enemy launched a large scale attack at Tung Hing Tsi and the Fai Fung Mountain bases. Fierce battles continued throughout the day. Our men were determined to resist to the last man. The enemy reinforced with cavalry and infantry from Quon Chun On and Que On failed to break our line. On the 17th, the enemy facing our 34th division, fighting under cover of ~~her~~ artillery, advanced on to attack our 199th ~~battalion~~ in the Mar On Mountain. A see-saw battle followed for three hours, in which the contestants repeatedly came to body ~~to~~ contact. This place was lost and recaptured six times. At two o'clock in the afternoon, about 200 of the enemy launched an offensive at the position of the 9th company. Taking full advantage of the favourable geographical surroundings, the enemy tried several surprise attacks. The left wing of our defenders were forced to give up about 300 square yards to enemy pressure. But the company commander Captain Fun Shang Yee leading his men in a flanking movement, slaughtered more than a hundred of the enemy and recovered the several hundred yards of territory yielded earlier. Unfortunately this Commander lost

his life. His company, with very few exceptions perished with him.
But the enemy was repelled.

4. The war of extermination in the Lee Gar' River

On May 19th, the enemy directly facing the 34th division, launched a major offensive. The main force followed the Lee Gar River bank, ~~and~~ Approaching the Tai Ping Bridge, we laid a trap for them. When they advanced into the narrow path they immediately felt the heavy fire from our men hidden behind cover. The enemy suffered heavily, leaving more than 800 dead.

5. Result of these bloody battles.

Bloody battles continued for practically ten days. We not only succeeded in detaining the enemy's main strength and preventing her from advancing westward, but we also inflicted on her the loss of 3,200 men in the course of the encounter and captured much war material as well as military documents. ^{Thus we made} ~~making~~ the enemy pay dearly. Her 3,200 homeless souls who stupidly allowed themselves to become the tools of their fascist leaders will never see their wives and families again. They committed an everlastingly-to-be-regretted blunder.

A concluding note on the guerilla fighting on the Tai Hung Mountain

These guerilla activities in the Tai Hung Mountain, though they succeeded in shattering the enemy's westward advance, and successfully executed a military operation of major importance, demonstrated our lack of resources combined with the non-cooperation of the unorganised masses. ^{These people,} sensing the approach of battle, deserted their villages, leaving only our gallant fighters to put up with difficult positions to the best of their ability. The mistake of failing to develop a strong tie between the guerillas and the masses, so that they can deal with the enemy much more effectively, is a lesson to be learned for future operations.

Notes: This paragraph only means that 3200 people were killed. The elongated description is a word for word translation.