THEY WERE EXPENDABLE

by W. L. White

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—The story of their part in the battle for the Philippines is told in this and the following chapters by four of the few naval officers who are still left in hell of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Three. They are Lieut. John Bulkeley, squadron commander; squadron executive officer Lieut. (jg) Robert B. Kelly; Ensigns Anthony Akers and George E. Cox Jr. (The fifth officer, Lieut. Henry J. Brandenburg, has since arrived from Australia.) The squadron, hand picked by Bulkeley from volunteers, had arrived in the Philippines in the fall of 1941. Their boats, however, were not ready for events of December 7 were as much of a surprise to them as to anyone, because they thought the Philippines would be attacked first.

Lieut. Kelly, second-in-command, to whom Bulkeley delegated the task of getting boats, men and supplies ready for operations of war. History about secret operations refers, he went to the Officers' Club in Manila on the eve of Pearl Harbor and had a thick steak with all the trimmings. After receiving his orders from Bulkeley the next afternoon, he took three of the boats to Harbormaster Bataan, where they were to report to Admiral Rockwell for duty in the defense of Bataan. When the first three boats had been launched, Bulkeley had only the fourth boat at Sisiman Cove.

CHAPTER II—Lieut. Kelly continues: Refueling the boats from drums was a dangerous job. They found water and rust in the gas, but didn't know then that the gas had been sabotaged. We had a badly gashed finger, but couldn't take time to go to the hospital. Lieut. Bulkeley assembles the first big air raid.

CHAPTER III—Lieut. Kelly tells how he was sent to a tunnel hospital on Corregidor, where he met Peggy Dern. Survivors from the sinking of a shipload of refugees were brought to the hospital. Patients from Manila were also moved into the tunnel. Kelly tells of the days before the battle for Bataan was going.

CHAPTER III

"When Bulkeley got back he took one look at me and ordered me to the hospital at Corregidor. But when we got there they told us that bombsfall by modern one-thousand-pounders had pital had been abandoned. There it was! I don't know how many it had cost, as orders to us were to put a