

# Corregidor's Last Breath

The last message from Corregidor, on May 5, 1942, was reproduced by the Coast Artillery Journal with the comment that:

"Here is history as it is made, without embellishment, and without conscious color. A soldier stuck to his post to the very end—he was only one of several thousand Americans who did what they could.

"One of the war's greatest mass dramas is here typified by the heroism of an individual pounding his key, telling the world of the last moments of military life on Corregidor. He fulfilled his military mission to the final second before the enemy snatched his fingers away to break the last thread of communication from Corregidor to the mainland."



"They are not near yet. We are waiting for God only knows what. How about a chocolate soda. (Pause.) Not many. Not near yet. Lots of heavy fighting going on. (Pause.)

"We've only got about one hour twenty minutes before . . . (Pause.)

"We may have to give up by noon, we don't know yet. They are throwing men and shells at us and we may not be able to stand it. They have been shelling us faster than you can count. . . (Pause.)

"We've got about fifty-five minutes and I feel sick at my stomach. I am really low-down. They are around now smashing rifles. They bring in the wounded every minute. We will be waiting for you guys to help. This is the only thing I guess that can be done. **GENERAL WAINWRIGHT IS A RIGHT GUY** and we are willing to go on for him, but shells were dropping all night, faster than hell. Damage terrific. Too much for guys to take. Enemy heavy cross-shelling and bombing. They have got us all around and from skies. (Pause.)

"From here it looks like firing ceased on both sides. Men here all feeling bad, because of terrific strain of the siege. Corregidor used to be a nice place. But it's haunted now. Withstood a terrific pounding. (Pause.)

"Just made broadcast to Manila to arrange meeting for surrender. Talk made by General Beebe. I can't say much. Can't think at all. I can hardly think. Say, I have sixty pesos you can have for this week-end. The jig is up. Everyone is bawling like a baby. (Pause.)

"They are piling dead and wounded in our tunnel. Arms weak from pounding key long hours, no rest, short rations, tired . . . (Pause.)

"I know now how a mouse feels. Caught in a trap waiting for guys to come along finish it up. Got a treat. Can pineapple. Opening it with signal corps knife. (Pause.)

"My name Irving Strobings. Get this to my mother, Mrs. Minnie Strobings, 605 Barbey Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. They are to get along O.K. Get in touch with them soon as possible. Message: My love to Pa, Joe, Sue, Mac, Garry, Joy and Paul. Also to my family and friends. God bless 'em all, hope they be there when I come home. Tell Joe wherever he is to give 'em hell for us. My love to you all. God bless you and keep you. Love. Sign my name and tell mother how you heard from me. (Pause.)

"Stand by . . . ."

Nothing further was heard from Corregidor.