

# EN DEFENSA DE LA PATRIA

## IN DEFENSE OF THE HOMELAND

### RULES FOR COMBAT SET IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR USING BLACK POWDER RULES

v. 1.2, 2017 rules, scenarios and game maps by Jorge Rodriguez Jr., M.A.E.E.

I have written an unofficial supplement for military actions set on the island of Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War (1898) using the *Black Powder* rules. It includes write-ups of troops and optional points cost using Appendix 4, pages 178-181 of the *Black Powder* rule book. Included in each stat-line are points cost for each of the units. These points cost are optional and are there for those people interested in games using points. Also included are four scenarios that exemplify the combat that occurred on the island. There are a number of excellent sources for campaigns that can easily be adapted to the *Black Powder* system. Any comments or suggestions are appreciated; please send them to [jrwarlock@gmail.com](mailto:jrwarlock@gmail.com).

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#### Overview

The land operations in Puerto Rico began with the debarkation of US troops in the bay of Guánica July 25, 1898 on the southern coast of the island and lasted until August 13, 1898, a mere 20 days. The first hit-and-run skirmish was conducted the within minutes by a small detachment of mounted guerillas which would characterize the engagements in Puerto Rico. Most of these engagements were a series of cat and mouse delaying actions by the Spanish and a cautious/timid advance by the US.

The truth is, both sides were unprepared for war. The US, although splendidly equipped and armed, suffered mainly from problems with lack of adequate training and knowledge of the terrain and, the problem with tropical diseases (Malaria, yellow fever, dysentery and

such) and the tropical heat due to the wool uniforms that they used.

The Spanish suffered mainly from logistical problems; they had too few troops stationed on the island because they had diverted Puerto Rican troops to Cuba. There was also a general inconformity of a large sector of the population to centuries of Spanish rule; almost all of the colonies of Spain had declared their independence or had been ceded independence by Spain, except for Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam. In the months preceding the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico had been given limited autonomy, in part to assuage the discontent on the island but mainly to ensure the loyalty of the citizenry; the arrival of US forces put an end to the dream of autonomous rule by the people of the island.

Mainly, the war effort was run via telegraph by Captain-General Macías from the capital city of San Juan. Another problem that the Spanish army faced was the local volunteer militia that were raised, who fled at the slightest hint of the sound of gunfire. On the other hand, the local *Guerrillero* (guerilla) units had stiffer backbones and put up great resistance against the *yanquis* throughout. Spanish line units were for the most part adequate, but the officer corps suffered internal conflicts between themselves, thus hampering operations in the field.

### US Landings

US forces landed on the southern coast of Puerto Rico the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 1898 in the town of

second northerly route from Ponce towards Utuado and a third northeasterly route, also from Ponce, towards Aibonito. There was a subsequent landing on August 2, 1898 in Arroyo; US forces headed west towards Guayama, battling Spanish troops there and maneuvered northward towards Cayey.

The Commanding General, Nelson A. Miles decided on these approaches after abandoning plans for landings on the east coast of the island, in Fajardo, due to reports of reinforced Spanish positions in that area.

This allowed US forces to disembark virtually unmolested. Opposition to US troops was sporadic; Spanish troops were ordered to head back to the capital by Governor Captain

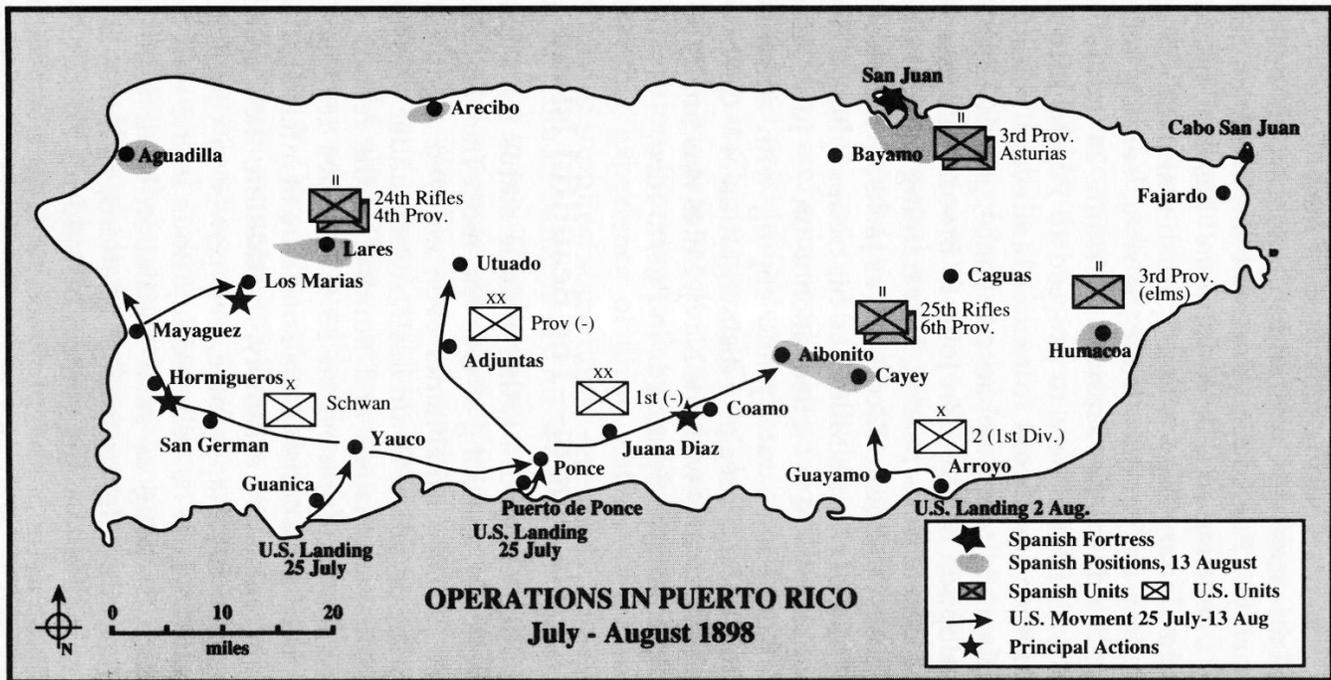


Figure 1: Operations in Puerto Rico, July - August 1898, from the Latin American Studies web page. (Antonio Rafael de la Cova)

Guánica and later that day in Ponce, and proceeded to move north, attempting to cross the central mountainous area towards the capital of San Juan. US forces maneuvered their troops in three axes of advance from the town of Yauco: one west and northwest towards San Germán, Hormigueros, Mayagüez and then westward towards Las Marías, a

General Manuel Macías y Casado. Time after time, Spanish forces engaged the US and pulled back in order to concentrate their insufficient forces. Mainly, the fear was that troops would be cut off by advancing US forces and destroyed or captured piecemeal.

The war was over August 13 without a decisive victory for the US forces on the island. In total for Puerto Rico, there were 4 US servicemen killed and 47 wounded, the Spanish had 34 killed and 91 wounded and 8 civilians killed and 18 wounded.

### **Disposition of Forces**

By this time, military forces fought in open (skirmish) order, but retained the rigid command hierarchy of previous decades. Forces amply used cover and concealment and used mostly modern bolt action rifles. Both sides used cavalry, mostly as advanced, flanking or scouting forces, due to terrain and would normally dismount in order to engage the enemy. Artillery was also used, but the hilly and mountainous terrain and frequent rains made their deployment difficult. As such, the United States used the most modern cannons, the Gatling gun, and the Dynamite gun sporadically. Spanish forces had older model cannons, since the majority had been sent to Cuba for the defense there.

### **The United States of America**

The United States of America deployed troops from both the Regular Federal Army and the Volunteer State Militias, similar to how they were deployed during the American Civil War (1861-1864). Their dress consisted of dark blue wool blouse and sky blue wool trousers with a corps facing color stripe along the outer seam. A drab colored broad brimmed felt slouch hat was also worn, with corps colored hat cord. This uniform, hardly appropriate to the climate of the tropics, was the source of some of the lesser casualties of the war due to the heat.

### **Weapons**

The US used the Colt model 1894 double action .38 Revolver or the Colt model 1889-1895 .38, or -.41 "New Navy" (by the Marines) as side arms and the Springfield model 1889 Rifle ("Trapdoor"), the Krag-Jorgensen model

1896 Rifle and the Lee model 1895 Rifle used by the US Navy.

### **Artillery**

US Forces used 3" Hotchkiss mountain guns. The US also used the 1895 .30 Gatling gun on swivel mounts.

### **The Kingdom of Spain**

Spanish troops consisted of those garrisoned in the forts in the capital of San Juan and in the major cities of Ponce and Mayagüez. For the war, the Spanish forces in Puerto Rico included the following forces:

- One battalion of the 24<sup>th</sup> Chasseurs of Alphonse XIII "Cazadores Alfonso XIII n<sup>o</sup> 24" (Light Infantry), operated in the western part of the island
- One battalion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Chasseurs of the Homeland "Cazadores de la Patria n<sup>o</sup> 25" (Light Infantry), operated in the capital, the east and in the central part of the island
- law enforcement corps "Cuerpo de Orden Público" (Militia)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion - "12<sup>o</sup> Batallón de Artillería de Plaza"
- Tercio de la Guardia Civil (3) (Militia)
- Batallón provisional de Puerto Rico n<sup>o</sup> 3. (Militia)
- Batallón provisional de Puerto Rico n<sup>o</sup> 4. (Militia)
- Batallón provisional de Puerto Rico n<sup>o</sup> 6 (Militia)
- Guerrilla units, on foot and mounted "Guerrilleros a pie y montados" (Guerrilla)

The uniform of the regular Spanish troops, called "Cazadores" (Light infantry) consisted of the unique *rayadillo* (thousand stripes) uniform, a light cotton drill fabric suited for the tropics, with blue and white pinstripes, rolled down collars and seven brass buttons down the front. The regimental number was encircled by a horn and made out of brass and was worn on each collar. Volunteer militia also wore the rayadillo uniform, with the

addition of green wool collars and cuffs with “sardinetas” (small yellow pointed braids), that the regulars used only on dress occasions.

Head gear consisted of light colored broad brimmed straw hats with the national cockade to one side, the sun helmet with a Spanish crest on the front and a cap similar to a kepi was sometimes used by some officers.

### Weapons

The Spanish forces used the model 1893 (7x57mm) Mausers for front line troops, and a mix of Remington model 1871-89 (FREIRE-BRULL) rifles, Mauser model 1895 carbines, model 1871 Remington rolling block rifles, Remington model 1871 carbines, Remington model 1874 carbines, and the Berdan rifle (all for second line troops and volunteer guerrillas and militia). The Smith & Wesson

.44 pistols (Orbea nº 7) were used as side arms.

### Artillery

Spanish forces used the 7.5 cm Model 1896 Krupp quick-firing steel cannon and the 9cm model 1878 Plasencia brass cannon.

### The military actions in Puerto Rico were:

The landing at Guánica - July 25, 1898  
 The battle of Yauco - July 25 to 26, 1898  
 The skirmish at Arroyo - August 1, 1898  
 The battle of Guayama - August 5, 1898  
 The battle of Coamo – August 9, 1898  
 The battle of Guamaní – August 9, 1898  
 The battle of Hormigueros – August 10, 1898  
 The battle of Asomante – August 12, 1898  
 The disaster at Guasio – August 13, 1898 Last combat action in Puerto Rico

# ARMY LISTS

## Spanish Regiment Tables

### Light Infantry “Cazadores”

In Puerto Rico, these were units from the 24<sup>th</sup> Chasseurs of Alphonse XIII “Cazadores Alfonso XIII nº 24” for battles on the western part of the island or the 25<sup>th</sup> Chasseurs of the Homeland “Cazadores de la Patria nº 25” for battles in Juana Diaz, Coamo, Aibonito and Cayey.

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny Spanish Light Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Skirmish	22
Small Spanish Light Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	3	2	4+	2	Skirmish	33
Standard Spanish Light Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Skirmish	44
Large Spanish Light Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Skirmish	55

### Puerto Rican Guerrilleros (Guerrilla)

Usually deployed as advanced or scouting forces, the guerrillas supplemented Spanish line forces with reliable, albeit meagre numbers. They did account themselves well in every engagement they participated in.

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny Puerto Rican Guerrilla	Irregular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	27
Small Puerto Rican Guerrilla	Irregular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	3	2	4+	2	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	38
Standard Puerto Rican Guerrilla	Irregular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	49
Large Puerto Rican Guerrilla	Irregular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	60

### Puerto Rican Guerrilleros Montado (Mounted Guerrilla)

Also serving as scouts, these units usually dismounted to engage in battle.

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny Puerto Rican Mounted Guerrilla	Irregular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine 30" (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	27
Small Puerto Rican Mounted Guerrilla	Irregular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine 30" (+4)	4	2	4+	2	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	41
Standard Puerto Rican Mounted Guerrilla	Irregular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine 30" (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	51
Large Puerto Rican Mounted Guerrilla	Irregular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine 30" (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Marauders (+5), Skirmish	63

## Puerto Rican Volunteer Militia

There is little that can be said about these troops. Although equipped and trained by Spain, these units fled at the slightest hint of combat. The Puerto Rican militia knew Spain was fighting a losing battle, so they chose for the most part not to get involved in the fighting. They are presented here for completeness sake.

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny Puerto Rican Militia	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	1	1	5+	*	Untested (-), Wavering (-4), Unreliable (-3), Skirmish	7
Small Puerto Rican Militia	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	2	2	5+	*	Untested (-), Wavering (-4), Unreliable (-3), Skirmish	13
Standard Puerto Rican Militia	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	3	2	5+	*	Untested (-), Wavering (-4), Unreliable (-3), Skirmish	14
Large Puerto Rican Militia	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	4	3	5+	*	Untested (-), Wavering (-4), Unreliable (-3), Skirmish	20

## Spanish Artillery

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Spanish Artillery	Rifled Artillery	Cannon	1	3-2-1	4+	2		27

# Forces of the United States of America

## US Infantry (Regular Federal and State Volunteer Militia)

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny US Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Skirmish	22
Small US Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	3	2	4+	2	Skirmish	33
Standard US Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Skirmish	44
Large US Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Skirmish	55

## US Marines

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny US Marine Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Skirmish	22
Small US Marine Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	3	2	4+	2	Skirmish	33
Standard US Marine Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Skirmish	44
Large US Marine Infantry	Regular Infantry	Bolt Action Rifle (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Skirmish	55

## US Cavalry

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
Tiny US Cavalry	Regular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine (+4)	1	1	4+	1	Skirmish	22
Small US Cavalry	Regular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine (+4)	3	2	4+	2	Skirmish	34
Standard US Cavalry	Regular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine (+4)	5	3	4+	3	Skirmish	46
Large US Cavalry	Regular Cavalry	Bolt Action Carbine (+4)	7	4	4+	4	Skirmish	58

## Gatling Machine Gun

See pages 82-82, Black Powder rule book

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
US Gatling Machine Gun	Artillery	Gatling Machine Gun (+4), 36"	1	*	4+	2		23

## US Artillery

Unit Name	Type	Armament	HtH	Shooting	Morale	Stamina	Special	Point Cost
US Artillery	Rifled Artillery	Cannon	1	3-2-1	4+	2		27

# SCENARIOS

## A Note on Scale and on the Sizes of Forces

Combat in Puerto Rico may seem small or meagre in comparison to those fought in Cuba or the Philippines, but the US invasion of Puerto Rico, its subsequent annexation and status as an associated commonwealth territory forever altered the fate of the island, and its national identity. On March 2, 1917, Puerto Ricans were granted US citizenship, a mere 36 days before entering World War I.

The scale of the scenario maps has been altered but map features have retained their importance in relation to the historical action described herein. Also, the number of troops also have been altered, in order to accommodate the units that fought in the battle.

## The Guánica Landing

July 25, 1898

### The Battle

General Nelson A. Miles decided to change the location of the landings from Fajardo in the east to Guánica in the south due to the belief that Spanish forces reinforced the east coast of the island. On July 25, 1898 at 7:00 am US forces entered the Bay of Guánica and landed a small boat of 28 Marines, 2 officers and 2 machine guns. They proceeded to lower the Spanish flag, raise the US flag and secure the area when a unit of 11 guerrillas shot at them from the main street. In the ensuing firefight, the marines return fire with their rifles and the M1895 Colt Browning machine gun, the Marines also place barbed wire at 50 and 100 meters. The Americans fire from the ships with their 3 and 6 pounder guns and the guerrillas are forced back and retreat towards the town of Yauco.

### The Terrain

In 1898 the town of Guánica, which was 1 km from the beach, was formed by 20 wooden houses and 40 bohíos (straw huts). On the beach were 4 structures, among them was the house of the harbor pilot, Vicente Ferrer and a half-ruined barrel-making machine shop in which part of the US Marines sheltered in during the firefight. The

rest is composed of the road on the beach (now Espernaza Idrach Street) and intersecting that street to the east is the main road (now 25 de Julio Street) and Beverley Street to the west and trees throughout.

### Special Rules

The US forces begin at the beach hoisting the US flag in skirmish order. The Guerrillas begin in the town, among the buildings and huts also in skirmish order. The Guerrillas take the first turn.

### The Armies

#### Orders of Battle

##### US Forces

Commander-in-Chief

Lt. H.P. Huse

Staff Rating of 7 and *Decisive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

1 small unit of US Marines

Lt Wood

Staff Rating of 7

1 small unit of US Marines

1 M1895 Colt-Machine Gun

### Spanish Forces

Lt. Enrique Méndez López

Staff Rating of 7 and *Aggressive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

2 small units of Puerto Rican Guerrillas

Note: If you want to fight with non-historical forces, it is suggested that the US pick a force of 500 points and the Spanish 300 points.

### Winning the Game

If either side is broken before the six turns are up then the opposing side has won automatically.

If neither army is broken by the end of the game the player with the highest Victory Points (VPs) wins. VPs are calculated for each side as noted below.

### US forces

The US win if the Spanish units are broken before the end of the game. Otherwise we assign victory points (VPs) as noted below:

The US score three VPs for each one of their units that is not Shaken and which is south of the victory line at the end of the game (see the Guánica Battlefield map).

The US score one VP for each unit north of the Victory line and also in the Spanish deployment zone at the end of the game. In this case the point is scored whether the unit is shaken or not.

The US score one VP for each Spanish unit that they cause to be shaken and two VPs for each unit they destroy or force to leave the table. Add half a point to this score if the unit is large and take half a point away if the unit is small.

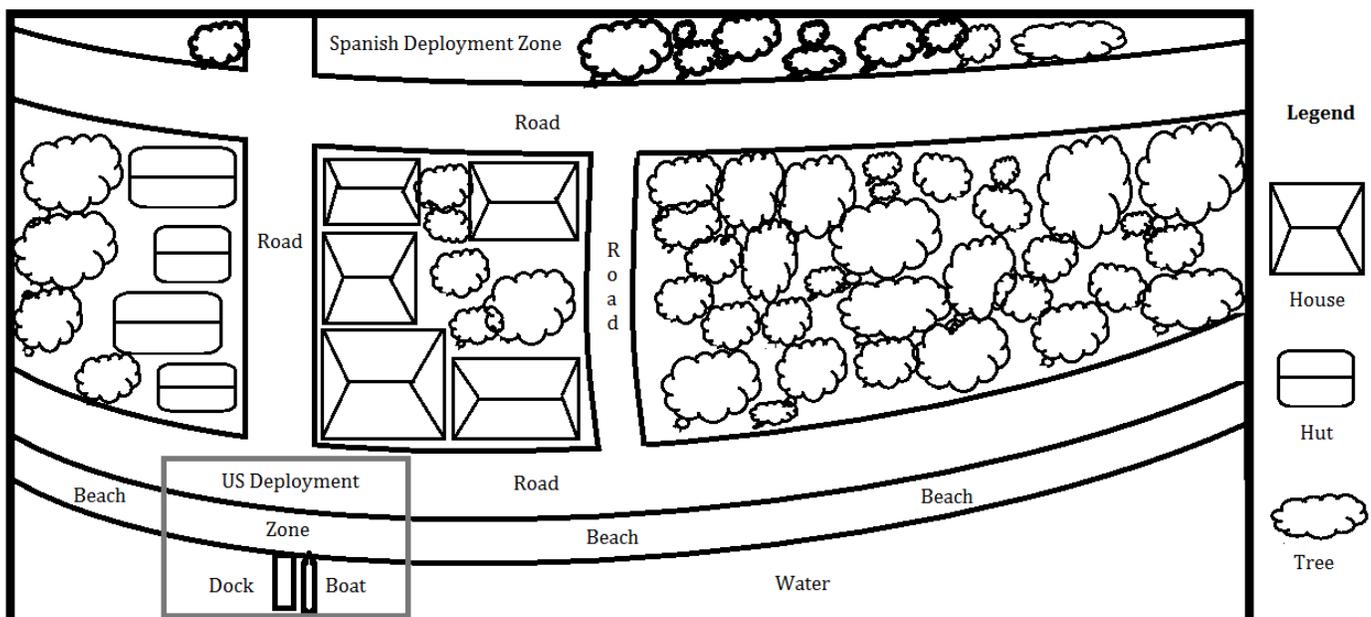
### Spanish

The Spanish player's aim is to delay and damage the US disembarkation. The Spanish win if the US forces are broken before the end of the game.

Otherwise we assign victory points (VPs) as noted below:

The Spanish score three VPs for each one of their units that is not Shaken and which is north of the victory line at the end of the game (see map).

The Spanish score one VP for each of their units south of the victory line whether shaken or not. The Spanish score one VP for each US unit that they cause to be shaken and two VPs for each unit they destroy or force to leave the table. Add half a point to this score if the unit is large and take half a point away if the unit is small.



# The Battle of Yauco

## July 25-26, 1898

### The Battle

After the skirmish at Guánica and the subsequent disembarkation of US troops there, the Americans move north-east towards the town of Yauco. Previously warned Spanish troops scout the area and occupy a hill and a hacienda located near the road to Yauco and take defensive positions there and in the area surrounding the hacienda. Late in the afternoon, US troops led by General G.A. Garretson arrive in the area near the hacienda and move to occupy another hill to the south of the hacienda. Spanish troops fire on the US troops occupying the hill and an intermittent firefight occurs throughout the night. Fearing a Spanish attack at dawn, the US troops ask for reinforcements, which arrive before dawn of the 26<sup>th</sup>.

At 6:00 am on the 26<sup>th</sup>, US forces move towards the Spanish positions and are immediately shot at by Spanish troops. The Americans scatter, but reform to return fire and continue pressing forward.

Having received numerous telegrams through the night from the Governor urging him to fall back, the officer in charge of the Spanish forces, Lt. Colonel Francisco Puig, sees that his position is untenable, pulls back his forces towards the town of Yauco, conducting a tactical withdrawal, leapfrogging elements of his troops out of contact with US forces.

General Garretson and his forces advance towards the hacienda finding it unoccupied, but pull back towards the hill they were originally occupying because he believed that the Spanish forces were preparing a counterattack that never came.

### The Terrain

The area where this battle was fought in is mainly flat land, dominated by the two hills and the hacienda. Vegetation mainly consisted of scrubland and agricultural areas of corn and cane sugar. The road from the town of Guánica to Yauco, runs from the lower south west corner to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way north east of the table edge. The hacienda itself is composed of an L-shaped building with thick outer walls which the Spanish defenders deployed behind.

### Special Rules

The US forces begin at designated zone on the map, deploying in skirmish order on the hill or on the road in March Column formation, after which they may adopt Skirmish Order.

Spanish forces deploy on the northern hill and in the hacienda in Skirmish Order.

The US forces take the first turn.

### The Armies

#### Orders of Battle

##### US Forces

#### Commander-in-Chief

General Garretson

Staff Rating of 7 and *Decisive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

1 standard unit G coy of the 6<sup>th</sup> Illinois (on the US deployment zone hill)

#### Darling's Brigade SR 7

1 Standard unit of L coy (Boston) of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment

1 Standard unit of M coy (Milford) of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment

#### Captain McNeely's Brigade SR 7

1 standard unit of A Company of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment (Deployed of the road in Marching Column formation)

1 standard unit of G Company of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment (Deployed of the road in Marching Column formation)

3 Standard units of C, E, and K coys of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment In Skirmish order

## **Spanish Forces**

### **Commander-in-Chief**

Lt. Colonel Francisco Puig Staff Rating of 8 and *Decisive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

### **Puig's Brigade**

1 Standard unit of Cazadores de la Patria Nº 25 (Light Infantry)

2 small units of Puerto Rican Guerrillas

### **Captain Serafin San Pedro's Brigade SR 7**

1 Standard unit of Cazadores de la Patria Nº 25 (Light Infantry) (deployed on the Spanish deployment zone hill)

### **Captain Salvador Meca's Brigade SR 7**

1 Standard unit of La 3ra. cía. del batallón Cazadores de la Patria Nº 25

### **Captain García's Brigade SR 7**

1 standard unit of the 4th mounted Puerto Rican Guerrillas

### **Lieutenant Rafael Colorado's Brigade SR 7**

1 standard unit of Puerto Rican Guerrillas

## **Winning the Game**

### **US Aims and Objectives**

The US players' aim is to drive the Spanish from this region. To do this they must capture several key battlefield features, the main feature being

the hacienda itself. This will give the US players 6 VPs. To do this there must not be any Spanish forces within 6" of any part of the hacienda.

3 VPs can be obtained by capturing the hill that dominates the North in the Spanish Deployment zone, and 1 VP is obtained by capturing the road (i.e. not having any Spanish forces within 6" of any part of the road).

### **Spanish Aims and Objectives**

The Spanish players' aim is to keep and hold the hacienda until the end of the game. If they do so they will gain 6 VPs. That said, to hold of the region, they must also capture other key features on the battlefield. Three VPs can be obtained by capturing the hill that dominates the US deployment zone in the south. One VP is obtained by capturing the road (i.e. not having any US forces within 6" of any part of the road).

### **Additional Rules**

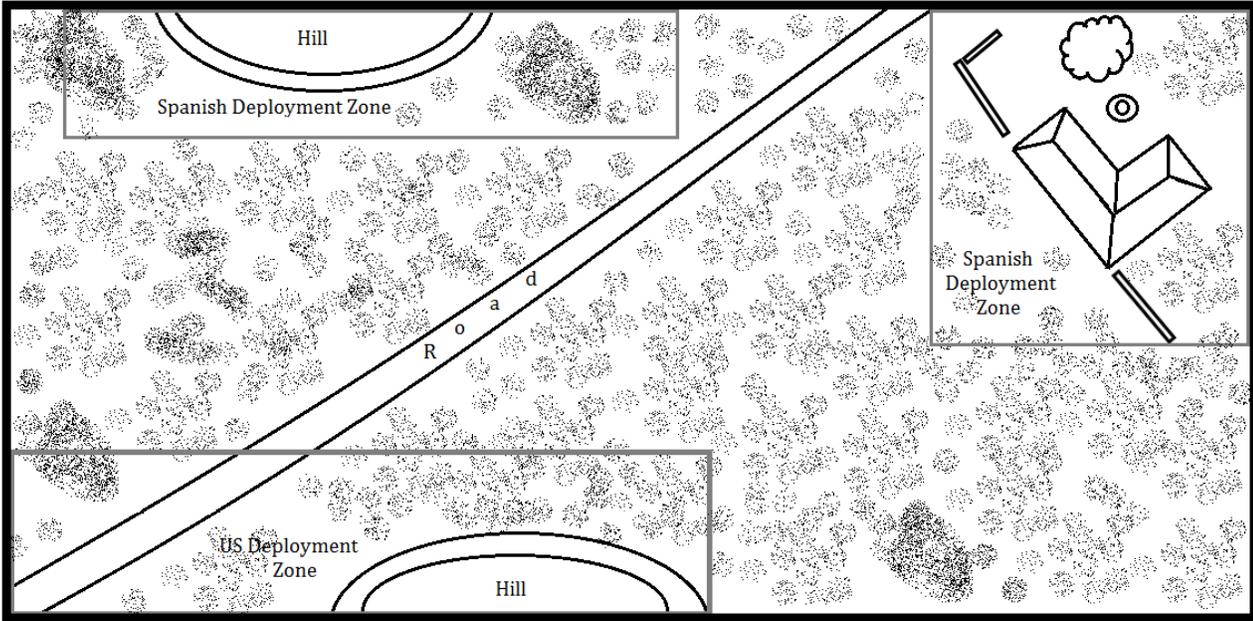
1. The game lasts for 8 turns. The player with the highest VP total wins. Both players may elect to extend the game if both sides agree to do so, up to a maximum of 12 turns.

2. To be classed as capturing a terrain feature the following applies: a building must be occupied, that is not having any enemy forces within 6" of any part of the terrain feature even if it is being assaulted when the game ends. A hill must have a friendly unit on it, and no enemy units on it.

3. Each army scores one VP for each enemy unit they destroy or force to leave the table. These scores should be increased by half a point for a large unit and decreased by half a point for a small unit. Note that no points are scored for shaken units.

4. The side with the most VPs at the end of the game wins.

5. If either side is broken before the eight turns are up then the opposing side has won automatically.



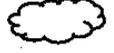
**Legend**



House



Wall



Tree

# The Battle of Coamo

## August 9, 1898

### The Battle

Lieutenant Colonel Larrea, who was in charge of the defensive positions at Asomante (Aibonito), ordered the withdrawal of Spanish forces from Ponce and ordered their placement in and around the town of Coamo, which was a vital in-road to the mountainous region of the island. Major Rafael Martínez Illescas was the officer in charge of the operation and he ordered trenches to be dug in some of the streets that surrounded the main plaza of the town as well as in the road south. An important bridge connecting the town to the road was also destroyed.

Meanwhile, US forces, under the command of General Ernst, explored several roads to Coamo. He settled on a coordinated two-pronged attack; the main force would advance from the west and a smaller force, the 16<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment, took the back roads northward and then swung south closer to the town. Due to the difficulty and unfamiliarity of the road the advance of the 16<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania was slowed, losing valuable time and were unable to reach their appointed position in order to perform the coordinated attack.

The US forces from the west advanced towards the town and ineffectually opened fire with their artillery at what they thought was a blockhouse, failing to score any hit what in reality was a small wooden and zinc roofed house. US artillery played no real part in this engagement.

These troops were joined by the scouting expeditions to the south, who were unsuccessful in finding any Spanish forces there or a way south to the town. All the while, Spanish forces fire on the advancing US forces from their positions in the town. A local townsman informed Major Martínez that US troops are on the road to the north. Realizing that he is about to be encircled, he orders Captain Raimundo Hita

to deploy eastward near a roadhouse on the outskirts of the town and to hold that position in order to allow the Spanish to retreat. Martínez prepares and orders his forces to retreat eastward to Aibonito.

After a long delay, the 16<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania made it to the northern border of the town. They find it difficult to effect a frontal assault, so they decided to take the road connecting Coamo to Aibonito in the east in order to cut off the Spanish forces' retreat. Captain Hita sees US forces advancing on his position and orders his forces to open fire. US forces shoot back. Major Martínez orders a withdrawal from the town, using the main road and a secondary road just south of it. Captain Frutos López arrives with his regiment and reinforce Captain Hita's position.

On horseback, Major Martínez arrives at Captain Hita's position and takes command of the forces there, ordering his men to hold their positions so that the bulk of their forces can retreat. In the firefight, Major Martínez is mortally shot, Captain López runs towards his fallen commander and is also shot and instantly killed.

Captain Hita, seeing his superior officers shot down immediately orders a surrender. Some of the troops refuse to surrender and leave southeast on the secondary road to Aibonito.

US forces arrive and capture the remainder of the Spanish force and pursue the retreating enemy forces but are unable to catch them due to another destroyed bridge on the road to Aibonito.

## The Terrain

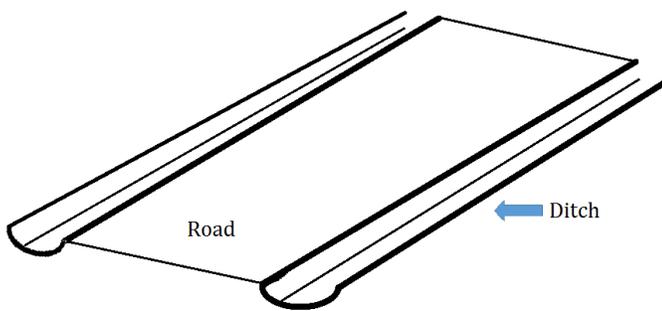
The area where this battle was fought in is hilly, with a slight incline towards the east and to the north. Vegetation mainly consisted of trees and scrubland (see the rule on Woods, page 36 of the *Black Powder* Rulebook). Furthermore, troops shooting through woods have an additional -1 penalty to hit because their targets are not clear, as per the main rulebook.

The main road from the town of Coamo to Aibonito, runs from the lower middle south of the table to the north-east corner of the table edge. This road has a ditch on either side, where Spanish forces were deployed in. A smaller road runs slightly parallel with the main road and hooks southward. There is only one building structure sitting perpendicular with the main road. To the north, in the US deployment zone, sits the Cuyón River, also parallel to the main road.

## Special Rules

The US forces begin at designated zone on the map, deploying in skirmish order.

Spanish forces deploy in Skirmish Order in the ditches along the main road and on the roadhouse in the designated zone on the map.



**Figure 2** Cross Section of Ditch Placement

The Spanish forces take the first turn.

- On the first turn, and at the beginning of every Spanish player's turn, before issuing orders, the Spanish player place their one of their undeployed units, in March order, on the main road and then proceeds to issue orders to his brigades. The unit on the main

road must proceed as much as it can towards the exit, leaving the table via the main road. These units take no part in the combat; they are retreating while the deployed units cover their retreat. Units in March order follow the rules in the *Black Powder* rulebook for shooting and hand-to-hand combat.

- After the 4<sup>th</sup> turn, officers may be shot at.

## The Armies

### Orders of Battle

#### US Forces

**Commander-in-Chief** - General Ernst, Staff Rating of 7 and *Decisive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

#### Hulings' Brigade SR 7

2 Standard units of the 16<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer regiment

1 Standard unit of the 16<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer regiment (comes in during the beginning of the US player's 4<sup>th</sup> turn).

#### Spanish Forces

### Deployed Forces

#### Commander-in-Chief

Major Rafael Martínez Illescas Staff Rating of 8 and *Head Strong* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

#### Captain Frutos López's Brigade SR 8

1 Standard unit of the Cazadores de la Patria Nº 25 (Light Infantry) (deployed in the ditches on the main road, Spanish deployment zone)

#### Captain Raimundo Hita's Brigade SR 6

1 Standard unit of the Cazadores de la Patria Nº 25 (Light Infantry) (deployed in the ditches on the main road, Spanish deployment zone)

1 Small unit of Puerto Rican Guerrillas (deployed in the ditches on the main road, Spanish deployment zone)

### Undeployed Forces

4 Standard units of the Cazadores de la Patria N° 25 (Light Infantry) (deployed in March Order, not placed on table)

## Winning the Game

### US Aims and Objectives

The US players' aim is to prevent the Spanish units from leaving through the Spanish Exit (see map).

3 VPs can be obtained for each Spanish marching unit that breaks in shooting or hand-to-hand combat.

2 VPs can be obtained by every Spanish unit in March order still on the table at the end of the game.

2 VPs can be obtained for each of the deployed Spanish units that breaks in shooting or hand-to-hand combat.

### Spanish Aims and Objectives

The Spanish players' aim is to exit as many units as possible through the main road.

3 VPs can be obtained for each marching unit that exits the table.

2 VPs can be obtained for each deployed Spanish unit that is able to retreat via the main road *after* covering the retreat of the marching units.

2 VPs can be obtained for each of US units that breaks in shooting or hand-to-hand combat.

### Additional Rules

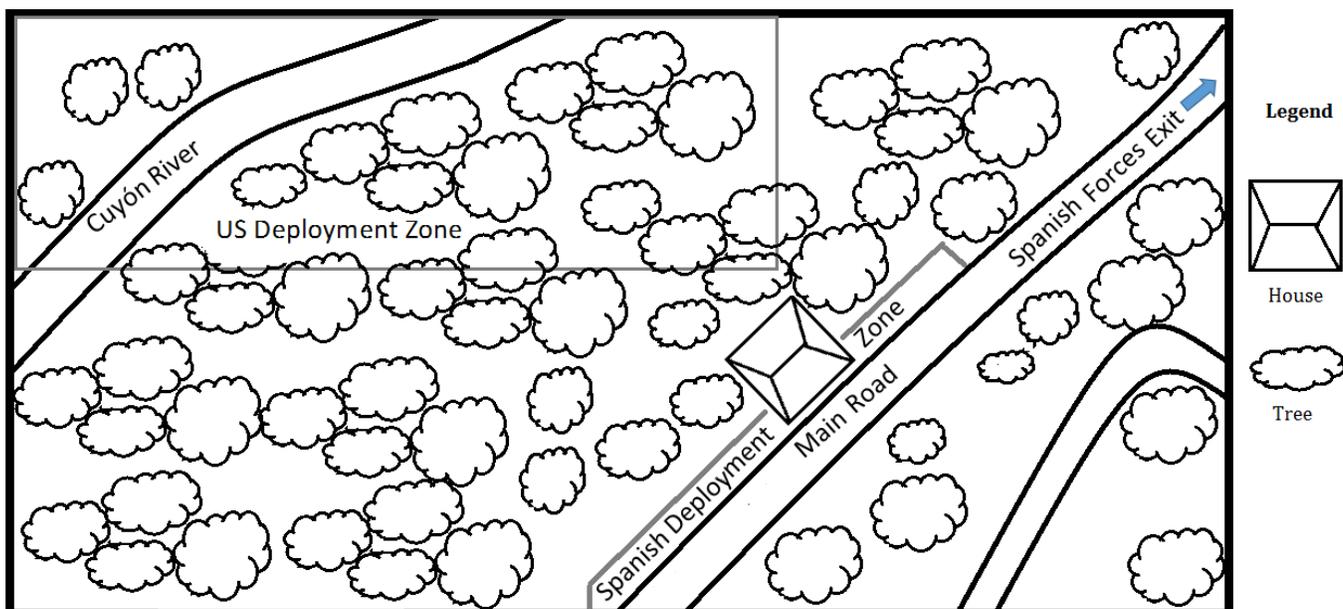
1. The game lasts for 8 turns. The player with the highest VP total wins. Both players may elect to extend the game if both sides agree to do so, up to a maximum of 12 turns.

2. Each army scores the appropriate VP for each enemy unit they destroy or force to leave the table. These scores should be increased by half a point for a large unit and decreased by half a point for a small unit. Note that no points are scored for shaken units.

3. The side with the most VPs at the end of the game wins.

4. If either side is broken before the eight turns are up then the opposing side has won automatically.

5. The Table and Game Scale This depends on the resources available to you, this battle can be fought on a 6ft by 4ft (or 6ft by 6ft if you prefer) table with all shooting ranges reduced by a third. All other distances remain as standard.



# The Battle of Hormigueros

## August 10, 1898

### The Battle

Additional US troops were brought in after the initial landings at Guánica and Ponce, in order to complete the plans for occupying the island. Their plan was to deploy troops towards the south-western part of the island, marching towards Arecibo on the north-western coast of the island in order to link up with troops moving towards Utuado, and finally march to the capital, San Juan.

After moving into and occupying the major towns of the southwest, US troops pushed on towards Mayagüez, where there were reports of Spanish troops concentrating there. On the road from San Germán to Hormigueros, just southeast of Mayagüez, US forces were engaged by Puerto Rican Guerrillas and then by regular Spanish forces on the hill to the northeast overlooking a bridge that crossed the Guanajibo River. US forces spread out and returned fire, placing half of the Gatling guns on a lower hill to the south and the others near the river. US cavalry tried to flank the hill but were unable to do so.

Nearing the end of their supply of ammunition and with no relief in sight, Captain Torrecillas orders his men to fix bayonets for a final charge. Finally, the charge was averted by the intervention of two superior officers that ordered the retreat of their forces from the area. US forces pursued but were unable to capture any enemy units because the Spanish had left by train to Mayagüez. US forces then continued on to Mayagüez.

### The Terrain

The terrain is slightly hilly, with the river bisecting the table in the lower half. The bridge sits in the middle of the table, north to south, crossing the river. Two hills, one in the northeast corner of the table and the other in the

southwest dominate the terrain, with the northeastern hill being taller. Trees and scrub fill the rest of the terrain features (see the rule on Woods, page 36 of the *Black Powder* Rulebook).

### Special Rules

1. The US forces begin below the river, in the southwest corner of the map and the road up to the southern edge of the bridge, deploying in skirmish order.
  2. Spanish forces deploy in Skirmish Order on the hill, in the northeast corner of the map and the road up to the northern edge of the bridge.
  3. The Guanajibo River is a deep channel river; troops are unable to cross the river except over the bridge.
  4. The US forces take the first turn.
- On the third turn, and at the beginning of every US player's turn thereafter, the US cavalry that is in reserve tries to flank the Spanish position on the hill. Before issuing orders, the US player rolls the unit's Morale test in order to see if the unit comes in. If the unit comes in, place the cavalry unit on the eastern edge of the table, above the border of the river at least 18 inches away from the lower edge of the northeastern hill (See map for position) and then proceeds to issue orders to his brigades as normal.
  - On the sixth turn, and at the beginning of the Spanish player's turn thereafter if the roll is not successful, the ammunition of the Spanish forces are nearing depletion. The officer in charge (CinC) orders his infantry units to Fix Bayonets and prepare to charge. Before issuing orders, the player of the Spanish forces rolls the CinC's order test in order to see if the Charge order goes through. This is somewhat impeded because two superior officers are trying to

avoid unnecessary loss of life. When the CinC rolls, add 5 to the roll on the sixth turn, 4 on the seventh turn, 3 on the eighth turn and so on to represent the officer's intervention of the CinC's orders.

## **The Armies**

### **Orders of Battle**

#### **US Forces**

##### **Commander-in-Chief**

General Shwan

Staff Rating of 7 and *Decisive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

##### **Colonel L.D. Russey's Brigade SR 7**

6 standard units of 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment US Regulars

1 Battery of 4 Gatling guns

##### **Captain Frank Thorp's Artillery Battery SR 7**

C Battery of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment

D Battery of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment

##### **Captain Macomb's Cavalry SR 7**

1 Standard unit of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (In Reserve)

#### **Spanish Forces**

##### **Deployed Forces**

##### **Commander-in-Chief**

##### **Captain Jose Torrecillas's Brigade**

Staff Rating of 8 and *Aggressive* (page 95 of the *Black Powder* rulebook)

4 Standard unit of the Cazadores Alfonso XIII n<sup>o</sup> 24 (Light Infantry)

##### **Captain Juan Bascarán's Brigade SR 7**

1 Standard unit of Puerto Rican Guerrillas

## **Winning the Game**

## **US Aims and Objectives**

The US players' aim is to cross the bridge with as many intact units as it can and destroy the deployed Spanish units.

3 VP can be obtained for each US Infantry unit that is able to cross the northern edge of the bridge that is unbroken at the end of the game.

2 VPs can be obtained for each Spanish unit that breaks in shooting or hand-to-hand combat.

## **Spanish Aims and Objectives**

The Spanish players' aim is to delay the US forces trying to cross the bridge.

3 VPs can be obtained for each US unit that is not able to cross the bridge by the end of the game.

2 VPs can be obtained for each of US units that breaks in shooting or hand-to-hand combat.

1 extra VP if the Charge of the Spanish forces is successful (i.e. that the Spanish are able to charge the US forces).

## **Additional Rules**

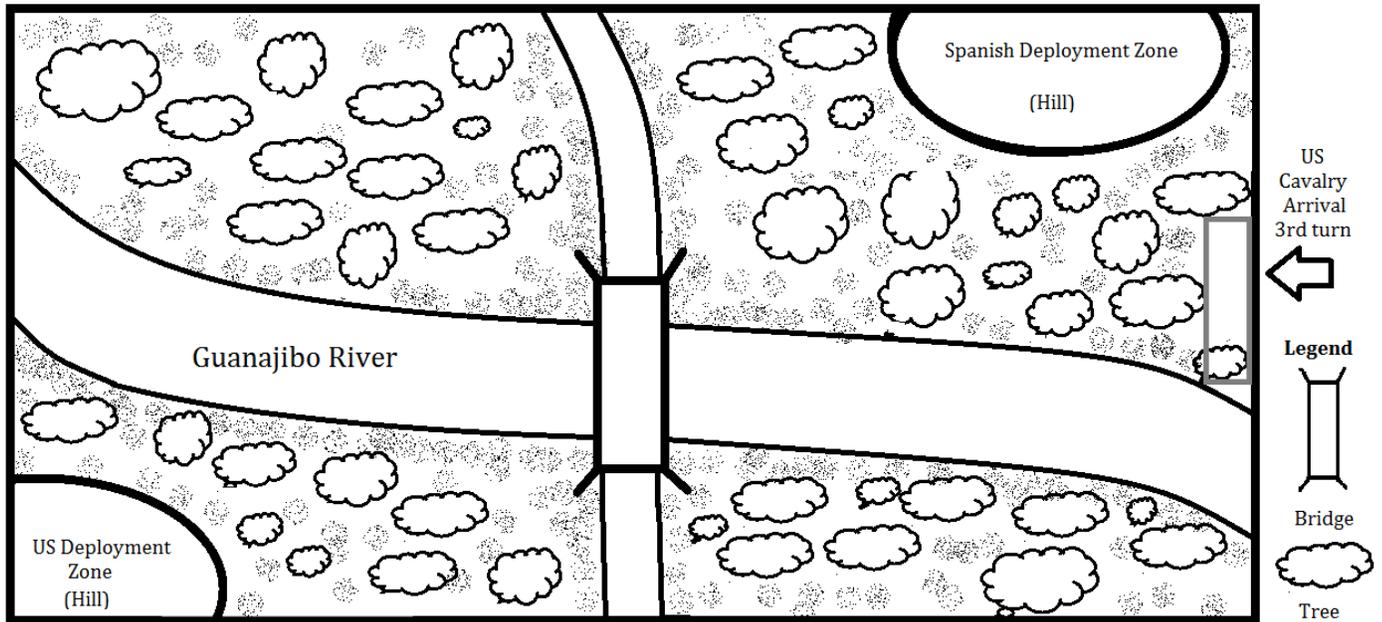
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4. If either side is broken before the eight turns are up then the opposing side has won automatically.

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