

## **Alamo Scouts**

National Museum of U.S. Army

Formed as the U.S. Sixth Army's special reconnaissance unit in World War II, the Alamo Scouts were organized on Fergusson Island, New Guinea, on 28 November 1943. The Scouts conducted reconnaissance and intelligence gathering in the Southwest Pacific Theater under the personal command of then LTG Walter Krueger, Commanding General, U.S. Sixth Army.

Named for his life-long association with San Antonio, Texas, and the Alamo, Krueger envisioned that the Alamo Scouts, consisting of six or seven man teams of highly trained and motivated volunteers, would operate deep behind enemy lines. Their mission would be to provide intelligence on the enemy and tactical reconnaissance in advance of Sixth Army landing operations. Intensive training stressed waterborne infiltration and extraction via U.S. Navy PT boats.

During their two years of service, the Alamo Scouts liberated 197 Allied prisoners in New Guinea. Two teams provided forward reconnaissance and tactical support for Company F, 6th Ranger Battalion, in the Ranger assault on the Cabanatuan prisoner of war camp on Luzon, twenty-five miles behind enemy lines. The Cabanatuan raid, a three-day operation in January and February 1945, freed 516 Allied prisoners. Additionally, in eighteen months, the Scouts captured eighty-four Japanese soldiers and sailors for interrogation.

The Scouts were disbanded without ceremony at Kyoto, Japan, in November 1945, never to be reconstituted. In 1988, the Alamo Scouts were awarded the Special Forces shoulder tab for their wartime service and included in the lineage of the today's U.S. Army Special Forces.

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February 1944, until the end of World War II, the Alamo Scouts conducted 106 intelligence collection missions behind Japanese lines in New Guinea, offshore islands, and the Philippines, totaling 1,482 days. This was accomplished without a single man killed or captured.



