

U.S. Army Military History Institute
950 Soldiers Drive
Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5021
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cavalry

NOTE: CANDIDATES FOR U.S. CAVALRY "LASTS"

***Last mounted tactical cavalry unit in combat...** 26th Cavalry Regiment (Philippine Scouts) in Philippines, stationed at Ft Stotsenburg, Luzon, 1942, fought both mounted and dismounted against Japanese invasion troops, 1942.

***Last mounted cavalry unit...** 129th Cavalry Squadron, activated 1 May 1944 for tactical instruction at the Cavalry School; deactivated 6 Feb 1945. However, 127th Cavalry deactivated at Ft Riley, 1947(?). Also, consider the Horse Platoon, 16th Constabulary Squadron, in Berlin (originally the Horse Platoon, 78th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, 78th Division. (See Armored Cavalry Journal (May/June 1947).

***Last active cavalry post...** Ft Riley, KS. Cavalry School deactivated on 31 Oct 1946 or Nov 1946, including horses & training detachment (129th Squadron?).

***Last U.S. cavalry horse...** See Spore, John B. "Death of a Symbol." Army (Jul 1968): pp. 72-73, which cites the last cavalry horse in U.S. service dying on 24 May 1959.

***Last mounted (horse or mule) US Army unit...** 4th Field Artillery Battalion & 35th Quartermaster Pack Company Co, both deactivated at Ft Carson, CO, 15 Feb 1957. (Horses & Mules, pp. 30-71, UE460.U5).

***Last U.S. Army horse or mule...** see "Horses & Mules" BibFile.

***Last combat cavalry charge...** Ojos Azules, Mexico, 1916, or...

We need to define what exactly constitutes a cavalry charge. Must a bugle sound the classic notes of the charge? Are slashing sabers required or will pistols suffice? How many cavalrymen must participate and must they belong to a bona fide cavalry unit? In view of such niceties, a reasonable candidate for the "last" distinction may be the 11th U.S. Cavalry in the Mexican Punitive Expedition. On 5 May 1916, six troops of that regiment attacked a Villista band at Ojos Azules, Mexico. The bugler sounded the charge as the troopers swept through the area and engaged the enemy--but with pistols, not sabers. See:

Clendenen, Charles C. Blood on the Border: The United States Army and the Mexican Irregulars. NY: Macmillan, 1969. pp. 273-74. F1234.C63.

Mason, Herbert M., Jr. The Great Pursuit. NY: Random House, 1970. Chap 9. F1234.M4.

Vandiver, Frank E. Black Jack: The Life and Times of John J. Pershing. Vol. II. College Station, TX: TX A&M, 1977. pp. 641-642. E181.P575v2.

Williams, S.M. "The Cavalry Fight at Ojos Azules." Cavalry Journal (Jan 1917): pp. 405-08. Per.

Other candidates for this terminal honor--depending on definition-- include the following occasions:

1. During the **China Relief Expedition, the 6th U.S. Cavalry** conducted a mounted charge on 19 Aug 1900 against Boxer forces. Sent on a minor expedition from the already-captured Tientsin, a squadron of the 6th Cavalry initially fought dismounted, then mounted and "charged hotly at the enemy." See:

Dagger, A.S. America in the China Relief Expedition. Kansas City: Hudson-Kimberly, 1903.
pp. 116-17 & 248- 50. DS771.D33.

U.S. War Dept. Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1901.
Vol. I, Pt. 4. Wash, DC, 1901. pp. 441-43. UA24.A1.

2. On the **Bataan Peninsula, the 26th Cavalry (Philippine Scouts)** staged a mounted attack against the Japanese on 16 Jan 1942. See:

Ramsey, Edwin P., & Rivele, Stephen J. Lieutenant Ramsey's War. NY: Knightsbridge, 1990.
335 p. D802.P5.R35.

Memoirs of US Officer, 26th Cavalry (PS), who remained on Luzon, 1942-45. See especially p. 66.

Wheeler, John. "Rearguard in Luzon." Cavalry Journal (Mar/Apr 1943): pp. 5-6. Per.

Whitehead, Arthur K. "Mounted Attack in West Bataan - 1942." Cavalry Journal (Jan/Feb 1945):
p. 51. Per.

Whitman, John W. "Last U.S. Horse Cavalry Charge." Military History (Jun 1995): pp. 38-45. Per.

See also:

Eldred, P.D. "Are Horses Essential in Modern War?" Cavalry Journal (May/Jun 1944): pp. 2-5. Per.

Fleeger, H.J. "Brief Regimental History, 26th Cavalry, W.W.II-Bataan." Cavalry Journal
(Nov/Dec 1945): pp. 6-9. Per.
On microfilm.

Huebner, Michael F. "Riding in the Twilight of the U.S. Cavalry." Army (Nov 1998): pp. 28-31. Per.

Lee, Clark. "The Fighting 26th." Cavalry Journal (Mar/Apr 1943): pp. 2-4. Per.

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Morton, Louis. Notes in OCMH Coll. Arch.

U.S. Philippine Division File includes Chronological Synopsis," 16 p.- "Operations of Troops C/26th Cavalry since Dec 7, 1941," 3 p.- "Diary of Maj Harry J. Fleeger-Brief Regimental History 26th Cavalry World War II-Bataan," 9 p.

Pierce, Clinton A. Papers. Arch.

Includes clippings, articles, map, and personal letters of CO.

Stubbs, Mary Lee, & Connor, Stanley R. Armor-Cavalry. Pt. I. Wash, DC: OCMH, 1969. pp. 72-73. UA29.S8.

Whitehead, Arthur K. "With the 26th Cavalry (P.S.) in the Philippines, December 7-22, 1941." Cavalry Journal (May/Jun 1944): pp. 34-43. Per.

By unit officer.

_____. "Survival in the Philippines, December 2, 1941-March 1,1942." Cavalry Journal (Jul/Aug 1944): pp. 34-41. Per.

_____. "With the Philippine Army on Panay, March 1-May 25, 1942." Cavalry Journal (Sep/Oct 1944): pp. 42-47. Per.

NOTE: According to a Bataan survivor interviewed in the Washington Post (10 Apr 1977) starving U.S. and Philippine troops ate all the regiment's horses.