



The Burman News



Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.
November, 1984

38th Reunion Huge Success

This recent reunion was one of our better ones.

This was the fortieth anniversary of the Burma Breakthrough to Myitkyina. Located as it was in the Southwest, we had an opportunity to have both Eastern and Western members join together.

After the Friday night dinner, we had a showing of a video-cassette created by David Quaid, former combat photographer with the 3rd Bn, 5307th. Taken from actual combat film on the trail enroute from Hsamshingyang to Myitkyina, Burma, in May of 1944, with narration by Quaid, it gives a true, realistic portrayal of the difficulties encountered. Quaid gave up his business for a month to make this film. He has also indicated that the profits from sale of this unique piece of our history is to be used for charitable purposes. Cost at this time is \$30. Check to Merrill's Marauders Association, care of Executive Secretary, address on front of this issue.

The Saturday night banquet began with a Presentation of the Colors by a Ranger Detachment, 2nd Bn, 75th Inf, Ft. Lewis, Washington. Seven of the eight Rangers on hand participated in the Grenada Campaign. Command M-Sgt. James Voyles provided us with a highlight briefing on the action on Friday night. Attendance at the dinner was 303.

Speech! Speech!

The forceful, patriotic talk given by Darrow Tully, Fighter pilot in Korea and Vietnam and currently publisher of the Arizona Republic and Gazette newspapers came as a surprise to some of us. But it was a delight to all of us. Certainly, one of the best speakers we have heard. After the dinner, many people came up to congratulate Mr. Tully. Some asked for copies of his talk. Mr. Tully made a copy available to us. We have retyped it for those who want a copy. Send \$2 check to Merrill's Marauders, 11244 N. 33rd St., Phoenix, AZ 85028 to cover cost of photocopy and mailing.

Business Meeting

For the first time, the annual business meeting of members was held on Saturday afternoon. Chairman Herb Clofine conducted the first part of the meeting. He was succeeded by Lawrence Lew after the election of officers. The new officers for this year are: President Philip B. Piazza; Chairman Lawrence Lew; Treasurer Herb Clofine; Executive Secretary Ray Lyons; Historian Ralph Kouroyen; Military Liaison Officer Dave Hurwitt.

Reunion Site Proposals

Hurwitt and Ketcham proposed the American Dutch Resort at Lake Buena Vista, near Orlando, Florida. It is 15 minutes from airport and convenient to Disney World Village and Epcot. Cost \$275 per couple. Tom Martini proposed the Henry VIII Hotel at St. Louis, Missouri. This was a reunion site in 1981. Cost: \$185 per couple.

The third proposal by Sam Rapisarda was for the Cleveland Hilton South, near Cleveland, Ohio. Costs are as follows: Package for two persons including 4 meals and 2 nights, \$205; Package for one person including 4 meals and 2 nights, \$155. There is no charge for children in the guest room regardless of age, when they occupy the same room as their parents. Package for children 12 years and under with 4 meals, \$25; package for children, ages 12-18, with 4

meals, \$55.00.

Non-package room rates: Room rates for single or double occupancy will be \$50 plus 12.5 percent sales tax. This rate will apply one week prior to your convention date and one week following your convention date.

Airport transportation is available to and from the Cleveland Hilton South.

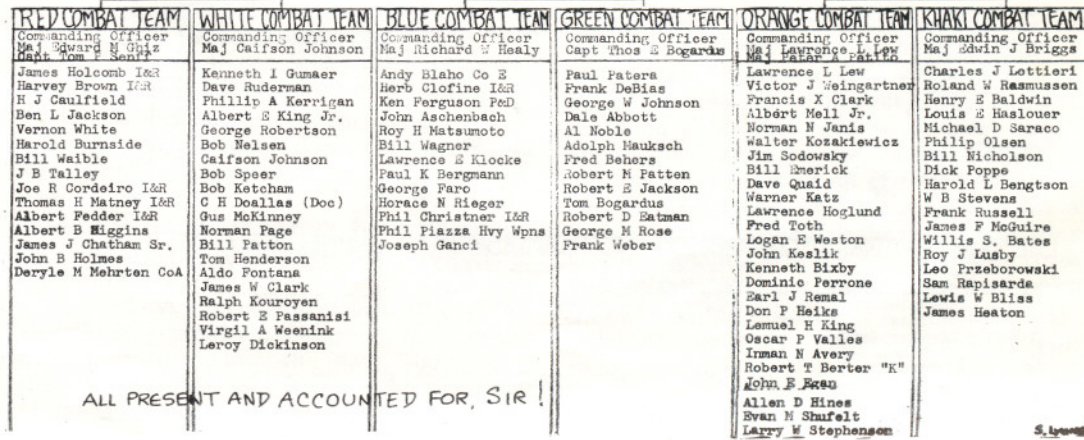
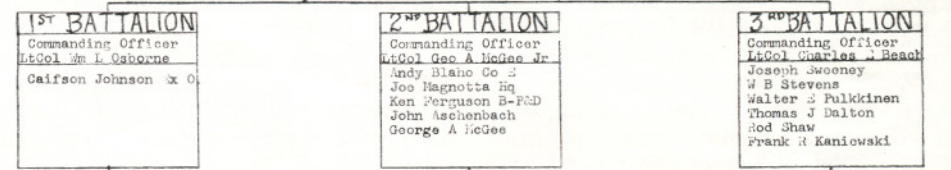
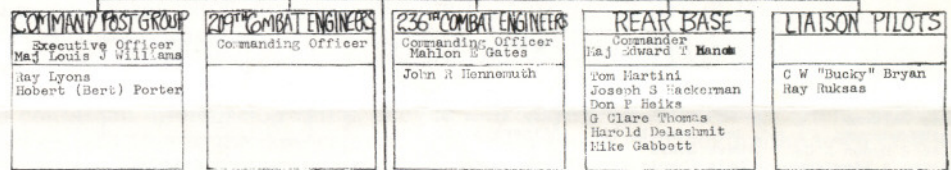
The vote tally for each of the proposals was: St. Louis — 14; Lake Buena Vista — 16; Cleveland — 70. Therefore, next year the reunion will be in Cleveland, Ohio. See you there. Details and registration forthcoming.

Address of new Historian Ralph Kouroyen is 198 Cavalier Ct., North Ft. Myers, FL 33903. Reunion Chairman Sam Rapisarda, 12937, County Line Road, Chesterland, Ohio 44026.

INDIA-BURMA CAMPAIGN
(1ST CAMPAIGN)

5307th COMPOSITE UNIT (PROV)

38th REUNION
SCOTTSDALE, AZ.
AUG. 31- SEPT. 2, 1984



ALL PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR, SIR!

**FATHER JAMES STUART'S
CHRONICLE OF THE MARAUDERS
THROUGH THE TAKING OF THE
AIRFIELD AT MYITKYINA**

Editor's Note: With this issue we begin the printing of notes made by Father Stuart that appears to be a report made to OSS Headquarters in Burma. During a visit to Columban Fathers Headquarters, outside of Omaha, Nebraska, we found that he had made a similar report to his religious superiors which stressed his missionary role. You will find this report reflects his plain-talking manner. The report was obtained from Dave Contess and Al Sokolnicki. It will be issued on a space-available basis in the future.

Father James Stuart, born in Ireland, was a Columban missionary among the Kachins. He died August 11, 1955, in his family home in Money more, Co. Derry, Ireland, at the age of 46. He is buried at Navan, headquarters of the Columban Fathers in Ireland

During the Fall of 1942 the late Brigadier Orde Wingate organized Gurkha and British soldiers into compact units to be used in long-range penetration operations. Known as Jungle Columns, these units engaged in

marauding expeditions in northern Burma, harassing the enemy and disrupting his communication and supply lines. They made no attempt to engage main enemy forces or to seize and hold territory, being concerned only with hit-and-run raiding tactics.

The exploits of this expedition received a good deal of publicity. A proposal was made at the Quebec Conference in August, 1943, that the United States should furnish such a force for a similar mission in Burma.

On September 1st, the Chief of Staff directed that "approximately 3000 officers and men be shipped at once to the Asiatic theatre to form three special units for employment in Burma on long-range penetration operations similar to the expedition commanded by Brigadier Wingate in the Spring of 1943." It was further directed that these troops be selected from "... volunteers, in excellent physical condition, and who were informed that they were to engage in a hazardous mission within a few months."

A letter was dispatched on September 7th to the Commanding General, CBI, Rear Echelon, New Delhi, acquainting him with the action taken and outlining the proposed use of the force thus: "It is visualized the three battalions will be employed separately — probably two in Assam and one from Yunnan, and that they will operate in front of main efforts. They will have pack transport and will be resupplied by air. Al-

though operating separately, the three efforts should be coordinated by one 'Group' Headquarters composed of personnel who will train with the battalions and thus become familiar with their capabilities, personalities, communication and supply problems, and other vital factors, as well as to maintain liaison and coordinate with other friendly troops in the area."

There was nothing in the letter to indicate that the force would be controlled by the British, although five days earlier General Stilwell had received information that the American troops were to operate under Wingate. (Radio NR 3283 2 Sept 43 EA Stilwell fr Marshall File 2 JWS Personal.)

Attached to this letter were proposed T-O's covering all anticipated requirements and plans for the composition, equipment, supply and training of the unit. There was also a clause permitting "alterations as desired." A large amount of material over and above the T-E was provided. (Ed. Note — not found). In paragraph VI this statement appeared: "Every conceivable type of weapon and special equipment, including new developments, that will further the success of this operation has been amply provided, with provision for aerial dropping losses and false drops for deceptive purposes."

By this time there had sprung up a difference of opinion regarding the value of long-range penetration groups. Some British commanders were not in favor of Wingate's plans for a second campaign because the nature of the task demanded the cream of the trained troops, thus depleting their regular military forces; others felt that the lack of a definite military objective and the probably small scale results were not suf-

(Continued on page 3)

CENTRAL BURMA
CAMPAIGN
(2ND CAMPAIGN)

MARS TASK FORCE
5332 Brigade Headquarters
Commanding Officer
Brig Gen. Thomas S Arms

38TH REUNION
SCOTTSDALE, AZ.
AUG. 31 - SEPT. 2, 1984

44TH FORT SURG. HOSP.
Commanding Officer

415TH INFANTRY HQ
Commanding Officer
LtCol Wm L Osborne
Fr. Glavin
Tom Martini
Ken Ferguson
Mike Gabbett
Thomas J Dalton
Thomas B Gehan

612TH FIELD ARTILLERY BN
Commanding Officer

124TH CAVALRY REGIMENT
Commanding Officer
Col Loren D Pegg

1ST BATTALION
Commanding Officer
Maj Caifson Johnson
James Holcomb
David Ruderman
Caleb E Hyden A Co
Phillip A Kerrigan
Albert E King Jr I&R
Harvey Brown "1" Co
Bob Nelson
Caifson Johnson
Bill Waible
Bob Ketcham
Virgil Weenink
Gus McKinney
Al Noble
J B Talley
Leo Przeborowski
Joe R Cordeiro I&R
Bill Patton
James J Chatham
Lemuel H King HQ
Albert Pedder
Albert B Higgins
Ben L Jackson
Harold Burnside
Earl J Amal
Tom Henderson
John B Holmes
Allin B Tidwell HQ
I&R

2ND BATTALION
Commanding Officer
LtCol Bob Thrall
LtCol John Lattin
Earl Farnell I&R
Dave Quaid
Dale Abbott
Norman Page
Robert E Jackson
Joseph Konopacki

3RD BATTALION
Commanding Officer
LtCol Arthur K Harrold
Ray Lyons HQ
Albert Nell, Jr
Fr Glavin
Bob Berter "K" Co
Walter S Pulkkinen
James D Holland HQ
Rod Shaw

1ST SQUADRON
Commanding Officer
Fr. Glavin

2ND SQUADRON
Commanding Officer

3RD SQUADRON
Commanding Officer
LtCol Chas B Hazelting

613TH FIELD ARTILLERY BN
Commanding Officer

31ST QUARTERMASTER
Commanding Officer
Lt Hulbert
John S Biancanello
(Jones)
Elbert V Higgins ExO
Robert E Jackson
Kenneth I Gumaer

33RD QUARTERMASTER
Commanding Officer
Capt Albert B Higgins
Harold Bengtson
Albert B Higgins

35TH QUARTERMASTER
Commanding Officer
Capt Ralph A Hatch
Ralph A Hatch

49TH FORT SURG. HOSP.
Commanding Officer

ALL PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR, SIR!

Officers Row

President — We will send a condolence card to families of deceased Marauders. Let me know. Phil Piazza, Rt. 3, Box 358, Timber Lake 1, Seneca, SC 29678.

Treasurer — Expenses were high last year. Herb Clofine.

Executive Secretary — If you like the material in this issue of "Burman News" and would like it to be continued, we need your financial support. Send donations to Merrill's Marauders, 11244 N. 33rd St., Phoenix, AZ 85028.

GOING! Going! going!

We have a license plate that displays the Ranger Tab and our Marauder patch. You can mount it on top of your present license, stick it in the back window, or tack one up in your workshop. Send \$6 check to Merrill's Marauders at 11244 N. 33rd St., Phoenix, AZ 85028.



FATHER STUART . . .

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ficient to justify the enormous expenditure involved.

In accordance with the Chief of Staff's September 1st directive, various command headquarters received radio instructions regarding the recruitment of personnel for the new force. The 950 troops who had served on Trinidad were secured through the Caribbean Defense Command; another 950 were found among the veterans of Guadalcanal and other South Sea operations; and a similar number, many with tropical service behind them, volunteered from the United States.

Lt. Col. Charles N. Hunter was the senior officer among those selected. He had just completed a tour of duty at Fort Benning Infantry School where he served as Chief of the Rifle Platoon Combat Section. Hunter went directly to Washington and sat in on some of the planning conferences. On September 15th, he flew to San Francisco where the men destined to form two of the three battalions had assembled. Personnel for the third battalion would be picked up enroute to India.

In order that the unit's departure might be expedited, the Trinidad volunteers had flown to Miami and crossed the continent by rail. On the 21st of September the unit sailed out through the Golden Gate on the SS Lurline. As much of their equipment as could be accommodated went with them; the remainder was sent to San Diego from which port it was to be forwarded in one shipment to Bombay. (The equipment shipped from San Diego reached Bombay in almost 40 different cargoes. In May, when the siege of Myitkyina was well underway, the last of it arrived in Calcutta. Because of this the unit started up the Ledo Road lacking some items it was scheduled to have.)

Lt. Col. Hunter knew that there would probably be little time before the unit entered into combat. Therefore, he initiated on shipboard a training program which was carried out as extensively as possible under crowded conditions. This program consisted of physical hardening exercises, small arms practice, classes in scouting and patrolling, and special first-aid and preventive hygiene training which would be useful in the jungle for which they were headed.

The Lurline proceeded SW to a point between Hawaii and Christmas Island, thence W to Noumea, New Caledonia. Here the unit was augmented by 650 officers and men; and the other volunteers needed to fill out the third battalion were waiting at the next port of call, Brisbane, Australia.

After a brief stop at Perth, the Lurline sped across the Indian Ocean and up the Arabian Sea to her destination, Bombay. The three battalions disembarked on the 29th, 30th, and 31st of October, 1943. Waiting to meet them was Col. Francis G. Brink, USA, who was charged with the supervision of their training. With him was Maj. Edward T. Hancock who acted as supply officer of the organization until its dissolution in August, 1944.

The status of the unit was not yet clear. Complete arrangements had been made by

the Americans to move and receive the troops in Assam but this move was not permitted by the British, who desired to keep them in India proper for training. Consequently, no adequate provision had been made for the reception and housing of the troops in India. Some immediate action was imperative. The British assigned temporary camp grounds at Deolali, but these proved unsuitable. Messing facilities in particular were so bad that Hunter made a protest through General Ferris. (Brig. Gen. B. G. Ferris, deputy C-S of CBI.) Three weeks later they moved to virgin country near Deogarh where a tent camp was partly established and where a training area was accessible.

Under the direction of Col. Brink who was assisted by Lt. Col. D. E. Still, the troops began to receive intensive instruction and training. Naturally, great emphasis was placed on jungle operations. General Wingate was very much in evidence around Deogarh. He brought in some British officers together with some officers and men

from the Burma Rifles to inject into the unit his ideas on training. It was obvious that he expected to have this group under his command. At his insistence, the American battalion formation was broken down into two Jungle Columns (later called Combat Teams) and training was shaped accordingly. In adopting this organization it was necessary to break up companies for the permanent tactical formation, yet, for normal administrative purposes it was equally necessary to maintain the original organization on paper as the British set-up did not contemplate or provide any personnel for administration in the Jungle Columns. This resulted in officers in charge of records being responsible for men concerning whose status they had no knowledge or control.

The administrative difficulties encountered during these early days, when the unit attempted to adopt the prescribed British organization, were responsible for the inac-

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PASS IN REVIEW

Deaths reported in the past year

Name and Hometown [where known]	Where, When Died
Thomas K. Armstrong, Titusville, FL	11/27/83
Ernest Beauchesne, Manville, RI, 3 Bn O Med.	6/4/83
Robert Wayne Beck, Tell City, IN, New Galahad	7/8/83
Raymond Bratten, 2 Bn	Warong, Burma, 3/10-12/44
Lionel Buchette	Walawbum, Burma
Lloyd (Clem) Caldwell, 475/2/Hq Co	11/21/82
William Connery, S/Sgt, 475/3/K	Myitkyina, Burma, 6/44
George Crisp	6/84
Alponse DePalma, Uniondale, NY, 1 Bn W.	6/1/84
Fred Domino, Depew, NY, 5307/1/R	Mesa, AZ 5/13/84
Virgil C Flatter, Mesa, AZ, 475/2/Hq Co	3/31/82
Ralph Fowler, Rev., Quitman, AR	Myitkyina, 6/44
Joseph Garcia, Phoenix, AZ 475/3/K	8/2/44
Richard F Gervois, Bristol, CT, 3 Bn I & R	10/7/83
John F Gestring, Col., Moraga, CA, 3 Bn	Ft Meade, VH, 6/26/83
William Grams, Sturgis, SD	12/22/83
Koore Hanson, Salem, OR, 5307/1/R	Woods, VH, 12/81
Richard Hejdak, Milwaukee, WI	Flint, MI 7/19/84
Duane T Hosler, Flint, MI, 5307/Hq (MP)	Mass, 5/9/84
Raymond C Houghton, Edgartown, MA, 5307/2/F	12/22/83
Charles L Joyner, Capron, VA, 5307/HQ (MP)	Burma, 1944
Robert E Kadgihn, Capt, Iowa City, Iowa	1954
Joseph Kwiatowski, Reading, PA	June 1944
Lake, Lt., (Capt Maxon, C O)	7/2/44
Elmer R Levesque, Bristol, CT, 2 Bn	1978-79
Edward Ludwig, Akron, OH	Fall 1957
Charles Lutz, Philadelphia, PA	West Germany, 1978
William Maddock	1968
Joseph Maloney, Dayton, OH 5307/3/OCT	Portsmouth, VA 7/10/84
Joseph Patrick Manzione, Portsmouth, VA, 236th	1963
George Mikulan, Pittsburgh, PA	Myitkyina, June 1944
Edgar Morris, Lt., 475/3/K	Walawbum, Burma, Mar '44
"Nick" Nichols, 5307/3/O CT	Korea, Dec. 1950, 38th Inf.
Charles Albert Ogden, 5307/3 Bn.	Myitkyina, Burma, June '44
Raymond Ostrolecki, 475/3/K	Nhpum, GA, Burma
John Ploerderl, Oshkosh, WI, 3 Bn	1976-77
I S Ravdin, DR, Philadelphia, PA 20 GH	7/12/84
Paul L Rogers, Braintree, MA 1 Bn	VA Med Cent, July 1983
Clarence Salts, Leavenworth, KS	7/2/44
William Joseph Spielman, Bristol, CT, 2 Bn	1970's
E Trout, Akron, OH	1983-84
Oscar Tudor, Sacramento, CA	12/9/83
Norvel P Tyler, Norfolk, VA 475th	Fall 1966
Joseph Volpe, Somerville, NJ	6/13/44
E G Zeranski, Bristol, CT 5307/3 Bn	1978-79
Daniel Zidna, Akron, OH 2 Bn	

FATHER STUART . . .

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curacies in records which later created trouble.

Lt. Col. Hunter continued to administer the unit. He drew some personnel from the battalions, and with other personnel made available by Theatre Headquarters, organized a provisional central headquarters. C.O. 39 Headquarters USAF, CBI, 10 October 1943 assigned the number 5307 to the provisional unit.

In December, Lt. Col. Hunter issued a general order from "Regimental Headquarters" activating the "Regiment," and sent the order to CBI Headquarters for approval. Theatre Headquarters approved the action, thus officially activating the unit as a regiment as of 1 January 1944.

The regiment was an aggregation of Branch Immaterial troops, and included artillerymen, cavalry troopers, infantrymen and others. Plans for a combined operation for the recapture of Burma having failed to materialize, the contemplated use of long-range penetration troops now in training had to be shelved. With the approach of the offensive to open up the way for the Ledo Road, General Stilwell desired to use his regiment in the North Burma campaign. The Supreme Allied Commander approved this request, and the organization was transferred to Stilwell's Burma command. (Rad NR 42 8 Jan '44, EA.)

The 31st and 33rd QM Pack Troops were added to the unit early in January, together with a detachment from the 835th Signal Service Battalion and a platoon of Military Police from the 502nd MP Battalion. On January 6th, Brigadier General Frank D. Merrill was assigned to command this combined force and its destination was announced as the 5307th Provisional Unit. The 31st had sailed from New Orleans on the eighteenth of October. The 33rd, which left the same port on the first of November,

travelled on a ship which was torpedoed en route, and lost all its equipment and animals. Twelve days before the start of the campaign they arrived at Deogarh where they found horses and mules that had been brought from Australia waiting for them.

Elements of these two pack troops, plus an extemporized pack troop made up of personnel borrowed from other units in the theatre, were attached to the three battalions and to the unit headquarters. The unit started out with an animal strength of 700. At the end of the campaign less than 100 remained, 600 animals having been casualties. The First Battalion alone lost 60 animals on the march to Myitkyina.

Plans had been made to employ Galahad in February, 1944, and the tactical situation in northern Burma in early January made its entry into combat activities on its time schedule most expedient.

Chinese units which had been sent to Ledo during October, 1943, to rout the enemy from forward areas in advance of the road engineers, after making initial gains in the Hukawng Valley, ran into strong opposition from prepared enemy positions and by January 1944 had been slowed down. Enemy reinforcements were rumored to be moving northward in the Hukawng Valley. Japanese patrols had attacked the Ledo Road, and raids on the Bengal-Assam Railway were feared. Any such enemy action could have a serious effect on our effort to get supplies through to China and it was essential to get the rate of advance by our troops speeded up.

When General Merrill assumed command of Galahad on January 6th, his instructions were "to close in on Ledo by February 7th." Ledo area was then the forward base of operations. This meant that within one month 3000 men and 700 animals had to be transported a distance of over one thousand miles, a monumental task because the route necessitated a

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India-Burma Campaign, Northern Burma, 1944, 5307 Headquarters. Kachin tribesman making a gift of chicken, deer meat, bamboo bottle of rice beer to BG F. D. Merrill. With the Commanding General is Father Stuart.

**HEADQUARTERS
5307th COMPOSITE UNIT (PROV)
SPECIAL ORDERS:)**

NUMBER 142 : A.P.O. 487
1 August 1944

1. PAC secret radio, Hq. USAF, CBI, APO 885, dtd 2 Jul 1944, the following named O, are reld fr further asgmt to and dy with this unit, and WP fr this sta to AP 883, for air transportation to Cont US.

Maj LAWRENCE L. LEW 0401329,
Inf, Hq Co 3rd Bn
Maj LOUIS J. WILLIAMS 0372083,
Inf, Hq & Hq Det
Capt. G. CLARE THOMAS 0402885,
Inf, Hq & Hq Det

2. T/5 Marvin C. Corbin, 6295608, QMC Hq & Hq Det, is placed on DS to Myitkyina Task Force.

3. VOCO of 27 Jul 1944 directing that Capt MARK J. SABLOSKY, 047144, DC, having reported this Hq be asgd to Hq Co 1st Br are hereby confirmed and made of record.

4. Having reported this Hq, Pfc James M Moll, 36155140, Inf, MOS 745, is asgd to Co F

5. Having reported this Hq, the following named EM are asgd to Hq & Hq Det, atchd to Casual Det for administration and further atchd to Hq & Hq Det, RE, for dy rats & qrs.

S/Sgt. John R. Buzzard 6142092

Pvt. Mack Johnson 6970348

Pvt James O. McFarland 15045600

6. Capt WILLIAM Z. SCOTT, 0375971, Inf Hq & Hq Det, is aptd C1 A Agent O to Lt Col J. E. KIRK, FD, Disbursing O, Advance Sec 2, SOS, USAF, CBI, APO 629, for the purpose of making pmts to EM of Hq & Hq Det on Jul 1944 payroll.

7. The following named EM, organizations indicated are rd to gr of Pvt.

Sgt Lewis E. Brown 34160396, Co C

Pfc Edward A. Hahn 32751209, Casual De

8. The following named O, organization indicated are placed on DS at Massouri India, for a period of 21 days, and WP o/a 5 Aug fr this sta to Massouri, India.

2nd Lt THEODORE T. CHAMALAS

0512157, Inf

2nd Lt WILLIAM B. FILIAK

01642858, SC

9. The following named O, are placed on DS at Simla, India, for a period of 21 days and WP o/a 5 Aug 1944 fr this sta to Simla India.

1st Lt KENNETH I. GUMAER

01715248, VC

2nd Lt EARL H. HEISS

01321407, Inf

10. 2nd Lt WILLIAMN. PAYNE, 0132470- Inf, Casual Det, is placed on DS at US Arm Rest Cp 1, APO 465, for a period of 21 days and WP o/a 5 Aug 1944 fr this sta to AP 465.

By order of Colonel HUNTER:

OFFICIAL:

TOM P. SENFF,

Capt., Inf,

Adjutant.

TOM P. SENFF,

Capt, Inf,

Adjutant.

WAR STORY

Little Shan boy watching Colonel Kinross at Myitkyina. Colonel was wearing eyeglasses to read map. Boy observes, "U big eyes, see little word."

FATHER STUART . . .

Continued from page 4)

change-over from a broad-gauge to a narrow-gauge line, and a different movement up to the Brahmaputra River by boat. The inadequate transportation facilities would not permit the completion of the move within the time allotted, and not until the 9th of February did the last of the trailing Third Battalion hit the ground at Margherita, six miles west of Ledo.

General Merrill was eminently fitted to lead such an expedition. He was thirty-nine years old, and had been a classmate of Lt. Col. Hunter's at the United States Military Academy from which he graduated in 1929. He had been a language student in Japan and had spent time in the field with the Japanese Army. December 7, 1941, had found him in a plane on his way to Rangoon from the Philippines. He served with General Stilwell in the first Burma campaign as liaison officer with the British Forces, and after the famous retreat became G-3 at CBI Rear Echelon Headquarters. This assignment enabled him to acquire a rich background on both the strategic plans of the theatre and its administrative ramifications. He was familiar with the country in which he was scheduled to operate and with the characteristics of the foe against whom he was moving.

His new command pleased him. On January 6th, he sent a message to General Stilwell that the outfit was in excellent shape, had high morale, and was ready and anxious for field service. Upon his arrival in Ledo, General Merrill had received further instructions to march up the Ledo Road as far as Ningbyen. The First Battalion moved forward on the 9th as the Third Battalion detrained at Margherita.

There had not been enough time to change the unit from the British type of organization back to an orthodox American battalion organization. Each of the battalions was still formed into two combat elements which were now called Combat Teams. These were not combat teams in the accepted sense, since they were merely sub-division of the battalion into smaller units rather than a grouping of associated arms (such as artillery and engineers with infantry for unit employment).

The First Battalion was commanded by Lt. Col. William L. Osborne, and its two teams, Red Combat Team and White Combat Team were under Maj. Edward Ghiz and Maj. Caifson Johnson respectively. Lt. Col. George A. McGee had the Second Battalion which was composed of the Blue Combat Team commanded by Maj. Richard M. Healey and the Green Combat Team under Capt. Thomas E. Borgardus. The Third Battalion was given to Lt. Col. Charles E. Beach and comprised the Orange Combat Team under Maj. Lawrence L. Lew and the Khaki Combat Team led by Maj. Edwin J. Briggs.

General Merrill appointed Col. Hunter as executive officer. A small and mobile command group, consisting of General Merrill, a few guards and an operating staff, accompanied the troops. In addition, a liaison group was placed at General Stilwell's Burma Headquarters. An Air Base

detachment, under Maj. Hancock, was left in the rear area to handle supply for the unit.

Operations behind enemy lines depend on mobility and secrecy. For this reason normal methods of supply were impractical. Because any attempt to encumber the troops with an appreciable amount of subsistence for themselves and their animals would destroy tactical mobility, arrangements were made to supply the organization by air-dropping food and munitions at pre-determined locations. (see Appendix No. 3). (Ed. Note — No Appendix attached). The unit normally carried rations for three days at all times.

The unusual effectiveness of this air supply contributed greatly to the unit's swift mobility and its ability to function properly. In some measure the success of the campaign was made possible by the splendid cooperation of Galahad's air base detachment in furnishing critically needed items despite the obstacles that often confronted them. (Three factors are responsible for the enviable success of Galahad's air base detachment in supplying the forward unit. A. The job was in charge of a line officer, Maj. E. T. Hancock, who kept abreast of the tactical situation and was frequently able to anticipate requirements before the need for them actually occurred. B. The efficiency, hard work, and devotion to duty of Capt. W. C. Nelson who was the mainspring that never ran down; and the tireless ef-

forts and complete cooperation of Lt. Robert O. Gardiner who supervised the packing of parachutes, and of Capt. M. E. Lowell who provided outstanding air liaison and flying performances under adverse conditions, formed close parallels in achievement. Lowell was later commanding officer of First Troop Carrier San at Sukreting (?). He did most of Det. 101's dangerous personnel night parachuting himself when he was a major. He was a grand character and always most obliging.)

The First Phase of the Campaign

On February 19th, the leading First Battalion reached Ningbyen and the Third Battalion, at the tail of the column, pulled in on the 21st, two days later. At Ningbyen, the first air-drop supplies took place. Maj. Hancock had come up from Rear Echelon at Dinjan to witness it. Some of the parachutes failed to handle their loads. Some containers weighed so much that men on the ground couldn't handle them, and the time consumed in breaking down the packages and distributing their contents was longer than had been anticipated. But before being removed from the field each parcel was examined and the mistakes made in packing and overloading them carefully noted. As a result of this experiment, changes in air-dropping technique were inaugurated and future dropping of supplies

(Continued on page 6)

FALL IN!**Here are the latest additions to our assembly. Remember them?**

John Aschenbach, Hope, Idaho 83836; 5307/2/B P&D
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FATHER STUART . . .

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was highly successful.

General Merrill went to Taipha Ga on February 22nd to meet General Stilwell and received his first mission; to cut the road in the vicinity of Walawbum and to attack the 18th Japanese Division Command Post, believed to be near there, when Chinese operations then underway reached a climax.

Meanwhile, he was to move to the Tanja Ga area and await orders to jump off. (I had been to Tanja Village in January '44 and visited some of the other trails in the area to get information on trails and Jap dispositions. Later, I brought 285 refugees, women and children over these trails to try and reach Shing. We got ambushed by Japs and, worst of all, by Kachins and Chinese under an American Major Lutkins (Miss.) who had been sent to meet us. We had to retreat. (Women and kids are not the best fighting material. Twice during ambushes a woman gave birth to a child.) Accurate and very detailed information regarding the terrain to be encountered was necessary for the success of this mission. Merrill personally assigned three Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoons the job of investigating the trails to Pup Ga, MBA Tingkrang Ga, and the trail leading through Nzang Ga as far as the Tawang HKA (River).

At 0600 hours on February 24th, the First Battalion moved out toward Ngukun Ga. The Second Battalion followed at 0900 hours and the Third at 1100 hours. Each man carried one C ration and two K rations. Unfriendly aircraft, apparently reconnoitering in the vicinity, convinced the American that the Japanese were aware of their presence. In order to deceive the enemy arrangements were made with local Kachins to build fires throughout the bivouac site and to maintain there the appearance of continued occupation.

Ngukun Ga was reached the first night. The normal order of march obtained the following day. On February 26th, the Third Battalion led off followed by the Second and First Battalions. By nightfall Nchaw Ga had been passed.

Meanwhile, during the day of the 25th the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of Maj. Lew's Orange Combat Team had run into a Japanese patrol between Ndawng Ga and Nzang Ga. A sharp exchange of shots resulted in the killing of one Japanese and the wounding of one American slightly.

On that same day, February 25th, Pvt. Robert W. Landis of Youngstown, Ohio, leading scout of the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon from Maj. Healey's Blue Combat Team, was approaching Lanem Ga. (I had been ambushed here earlier in February.) A hidden machine gun poured out a sudden burst of fire, killing Landis instantly. He was the first American infantry soldier since the Boxer Uprising to lose his life in any combat engagement of American troops on the Asiatic Continent. (Three planes were shot down east of Sumprabum on the 18th of January '44. They had been making an air drop to OSS. Those killed, apart from Air Corp men, were six OSS personnel. One was a Navy Pharmacist Mate,

a Navy photographer (Warrant Officer, I think) and one paratrooper, Lt. Tom O'Reilly, another, Lt. Hank Gibbons, whose branch of service I don't know, and two other OSS men whom I didn't know. Some were going to jump into the Triangle, so there is a possibility that some were infantry. If so, Landis was not the first infantryman to die in combat on the Asiatic mainland.

As the three battalions continued their march on the 27th, no contact was made with the enemy, although sizeable groups of Japanese were known to be in the vicinity. During this day newspaper correspondents with the unit invented the name "Marauders" which became the popularly used designation in press reports thereafter.

On the afternoon of February 28th, a liaison plane brought to General Merrill orders to proceed with all haste to Walawbum in the execution of his mission, and block the enemy, who was retreating down the road under pressure from a determined and

vigorous Chinese advance. (This main road, known as the Kamaing Road, was the only motorable route in the Hukawng Valley and the chief artery in the Japanese supply line. Although it was usable only during the dry season, whoever controlled it controlled the Hukawng Valley.) (The road was west of the present Ledo Road but joined it at Tinhawk. Tinhawk to Warazup was also the old Kamaing Road.)

During the night of February 28-29th, the Marauders crossed the Tawang River. The crossing of the Third and Second Battalion was covered by the First Battalion which followed just as dawn was breaking.

At this time the main Chinese forces were engaged with the 18th Japanese Division near Taihpa Ga, some 30 miles northwest of Walawbum, and were gaining ground steadily.

March 2nd found the Marauders in an assembly area at a point below where the Pup Ga trail (over which their movement was made) crossed the Tanai Hka (River)

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So this is what Dave Quaid looked like! In 1944, that is.

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On that same day (March 2nd) General Merrill held a staff meeting with the battalion commanders and their S-3's and issued combat orders.

Lt. Col. Beach with his Third Battalion was ordered to move out at 1600 hours via Sabaw Ga and Lagang Ga to Walawbum, seize the high ground along with the Numpyek Hka (River) adjacent to the road and to secure control of the Kamaing Road at Walawbum, denying it to the enemy.

Lt. Col. McGee with his Second Battalion was directed to proceed to Wesu Ga, cut a trail through the jungle westerly to strike the Kamaing Road at a point two and a half miles west of Walawbum, and there to construct and hold a road block.

Lt. Col. Osborne with the First Battalion was given the task of blocking the trails at Sana Ga and Nchet Ga with a minimum of one platoon at each point, and establishing strong combat patrols along the Nambyu Hka (River) between Shimak Ga and Uga Ga with one combat team. The balance of the battalion would be held in reserve near Wesu Ga.

By dawn of March 3rd all of the Marauder groups were on the move. Each group encountered Japanese patrols which were successfully disposed of without appreciable delay. Just south of the village of Lagang Ga the Third Battalion ran into a larger enemy force. The ensuing action was sharp and short. Fifty Japanese were killed and the village was cleaned out. The Third Battalion moved ahead.

Maj. Lew's Orange Combat Team from the Third Battalion reached the high ground facing Walabum and dug in with his mortars and machine guns covering the main road. Lew sent his Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon up the Numpyek Hka (River) which they were to cross in order to reconnoiter the area. By dark this platoon had crossed to the west bank of the river.

The night of March 3rd found the First Battalion two miles east of Wesu Ga and the Second Battalion in the Wesu Ga area. All elements put out heavy local security and before morning all had tangled with Japanese patrols. However, no casualties were suffered.

It seemed evident that the enemy was confused and uncertain about the American movement. On several occasions Japanese parties, carrying wounded apparently destined for rear hospitalization, walked directly into Marauder positions.

Maj. Briggs' Khaki Combat Team of the Third Battalion constructed and was protecting a liaison plane field at Lagang Ga. Early on the morning of March 4th a Japanese force made a vigorous attack upon this field, but they were quickly driven off after ten of their number had been killed. Two men from I Company of the Khaki Combat Team were wounded during the engagement.

General Merrill established temporary headquarters at Wesu Ga. During the day of March 4th, two Japanese soldiers contrived to infiltrate the American lines and almost succeeded in reaching Merrill's command post. When discovered one was

setting up a machine gun with which he could have wiped out the entire command group. The other was located while worming his way through the heavy growth surrounding the headquarters. Both of these Japanese escaped, but there were indications that at least one was wounded.

Now Lew's Orange Combat Team opened fire on the enemy in Walawbum with mortars and received heavy mortar and some 77 mm fire in return. Shortly afterward Orange Combat Team observed strong Japanese patrols moving in with the evident intention of feeling out the American flanks. To do this it was necessary for the Japanese to cross to the east bank of the Numpyek Hka (River). But during the previous night, Orange Combat Team had taken the precaution of placing booby traps and preparing ambush positions along the river in anticipation of just such an enemy maneuver. Because of these precautions, Orange Combat Team took a heavy toll of the enemy as this crossing was being made. Seventy-five dead Japanese were counted, while Orange Combat Team had but one man killed and seven wounded. These wounded were evacuated by plane from Lagang Ga late that afternoon.

While Lew's Orange Combat Team from the Third Battalion was engaged at Walabum, the Second Battalion had chopped its way through the jungle to a point just west of Wesu Ga. They reached the Kamaing Road as dusk approached without meeting serious resistance. They constructed a road block, a perimeter defense, and dug in to protect both.

Headquarters of the 18th Japanese Division was at Kamaing, but the majority of the troops from this enemy division (approximately 7000) were scattered around Maingwan and spread north from that town into the Hukawng Valley. The Japanese telephone communications ran along the Kamaing Road, and so passed through the perimeter established at the road block by the Second Battalion. T-4 Roy H. Matsumoto, Nisei NCO assigned to the Second Battalion for intelligence operations, tapped in on the enemy telephone line. The conversations which they overheard contained information which proved to be of great value to the Americans.

One of the conversations concerned the troubles of the Japanese sergeant who was in charge of an ammunition dump. He had with him only three soldiers armed with rifles and begged help and advice from his commanding officer. Matsumoto managed to discover the location of the ammunition dump. Soon afterward, when American planes appeared for a supply drop, arrangements were made for "help and advice" to be dispatched to the Japanese sergeant from unexpected quarters.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion had established blocks near Sana Ga and Nchet Ga on the trails leading into Walawbum. Their patrols took heavy toll of unwary small parties of the enemy, but nothing approaching a heavy engagement materialized in that section.

Toward evening of March 5th, all activity slackened around Walawbum and, from the quiet that settled over the town, it appeared that the enemy might have evacuated the place. This was not the case. Intercepted

messages on the telephone-tap made by the Second Battalion proved that the Japanese were surprised and confused by the American activities. Finally, Matsumoto reported that the Japanese 18th Division had been ordered to withdraw to a point south of Walawbum — crossing the Nabbyu Hka south of Kumnyen and using a by-pass road which permitted them to avoid the Second Battalion's road block position. Increased pressure was put on the Second Battalion to cover this movement. By now the Second Battalion was almost out of ammunition. It was impossible to get supplies to them. General Merrill ordered them to hold their positions until after dark then withdraw and rejoin the main force in the Walawbum area, picking up the ammunitions which would be dropped at Wesu Ga and held there for them by a part of the First Battalion.

Besides being short of ammunition, the Second Battalion had fought 36 hours without food or water. They had withstood considerable shelling and six separate attacks with a surprisingly low casualty list of only one man killed and five wounded. When they received orders to return to Wesu Ga, they first blocked the road with trees, placed booby traps in the area, then withdrew along the trail they had cut two days before. Fortunately, they were alert to the danger of booby traps themselves and drove a mule ahead of them on the trail. The mule was blown to bits. Arriving at Wesu Ga by noon the following day, March 6th, Lt. Col. McGee and his men of the Second Battalion picked up an air-drop of rations and ammunitions, filled their canteens, and hurried to support the Third Battalion which was by then heavily engaged in a fire fight close to Walawbum. (General Merrill said that Col. McGee was the only commanding officer he had recommended for decoration for the Walawbum show. A Battalion was reputedly the best of the three, but B Battalion took the worst beating all through.)

During the day of March 5th, Allied airplanes bombed every visible formation of the enemy. By heavy mortar concentration Lew's Orange Combat Team succeeded in breaking up several incipient attacks on its position overlooking the town of Walawbum. Japanese reinforcements, arriving by truck from the direction of Kamaing, were strafed and bombed by our planes and took to cover. But the flow of incoming enemy troops from the south was resumed after dark, as was indicated by the noisy slamming of tail-gates as truck after truck arrived and discharged its human cargo.

The Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of Lew's Orange Combat Team, now across the Numpyek Hka (River) reconnoitering the area northwest of Walawbum, reported profitable targets by SCR radio. Soon after daylight on March 5th, this platoon brushed with an enemy patrol and shortly afterward met resistance from a Japanese group north of them. A little later another enemy group came at them from the northwest and a third advanced upon them from the northeast.

Sgt. Henry Gosho, Nisei interpreter with the platoon, was fortunately able to antici-

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pate these attacks from enemy orders which he overheard. This enabled the platoon commander, Lt. Logan E. Weston, to shift automatic weapons in time to meet each attack successfully. Nevertheless, knee mortar fire began to come very close. By 1100 hours, Lt. Weston's platoon was flanked on three sides by superior enemy forces.

By radio, Weston contacted Maj. Lew with Orange Combat Team and asked for mortar fire on targets in the vicinity of his endangered platoon. But Orange Combat Team's mortars were busy. Maj. Lew contacted one of the other Marauder outfits and soon mortar fire was ranging in from Weston's radioed directions. A smoke barrage was fired on the Japanese positions that covered the river bank, and Weston was able to lead his men back across to safety on the east bank of the stream.

At 0700 hours on March 6th, General Merrill moved his command post from Wesu Ga to Lagang Ga where Maj. Brigg's Khaki Combat Team of the Third Battalion had been protecting the dropping field. Khaki Combat Team now left Lagang Ga to support Lew's Orange Combat Team from a position where the Numpyek Nka (River) makes a sharp bend just south of Walawbum.

Orange Combat Team was well dug in. The trees overhead had been chopped down, and logs covered their foxholes. From dawn of March 6th on, they received an almost steady stream of mortar fire which, about mid-morning, was supplemented by medium artillery. Because of their excellent protection Orange Combat Team received little damage. However, their animals, which could not be dug in, suffered considerably.

Sgt. Andrew B. Pung of Orange Combat Team directed mortar fire from the 81 mm section with great accuracy. Perched in a tree 30 feet from the ground, he secured direct hits on the Japanese concentration

area at the rear of Walawbum. One of these hits landed in the bed of a truck from which reinforcements were being unloaded. A tree burst finally stunned Pung and temporarily incapacitated him.

At 1430 hours, 77 and 150 mm shells started falling on the airstrip at Lagang Ga, causing some casualties among the men and many among the animals. At 1715 hours a reinforced enemy company, followed by another, in line of skirmishes started from across the river to attack Orange Combat Team's position under cover of heavy Japanese fire. The Marauders continued their mortar fire and lay low until the enemy line came within 50 yards. They then let loose with automatic weapons that tore great gaps in the Japanese line. Two of their heavy machine guns, placed low on the river bank, had clear fields of fire. Each of these guns used 5000 rounds with deadly effect. The attack wilted, and 400 Japanese lay dead on the open ground eastward and along the river bank. There was only one reason why enemy casualties were not greater; the supply of Japanese ran out.

By now Orange Combat Team's ammunition was low. Five mule-loads were rushed up by Khaki Combat Team (not engaged at the moment) from its new position 100 yards or so downstream. Before the ammunition arrived, however, the Japanese had retired.

At 1600 hours on March 6th, General Merrill went to Kasan Ga. There he met Col. Brown (in charge of the tank unit) and a Chinese battalion commander who had just arrived with his battalion with orders to relieve the Marauders at Walawbum and with information that the remainder of his regiment was close behind him. Information from intelligence sources indicated that the enemy was bringing up reinforcements from the south. General Merrill decided to disengage at Walawbum, pull back, circle around, and cut the road near Chanmoi, thus again maneuvering his forces to the rear of the Japanese. The tank

Hey Medics!

Jim Proper, Platoon Ldr, I&R, 1st Bn, 475th, is laid up in the Castle Garden Nursing Home, 401 Malley Drive, Denver, Colorado 80233. Drop in if you are passing by or send a card to your Marauder buddy.

If you know of another Marauder who is invalided, let the executive secretary know and we will list them in this section of "News."

The publisher of the Ex-CBI Roundup, Dwight O. King, has offered to mail a free copy of the April 1984 issue to you. This copy had a reprint of May 25, 1944, article about march to Myitkyina. His address: Ex-CBI Roundup, P.O. Box 2665, La Habra, CA 90631.

unit which could not operate in the terrain around Walawbum would operate north and west of the Nambyu Hka (River) between Ningheu Ga and Kumnyen, while the Chinese Regiment took over at Walawbum. The main body of the Chinese 22nd and 38th Divisions were then pushing rapidly from the north and had captured Maingkwan.

Orders were therefore issued to displace to the south of Wesu Ga. The Second Battalion moved at 2000 hours and the Third Battalion followed at midnight. The First Battalion was directly in the vicinity of Wesu Ga, patrolling and manning trail blocks. Subsequent orders cancelled that part of the above plan as concerned Galahad, since rapid moved by the 22nd and 38th Divisions had made further effort by the Americans unnecessary and General Stilwell desired to get them ready for another phase of operations.

Meanwhile, the Chinese 38th Division had been pushing down from the North in rapid pursuit of the retreating Japanese. The following morning (March 7th) the Chinese entered Walawbum with almost no opposition.

(Continued in next issue)

**MERRILL'S MARAUDERS
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