

The Burman News

Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.

FEBRUARY, 1986



Glavin Elevated to Monsignor



Bob Passinisi giving a talk about the Merrill's Marauders Association and Father Glavin's faithful service as chaplain, both in Burma and at our annual reunions. This dinner was on the occasion of Father Glavin's Jubilee. Fifty years service as a priest. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Weber also participated in the Jubilee Mass.

At this Jubilee, Father was promoted by his Bishop to be a Very Reverend Monsignor. It is the first such promotion in the Albany, N.Y., diocese in 20 years. Father Glavin assures us that he will still respond to the call of Father.

Officer's Row

CHAIRMAN — The rendezvous selected for 1986 by our Marauders is one of the most fabulous amusement centers of the South and the Number 1 tourist destination in the world! Attractions include the world-famous Epcot Center and the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World, just 25 minutes away; Sea World; Gatorland Zoo; Wet'n Wild; Circus World; Cypress Gardens; Busch Gardens; Kennedy Space Center; huge shopping and outlet malls; and much, much more to make it a fun-filled adventure to discover Orlando and its environs.

Hosting our 40th Annual Reunion will be the spanking new (just completed this past August) Radisson Plaza Hotel, Orlando. The Radisson Plaza will make ideal headquarters for those planning a longer Florida fun vacation as well as it will provide

a most hospitable meeting place for continuing the legendary camaraderie and close kinship for which Marauders, their families and their friends are noted.

You'll be welcomed by impressive facilities: 342 spacious, luxurious guest rooms; fine dining and entertainment; pool, sauna, whirlpool and steam bath; two lighted tennis courts; a jogging trail around Lake Ivanhoe, across from the hotel; 450 free 5-level parking facility spaces; complimentary transportation to and from the airport; easy accessibility from major highways. So, start planning now to make our eventful 40th Annual Reunion a great Florida vacation.

Complete details will come at a later date, but now is the time to mark your calendar for this Marauder highlight event of 1986. SEE YOU ALL IN ORLANDO, where

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HEADQUARTERS
5332d BRIGADE (PROV)
A.P.O. 487

18 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
CONSOLIDATED COPY
NUMBER 9)

1. So much of par 10, SO 2, this Hq. cs, as pertains to the asgmt of 1st Lt WILLIAM S HORNE, 0340623, CWS, is corrected to read: "is placed on DS with Hq & Hq Co 5332d Brigade (Prov)."

2. So much of par 8, SO 3, this Hq, cs, as pertains to the asgmt of Capt MILTON A PILCHER, 0363806, SC is corrected to read: "is placed on DS with Hq & Hq Co 5332d Brigade (Prov)."

3. So much of par 5, SO 5, this Hq, cs, as pertains to the asgmt of 2d Lt WILLIAM S FILTAK, 01642858, SC and 2d Lt ALEXANDER E GLAVES, 01635036, SC, respectively, is corrected to read: "are placed on DS with Hq & Hq Co 5332d Brigade (Prov)."

4. So much of par 1, SO 7, this Hq, cs, as pertains to the asgmt of S/Sgt. JOHN W. REDLY, 32695533, Inf, is corrected to read: "is placed on DS with Hq & Hq Co, 5332d Brigade (Prov)."

5. So much of part 6, SO 8, this Hq cs, as pertains to the asgmt of 2d Lt JAMES A FAY, 01315809, Inf. is corrected to read: "is placed on DS with Hq & Hq Co 5332d Brigade (Prov)."

6. Pfc PETE PHILLIPS, 15054969, Inf, WP FE, 475th Inf, without delay, reporting upon arrival to the S-4, 475th Inf., thereat for dy. Travel will be performed by mil aircraft.

7. Sgt. HENRY H GOSHO, 17145513, 475th Inf, at present a patient in the 100th Sta Hosp, APO 885, is placed on DS with Hq, USAF, CBI, APO 885, and will report to the CO thereof upon release from the 100th Sta Hosp. No travel involved.

8. 2d Lt JOHN W TRAVIS, 01641868, SC 475th Inf on DS with Hq & Hq Co, 5332d Brigade (Prov) is placed on further DS with US Army Rest Cp 1, APO 465 for a period of 20 days including travel time, and WP o/a 19 Aug 1944 fr this sta to APO 465, reporting upon arrival to the CO, US Army Rest Cp 1 thereat. He will return to proper sta o/a 8 Sept 1944. Travel by air, rail a/o motor is atzd.

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OFFICER'S ROW . . .

(Continued from page 1)

I look forward to greeting you personally on Labor Day Weekend. Dave Hurwitt.

PRESIDENT — I have been having a running battle with a group of Korean War Rangers, who have been trying to get the 75th Ranger Regt. designation changed. They felt that they never got enough recognition and that we got too much recognition and publicity, especially having today's Ranger Units using our insignia and claiming their heritage from us. Fortunately, the other Ranger Units and the present day Rangers are very proud of it and are also bucking them. Phil Piazza.

EDITOR — You will be delighted to know that Logan Weston has written up some recollections of his 5307/3/0 CT/I&R actions on the trail before and after Nhpum Ga. "... dispatched my platoon to scout the route from Walabum through Nhpum to Manpin. The companies of the CT were to follow within 24 hours." More to come in next issue. Ray Lyons.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY — We would like to ask you to keep us in mind when you move to a new retirement home or whatever address change takes place. We have had 51 address changes in the November mailing, so far. Some of them have come back as "lost causes." We have written to five postmasters asking for a further check. In some cases, it is a hopeless task. Help us to keep in touch. Ray Lyons

Fall In

Here are the latest additions to our assembly. Remember them?

- CLYDE E. BAY, American Embassy, APO Miami, FL 34036-0008. ALO 88 Ch Regt/K Force/C Bn.
- C. TODD BRENNEMAN, 4330 Allison, Des Moines, IA 50310, 124th Cav/HQ/Co.
- MILES ELSON, 4412 Lehigh, Lubbock, TX 79416, 5307/3/HQ.
- KENNETH J. FRAME, 221 21st St. NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405, MTF.
- WILLIAM FULLER, 616 East 3rd St., Lexington, KY 40505, 5307/2.
- DAVE HAMILTON, Rd 8, Box 166, Greensburg, PA 15601, MTF.
- SANFORD B. HEAD, P.O. Box 5097, Athens, GA 30604, 475th Inf/3 Bn.
- BERNARD ROSENMAN, 5831 N Artesian Av., Chicago, IL 60659, 5307/Hq/RE.
- WILLIAM SAFFELL, Rt. 1, Box 365, Joliet, MT 59041, 5307/1/W CT; 475/1.
- WILLIAM D. SHOEMAKER, 1362 Gladys Av., Lakewood, OH 44107, 5307/2 Bn.
- WILLIAM P. THOMPSON, Rt. 1, Box 210, Ellerbee, NC 28338, 475/3/K.
- CLARENCE J. WEBER, 1824 W. Cuyler, Chicago, IL 60613, 124 Cav/2/G Tr.
- ARTHUR WILSON, 8335 SW Fairway Dr., Portland, OR 97225, 5307/1/A Co., 475/1/A Co.

BONES

- Wishbones** — Those who spend their time wishing someone else would do the work.
- Jawbones** — Those who do all the talking but very little else.
- Knucklebones** — Those who get under the load and do the work.

Letters

EDITOR

We recently attended a family dinner held in honor of a former Ranger, Brian Ivers, married to a niece. We had never met before. In response to questions, Brian, Ex-Sgt., 1st Rgr Bn., told of his service including the fighting against the Cubans in Grenada. After dinner, during polite conversation prior to our departure, he asked the grey haired old guy (me), if I had ever been in the service. After saying, "Yes," he wondered what had been my Branch. I told him "Infantry." Then in response to "What Outfit?" I said, "5307th Composite Provisional," expected the usual blank look that I usually get and which ends the questions. Instead, his jaw kinda dropped and he said, "My God, you guys were our ancestors." That's how I discovered the Rangers had acquired our Battle Honors and Insignia. And by following up on his leads, I found the Marauder Association. I sure would like to get in touch with my old buddies. Arthur Wilson, 5307/1/RCT; 475/1/A Co, Plat Sgt. 8335 SW Fairway Dr., Portland, OR 97225.

EDITOR

Got your address from Lt. Jack Merton. His health is very poor. He would like to hear from anyone in C Co. He lives in Clay Center, KS. I have about 80 addresses but do not know how current they are. Located Earl Funsch in Albany, CA. Joined C Co 2nd Plat. Sgt Lambert just before the unit went overseas. Would like to locate Stephen Marsh, Baker, R J Pagono (NJ), Cunningham (PA), Scolari (San Diego). Lt Porter was from San Diego or OK. Lt Merton says that Captain Pierce is in Oklahoma. Melvin Panting, Rt 1, Box 240, Mulvane, KS 67110-9720.

EDITOR

Our travel plans are being laid for '86. We are looking forward to the Orlando Reunion. We're also going on a raft trip down the Tatshenshini and Alsek Rivers in the

Yukon and Alaska. If we survive, we will come to Florida. We'll also do our annual 3 mile back pack trip. This year on the Pacific Coast Trail in British Columbia. busy summer. Best wishes to all. Tom Bogardus, 5307/2/G CT/CO, P.O. Box 1279, Friday Harbor, WA 98250.

EDITOR

I saw the last Ranger Class graduate at Ft Benning and the two young men received their Merrill's Marauders compasses. They looked real proud. Is Father Stuart's chronicle that's been running in the BURMAN NEWS, available in book or pamphlet form? I am enjoying that and I think my sons and grandsons would too. Mrs. Richard Healy, Box 399, Cedar Key, FL 32625.

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

Editor's Note: This completes the article written from notes by Father Stuart that has been published in several issues of the Burman News.

On May 8th the 88th Chinese again attacked from the north edge of Ritpon. Both Orange CT and Khaki CT, from positions south of the town, laid in a barrage mortar fire to support the drive, and the following day, May 9th, they succeeded in overcoming the enemy and entering the village. Leaving the Chinese to mop up Orange CT and Khaki CT marched south Lazu where they established a protective trail block and bivouacked. During the delay at Ritpong, H Force had caught up with K Force, and now passed through them to take the lead.

Meanwhile, M Force was still near Samlugahtawang, and patrolling the Sen Ga-Hkada Ga area. On May 7th, McGee

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Pass In Review

DEATHS REPORTED RECENTLY

Name and Hometown [Where Known] — Organization, Where, When Died

LT. KENNETH BRATTLÖF, 704 Granite St., Cloquet, MN 55720, 5307/2	June 10, 19
SHIELDS A. CRUBECK, Beckley, WV, 475/3/HQ/S-3, St. Clairesville, OH	19
LOUIS A. CROCI, 245 Mulberry Ct., Lakeview Estates, Warrenton, MO 63383, 5307/HQ	October 29, 19
FRANK L. GRAHAM, 3818 Blue Grass Lane, Santa Rosa, CA 95401, 5307/3/0 CT	19
CAPT. RALPH A. HATCH, 327 1/2 San Eligo St., San Diego, CA 92106, 35 QM PK TR, 475/3 BN	July, 19
WAYNE EDWARD McNAUGHTON, 716 Penn St., New Bethlehem, PA 16242, Medical Detachment	July 27, 19
FRANK MORGAN, Rt. 1, Box 241, Columbiana, AL 35051, 5307/1; 475/1	October 6, 19
RAYMOND C. PARKER, RD 4, Bellefontaine, OH, 475/2/HQ/I&R	September 19
WILSON H. PAUL, 5215 Long Oak Dr., Houston, TX 77070, 475/2/HQ/I&R, Langhorne, PA	October 1, 19
COL. WALTER K. PAYNE, 2727 No. Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach, FL 32018	19
LESTER PFANNEBECKER, 1010 Spinnaker Way, #G-1, Melbourne, FL 32935, 5307/1/R CT	January 1, 19
RAYMOND M. REED, 110 Elm St., Stowe, PA 19464, 5307/HQ/CP	September 29, 19
REV. MARIO A. TOGNOCCHI, Chaplain, Merrill's Marauders Association, Salesian Missions, Box #30, New Rochelle, NY 10801	December 7, 19

FATHER STUART . . .

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Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon from Blue CT, commanded by Lt. Joseph F. Freer, (1) had encountered 300 Japanese near Sharawkawng. Hurrying to Freer's assistance, M Force found that the enemy was less sizeable than reported, and that Freer had easily routed them.

On May 15th, after pausing briefly at Muta Ga to consolidate his M Force, McGee started eastward over the mountains to Arang. The trek was even more difficult and hazardous than that made by H Force and K Force. Rain and mud made ridges dangerous, and turned low ground into quagmires. Of the 106 animals with which the reorganized Second Battalion started this march, exactly half died from exhaustion or slipped over precipices, plunging to their death in the deep gorges below.

By the time M Force reached Arang, many of the Marauders were sick with dysentery and various fevers. At Arang there several casualties from H Force and K Force which had passed through there two days before. ((Arang was headquarters for an OSS group under Capt. Quinn (Anglo-Burman). There was an air strip there (for OSS only).))

Tingkrukawng

It was on the night of May 10th that K Force and M Force bivouacked at Lazu. Early the following morning, May 11th, K Force struck off at a tangent toward Ngao Ga. It was a terrific climb, and the day was the hottest they had been through. This movement could easily be construed by the Japanese as threat to Nsozup, a large enemy supply base north of Myitkyina on the Irrawaddy River. It was hoped that K Force would occupy the attention of the Japanese troops in the vicinity, thus insuring uninterrupted progress for H Force which was already forging southward from Lazu, and encountering no difficulties other than those incident to the long, hard march which was frequently continued well into the night.

At 0950 hours on May 12th, K Force ran into Japanese opposition about 400 yards northwest of the village of Tingkrukawng. Intelligence estimated the enemy to be about a platoon in strength. Orange CT attacked without delay. As the attack developed the enemy strength was revealed to be approximately a reinforced battalion, and the Marauders were soon pinned to the ground. To the rear of Orange CT, mortar support was launched by Khaki CT. Orange CT built up its line, but the going was hard. A company of Chinese from the 88th Regiment was dispatched to cut a trail around to the right, find the Japanese position and attack the enemy left flank. This maneuver failed, as the Chinese ran into

HEY MEDICS

Everett Hyden reports 10/22, that Harvey Brown, 1st Bn. RCT, is ill. Brown's address is 5401, College St., Jennings, MO 63136.

heavy opposition and suffered heavy casualties.

Orange CT worked its way to high ground on either side of the trail. They found that the Japs had even more favorable commanding ground and positions on the opposite side of the village, with dug-in gun positions dominating the approaches.

That night Col. Kinnison called a conference. He ordered Khaki CT to make a circling movement around to the left of the village to hit the enemy from the rear as Orange CT pushed straight down the trail. This maneuver entailed Khaki CT's cutting about four miles of jungle trail through country so tough that neither animals nor heavy weapons could be taken.

At 0615 hours on May 13th, Khaki CT began the task. By noon, they had made their way to a point where precipitous slopes stretched upward toward their objective east of the village. With great difficulty, the outfit managed to inch its way up the incline. Reaching the crest, they soon discovered that the Japanese had constructed a heavy road block along the trail. The terrain was such that any maneuver to flank the road block appeared impossible. A Japanese patrol tried to work around the American right flank and cut off their rear, but was confronted by two of Khaki CT's platoons.

Although the enveloping movement around Tingkrukawng had failed, one advantage resulted: from a rise in the ground Maj. Briggs could see Japanese positions in the village. Briggs directed Orange CT's mortar fire from his vantage point.

By 1645 hours, Khaki CT had run out of ammunition. They had been without food all that day. Since air-dropping supplies to them was impossible, Col. Kinnison ordered Briggs to withdraw. Darkness, difficulties of terrain, and the evacuation of wounded hampered the speed of their withdrawal, and Khaki CT did not rejoin the main K Force body until 0800 hours on the 14th day of May.

Meanwhile, a Chinese battalion had been sent around to the south for an attack upon the Japanese left flank. Like the company that preceded it, it had failed in its mission. Orange CT had been unable to make further progress. The Japanese were being reinforced from the east. However, this operation had provided sufficient diversion to allow H Force to march unmolested beyond Arang, so Col. Kinnison withdrew his force under the protection of an artillery barrage from Katanbum, turned west, and picked up the trail to follow on the heels of H Force.

American casualties in this engagement were 8 killed and 21 wounded. Chinese casualties were heavier.

((On Friday, May 12th, I got a message from Col. Peers stating that my brother, Frank, a staff sergeant in the A.S.C. was at Det. 101 Hq. in Assam. An L-1 plane was coming in to take me out to see him. I

hadn't seen him since March 1923, over 21 years ago. I went to Nazira and spent a few days there with Frank. Then I went to Galahad rear base near Dinjan on May 18th. I learned there that Myitkyina airstrip had been taken and that fighting was still going on around the field. Maj. Hancock said he would get me in early next day and he did.

At Myitkyina I was greeted by Col. Hunter and Gen., McCammon who asked me to remain at their headquarters and help in G-2 work. All Americans spoke very highly of the Kachins and of the excellent work they had done in leading the entire force to the airstrip without contacting Japs or even letting the Japs know that this large force was in the area. Most praise, of course, went to Nauyang Nau who had been bitten by a snake but had continued to act as guide for the force. He walked all one day until his foot became too painful but then rode a horse and continued his lead. He was evacuated to the 111th Station Hospital at Chabua when he finally reached the strip on the point of collapse.

Some local Gurkhas I had known before the War came in and gave me quite a bit of information about disposition of Jap troops in Myitkyina and surrounding areas. They promised to collect as many of their people as possible to help in fixing the airstrip. Col. Hunter then got the idea of organizing Gurkhas to try and clear up Jap snipers from the vicinity of the airstrip. Col. Hunter entrusted this job to me as I knew quite a number of the local people.))

Myitkyina

By May 15th, K Force had sent its wounded to Arang for evacuation, bypassed the village to the east, and was rapidly moving southward toward Manazup Sakan. They reached Hkumchet In on the 17th of May. Here patrols were sent forward to block the trails ahead, and the column halted for a breather and to receive an air-drop.

This rest was destined to be of short duration. H. Force began to send urgent requests for support from both K Force and M Force. Col. Kinnison got the message just as the transports were circling the dropping field at Hkumchet In. Nevertheless, he ordered his column to get under way, leaving the food-laden parachutes to float down to a deserted field.(1)

McGee and his M Force were still at Arang and because of jammed air conditions, they did not pick up the urgent calls from H Force until the night of May 17th. M Force had not eaten since breakfast time, and food for them was lying on the Arang dropping airstrip. But they, too, left their supplies on the field and pushed south. (When M Force arrived at Namhwi on the night of May 19th, they had not eaten for almost three days, having missed eight meals.) ((These were the men who were besieged at Nhpum.))

The requests for help which Col. Hunter sent out on the afternoon of May 17th in no way over-emphasized the urgency of his need. Had either McGee or Kinnison been

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(1) It took an average of two hours to accumulate and distribute a supply drop.

(1) Sgt. Freer was promoted to 2nd Lt. at the direction of Gen. Stilwell. He commanded an Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon until wounded and evacuated at Charpate on May 31st. For some reason, the promotion was not confirmed, and he was discharged from the hospital as a sergeant. Investigation has disclosed that this unfortunate circumstance is directly traceable to an administrative error. Headquarters at New Delhi did not receive the necessary data for this promotion. Several other changes of status were not made until long after the fall of Myitkyina — at which time many of those involved were scattered and, in some instances, dead.

FATHER STUART . . .

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able to reach him in a half-day march, probably the entire complexion of the Myitkyina campaign would have been changed.

During the time K Force was engaged at Tingkrakawng, H Force had forged rapidly forward until at noon on May 16th they reached the Namkwi Hka a little south of the village of Namkwi. The trailing element of the column, the 150th Chinese Regiment, pulled in at 1600 hours.

The main airport of Myitkyina was only two miles distant. Col. Hunter had reason to believe that the presence of H Force was yet unknown to the enemy. For the last several miles the Force had followed a devious approach to the city under the guidance of the Kachin headman of that district. (1)

To guard against the possibility of alerting the enemy, the entire population of the village, some of which were known to be of doubtful allegiance, was rounded up and kept confined for the night within the American lines. The Kachins, who on numerous previous occasions had proved invaluable, were of great assistance in this chore and handled it admirably.

(1) This headman, named Nauyang Nau, at about 2030 hours on the night of May 15th, was leading H Force across the upper Namkwi Hka when he was bitten by a poisonous snake. He tried to go on, but within an hour and a half his foot was badly swollen and he was too sick to move. Without his guidance, the Marauder column would have been hopelessly enmeshed in a maze of intricate paths, paddy fields and jungle. Capt. Laffin and Lt. Dunlap gave the Burman heroic treatment. They slashed the spot where the fangs had penetrated and sucked poison from the incision for two hours. By 0230 hours the headman was able to mount Col. Hunter's horse and continue the lead until (seen only by two natives who were taken along to prevent their revealing the movement) the column reached its destination for the day. Eventually, Nauyang Nau completely recovered.

A reconnaissance patrol of six men under Sgt. Clarence C. Branscombe from White CT went forward to ascertain the azimuth reading to the airstrip. He was also to get answers to the following questions regarding the condition of the field: What type of work was in progress? Did the runway need repairs and if so, what was the extent of the damage? Branscombe left at 1900 hours on May 16th, and was gone until 0600 hours on the 17th, but he got all the answers, and, in addition, counted the number of Japanese and workmen who were about the field.

Hunter's plan of attack was for the Marauder battalion, under Lt. Col. Osborne, to lead the Chinese 150th Regiment to the south end of the airport, leave them to attack the airstrip at that point, while Osborne pushed southwest to the nearest ferry terminal, Pamati. By taking Pamati, the Americans would control the nearest route of traffic across the Irrawaddy River. It was known that, due to recent strafing of the airport, the Japanese habitually withdrew during daylight to positions in the heavy growth at some distance from the strip. Further action would necessarily depend on the development of the situation.

The attack on the airport was set for 1000 hours on the 17th of May. This came off exactly as scheduled. Osborne left the 150th Chinese Regiment to carry out their part of the mission, and with his Marauders, hastened to Pamati. By 1100 hours he had taken the village and ferry. Red CT was instructed to hold the Pamati ferry position, and White CT was ordered back to the airstrip where they received orders from Col. Hunter to advance on Zigyun (near the 18th General Hospital area) main ferry point for the city, and take possession.

At 1700 hours on May 17th, Osborne and White CT left the airstrip and moved southwest to the Irrawaddy River in close

proximity to Rampur. They bivouacked and early on the morning of May 18th took possession at Rampur of several warehouses filled with clothing and sundry supplies.

Osborne then moved on to Zigyun. If fighting was necessary here, either, though several Burmese prisoners were taken. By 1000 hours on May 18th, the investment of Zigyun was complete and defensive positions were being prepared. Osborne proceeded for further instruction to Col. Hunter who informed him that a company of Chinese was on the way to relieve the White CT which was to report back to the airport the moment the Chinese arrived. The return was considerably delayed, however, as the Chinese sent to relieve them engaged several groups of Japanese stragglers en route and did not reach Zigyun until several hours later, after having dug in nine times during what normally would be a two-hour march.

Meanwhile, during the day of May 17th the attack on the airfield had progressed. The strip was rather lightly defended, and the thrust had come as a complete surprise. Throughout the day, sporadic fighting went on in widely separated spots, but the attack was completely successful.

When no Japanese reinforcements appeared, Col. Hunter concluded that the enemy did not hold the town in strength. Intelligence reports tended to confirm his deduction, and he wanted to press home to advantage of his surprise by taking the city. It was at this time that he sent requests to K Force and M Force, asking that they hasten to support him in the event the enemy made a determined counter-attack, for large Japanese forces were known to be at McGaung and Sumprabum as well as at other outlying points.

As soon as Col. Hunter reported that the Myitkyina airstrip had been taken, General Merrill flew into Myitkyina and ordered the 89th Chinese Regiment, which was waiting on airfields at the rear, under his command, to be flown in. One battalion arrived from Ledo late in the afternoon of May 17th.

Disposing these new troops to hold the field, Col. McCammon (useless) recently appointed second in command to General Merrill and who had also arrived and was setting up the force headquarters, ordered Col. Hunter to attack Myitkyina, using the disengaged portion of H Force, which consisted of the 150th Chinese Regiment (less one battalion).

This force moved out, but unfortunately followed the wrong road. Nearing Singu instead of Myitkyina, they became involved in a sanguinary engagement. This action was probably started by Japanese snipers but the Chinese units became confused and fired upon each other with disastrous results. This unfortunate situation was finally untangled, and toward noon of May 18th the Chinese were again started toward Myitkyina.

This time, a penetration was actually made. The Chinese took the railroad station, and central area of the town. Col. Coombs, a Catholic, with the Chinese, did great work in getting the Chinese out of their confused state, but



MYITKYINA STRIP INVASION — The Airborne Engineers prepare the Myitkyina Air Base in Burma, which was captured by Merrill's Marauders and Chinese troops, for the landing of the 1st Troop Carrier Squadron. The cooperation of these troops with the fighter planes made a strategic base for the capture of the city. Here Merrill's men take their horses to a creek which was the only water supply for the base. Note Jap bomber which had crashed near the runway approach. Myitkyina, Burma, 17 May 1944.

— US Army Signal Corps Photo

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FATHER STUART . . .

Continued from page 4)

was too late. He had his C.P. at the station and I talked to him over the phone from the airstrip. A Major Hodges with him was killed at the RR Station. The only resistance, so far as can be ascertained, came from a scattered force of not more than 300 Japanese.

Again, elements in the rear, harassed by snipers, fired on their own advance troops. Another intra-regimental engagement ensued which resulted in the two elements of the Chinese 150th Regiment driving each other out of the city. They dug in on a line about 800 yards to the west. In the melee, the Chinese had shot up all their ammunition, and they were reluctant to move until more was issued.

Back at the airport, meanwhile, the battalion of the 89th Chinese Regiment which had flown in from Ledo was meeting no organized Japanese resistance. There was, however, continual sniping. To make the strip safe for air traffic, which flowed in on an ever-increasing scale, these Chinese troops had to be widely distributed. This meant that the protective perimeter around the field and the important water supply was stretched dangerously thin.

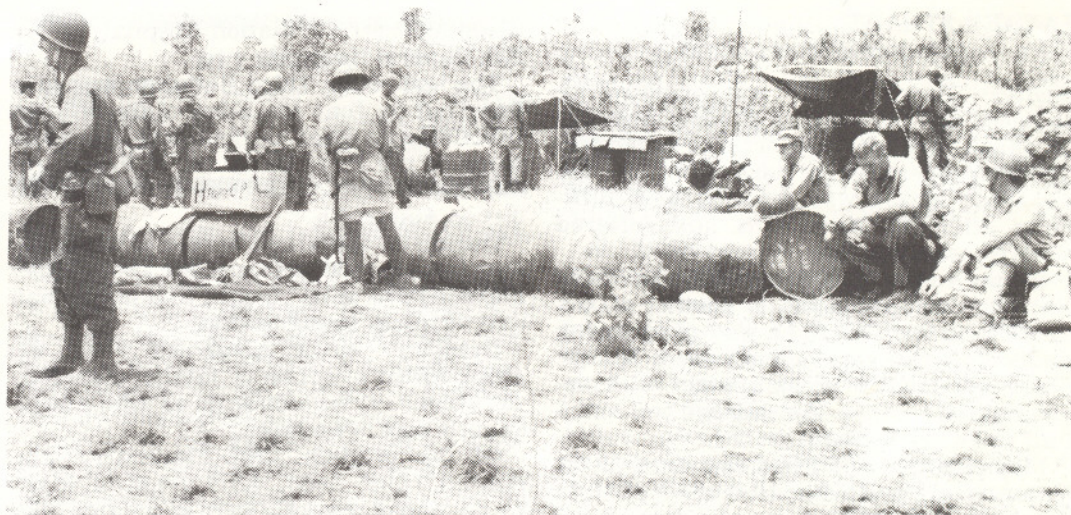
Meanwhile, K Force had been pushing south rapidly. About eight miles from Myitkyina the guides leading Kinnison and his men lost their way in the inky blackness, and K Force bivouacked for the night. Daylight disclosed the Myitkyina-Mogaung highway within fifty yards of their perimeter, and they continued on. By radio, Col. Kinnison received orders from Gen. Merrill to attack and secure the village of Charpate which lay in their path.

The town was captured with no appreciable Japanese resistance. The Marauder element of K Force dug in around the village, while the 88th Chinese Regiment (constituting the rest of K Force) moved to the southwest on a line extending from the vicinity of Charpate to the railroad. Kinnison ordered a block placed across the Mogaung Road, and sent patrols to block all trails converging on Charpate.

At this time, Col. Kinnison was called to a position on the staff of the new Myitkyina Task Force being formed for the investment of Myitkyina. Col. Hunter took command of the American units, while Col. J. C. McCammon, second in command to Merrill, took over the overall command of all forces as Gen. Merrill was again overtaken by illness and had to be evacuated to the rear. K Force was dissolved and the Third Battalion resumed its identity under Lt. Col. Beach.

The village of Charpate stood in the midst of a flat area, surrounded by rice paddies. Four or five hundred yards to the northwest the ground rose slightly and was covered with growth. This elevation was overlooked in preparing the position, a fact that later proved embarrassing. On May 19th, and again on the 20th, the Third Battalion was hit by small bands of Japanese who were trying to get into Myitkyina via the Mogaung Road. None of these engagements, however, was serious.

It was on the evening of May 19th that McGee and his men finally reached



MYITKYINA STRIP INVASION — The Airborne Engineers prepare the Myitkyina Air Base in Burma, which was captured by Merrill's Marauders and Chinese troops, for the landing of the 1st Troop Carrier Squadron. The cooperation of these troops with the fighter planes made a strategic base for the capture of the city. Here the "H" Force, commanded by Col. Charles M. Hunter, which is one of the attacking forces of General Merrill's troops, have set up their Command Post in what was formally a Jap plane revetment. Myitkyina, Burma, 17 May 1944.

— US. Army Signal Corps Photo

Namkwi. M Force was famished. The air-drops which had been anticipated during the march south had not materialized. H Force fed McGee's outfit which had fasted so long that the physical condition of the entire battalion was impaired. However, M Force outposted Namkwi and patrolled to the west and southwest.

By May 20th, the situation had changed. An estimated three or four thousand Japanese had filtered in from Nsopzup, Mogaung, and other localities. Some even were sent up from Bhamo.

((May 20th — Chinese troops captured Myitkyina railroad station. I had a long conversation by phone with Col. Coombs, American liaison officer with the Chinese who was with them at the station. I gave him the information I had collected about Jap strong points and described the positions of the places in relation to his C.P. Later two Chinese Battalions near the station mistook each other for Japs and before the mistake was discovered there were said to be over 1,000 Chinese casualties including 300 dead and the railway station had been lost.

The position was not clearly understood at Division Headquarters and it was feared that the Chinese might retreat all the way to the airstrip. There was even talk of recalling all the Americans to the airstrip to make sure of holding even that. Later the position was cleared up mostly due to good work by Col. Coombs. A lot of ground, however, had been lost.

More and more Gurkhas and Indians came in and Col. McCammon suggested that a camp site be allotted to keep these people and that the army would feed them. I met some of my old parishioners — Indian Catholics from Myitkyina.))

On May 21st, Col. Beach was directed to move his Third Battalion to the junction of the Mankrin-Radhapur Roads, secure that point, and push on to the northern airstrip which was located near Singapur.

Leaving Charpate at 1000 hours on May 21st, Beach got almost to the designated

road junction when he ran into a prepared enemy position. Here tight bands of automatic fire directed over level terrain pinned him down. The battalion dug in. During the night of May 21st-22nd, the Japanese came down the Mogaung Road through Charpate to attack the Third Battalion rear. Artillery fire drove the enemy off, and in the morning, Beach withdrew to his original position at Charpate and resumed his patrolling.

((May 21st — I had been in a flooded slit trench part of the night as I had some shells coming over and I woke up sick. I did quite a lot of work at headquarters and got Gurkhas and Kachin guides to lead patrols who were trying to round up snipers. One Kachin-Gurkha patrol went out for the purpose of capturing a Jap.

I was asked to take the funeral service of Major Hodges who had been killed the previous day in the fighting at the railway station. I agreed. I had a long wait while the grave was being dug and other preparations made and I was feeling quite ill. Col. Hunter came and said that in the future, regular chaplains were to be called for this work as I was needed at headquarters. After the service, Col. Hunter sent asking if I would go to Pamati to bring the villagers into the airstrip as they were having trouble with the Chinese. Capt. Gersham went and volunteered to go in my place as he knew I was ill.

I was examined by a doctor who said I had a high fever and must go out to the hospital. I went by plane to Ledo where I remained in the hospital for ten days and then came to Det. 101 Headquarters to recuperate.))

At 2200 hours on the night of May 23rd, a battalion of Japanese launched an attack on Charpate from the commanding ground northeast of the town. This was ground that had been overlooked in the hasty occupation of the positions and the Japanese shortly penetrated the Third Battalion

(Continued on page 6)

FATHER STUART . . .

(Continued from page 5)

position. Beach's force was depleted by sickness and the absence of some men out on patrol. Artillery support was called for. The Marauders fought heroically, and the Japanese attack was repelled with difficulty after the Americans had suffered severe casualties.

On the morning of May 24th, the Third Battalion was subjected to another attack at 0935 hours. The fight was progressing badly for the Marauders when Hunter ordered Beach to break contact with the enemy and move to the railroad two and a half miles to the south.

Meanwhile, Red CT had remained at the Pamati ferry position until the 19th of May, when it was relieved by a company of Chinese and returned to a position along the Namkwi River. The following day, May 20th, Red CT was joined by White CT which was relieved from its position southeast of Myitkyina at Zigyun. An area extending five miles to the west was outposted and patrolled to prevent any formation of the enemy for an attack on the rear. Red CT and White CT had also evacuated a number of sick, thus bringing the strength of the Marauder element of H Force down to approximately 200. On May 24th, Red CT and White CT were ordered to return to the airstrip to become part of the Myitkyina Task Force under Col. McCammon.

On May 26th, Japanese and mortar fire hit Namkwi heavily, and the remnants of the Second Battalion pulled back to a ridge about halfway between Namkwi and Myitkyina. The Japanese occupied Namkwi and fortified it strongly. (Two companies of combat engineers were subsequently badly mauled in their efforts to retake the village.)

On the 27th of May, Company C of the 209th Engineers Combat Battalion(1) was attached to the Marauder Second Battalion and McGee received orders to reconnoiter the Charpate area which the Japanese had held in force since the withdrawal of the Third Battalion. As soon as this had been done, McGee was to move his men down the main road to Radhapur, there to unite with the rest of the 209th Engineers.

McGee's forces were attacked just south of Charpate. The Japanese were not in great strength, but the Second Battalion was so wasted by fatigue, dysentery, malaria, and malnutrition that it was not an effective combat organization. Several men were so exhausted that they went to sleep during the engagement, and although the attack was beaten off, McGee became convinced that his troops were unfit for further employment and asked to have them relieved as soon as possible.(2)

The Second Battalion occupied the town of Charpate until the afternoon of June 2nd when they returned to the airstrip. By June 4th the last casualty had been evacuated to a hospital. Each man was sent under an E.M.T. tag either to the 14th Evacuation

Hospital, the 111th Station Hospital, or the 20th General Hospital.

The last of the Third Battalion was also flown out by June 4th, a few of the officers remaining on other assignments. The remnants of the First Battalion, H Force, remained in Myitkyina until the fall of the city on August 4th.

During its operations in rear of the Japanese lines the 5307th Composite Unit (Prov) marched 750 miles, fought five major and over 30 minor engagements.

Galahad's battle casualties were: 92, either killed in action or fatally wounded; 252 wounded, including those who subsequently died of wounds.

Of the original 2,997 Marauders who started from Ledo, 1,310 reached Myitkyina, and of these 679 were evacuated May 17th and June 1st.

There were 503 cases of amoebic dysentery, 149 of typhus, and 296 of malaria. Only 69 men received accidental injuries; and there were but 72 neuropsychosis cases, a remarkably low number under the circumstances. Other fevers and miscellaneous sicknesses, which were mostly stomach disorders, accounted for the balance of 2,336 removed to hospitals.(1)

During the dark days of Nhpum Ga, Galahad's rear schelon on one occasion managed to scrape together a mess of fried chicken and apple turnovers which were dropped to the beleaguered men of McGee's Second Battalion. Otherwise the unit's entire subsistence was 80 percent K ration, 5 percent C ration, 5 percent 10-in-1 ration, and 10 percent B ration, (used entirely on the first ten days along the Ledo Road.) Aside from the monotony of such fare, this campaign again demonstrated that these rations lack certain elements vital for sustaining health among troops for any long period of time. The average loss of weight among the Marauders was 35 pounds per man.

Original estimates forecast a possible expenditure of 85 percent of the unit. Galahad did its job with a loss of only slightly over 55 percent, notwithstanding the undeniable hardships and difficulties which were encountered and which make the performance of the Marauders a credit to American military achievement.

When the initial attempt to capture the city of Myitkyina failed, the situation was altogether too precarious to risk any depletion of the Marauder force and although it was desired to give the unit a well deserved rest such a stop was impossible. The influx of Japanese from the surrounding areas was heavy. A strong counter-attack was expected momentarily, and no replacements were available to meet this threat. If, at this point, enemy action had wrested control of the airport from Allied hands, the fruits of the hard campaign would have been lost and everything would have had to be done over.

Within a few days after the fall of the airstrip, the Japanese were extended on a

five-mile front. This caused considerable concern in the higher command which judiciously directed that every available man should be retained to ward off the three. Even at that, the Allied Forces seemed inadequate.

In the face of this situation, men with stomach ailments, fevers and other illnesses, who had kept going up to this point felt that they had been betrayed, and morale and the will to continue. In whole numbers the Marauders reported to the unit doctors asking to be evacuated. Most of these men were legitimately ill; but many, particularly those with malaria, had been sick for a long time. The airstrip defenses were being so seriously jeopardized by the large numbers of men being evacuated for illness that instructions were issued stressing the gravity of the outlook and cautioning the medics against indiscriminate evacuations.

Despite careful investigation of all causes and the setting up of additional facilities for local treatment, the flow of evacuations continued to such an extent that drastic measures to insure the maintenance of adequate force became necessary. A request was sent to the rear for all men capable of duty. At a camp in Dinjan a number of Marauders who had been evacuated in various stages of convalescence from overcrowded hospitals. A group of fresh replacements, newly arrived in India to receive training, were at Ramgarh. Both the group discharged from the hospital and that from Ramgarh were rushed to Myitkyina. Some of the convalescents were unfit for combat and were immediately evacuated again, but the incident assumed undue proportions.

((I toured the trails from Nhpum through Naubum over the Naura Hkyat pass through Ritpong and Arang over the route covered by the Marauders on their march to Myitkyina. This was the end of July and August, 1944. I was asked to check up on claims against the Army by Kachin. Against the Chinese there were many complaints and claims for losses due to looting. Against some of the Anglo-Burman employees of OSS there were claims also. In all, I paid out Ps. 22,000 in compensation. There was not a complaint of a single claim against the Marauders. This was extraordinary for such a large crowd of men. One officer said they were usually so hungry that food was all they thought of; women weren't considered. Even for food there was no looting. This should be recorded in their favor.))

The fresh troops from Ramgarh were unquestionably lacking in training, but they were all that there were to be had. It is regrettable that the otherwise splendid achievement of the Marauders had to be the reflection of an investigation at its final state because of these circumstances and the unwarranted publicity which they attained. The Presidential Citation, which follows, is a much more fitting note which to end this chronicle.

" . . . in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of the service and honor and distinction . . . The 5307th Composite Unit was the first United States

(1) The 209th Engr. Combat Bn. was among the hastily assembled reinforcements flown to Myitkyina.

(2) Lt. Col. McGee himself lost consciousness three times during the Charpate engagement, and directed the battalion from an aid station between relapses. (Statement of Bn. Surgeon Capt. Kolodny.)

(1) These are the official figures of the AG battle casualty roster. Due to the fact that many cases of light battle casualties were not evacuated, but treated by unit surgeons, consequently not reported in hospital returns, accurate statistics are not obtainable. The actual number of wounded at Nhpum alone exceeds the official total for the entire campaign.



Fr. Stuart's grave at Columban Fathers, Dalken Park, Navan, County Meath, Ireland.

FATHER STUART . . .

(Continued from page 6)

ground combat force to meet the enemy in World War II on the continent of Asia. After a series of successful engagements in the Hukawng and Mogaung Valleys of North Burma, in March and April 1944, the unit was called on to lead a march over jungle trails through extremely difficult mountain terrain against a stubborn resistance in a surprise attack on Myitkyina. The unit proved equal to its task, overcame all the obstacles put in its way by the enemy, the terrain, and the weather and after a brilliant operation on 17 May 1944, seized the airfield at Myitkyina, an objective of great tactical importance in the campaign. The successful accomplishment of this mission marks the 5307th Composite Unit as an outstanding combat force and reflects great credit on Allied arms."(1)

Editor's Note: Fr. Stuart returned to Ireland in 1954, seriously ill. He died in his sleep in his family home in Moneymore, County Derry, Northern Ireland, on August 11, 1955.

(1) WD GO 54 soc. V 111, par. 2.

SPECIAL ORDERS NO. 9 . . .

(Continued from page 1)

9. 2d LT FRANK J STARON, SC, 475th Inf., is placed on DS with US Army Rest CP 1, APO 465, for a period of 20 days including travel time, and WP o/a 19 Aug 1944 fr this sta to APO 465 reporting upon arrival to the CO, US Army Rest Cp 1, thereat. He will return to proper sta o/a 8 Sep 1944.

10. The following named O & EM, 475th Inf, WP o/a 20 Aug 1944 fr this sta to APO 883 reporting upon arrival to the CO, 26th Replacement Depot (AAF), thereat, for air transportation to Cont US under APR-4-THE-2662-AFG-SEPT.

- Maj. Edwin J. Briggs — Inf (Train Comdr)
- Maj. Frank A. Johnson — Inf
- Maj. William T. Bell — VC
- Capt. John K. Benefield — Inf

- Capt. James E. T. Hopkins — MC (Train Surgeon)
- Capt. Willis C. Mead — Inf
- Capt. James E. Sanford — Inf
- Capt. William Z. Scott — Inf (Trans Officer)
- Capt. John J. Spillane — Cav
- 1st Lt. Harry B. Coburn — Inf
- 1st Lt Edward R. Oswald — Inf
- 1st Lt. Earle L. Varney — Inf
- 1st Lt. Logan E. Weston — Inf

WOJG Clifford J. Mason—USA (Train QM)

1st Company

- M/Sgt. Ralph E. Duston — 542
- 1st/Sgt. Reuben E. Bey — 585
- T/Sgt. John R. Adkins — 652
- T/Sgt. Luther L. Bowman — 651
- T/Sgt. Leo G. Click — 652
- T/Sgt. Elmer W. Clifford — 651
- T/Sgt. Noble F. Deeling — 653
- T/Sgt. Carl W. Drummond — 052
- T/Sgt. Joseph F. Freer — 651
- T/Sgt. George W. Friedman — 502
- S/Sgt. Lesley R. Aldrich — 653
- S/Sgt. Edward L. Aufderheide — 653
- S/Sgt. Robert H. Ausburger — 653
- S/Sgt. Fred Baker — 652
- S/Sgt. Kenneth F. Bixby — 653
- S/Sgt. Charles R. Bowen — 653
- S/Sgt. George J. Bowser — 652
- S/Sgt. Harold C. Clark — 821
- S/Sgt. Stanley G. Cobb — 653
- S/Sgt. John L. Coll — 653
- S/Sgt. Paul W. Craig — 806
- S/Sgt. Kenneth Dewhurst — 607
- S/Sgt. George L. Fike — 652
- S/Sgt. Don G. Fowler — 652
- S/Sgt. Kenneth C. Hanson — 533
- S/Sgt. Ralph A. Hascall, Jr. — 409
- S/Sgt. Robert G. Heise — 340
- S/Sgt. Joseph P. Henry — 744
- S/Sgt. James H. Jarrett — 744
- S/Sgt. Paul D. LaHaie — 653
- Sgt. Clifford Allen — 653
- Sgt. Morris S. Anderson — 653
- Sgt. Wilmot A. Andersen — 741
- Sgt. John Aschenbach — 049
- Sgt. Charles E. Bartolovich — 050
- Sgt. Walter H. Benson — 533
- Sgt. Seabrook Bowen — 653
- Sgt. Richard M. Bush, Jr. — 652
- Sgt. Earl D. Cauble — 729
- Sgt. Russell L. Cooper — 653
- Sgt. Donald P. Darsey — 653
- Sgt. Burtis E. Davis — 652
- Sgt. Joseph J. Desrochers — 577
- Sgt. Charles F. Dolan — 652
- Sgt. Thomas A. Detson — 652
- Sgt. Thomas A. Dubois — 745
- Sgt. Alexander Ervolino — 653
- Sgt. Jessie L. Pacmer — 060
- Sgt. Johnnie S. Fist — 653
- T/4 Gene L. Bisner — 177
- T/4 Jack Brackett — 533
- T/4 Russel J. DeMars — 653
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- T/4 Dominic Gentile — 745
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- Cpl. Clarence E. Carter — 653
- Cpl. Chauncey E. Chapman — 653
- Cpl. Claude L. Davis — 746
- Cpl. Victor DeAngelo — 606
- Cpl. Reese Drattle — 565
- Cpl. Ben H. Easterday — 653
- Cpl. George T. Faro — 606
- Cpl. Ervin J. Frecks — 729
- Cpl. Frank L. Graham — 745
- T/5 John P. Allen — 603

- T/5 Charles E. Bock — 746
- T/5 Floyd H. Cothorn — 746
- T/5 Granville O. Couch — 761
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- T/5 Thomas E. Day — 746
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- T/5 Cyril J. Fitzgibbon — 776
- T5 Herschel C. Fulk — 345
- T/5 Eugene J. Giebel — 653
- T/5 John R. Gray — 746
- T/5 Daniel A. Hardinger — 861
- T/5 Richard J. Shaper — 060
- Pfc. Matthew G. Arthur, Jr. — 675
- Pfc. Luther Baker — 765
- Pfc. Arnold Barnett — 345
- Pfc. Edward Barta — 745
- Pfc. Joseph T. Bassetti — 675
- Pfc. Joe B. Bazemore — 060
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- Pfc Robert G. Beitz — 745
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- Pfc. Robert W. Cole — 745
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- Pfc. Fred R. Corvelle — 746
- Pfc. William D. Crews — 761
- Pfc. Norman K. Darling — 504
- Pfc. Wilbur E. Davis — 238
- Pfc. Solomon Dietz — 745
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- Pvt. Anthony R. Callisto — 745
- Pvt. Newman F. Campbell — 657

Pvt. Joseph J. Campochiro — 521
 Pvt. John P. Carbone — 745
 Pvt. Jewel W. Chapman — 745
 Pvt. Frederick T. Chauncey — 745
 Pvt. Jack A. Codding — 745

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 T/Sgt. Joseph S. Hackerman — 816
 T/Sgt. Wesley E. Headlee — 651
 T/Sgt. Russell F. Hill — 814
 T/Sgt. Marshall W. Hurlocker — 652
 T/Sgt. Robert C. Mallory — 651
 T/Sgt. Charles B. Mauldin — 174
 T/Sgt. Joseph F. Purjue — 543
 S/Sgt. John J. Lavan — 653
 S/Sgt. Francis K. Luke — 651
 S/Sgt. Henry P. Lumpkin Jr. — 764
 S/Sgt. Charles E. Mansell — 651
 S/Sgt. Theodore I. McCarthy — 652
 S/Sgt. George McGee — 653
 S/Sgt. Harvey W. C. McRae — 653
 S/Sgt. Walter Mikolajczyk — 653
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 S/Sgt. Victor J. Noreka — 653
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 S/Sgt. Roy N. Phillips — 652
 S/Sgt. Richard H. Poppe — 653
 S/Sgt. Montio H. Petter — 653
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 Sgt. Ernest W. Gibson — 533
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 Sgt. Jacob Hand — 729
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 Pfc. Lee E. Martinez — 533
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 Pfc. Ralph J. Myszewski — 745
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 Pfc. Marion Peters — 745
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 Pfc. Ralph Putman — 745
 Pfc. Harold D. Rambo — 605
 Pfc. Seth R. Rasmussen — 745
 Pfc. Raymond M. Reed — 345
 Pfc. Manuel F. Rivas — 409
 Pfc. Robert J. Robertson — 745
 Pfc. Alvie Robinson — 745
 Pfc. Paul L. Roger — 060

Above provided by John Keslik, who saved it all these years. How come the Army could not find these orders? We all have the Army Serial Numbers which we did not print in the interest of saving word and space. If anyone listed here has forgotten his ASN, we can provide it. This gives us another chance to scratch our heads and to try to remember where these guys lived.

Raymond V. Lyons
 Executive Secretary and Editor



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RAYMOND V. LYONS
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