

# The Burman News



Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.

February, 1987

As Seen Thru the Eyes of a Couple of GIs

## Myitkyina Battle Goes On and On!

*The 209th and 236th Engineer Combat Battalion fought at Myitkyina as part of the 5307th under command of Colonel Hunter.*

*Company B of the 209th maintained a running chronological record of events. This is the continuation of the portion which began in the November issue.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### October 23, 1943

(Saturday) This morning at 8:00 A.M. all equipment was packed and loaded into British trucks for removal to the train station. We were dismissed until 1:15 P.M. to do as we wished. The morning was spent with the men being either asleep or visiting other parts of the camp.

At the designated time we marched to the train station of Nasik for a destination still unknown to any of us. Again we found the modern streamliner of India was no more than a cattle car. Unless one has a very vivid imagination it would be almost impossible to visualize the actual appearance of these so-called trains. Small compartments with six men to each was where we were to spend the coming five days. The windows moved down by pressing up and outward at the same time.

Our first American rations were served to us between the hours of 7:00 and 9:00 P.M. and they were well appreciated by all the men. The meal itself consisted of two slices of cheese, bread, jam, sausage and coffee.

### October 28, 1943

We pulled into the rail center at approximately 7:30 P.M. and detrained at 9:45. Before carrying our equipment off the train we were served tea in the British way by Indian cooks at a small place some distance from the train itself. We transferred our equipment from the GIP (Great India Peninsula) across the tracks some hundred feet to what was called a narrow gauge train. All the machine guns, kitchen field ranges and extra baggage also had to be unloaded and transferred. This took three to four hours of hard work and most of the work that was done had to be done by our men. After completing this we returned to the other train and found most of the men sitting by small fires that they had built or in groups talking of different things. It was noted that American forces had been through this route before by listening to the

small native children swear in English. They seemed to know all the army curse words and proceeded to use them as ordinary speech.

### October 29, 1943

At 5:10 A.M. we left the rail center on an even slower train than we had previously ridden. The others had seemed slow but this really was worse. We were as usual cramped together and as always we managed to get some sleep. Some were sleeping on shelves, barracks bags and the floor, the remainder could be found sleeping on the wooden seats.

11:00 A.M. the following morning we were served our breakfast and dinner at the same time with a combination of canned corned beef and cherry jam with dog biscuits for bread. The train had been stopped from 9:00 until this time so the meal was served in an open field bordered by a pond on one side and a holy cow on the other. Continuing our journey at the high speed of twenty miles per hour we again stopped for water. While at this point we witnessed a sample of the extreme famine conditions that are prevalent throughout this country. Two natives passed by our car carrying a dead man tied hand and foot to a

bamboo pole. They were taking him to their so-called cemetery where his remains would be burned. A small girl died on the other side of our train and there was no weeping or crying from any of the natives. They only stood by and watched her die with glassy eyes and placid faces. In the possible twenty minutes that we were in this station three deaths occurred and one dog died.

(Nite) We detrained at 10:00 P.M. in darkness so thick that it could have been sliced by a knife. It was hell finding our equipment because everyone had been tired when getting on and they had thrown helmets, rifles and all the other bags every where just to get them out of the way. S/Sgt. Kenneth DeShane (Seattle, Wash.) was so angry he threw his rusty piece as he calls it out of the window and when he retrieved it he found the muzzle sticking in the mud and dirt several inches. After this we walked what seem to be a half mile around a train that pulled out of the station before all the men could get across the tracks and walked back to the same spot only fifty feet across from where we had detrained. This, however, was nothing new to us as we generally went at things backwards when we had a heavy load to carry.

We threw our bags on the platform and marched out into the night. It is quite an appalling thing to march out into darkness without a noise other than the shuffle of marching feet. To one that has never experienced this sort of thing it would be hard to visualize because it is a feeling one never forgets. The thoughts race through your mind, about men in other wars before you, wondering what they thought when they did the same thing that you were doing now. The Indians came out of their homes to watch us go by just as our own people had back in the states, possibly they were thinking the same thoughts that we were, where are we going, what are we going to do. Possibly they knew more about our mission than we ourselves did.

It took us fifteen minutes to reach our destination. We found it to be another Indian Rest Camp with the usual dirt. We were assigned eight men to each tent, finding the typical British hospitality was giving us the extreme pleasure of sleeping on the damp and dirty brick floor. This was another example of what they thought of

(Continued on page 2)

Company B  
209th Engineers, U. S. Army

**DIARY**

DEDICATED  
To the Men of Company B Who Laid Down Their Lives  
So That We Could Exist

WRITTEN BY  
IRWIN E. SMITH  
SAUL ROBBINS

COLLABORATORS  
JAMES APOSTOLOS  
PETER ROZAKIS

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**

(Continued from page 1)

American troops. We soon had details picked to unload the trucks of barracks bags while the rest of the men ate their late and meager supper. This meal consisted of Spam, dog biscuits and tea, not much but we had not eaten for several hours and even this much tasted good to us. After this hearty meal we laid our blankets on the floors of our tents and let sleep alleviate our sorrows and discontentments.

**October 30, 1943**

We were packed and ready to leave at 8:00 A.M. this morning. We ate our breakfast which wasn't eatable and were marching out of the camp by 9:00 A.M. while Indian troops were marching in. It was only a short distance to the Brahmaputra River bank and there we spent several hours waiting for the ferry to be loaded with equipment. This was a small example of how we spend most of our time in the army. The orders come through to be fulfilled in a hurry and then we wait for hours because someone at the other end is never ready. While waiting there we purchased pineapples and oranges from the natives and ate them as we had the bananas at Deolali. We stepped on the gangplank of the "Vulture" at 3:30 P.M. and found the name to be correct for this ferry as it was a dirty, grimy and extremely old boat. Once on we were given instructions to remain in the vicinity that was designated for us, otherwise we would cause the boat to capsize. To be able to sleep looked almost impossible but we found that we could sleep anywhere on anything at almost any time that we were given the chance. From 2:00 A.M. on until the late part of the next afternoon it was cold. The air was naturally damp from the water and our climatic conditions were changing from time to time. Blankets came out, plus field jackets and any other type of clothing that would keep us warm. Thus we put through our first night.

On this morning we washed ourselves as well as we could by using our helmets and catching water out of a hand pump at the far end of the ferry. Our breakfast this morning was of Vienna sausages, dog biscuits, jam and tea as usual. We continued our journey upstream and on the late evening of October 31, 1943, we dropped anchor and started drifting into the dock. "C" Company was assigned the job of unloading the heavy equipment out of the hold and we unloaded the B bags. Guards were posted for the night as we were not debarking until 4:00 the next morning.

**November 1, 1943**

Through a cold mist and fog we climbed a long bank to the train. We boarded this narrow gauge and proceeded to make ourselves comfortable if that was possible. This was the first time that our drinking

water had been rationed since leaving the Mariposa. After using this water we took the water out of the engine. The taste was terrible but we soon became accustomed to it and we were certain that it was pure after being boiled.

We had a case of canned milk today and by adding water and sugar it made a fair drink to go along with our usual corned beef and onions. This beef was fast becoming monotonous but we had to eat it or not eat at all. We rode only for a short distance until we arrived at the Ledo staging area which was the first American base we had been in since our stay in India.

We were assigned living quarters in tents with six to eight men to each. Our district as always was in its early stage of construction. We immediately went to work rebuilding and cleaning the camp area.

Once again we had a mess hall, although it was crude. Nevertheless we had tables and benches for the first time since leaving Camp Beale, California. An old type well with a hand pump provided us with our only means of water supply both for cooking and drinking purposes. The water was impure, consequently the cooks had to boil all water before we were permitted to drink it. We later dug small trenches for the water containers to be placed in to help cool the water off more quickly and we used them one day before leaving.

**November 2, 1943**

By this time we were almost to the completion point of our new home. It seems that it has always been our misfortune to have to build something and then leave before using it. The mess hall had been cleaned and was beginning to look very promising. We received our first mail in this camp on this night. By means of two lanterns and a few fires we managed very well in reading those wonderful letters. Mail call on foreign soil means more to the men than anything else that could happen to them.

**November 3, 1943**

By this day our part of the camp was resembling an American garrison at home. After 9:30 A.M. the sun was very warm and the dampness that pervaded the nights was generally gone with the warm air taking its place. The men were beginning to wash clothes and take baths such as they could by using a helmet. Washing was done in helmets, ration cans or whatever might be available. It took little or no time for these clothes to dry due to the warm sunshine.

Sergeant Maurice Strutz washed some of his towels and upon returning found them missing. The sergeant had his tent closer to the tall trees than all the others in the company and that is possibly the reason for the happenings related in the following para-

(Continued on page 3)

**BURMA**

Mean Grid North, in this sheet, is 3' 11" East of True North.  
Mean Magnetic Declination 0° 20' East (in 1917)  
(Decreasing by 6' annually)

GRID II B (Yards)

No. 92  $\frac{G}{SW}$



**Louisiana Words and Sayings**

**Andouille and Boudin** (Ahn-doo-ee and boo-dan) — two types of Cajun sausage. Andouille is made with pork, boudin with pork and rice. Sociologists recognize two major categories of Cajuns — the "River (or andouille) Cajuns" and the "Bayou (or boudin) Cajuns."

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**

(Continued from page 2)

graphs. It seems, as the story goes, after hanging his towels up to dry he was called away to collect his machine guns. As said before several of his towels were missing upon his return which made him very angry. In the army a good soldier is never short so this was the first conclusion that came into his mind that someone had helped themselves. Upon inquiring of the men concerning his towels the boys told him that possibly the monkeys had gotten them. In his Wisconsin way Strutz went into a rage at the very thought of monkeys being anywhere near the camp but soon they showed him the monkeys high up in one of the trees, the part which is still a puzzle is whether they actually did take them or not.

(Nite) Tonight Lt. Stefl and one of the weapons sergeants were looking for a misplaced machine gun in the vicinity of the kitchen. While there they spotted two young calves that they had previously seen in the area a day or so before. It came into their minds that beef stew would go well for the next day's dinner. After calling out the assistance of Sgt. O'Connell, Sgt. Bratton, Cpl. Samler and Mess Sgt. Kenneth De-Shane they proceeded to catch at least one of the two. It proved to be quite a chase. They first thought they would be able to corner one of them in the mess hall but it slipped through one of the entrances and lead them a merry chase through brush and tents. The men rushing through the brush and the calf leaving a trail of dust behind left the guards in a confused state of mind. The sounds that came forth reminded one of an all-out blitz. The chase led them up to the colonel's tent and almost into it which would have proven disastrous to our cause and efforts, had the calf awakened him. After possibly forty-five minutes to an hour the calf finally tangled himself in some vines and deep brush. The fellows were like a pack of wolves after a small rabbit the way they pounced on him and held him. Soon one of the other men came back with a rope with which we secured him. Techns. Miller and Samler held him while Pvt. Clemens Meir smashed his head in with a ten pound driving mall. Techn. Miller's hunting knife was then used to cut his throat and skin him. After disemboweling him and burying the remains they

(Continued on page 4)

**Louisiana Words and Sayings**

**Bayou** (by-you, bia or by-yo) — a sluggish stream, bigger than a creek and smaller than a river.

**INTELLIGENCE SECTION (MAPS)**

Photocopies of Original Maps Carried in Burma . . . . . \$5.00 each

- A. Mountain trails above Myitkyina
- B. Myitkyina Area, five miles north of town to 25 miles south
- C. Burma Road Block Area, Nampakka Valley, 475 & 124th

**Raymond V. Lyons**  
11244 N. 33rd St. Phoenix, AZ 85028



# AMERICAN TROOPS 40 MILES FROM MONGMIT

For the first time since the capture of Myitkyina, tough, well equipped American ground troops are again in action against the Japanese.

The Americans, under the command of General Willey, met their first Japanese resistance at Mo Hlaing. This is forty air miles north of Mongmit. After defeating the enemy there, they joined their Chinese allies in a victorious battle at Tonkwa. Here the Americans and Chinese killed 126 Japanese. Forward Allied patrols are now operating in the Shweli River area.

The New American force contains soldiers who were once part of the famous "Merrill's

Marauders". This was the American task force that spearheaded the swift Allied drive down the Hukawng and Mogaung valleys last spring.


Meanwhile another Chinese force has captured Bhamo. A large part of the Japanese garrison, surrounded and already bypassed by other Allied units, was annihilated.

Along the railway, the British 36th Division, with Chinese and American support, has occupied Naba Junction and Indaw. The important Irrawaddy port of Katha was taken without a fight.

The Japanese have now been cleared from North Burma. Your area will be freed as well.

**NABA, INDAW, KATHA, BHAMO TAKEN**

(Front Side of Leaflet)



## အမေရိကန်များမိုးမိတ် ချီတိုက်၍ ၄၀ မိုင်အကွင်းရောက်ပြီ

လက်နက်အပြည့်အစုံနှင့် အင်အားကြီးမားသော အမေရိကန်တပ်များသည် မြစ်ကြီးနားကို သိမ်းပြီးနောက် ယခုတစ်ပတ်အကြိမ် ဂျပန်တို့ကိုင်ဆိုင်နေပြန်ကြောင်း။ ဂျင်နရယ် ဝီလီယံ မွေးသော ဤ အမေရိကန် တပ်များ ကို ဂျပန်တို့ မိုးလိုင်၌ စတင် ခုခံကြလေသည်။ မိုးလိုင်မှာ မိုးမိတ်နှင့် လေကြောင်းမှ မိုင် ၄၀ သာ ကွာဝေးကြောင်း။ ထိုနေရာ၌ ဂျပန်များကို နှိမ်နင်းခဲ့ပြီးနောက် အမေရိကန် တပ်များသည် မိတ်ဘက် တရုတ်များနှင့် ပူးပေါင်းကာ တိုက်ပွဲတွင် အောင်ပွဲဝင်ခဲ့ကြပြန်ကြောင်း။ ဤတိုက်ပွဲတွင် အမေရိကန်များသည် ဂျပန် ၄၀ ကို ကိုက်စွတ်စီရင်ခဲ့လေသည်။

ထိုအခိုက် အခြားမဟာမိတ် တပ်များက ဗန်းမော် ကို သိမ်းယူခဲ့၏။ ကံဆိုး မိုးမှောင် ကျနေသော ဂျပန် မြို့စောင့် တပ်ရှိ စစ်သားများစွာမှာ ချေမှုန်းခြင်း ခံခဲ့ရကြောင်း။ မီးရထားလမ်းတလျှောက်၌လည်း ဗြိတိသျှ တပ်များက နဘား မီးရထား လမ်း ခွဲ နှင့် အင်းတော်ကို သိမ်းယူခဲ့၏။ ချက်ပိုင်သော ရော့ဘတ် ဆိပ်ကမ်းမြို့ ကသာကိုမူ တိုက်ခိုက် ခြင်းမပြုရဘဲ သိမ်းယူရန်ခဲလေသည်။ ယခုမူ မြန်မာပြည်မြောက်ပိုင်းမှ ဂျပန်များကို အပြီးသတ် သုတ်သင်ရှင်းလင်း မိလေပြီ။ သင် ထို အရပ်လည်း လွတ်မြောက်တော့မည်။ အားမငယ်ကြန့်နု။

နဘား၊ အင်းတော်၊ ကသာ နှင့် ဗန်းမော်ကို မဟာမိတ်များသိမ်းပြီ။

(Back Side of Leaflet)

These were dropped from a B-25. I had to laugh at the last line! I think the pilot was lost. The area was already cleared. I wondered what the natives thought.  
— Ralph Pollock

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**

(Continued from page 3)

... tied his feet to a bamboo pole and carried him to the kitchen. All this was done as quietly as possible because of the nature of the Indians religion in believing cattle were holy. After bringing him to the kitchen they proceeded to cut him up and place the meat in salt water for the purification of it. While Sgt. Strutz buried the remains he said these words and we quote: "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, if the Colonel catches, we'll all be bust."

**November 5, 1943**

We received orders in the late morning to be ready to leave Ledo by 7:30 P.M. This did not surprise us because the place was now well built for someone else. By 3:00 P.M. everything was packed with the exception of the field ranges. As usual we did not leave until five hours after the given time. At midnight we boarded trucks with a possible six to ten hours ride confronting us. The convoy moved out and it soon became apparent that it was going to be a cold night in the trucks. The dust came in large quantities after they had gained some speed. We had to laugh at the idea of riding in trucks not blacked out and being close to enemy territory. While in the states our drivers had practiced driving for many miles without lights and over here where there might be imminent danger they were driving with all lights on.

We pulled blankets out and tried to keep us warm as possible. We continued to go higher and higher into the mountains. Once while stopped the large jungle trees dripped moisture almost to the extent that one believed it was rain. At 7:30 A.M. we stopped to eat a cold breakfast of corned beef, dog biscuits and honey. Afterwards we pushed on up the road which was literally covered with machinery of all types from heavy angledozers to rock crushers.

At 9:20 A.M. we reached our designated area. It was nothing but woods and jungle vines with tangled brush heaped all around. With the tools we could borrow such as axes, two man saws and shovels, we went to work clearing out an area for our new homes. It was a hard and arduous task to clear the brush and vines away because it was almost straight up the side of a mountain. A temporary kitchen was set up at the bottom part of the mountain until we could get better facilities for building. This was Sunday and across from us a Negro encampment was having church services which sounded good to us.

**November 16, 1943**

This day find us on many types of work. Men are beginning to operate Diesel-powered rock crushers a few miles back. Others are still operating the heavy road equipment at the Nangyang river bridge. Some of the boys have today off and have gone hunting, looking for anything, but deer chiefly. Our morning report showed that our hospital list had increased

**Louisiana Words and Sayings**

**Beignet** (Bin-yay) — a fritter, or a strangely shaped doughnut without a hole. A New Orleans favorite.

to eight men. Several of them are suffering from slight cases of wood poisoning, however nothing serious has developed as yet.

Lt. Myer was taken to the hospital this afternoon for treatment for malaria. This is our second case in this company of that dreaded disease.

**November 19, 1943**

Our supply tent is now nearing the final stage of construction. The most important thing we need now is supplies to fill out the tent. Due to the fact that someone helped themselves to the stove pipe that was to be used for the supply tent the stock clerk made his own pipe by using Spam lunch meat cans hammered together. It sags in some places and bows in others but it does work.

We are now getting food that is a one hundred per cent improvement over what we were receiving a month ago. The boys wouldn't be satisfied if they were not complaining about one thing or another, so we now have the biggest of all family feuds due to the fact that our non-commissioned officers place themselves in the front of the chow line at each meal. It has always been the custom of the first three grades to eat before the other enlisted men do but now the corporals and sergeants have adopted the cast system since seeing the ways of the British non-coms. The offense is not serious however and it adds a little humor due to the extensive arguments that arise from it.

**November 25, 1943**

(Thanksgiving Day) Tonight we truly have something to write home about and give thanks for. Our cooks have worked extremely hard since yesterday morning in preparation for tonight's dinner. It will not be like the ones we used to have at home but under the present circumstances they should receive our gratitude. They have baked pies, including mince and peach, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, creamed peas, turkey (canned but good), fresh duck, cranberry sauce, and one of the best American drinks commonly known as coffee, of

which we see very little over here.

**THANKSGIVING DAY MENU**

- Roast Boneless Turkey
- SHREDDED DUCK with Giblet Gravy
- Mashed Potatoes
- Candied Sweet Potatoes
- Buttered Green Peas
- Cranberry Sauce
- Sour Pickles

- Raisin Bread
- Peach Pie
- Hard Candy
- Butter
- Mince Meat Pie
- Coffee
- Tangerines

Early this morn while the cooks were going to all the trouble of preparing the above listed items a dynamite charge down by the garbage pit went off, blowing fragments of dirt on the pies. We felt that our 1st Sergeant was to blame for this. However since it was his first offense the cooks took an automobile pump and flew the small amount of dirt from their pies and they will taste just as good as before.

**December 13-23, 1943**

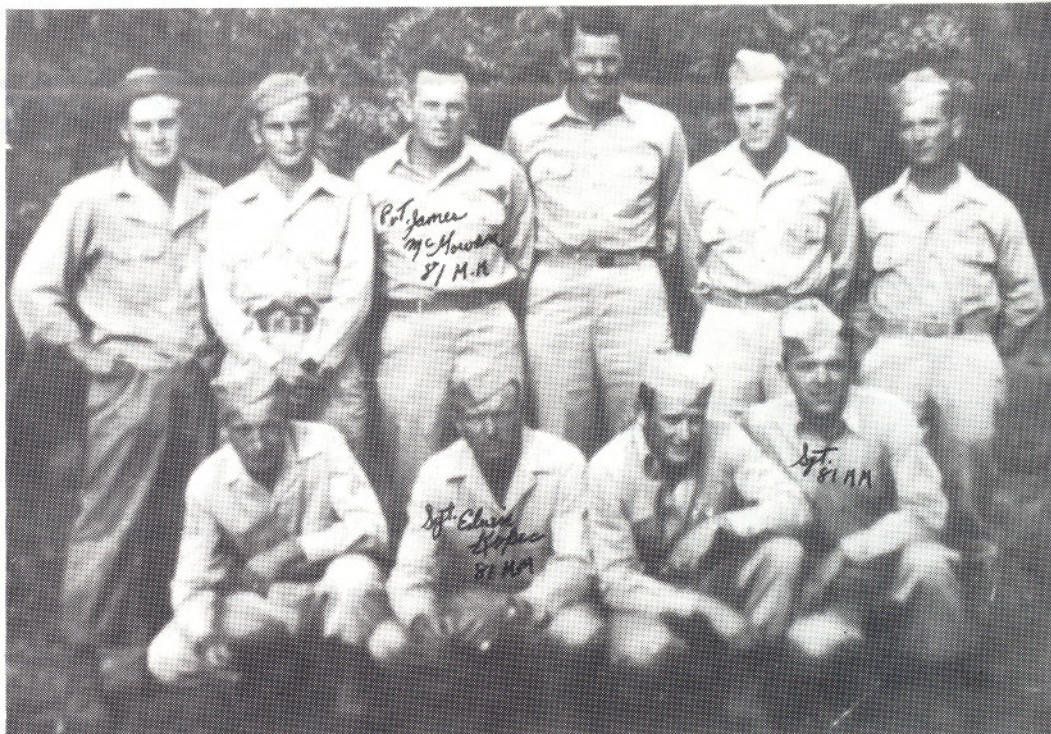
A recent bulletin from higher headquarters came to our attention that we are now authorized to wear a bronze star on our Asiatic ribbon. This is to signify that we have been and are now engaged in battle, designating Base Section No. 3 as a Combat Battle Zone. We have not fired a shot as yet, and also we can now see how the hero who

(Continued on page 5)

**READERS RETREAT (BOOKS)**

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>The Marauders</b> by                | <b>Cost</b> |
| Charlton Ogburn, paperback             | \$ 6.00     |
| <b>Yank, WW II Stories</b> , including |             |
| Dead End Kids: Richardson              | \$12.00     |
| <b>U.S. Rangers</b> , by Ian Padden,   |             |
| paperback, history . . . . .           | \$ 3.00     |
| <b>Shock Troops</b> , by David C.      |             |
| Knight, hardcover, Elite TR            | \$15.00     |
| <b>Shots Fired in Anger</b> , by       |             |
| Capt. George, hardcover . . .          | \$16.00     |

**Raymond V. Lyons**  
11244 N. 33rd St. Phoenix, AZ 85028



Members of 5307/3/OCT/HW Platoon. Who are they? Write and tell Sgt. Edwin Kopec and us.

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**

(Continued from page 4)

comes home with all the decorations on his breast does not always actually see the combat. Several nights ago a red alert came through and the next morning we learned that a small town some sixty-five miles from here had been bombed by a small Japanese raiding force. This, like most of the raids in the vicinity of five hundred miles, proved to be more of a nuisance attack than one causing any damage. Last night the motor sergeant reported that he had seen a Chinese truck pass with two Japanese prisoners in the back guarded by a Chinese soldier with a Sub-Thompson gun. These were the first of the enemy that had actually been seen at this point.

**December 25, 1943**

Christmas Day, the Lord's birth day, on which occasion peace on earth and good will toward men had been sung so joyously a few short years ago. Today humanity is undergoing the onslaughts of the grim reaper of death plus the black clouds of global war, yet in spite of all this and more to the words echoed and reechoed throughout the world and from our hearts as well as the many others serving in the armed forces. We as soldiers and our loved ones at home cannot look back across the elapse of time and justly say that we do not owe thanks to the One Whose birth we celebrate this day for the march on to victory that has been granted to us.

At 12:00 noon all work ceased throughout the Company with the exception of one shift of our cooks and the three road guards that were stationed at the culvert job at Thursday River. In the early afternoon the remainder of the beer which was the last of the ration was issued.

Our mail clerk proved to be Santa Claus in person by taking a truck to Battalion Headquarters and picking up two large mail bags full of Christmas packages. Of course this only benefitted a very small percentage of the men, yet we were all happy that it could seem like a real Christmas to some of us.

**January 4, 1944**

At approximately 9:30 P.M. an alert came through for all troops in this immediate area. The movie at Nang Yang, where most of our entire company was, discontinued its showing and all the men reported back to the company. After returning to camp, the guard was increased and no

(Continued on page 6)

**Louisiana Words and Sayings**

**Bourre'** (Boo-ray) — popular Cajun card game, sometimes called "Cajun bridge."

**Letters**

To the Editor:

I was one of the replacements who had just arrived in India and who were rushed from Ramghar to Myitkyina, ready or not. And, believe me, we were not ready. My Bn was organized on paper only. We had not trained together one day as a unit. Shortly after we went up on the line at Myitkyina, our Bn Comdr. was relieved and Col. Osborne took command. I believe we were the 1st Bn. of the three committed. I was the 1st Lt. in the Heavy Weapons Company commanded by a Captain Irwin.

The Captain sent me forward to see to the operation of our two .30 cal. Heavy Machine Guns in support of a rifle company led by a Captain Leonard. I didn't last long on the job. One day we tried to attack across a field, and when the attack failed we fell back to our original positions. I was trying to help get the men reorganized and to retrieve one of our machine guns. I believe I was singled out, and a Jap sniper shot me. The round went through my helmet, took a piece out of my scalp and knocked me cold. I eventually made it back to the 20th General Hospital. Later I was returned to duty. Myitkyina had been taken, and the 475th Infantry was being organized and started training.

My luck was still bad. Our mortar crew dropped a short round that caught me in a vulnerable forward position. So, it was back to the 20th GH. By this time I had developed stomach ulcers and the war was over for me.

I never knew the men of the Original Marauders except Colonel Osborne, and actually I never had time to learn the names of the men I was fighting with well enough to be able to remember them later. Charles W. Johnson, N-1 Klamath Dr., La Conner, WA 98257. 5307/1/HW; 475/1/D Co.

Editor:

One thing that bothered me before ever going into Burma and a later incident that happened in Calcutta. I had a campaign hat that I intended to wear while in Burma. A Sgt./Major saw me with it and made me get rid of it. Later on when I saw him in Burma, he was wearing an Australian Bush Hat through the whole period. Later after leaving Burma, I and many others went to Calcutta for two weeks. We were told we would get p....., but we didn't. Anyway, I'm sure you and all of us visited Corrice Rd. The Sgt./Major made a visit like the rest of us. I guess something did not please him and after he came out of the cat house,

he stopped, turned around and fired six shots from his .45 pistol into the house. No one was even hit as far as I know and I often wondered what might have happened to him. Norman K. Darling, Rt. 1, Box 67A, Mauk, GA 31058, 5307/3/KCT/HMG.

Editor:

Was evacuated from Myitkyina on return from Ziguyn Ferry — fever, rash and possible typhus. (The word typhus didn't mean much to me then but a few days later I was scared as hell.) On the way back to the air field from Z F, I kidded Lt. Lepore about cigars again. He always seemed to have cigars even when we were out of all supplies. He arrived at the hospital the next day after me and two days later he was dead. I recovered from whatever I had. Ralph W. Pollock, Rd 1, Box 1494, Mt. Union, PA 17066, 5307/1/WCT.

Editor:

In event that the information might be useful, I note some items dredged up from memory or from various sources.

1. The 98th FA Bn (Pk), on New Guinea was sent to Burma as part of the Marauder organization. Another pack FA Bn was converted on New Guinea to a Ranger Bn (the 6th Army Rangers?) and later on Luzon rescued American POWs at Cabanatuan Prison.

2. The 610th, 611th, 612th, and 613th FA Bns were activated at Camp Carson in early 1944, apparently intended for the CBI Theater. Only the 612th and 613th went to Burma as part of the Mars Task Force.

3. A clipping from one of the Journals indicates the last pack artillery battalion in the army was deactivated at Camp Carson in 1953.

4. After conclusion of the Burma campaigns, the 612th FA Bn moved to Kunming, assigned to the China Training Command, and I was one of a liaison team involved in training the Chinese Army in use of pack artillery. Five years later, in the Korean War we found unmistakable evidence the CCP was still using mules (in the form of fresh manure).

5. In basic training (1943) we learned a marching song called "The Mountain Battery," some words of which indicated origin in the Philippines during or after the Spanish-American War. I now recall only the chorus: "For when there's trouble brewing, they always send for me, to start the fun with a mountain gun, from the mountain battery." W. B. Woodruff, Jr., 100 No. Trinity, Decatur, TX 76234.

Editor:

The US NEWS & WORLD REPORT, November 3, 1986, issue had a comprehensive article on the Special Operations Forces. Among other references it said, "Today's SOF traces its roots to the derring-do of World War II outfits such as Merrill's Marauders, which harassed the Japanese in Burma." It also quotes from Lt. Gen. Samuel Wilson, as a father of the SOF. He is, of course, the Lt. Sammy Wilson 5307/1/WCT/I&R Platoon Leader. Copies can be obtained from the publisher. Richard Hektor, 152 Carlton Rd., Millington, NJ 07946.

**MARSMEN  
IN BURMA**

By John Randolph

A third printing of this popular book (soft paper-back cover) is being considered. If you would be interested in a copy of this book contact:

**MARSMEN IN BURMA**

The Laurens House of Print, Ltd.

Box 143

Laurens, Iowa 50554

Phone (712) 845-4373

Projected cost is \$12.50 plus mailing  
Over 300 pages with many pictures!

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**  
(Continued from page 5)

lights were to be used in or around this sector, all because an ITA officer and one American officer had heard a noise that sounded like someone trying to cut through the jungle. By the simple espionage trick of listening in on the phones we gathered more interesting information concerning this alert. These phones are very similar to a civilian party line with one exception, there are more parties connected with these, which is done by lifting the receiver and refraining from pressing the click-off release. At a few minutes past 10:00 P.M. the Battalion Commander called, giving us orders to proceed immediately with one hundred men armed with M-1's and three clips of ammunition to Headquarters. There we were to be given more specific instructions. The majority of the men were asleep and alert or no alert they wanted to remain that way, but since orders are or-

ders they soon rolled out of their warm bunks and pulled on their clothing, bitching and griping all the time. Exactly ten minutes after the order had been called in to us the men were drawing ammunition. They fell into formation equipped with cartridge belts, leggings, overcoat, steel helmets, rifles and other necessary equipment. Battalion Headquarters is two miles from us and uphill all the way. Although double time was not used, the cadence of quick time was pepped up somewhat. By the time they had reached the point their clothing was damp with perspiration. In the ensuring time, having to stand without action, the cold penetrating the wet clothing became unbearable. After thirty minutes had elapsed and the men had had a few cigarettes, they were dispersed throughout the area surrounding Headquarters Company. This guard, acting purely as security, lasted until dawn of the next day, Jan. 5 / 44. At this time the reliefs were placed and most of the men returned for breakfast

after which they again returned to join a patrol which proceeded some five miles into the jungle in search of the disturbance, enemy or dry run, whatever the source might be. It might be added that the rumor was that Japanese paratroopers had landed and were cutting their way through miles of bamboo, but the boys found nothing unusual and now we are known as Colonel Sandvall's shock troopers who brave the night and death in search of woodpeckers who have lost their homes and decide to build anew in the middle of the night.

**January 16, 1944**

The current news and sights providing the most interest was the passing of American light tanks. These were operated by Chinese soldiers who, rumor has it, had had one to ten days training in the manning of armored vehicles. These tanks are obsolete but will no doubt be perfect for this type of terrain and the work they will do at the front will be invaluable.

**January 27, 1944**

Latest rumors advise us a large troop movement is on the way through, supposedly seventeen thousand British, African and Indian combat troops. Scores of their advance scouts have passed our encampment, some walking, leading mules, others riding through in American trucks. It has been noted before and quite often too that the British mechanized units carry their own fresh meat along with them in the form of live animals. Evidently they feel as we do about the native superstitions and their uncanny belief in life after death in the form of a cow or dog.

**May 15-17, 1944**

In the early morning hours of May 16 heavy reverberations rocked the earth. Many of us were aroused by this only to fall back to slumber. Soon we found what the noise had been. It was the Japs bombing the forward Airstrip, located by "A" Company some distance from Jambubum pass. The damage was slight with only one casualty. This boy's hand was lacerated by shrapnel for which he will receive the Purple Heart.

**May 17, 1944**

P-51 Mustangs have been over three times this morning escorting a squadron of B-25s. No doubt the Japs are regretting their nuisance attack by this time. The P-51s take off and land on the Airstrip

(Continued on page 7)

**Louisiana Words and Sayings**  
**Cafe' Noir and Cafe'-au-lait (Cafe'-o-lay)**  
— black coffee and coffee with milk or cream.

**EX-CBI ROUNDUP ISSUES AVAILABLE TO MARAUDERS**

Dwight King, editor of the Ex-CBI Roundup, has again offered to make available to members of our association a free copy of the February issue of that fine magazine. It will contain a pictorial feature about the Marauders. His address is: EX-CBI Roundup, P.O. Box 2665, La Habra, CA 90631.

**HEADQUARTERS**  
**5307 COMPOSITE REGIMENT**  
**(Provisional)**

A.P.O.  
884 c/o PM, New York, N.Y.  
1 January 1944

**GENERAL ORDERS )**

NUMBER 1 )

**Constitution & Activation of the 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional)**

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in General Orders No. 39, Rear Echelon, Headquarters, United States Army Forces, China, Burma, India, dated 10 October 1943, the constitution and activation of the 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional) is hereby announced.

2. To comply with The General Order quoted in paragraph 1 above the following designations of units and assignment of personnel will govern. (See Appendix "A").

3. All personnel placed on temporary duty with the 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional) by Rear Echelon Headquarters C. B. I. are attached to Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional), and all personnel

now on S.D. with the Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional) are assigned to that Detachment effective this date.

4. All grades and ratings in excess of the above quoted Tables of Organization will be absorbed by attrition.

By order of Lt. Col. HUNTER  
LOUIS J. WILLIAMS  
Capt., Infantry  
Adjutant

**APPENDIX "A"**

**Composition of 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional)**

The 5307 Composite Regiment (Provisional) will consist of the following components.

1. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (T/O Tentative).

2. Three (3) Battalions, namely, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

3. Each Battalion will consist of a Headquarters and Headquarters Company and three (3) lettered Companies and one (1) Medical Detachment, namely:

- Headquarters & Headquarters Company (T/O 7-126-S)
- Three (3) Rifle Companies (T/O 7-127-S)
- Medical Detachment (T/O 7-125-S)

**ASSIGNMENT OF UNITS AND PERSONNEL**

Old Designation	New Designation
Shipment 1688-A	1st Bn 5307 Comp Regt (Prov)
Hq & Hq Co 1688-A	Hq & Hq Co. 1st Bn 5307
Co "A" 1688-A	Co "A" 1st Bn 5307
Co "B" 1688-A	Co "B" 1st Bn 5307
Co "C" 1688-A	Co "C" 1st Bn 5307
Med Det 1688-A	Med Det 1st Bn 5307
Shipment 1688-B	2nd Bn 5307 Comp Regt (Prov)
Hq & Hq Co 1688-B	Hq & Hq Co 2nd Bn 5307
Co "A" 1688-B	Co "E" 2nd Bn 5307
Co "B" 1688-B	Co "F" 2nd Bn 5307
Co "C" 1688-B	Co "G" 2nd Bn 5307
Med Det 1688-B	Med Det 2nd Bn 5307
Shipment 1688-C	3rd Bn 5307 Comp Regt (Prov)
Hq & Hq Co 1688-C	Hq & Hq Co 3rd Bn 5307
Co "A" 1688-C	Co "I" 3rd Bn 5307
Co "B" 1688-C	Co "K" 3rd Bn 5307
Co "C" 1688-C	Co "L" 3rd Bn 5307
Med Det 1688-C	Med Det 3rd Bn 5307

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**  
(Continued from page 6)

which is in reality a masterful piece of Engineer Construction. 250-lb. bombs line each side of the strip with many cases of 50-calibre ammunition stacked six to ten feet high.

**May 20, 1944**

A Company is building a strip about 20 miles further up the line, and early this morning the Japs came over and bombed the strip. None of the bombs hit the field, and none of the members of our Battalion were injured. About seven Chinese were killed.

**May 23, 1944**

Suddenly we were alerted, our Battalion was actually going into combat. Everybody was in a state of excitement, what were we all going to do? Our gear was hastily being thrown into barracks bags, we were only taking along one bag with a few necessary clothes, while the other bag was being left behind with Supply Sgt. Fuller.

All mail is being suspended for the time being. Many of us would have liked to write our folks as many months may go by before they'll hear from us again.

At night everyone was playing cards, just having a joyous time pulling off pranks on one another, etc.

**May 24, 1944**

Loaded into trucks about 10 A.M. and proceeded on to the airstrip at Tin Cox which the 3rd platoon of B Company had helped build while on Temporary Duty for a couple of weeks. Most of the afternoon was spent in sitting on the side of the air-strip watching the planes come and go, always returning and loading up more men and fighting equipment.

The Chaplain held services for all. While he was speaking, many of us realized that this was the real thing and many of us who had spent the past year and a half together might not be coming back.

At about 5:30 P.M. the gun crews around the airfield suddenly started firing their guns. It was not known they were only test firing, so the field was cleared in nothing flat. Many of the men ran as far as a mile into the woods, while most of them hit the trenches along the side of the field.

Most of B Company put up for the night at C Company area about half a mile from the air-field, to be flown out the next morning. 1st Lt. Stefl and 1st Lt. Meyers plus 1st Platoon and 1st Squad of 2nd Platoon left a day sooner for Myitkyina.

**May 26, 1944**

Back at the field in the early part of the

morning we waited our turn to be taken into combat. A couple of P-51s, while attempting to take off, hit a wet spot on the runway and cracked up, neither pilots getting hurt.

About 3 P.M. we piled into a C-47 plane and we were on our way for about a 40-minute flight to a mud-filled field south of Myitkyina. As we flew over the field a couple of times we could see wrecked C-47s and gliders all over the place. Just seven days prior to our coming, the field was taken by the famous Marauders with the help of the glider-borne troops.

Pfc. Rackley was our first casualty as he stumbled into a hole on the strip and broke his leg. He was shipped out on the same plane that had not a half hour before brought us to combat.

B Company was to spend the night on the side of the strip and we made ready for our first night's rest in a fox-hole (as if such a thing is ever possible).

Under a few huge tarps was Dr. Seagraves Hospital and here we witnessed our first war sights. Most of the casualties were Chinese. With conditions as they were everything possible to help them was being done. Here too, we saw our first wounded Jap. Most of us agreed there was very little difference between them and the Chinese, other than their outward appearance in most cases.

Firing could be heard in the distance, with the occasional firing of a big gun. The sight of our P-40s and P51s diving and strafing the enemy could be seen as the bombs were being dropped.

As the monsoon season had already started, the first night it poured and that for a Burma rain is putting it mildly. Very few if any of our men slept dry. It is impossible to describe resting or sleeping in the mud-filled water hole. It is something one must go thru oneself in order to know what it is like. But this was only the beginning as we were soon to learn.

**May 27, 1944**

A cargo plane loaded with Chinese crashed this A.M. upon hitting the wet spot and the wheels sunk down. No one was injured, just slightly shaken up.

In the morning we found about 50 feet from where we had spent the night a half filled hole with the remains of 22 dead Japs, decayed by the sun, with millions of ants, bugs and lice preying upon their rotted bones.

Many of the men already started to give away their extras, as the lighter your bag and pack the less you must carry. The men are using parachutes for fox-hole covers, as a means of keeping dry.

In the half of the afternoon we moved about a mile from the airstrip near a shack, setting up our machine guns and digging foxholes again. We are placed just above a road that is filled with Chinese both coming and going, loaded down with equipment, mules and horses.

**HEY MEDICS**

Col. Caifson Johnson, 5307/1/WCT CO; 475/1 CO., has asked us to tell all his friends that he has come down with Parkinson's Disease and is therefore unable to respond to the many cards and letters received at Christmas. He is now on medication and we will all hope for his improvement.

The weather is becoming unbearable. First it pours, then within a few hours the sun comes out and the humidity is very intense. During the night the enemy only put up a light barrage, while the Chinese kept up an endless chatter of machine gun fire.

**May 28, 1944**

Many of the men are going back about a hundred yards, getting some rest and away from the heat whenever possible. In the middle of the afternoon a couple of Jap snipers gave Cpl. Korzenowskie's machine gun nest a little scare, but no damage was done other than putting everyone on the alert.

Several of the men already have a slight case of dysentery. Eating K-C rations is something new for their systems.

Nothing much happened during the night. There were light bursts of rifle and machine gun fire, with occasional bursts of artillery fire. To describe one's thoughts during the night, when it is impossible to see anything five feet ahead of your foxhole, should be a book in itself. Yet where two or three are in a fox-hole, the men discuss home — thoughts of mother's food, small insignificant things that never meant much, yet with the dangers before us our complete lives flash thru our minds in the still hours of the night. Only those men who have been thru the same thing will agree with the above.

**May 29, 1944**

We were moving in and our equipment was being hauled by mules and a few horses. The sight of T/5 Vaughn leading a donkey into a swamp chest deep with the mule rolling over will be recalled by many. Cpl. Rhodes, who was having quite a time keeping up with the advance, was fortunate in locating us, having nearly wandered over to the Japs.

The hike from the air strip to the railroad  
(Continued on page 8)

**Officer's Row**

**President** — We have been in touch with the new chairman for the New Orleans Reunion, Roy Dupre. Everything is coming along fine. Emma and I will be attending the Korean War Ranger Reunion at Ft. Benning in early June. Phil Piazza.

**Executive Secretary** — We put in some time back in November at the National Archives, Suitland, MD. We were hoping to be able to find copies of the shipping orders for 1688-A, B & C. No luck. We were advised that the U.S. Army in its wisdom decided back in the '50s to destroy all those old files. However, we did unearth complete copies of General Orders for the 5307th and the 475th Infantry. For historical and genealogical reasons we will publish them as space permits with some exceptions. E.g. GO No. 5, of the 5307th pertains exclusively to posting of the guard in the Rear Echelon HQ. The Orders will show the awards of various medals to individuals concerned and their home towns (at that time). Ray Lyons.

**Louisiana Words and Sayings**  
C'est la vie (say la vee) — That's life.

<b>MISCELLANEOUS MEMORABILIA</b>	
License Plates, (Plastic)	
Ranger Tab & Marauder Patch	\$6.00
Lapel Pin, Marauder (Miniature)	\$4.00
Marauder Crest	\$3.00
Shoulder Patches (Marauder)	\$4.00
Decal (Marauder)	\$1.50
Decal (Ranger - 5 1/2" x 2 1/2")	\$1.50
<b>Raymond V. Lyons</b>	
11244 N. 33rd St. Phoenix, AZ 85028	

**BATTLE OF MYITKYINA . . .**

(Continued from page 7)

was one of the hardest grinds. S/Sgt. Cooley, who was given a bottle of atabrine tablets, put them in Sgt. Strutz's pack but by the time Strutz got to the railroad he had thrown away his pack. Pvt. Ollie Johnson, one of the walkingest men in the outfit passed out, the first time for that lad. We were replacing the bulk of Merrill's Marauders who were three miles from the field, and were being evacuated.

During the night Sgt. Brinkman from A Company was killed as he failed to halt on an order from one of his men who in the darkness could not make out whether he was friend or foe.

**May 30, 1944**

Our planes are giving the Japs a good working over as they appear in groups of six or nine and continue bombing and strafing continuously.

**June 1, 1944**

We moved again. This time infiltrating thru enemy territory to put in a road block on the Mogaung-Sumprabum highway leading out from Myitkyina. This road was a major supply route to the enemy forces fighting at Mogaung nearly a hundred miles to our rear. Our objective was to split the enemy forces and to prevent men and material from being shuttled between them. We arrived at our objective at about 5:30 P.M.

We immediately got busy digging gun positions and fox-holes. Our strength consisted of two lines — Companies A and B, also H and S Cos. Even before we finished digging in, B Co. men spotted two unsuspecting Japs walking towards our perimeter. Our men opened fire immediately, claiming their first blood. After the enemy had been routed the men resumed digging in. About 9:30 that evening our first real test of combat occurred. An unsuspecting enemy convoy of three or more trucks came towards our perimeter. We had two 30-cal. machine guns, plus an assortment of riflemen, tommy guns and B. A. R. men covering the road. Our men, nervous, but

still thinking clearly, waited until the trucks were almost on them, and then opened fire. The roar of gunfire was deafening amid the confused fighting. One truck rolled inside our perimeter, but before any of the Japs could flee, our machine guns, which by now had been turned around, mowed them down. A few wounded Japs were inside of our perimeter but were quickly eliminated. Sporadic firing continued throughout the night.

**June 2, 1944**

In the early light of dawn our men looked around. It was a terrifying sight at first, but as the morning wore on our men became jubilant. Many exciting stories were being told. Pfc. Holt and Pfc. Kopacz told of killing two Japs just outside their holes who measured six feet or better. These Japs were of the Imperial Marine Corps, the cream of the Japanese army. Pfc. McLaren and Pfc. Rifenburg really had a close call. A Jap jumped into the hole occupied by

these two men. In the ensuing hand to hand battle, McLaren locked the Jap in his arms, his hand being cut by the Jap's bayonet. Rifenburg wrested the bayonet from the Jap and killed him, McLaren threw a grenade at a second Jap bearing down on them. Pfc. Purdon killed still another Jap advancing in the wake of the first two. Later in the morning we took account of our casualties and also the enemy's. Pvt. Tommy Dolan was the only one who was killed and he was killed by our own fire. We also had six wounded. The Japs lost 86 men killed plus a booty of three trucks and a great deal of arms and ammunition valuable to G. 2. The rest of the day was quiet except in spots. The boys felt that they were hardened veterans now. That night the Japs gave us a terrific mortar and artillery barrage which lasted throughout the night, inflicting many casualties.

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

**Pass In Review****DEATHS REPORTED RECENTLY****Name & Hometown [Where Known], Organization, Where, When Deceased.**

FREDERICK O. LYONS, Captain, 1300 Encinal Ave., Alameda, CA 94501; 5307/2 Bn	October 31, 198
EDMOND POTTER, Fishkill, NY; 613th FA, MTF	198
RUSSELL L. RUE, 3306 Panorama Cir., Dayton, OH 45415; 475th	May 10, 198
MAJOR WENDALL L. SPALDING, P.O. Box 950, Mishawaka, IN 46544; 5307/3/MO	June 6, 198
ELI STOIS, 32924 Willowick Dr., Willowick, OH 44094	November 198
ROLAND E. UPSHAW, 810 So. Seventh St., Lake City, FL 32055; 475th	January 6, 197
WILBUR WATSON, Rangeley, ME 04970; outfit unknown	198

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

WALTER E. BOSTICK, Rt. 2, Box 76, Portales, NM 88130; 5307/2/HQ/S-4/SGT.  
 JAMES T. COLLINS, P.O. Box 8755, Silver Spring, MD 20907; 5307/1/RCT/I&R; 475/1/A CO.  
 EARL L. ROYER, 324 Adams Ave., Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221; 5307/1/HQ/COMM;  
 475/1/HQ/COMM  
 DR. JOSEPH P. WORLEY, 6410 Johnson Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46220; 475/2/SURGEON

**MERRILL'S MARAUDERS  
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

RAYMOND V. LYONS  
Editor

11244 N. 33rd St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85028

Address correction requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Scottsdale, AZ.  
Permit No. 324