

# The Burman News

Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.

May, 1992

## We're Coming Richmond, Virginia!

RICHMOND VA Next Merrill's Marauders Association Reunion - Labor Day Weekend. We have confirmation that Lt Gen Wayne A Downing will be our Principal Speaker at our Annual Reunion at Richmond. Logan Weston will be the Speaker at our Friday Night Dinner. I am in constant touch with the Richmond Marriott and everything is going well. If any Marauders has to make a financial choice of going to either the Ranger 50th Anniversary at Ft Benning in June or the Merrill's Marauder Association Reunion in Richmond VA over Labor Day, I would recommend the MM Reunion. A registration envelope is enclosed with this newsletter.

There is a possibility of arranging for a special luncheon or dinner cruise on the River Steamer, the Annabelle Lee. Normally, they end their cruise season on Sept 1st. We would have to guarantee them 125 people for the luncheon cruise costing \$17.50 per person which would include gratuities. It is a two hour cruise and includes a buffet lunch, live band and a show. An alternative would be a Dinner Cruise with a minimum of 25 people at a cost of \$27 per person including all costs. The Luncheon cruise would leave at 12 noon and the Dinner Cruise leaves at 9:30 PM. We must have guarantees and pay in advance. Contact Phil Piazza to make arrangements for reservations & to pay.

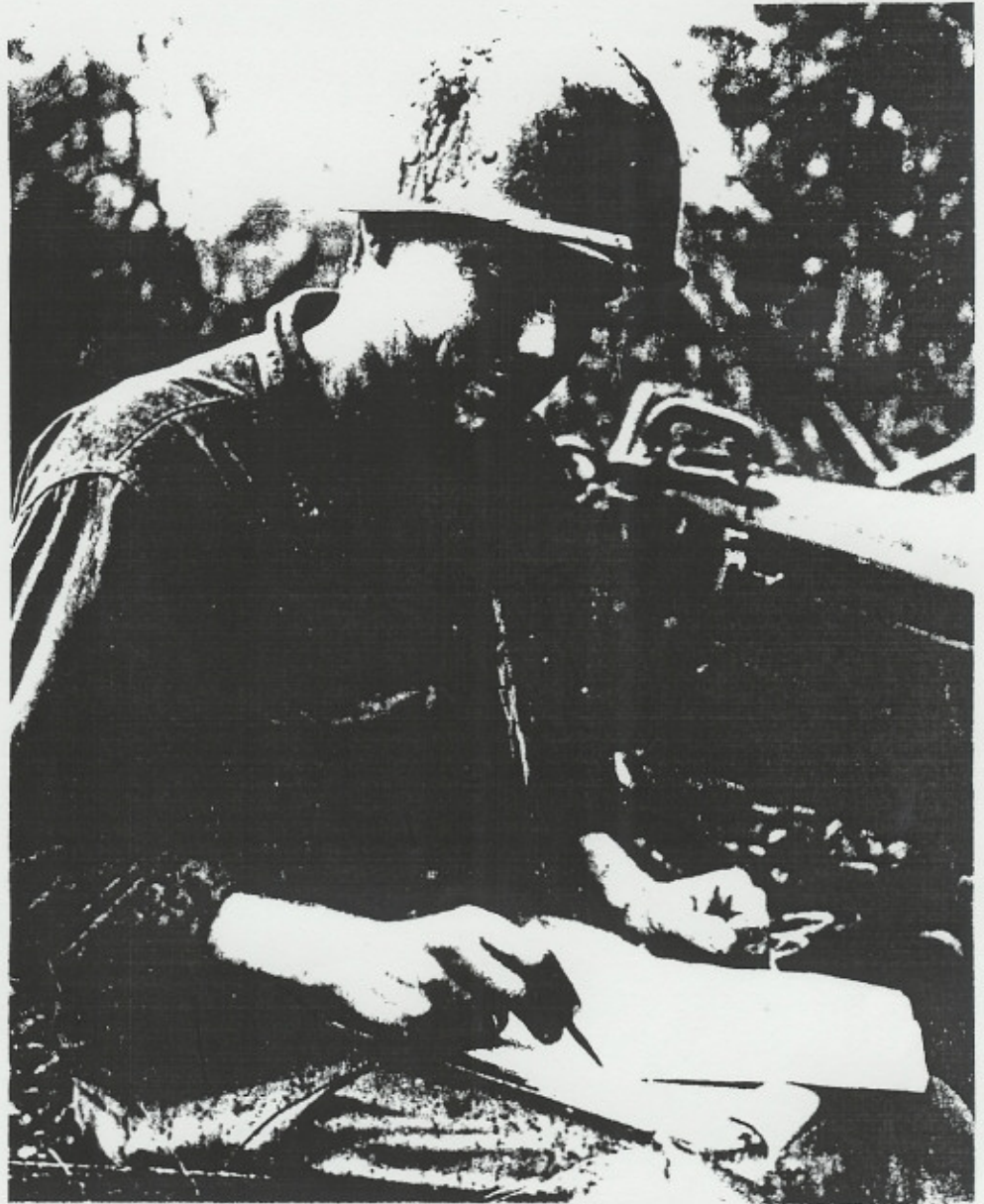
George Rose, the local reunion representative says to call 1-800-847-4882 and 1-800-365-7272 to get a free map and other tourist brochures of the Richmond area. Tell them you will be with the Merrill's Marauders Association at a Richmond Reunion.

## Sharing the Story

### ARTILLERY COMES TO RESCUE

**JOHN ACKER:** This is my version of what happened as we received the drop of the pack artillery pieces from the Rear Echelon at Hsamshingyang.

As the Khaki Combat Team left Inkangantahng, on the withdrawal we moved rapidly back through Warong, Auche, Kauri, Nhpum Ga and down hill to Hsamshingyang. On arrival at Hsamshingyang we set up a perimeter defense. At this time, I was S/Sgt in charge of pack animals in KCT. I believe that all of KCT bivouacked at Hsamshingyang on or about the 28th of March. As I remember,



**John A. "Red" Acker**

our perimeter surrounded a rather large aircraft landing strip for carrying our sick and wounded out to rear base hospitals. I recall that General Merrill got sick about this time and was evacuated. Col Hunter was left in command.

I believe on the 29th of March, Major Briggs came by our positions on the perimeter and talked with us for a while. His intent was to check our positions, encourage morale and see how we were doing generally. As we talked about the

condition of 2nd Battalion, I mentioned the fact that we men, of the 98th Field Artillery had been discussing our need for artillery support. I told Major Briggs that if we had some guns we would fix the Japs up. His question was, "Could we fire the guns if we had some?" We assured him that we could. There was nothing more said about it until the next day. Major Briggs asked me to assemble men for two Gun Crews. I

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Immediately got the word out and the old artillery men were very excited. I asked Thomas Averett and George (Red) Lowe to be our Gun Chiefs. Averett (KCT) on Gun Crew #1 and Lowe (OCT) ON Gun Crew #2. We needed eight men per Gun Crew besides our mule skinnners. "Hoot" Gibson came over as a Radio Man. Charles Thurman was to be used as an interpreter, if needed. He could speak Chinese. We had a total of 30 men as Gun Crew, Packers, Ammunition Handlers and picket line guards.

On the 2nd of April, we assembled at the drop area as the planes came over for the drop. We had been informed that the gun pieces would be marked by different colored parachutes. As the drop was made, the men began immediately to claim the different pieces and take them to the designated area. From the time of the drop, we had two guns assembled in 15 minutes. I had been asked by Col Hunter to come to his quarters as soon as the guns were in place. As I came into his tent, he had on his desk (better described as a card table), all materials spread out as to how to assemble the guns. He was very pleased when I told him the guns were ready to fire. He put his assembly instructions away and spread out a map on the table and began to show me where the Japs artillery pieces were located and asked if we could fire in that general area without endangering our own troops at Nhpum Ga. I told him we could, but would have to change the position of our guns as soon as possible before the Japs found our position and fired on us. He said go ahead and fire. This would discourage the Japs and boost the morale of our troops at Nhpum Ga.

When we received the guns, no aiming circle (an instrument used to set the two guns to fire parallel to each other) was with them. Hoot Gibson, who I mentioned



**Gun Crew #1**

Front by wheel, Roy W. Ross, gunner. Left to right: Willis S. Bates, #1 cannoner; Albert Pfeiffer, gun crew; Joe Martinez, gun crew; John Miller, gun crew; Clarence Howell, gun crew. Rear: "Red" Seegars.

before, had a special compass, much better than the one I had. We used Gibson's compass to set our guns parallel. We usually set the guns about 30 feet apart to fire parallel. Using the compass and the map from Col Hunter, we determined our line of fire and realized that we would be firing very close to our troops on the hill. We were going to fire into the area of Aucho, about 2,000 yards from Nhpum Ga, and about 4,000 yards from our position. I gave an order to fire with an elevation that would surely clear our troops on the hill and fall in the area of Aucho. To do so, our order was to fire elevation (whatever it was), charge three and three rounds. Our ammunition was designed with four bags of powder in each shell. By ordering charge three, it meant our #5 gunner would remove

one bag of powder from the shell and this would let us fire high enough to clear our troops on the hill, yet fall short enough to hit near our targets. It seemed to be effective, because as we opened fire, we caused the Japs to cease firing.

On the 2nd of April, the original day of firing, we fired about 30 rounds per gun by moving from Base Deflection to right and left and over and under our assimilated target. After this, we moved our guns to a more protected area. On the 3rd of April, by permission from Col Hunter, we moved our guns up hill toward Nhpum Ga. It should be noted here, that our Pack Saddles had been fitted to our mules and horses to carry flat, close packed loads. In order to carry our gun pieces, the packing had to be adjusted to carry the gun pieces which were more lengthy and didn't carry as well as a normal load. The gun barrel and tail pieces, for example, were long and would cause a rocking and swaying motion on the animal. We must give recognition at this time to Sgt Thompson, Packmaster KCT, as he gave long hours of time to get our Riggings (Pack Saddles) adjusted to carry the guns. I believe he got Sgt Anderson, Packmaster OCT, to help him make the change.

As we moved up the trail toward Nhpum Ga, we had 12 mules, our best suited for carrying the guns. We had eight mules loaded with ammunition and, I believe, four mules loaded with feed for the animals and our radio carrying animal. As we moved out, I got Cpl George Harmon and PFC Charlie Clurman to move out ahead with me to find a suitable location for our guns. We found a place about 1,000 yards from Nhpum Ga. There was a nice bend in the trail to the left with a deep ravine to the right and Nhpum Ga hill directly in front of us. This was an ideal location for our gun position. The enemy, with their flat trajectory guns, could not fire low enough to hit us. Their shells would hit the hill in front of us. If they raised their elevation to clear the hill, their shells would go over our heads and into the ravine behind us. Believe me, they tried it. It gave us great confidence as we realized our advantage. We could adjust our elevation to go up and over the hill and drop on the target.

Shortly after we had located our gun area, our pack train arrived with our equipment. The Gun Crews immediately dug our guns in and set up. We established a Base Point and got our guns laid in parallel. Our mule skinnners established a picket line directly behind us and the animals tied up and fed. Our ammunition was placed very handy to the guns and we were all set. By 3:00 PM on the 3rd of April, we were firing in the direction of Aucho. We had no forward observer at this time and the best we could do was fire off our map position. We were effective to the extent that we could stop the Japs from firing at B Bn. We were firing blind with no one to report our effect. This continued for a day or two. On or about the 6th of April, we were told the Japs had moved their artillery up to Kauri, which was closer to Nhpum Ga. In order to fall in the area of their guns, we had to reduce our load and raise our

#### FALL IN

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

KENNETH AKUNE, 1105 "D" Rycroft St, Honolulu HI 96814-2849, 475/HQ/NISEI INTPR  
 CARLIE W BLEDSOE, 313 Spring St, Whitmire SC 29178, 5307/2/F; 475/2/F  
 LTG WAYNE DOWNING, CG, USA Special Operations Command, Ft Bragg NC 28307-5200  
 LAWRENCE FONTE, 598 Schley Av, Alpha NJ 08865-4827, 5307/2/F Co; 475/2/F  
 COL DAVID L GRANGE, CO, 75th Ranger Regiment, PO Box 55843, Ft Benning GA 31905-5843  
 CHARLES HATTAWAY, 1166 East St, Dedham MA 02026, 617-326-7676, 149th Chinese Regiment (Liaison)  
 GRANT HIRABAYASHI, 13712 Fair Ridge Dr, Silver Spring MD 20904, 5307/1/NISEI INTPR  
 AMBROSE JACOB, 18211 Sand Pines Dr, Spring Hill FL 34610, 612/C/4 PACK ARTY  
 WILLIAM NATHAN KAUFMANN, 329 Gambrills Rd, Gambrills MD 21054, 410-923-2005, 5307/1; 475/1  
 GABRIEL B KINNEY, 4463 County Rd 522, Hanceville AL 35077, 205-352-5391, 5307/2/BCT/1  
 COL JOHN J MAHER, CO, Ranger Training Brigade, ATSH-RB, Ft Benning GA 31905-5430  
 ROBERT MC NEES, 107 East Northview, New Castle PA 16105, 475th  
 EDDIE MITSUKADO, 1-16-20 Honkugenuma, Fujisawa, Kanagawa 251, Japan, 5307/1/TEAM, LDR NISEI INTPR  
 ROY NAKADA, CPO Box 611, Naha, Okinawa 900-91, Japan, 5307/2/NISEI INTPR  
 THOMAS V PATELLI, 37 Glenwood Rd, Somerville MA 02145, 49th Portable Surgical Hospital  
 WILLIAM K PLACE, 722 W Clime St, Delphos OH 45833, 5307/1/A/1; 475/1/A/1  
 JOHN F SKIMMEHORN, Gen Del, Bloomington Spgs TN 38545, 615-528-4045, 5307; 475  
 THOMAS K TSUBOTA, 911 11TH Av, Honolulu HI 96816, 5307/3/HQ TEAM LDR NISEI INTPR

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elevation to go up over the hill and drop into their positions. We were still firing blind, but it would cause the Japs to cease firing as they were afraid we could observe their position.

On or about the 7th of April, as we fired just to keep the Jap artillery quiet, we received a call on our radio from a Captain from the 1st Bn. I don't recall all the facts, but he either said he was Captain White or a Captain from White Combat Team. Anyway he was very excited as he asked our radio man to let him talk to me. Gibson, the Radio Man, said, "Hey, Acker, I have a Captain on the radio and he's excited as hell." I took the radio and he said, "I'm sitting along the trail between Kauri and Nhpum Ga and I can see the Jap artillery guns. You are firing about 400 yards behind them." Boy, what great news! I asked him if he knew anything about observing artillery fire and he said he did not. I asked him to watch for me and tell me what effect we had with the next round. We adjusted fire and he reported that we were two or three hundred feet short of the target, but right in line. On my next order to fire three rounds elevation, etc., he reported we were right on target. The Japs were squealing and running all around. He watched as we pulverized the area and reported that we had destroyed their artillery. What a day! We never heard from that artillery again. This eased the pressure on the hill a lot. We realized that the 7th of April was Good Friday, and what a good Friday!

On the 8th of April, we had a visit from Major Briggs. He said KCT was making the push into Nhpum Ga that day and indicated there was no question about it. He wanted all the help we could give him. We still had no forward observer for our artillery. As Major Briggs and I talked, one of our Mule Skinners, Robert L. Carr, stepped up and said he would go up front and observe for me. Knowing that Carr was a Mule Shoer with the 98th FA and not a forward observer, I was concerned. What do you do when you don't have the best? You go with the next best. As we talked, Major Briggs told me all he could about the area up front. Thick growth, with about 30 yards between the Japs and our troops. I could see the area of the trail from our gun position. In fact, the Japs had fired into our gun pits several times with small arms fire. We decided that when all was ready, and with orders from the front, we would begin firing.

In a short time, Carr came in on the radio and said he was just out in front of our forward lines and would like for us to fire a few rounds. Now we were firing point blank at the enemy. Probably about 300 yards range. I took the radio and identified



**Gun Crew #2**

**Front, left to right: Little Chief Ross, gunner; Ervin Mathis, gun crew; Ed "Mule Skinner" Wade, gun crew; Linne Myer, gun crew; George Harmon, gun crew; Rear: George B. "Red" Lowe, gun chief; John Miller, gun crew.**

with Carr. We fired one round from Gun #2 because it was closer to our front. Carr said it fell well over behind the Jap front. I told him to stay down and be careful as we moved the rounds closer toward him. The next round burst in a tree and had little effect. I told Carr to watch closely as we were going to fire a fuse delayed round. This means that the projectile would hit an object and explode a very split second later. It would hit the ground and go into the ground and explode later. It was very effective.

When the next fuse delayed round went in, Carr said to move in a little closer. The next round went into the fox hole with the Japs. When this happened, a Major Petito came in on the radio and very excitedly said, "You're on target! Fire Battery 100 rounds." Now this was not right, Battery 100 rounds means to fire 100 rounds into the same spot. I had a time with him and talked him down to 15 rounds. This heated our guns up a lot. Anyway, I got back in communication with Carr and he said we

should move a few yards closer to our lines. As I cautioned him to be careful, he said, "Move over ten yards and if you don't hear from me, you'll know you got too close." When we fired, he said we were right on target and the Japs were squealing and running around. I told him to move back and we would clean it up. We pulverized the area with the help of our mortar fire.

In an hour, I was able to go up and observe what we had done. We had fired about 200 rounds altogether and the effects were evident. There were Jap bodies up in the trees and flesh and parts of their bodies were dropping to the ground. The fuse delay projectile had gone into the ground and dug the Japs out of their fox holes. The area was partially cleared of the trees, bamboo and low foliage. The results of the artillery and mortar fire was a complete success. The troops had already moved up the trail toward Nhpum Ga. The KCT troops moved up the trail in a clean up effort. I am told they moved very cautiously and didn't encounter a lot of stiff resistance. One thing that may be interesting is that as they moved into the vacated Jap positions, they found the carcass of some of our mules or horses. The Japs had cut the better steaks and parts of the animals and used it for food.

It was Easter Sunday, April 9th, what a memorable day. At 5:00 or 6:00 AM, we received news that our troops (KCT) had walked into the perimeter of 2nd Bn and had made contact with Col Mc Gee. Sometime later that day, the men of 2nd Bn came walking past our gun positions. Some carrying litters with their comrades on them and others helping their buddies by letting him lean on their arm or shoulder. It was a humbling sight to see and to realize that we had been a part of helping in the endeavor.

When we realized the victory, we fired a three round salute from both guns in recognition of 2nd Bn, 5307th Composite

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#### PASS IN REVIEW

Deaths reported recently

Name & Hometown (Where Known), Organization, Where, When Deceased
ROSCOE C CAREY, JR, Milford DE, 5307, January 5, 1992
FRED L CHURCH, 142 Jacoby St, Maplewood, NJ 07040, 5307; 475, April 13, 1991
VIRGIL COSTNER, 704 Carbon City Rd, Morganton NC 28655, 5307/2/; Muleskinner, February 5, 1990
JOSEPH CRAWLEY, Rt 6 Box 209 Jenkins Rd, Morganton NC 28655, 5307/2; Muleskinner, January 24, 1992
JED B FRANKLIN, 233 E Cleveland St, Delphos OH 45833, 5307/3/M Co; 475/1/B Co July 1991
LYN HIGHTOWER, Rt 1 Box 404, Sadler TX 76264, 5307/3/1 Co; 475/3/1 Co, February 15, 1992
EDWIN KOPEC, 196 Remington St, Lowell MA 01852, 5307/3/OCT/HW/I&R; 475/3, December 29, 1991
CAPT WILLIS MEAD, 909 Old State Rd 60, Salem IN 47167, 5307/3/OCT, January 8, 1992
WILLIAM RANKIN, 5139 Liberty Rd, Greensboro NC 27406, 5307/2/BCT, January 27, 1989
FRANK RINALDI, 226 Juniper Ridge Dr, Waterbury CT, 06708, 203-756-0896, 5307/1/WCT; 475/1, February 29, 1992
ALBERT R SCROGGINS, PO Box 127, Cotton Plant AR 72036, 501-459-3965, 5307/2/BCT, 1992
JOSEPH SMITH, 124 E 3rd St, Peru IN 46970-2334, 475/2/F Co, January 1, 1992
JIMMIE NOBORU YAMAGUCHI, Tokyo, Japan, 5307/1/HQ, CBI HQ, November 19, 1982

#### READERS RETREAT

We have published a book in three parts, the Father Stuart Notes, GO #3, and the Staff Sgt. Anderson Story. The book is called, "The Merrill's Marauders War in Burma, Volume I." Cost is \$12.00. Send check to Merrill's Marauders Association, %Ray Lyons, Executive Secretary.



Unit. I didn't realize it at the time, but my time was short with my dear friends of 3rd Bn. I believe it was Monday, the 10th of April, that Captain George G. Bonnyman was flown in to take command of the Field Artillery of the Marauders. Captain Bonnyman was a real soldier and gentleman. He reported in to me and gave me all the courtesy a man could expect. As we reported to him how we had handled the situation, he remarked that was exactly how he would have done it if he had been there.

There was no lost time. Captain Bonnyman put me in charge of firing the guns. He took the responsibility of observing fire. He requested liaison planes to fly over the Jap positions which were now in the area of Auhe and Warong. He would spot a group of the enemy or a convoy of trucks and call for fire. We were delighted to oblige. At times he couldn't tell exactly when our rounds had landed and would call for a smoke round. This means when the projectile explodes, the smoke would boil up out of the jungle and would mark the spot of the round. This way he could move us up and down, right or left, until we hit the target. It was sure good to have our orders come back in the Field Artillery language.

This went on for three or four days and on Thursday evening, April 13, Captain Bonnyman asked me if I would like to go up on Friday morning and observe fire. Now this was an opportunity for me. I had never been up in an airplane and looked forward to it. I had been trained to observe fire and I was confident that I could do a good job of it. Besides, I wanted to be able to pull the fire onto those little Nips and watch them as we tore them apart. Anyway, I got my act together and left our bivouac area early Friday AM. I walked down the trail to Hsamshingyang and when I got there, the Piper Cub was waiting for me. The pilot introduced himself to me and we made our plans. He would normally fly in the rear cockpit, but due to my weighing more than he and having the field radio with me, he asked me to take the rear cockpit. We took

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## OFFICERS ROW

### PRESIDENT - PHILIP PIAZZA

We have confirmation that Lt Gen Wayne A. Downing will be our Principal Speaker at our Annual Reunion at Richmond. Logan Weston will be the Speaker at our Friday Night Dinner. I am in constant touch with the Richmond Marriott and everything is going well. If any Marauders has to make a financial choice of going to either the Ranger 50th Anniversary at Ft Benning in June or the Merrill's Marauders Association Reunion in Richmond VA over Labor Day, I would recommend the MM Reunion.

I had a woodmaker make a beautiful plaque about 18 inches high, and had an artist draw the Ranger Tab and Merrill's Marauders insignia on it. They loved it when I presented it to the Brigade, and it will hang on the wall in the Hall of Fame.

Dave Quaid had some pictures and a map enlarged and did a terrific job with it. I presented them to Col Grange and they are going to hang in the Conference Room at Regimental HQ. Col Grange is also going to have a display case for Merrill's Marauders.

If you have any memorabilia that you would like to present, send it to me, tagged with your name. Not all are going to the Regiment. We met with the Curator of the Infantry Museum a few weeks ago, and he took us on a personal tour of the facilities. They are eventually going to have one end of the Museum for a separate Ranger Museum.

During the Ranger 50th Reunion, there will be a tour of both Regimental HQ, Brigade HQ, where the Hall of Fame is and the Infantry Museum. So far the President is still scheduled to be at the Ranger Reunion. The Parade will be a short one, from just one side of the Infantry School Building, past the reviewing stand, and on up the hill, where we will break ground for the Ranger Field Memorial. I have blocked off 15 rooms at the La Quinta Inn, 404-568-1740, or 1-800-531-5900, for the use of the Marauders. It is right on the Expressway going into the Post. It is also next door to a Shoney's restaurant & a Denny's. You will have to make your own reservations. The Hotel will authorize a free Continental Breakfast at Denny's. Tell them you are with the Merrill's Marauders Association group for the Ranger Reunion, to get their special rate.

Please let me know in addition, so that when the 15 rooms are taken, I can go back and ask for more to be blocked off for our use. The hotel reservations are going fast, so it would be a good idea to make yours as soon as possible. It is my understanding that Army Busses will be available to do some of the transport from Hotel to the various functions. The La Quinta has a van to pick up at the Columbus Airport.

If there is any Marauder who would like to sponsor an Active Duty Ranger for the different banquets, let Phil Piazza know. There are some of them who can not afford the costs.

### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - RAY LYONS

It occurred to me while reading Phil's notes that the Parade at Ft Benning will be the first time that the Merrill's Marauders Association have ever paraded. As you are well aware, we have always been an informal get-together for a sociable time kind of outfit. We came back from Burma in small groups and went back to our homes - family and friends. For some of us, that was the end of our Army experience, for others, it was a 30 day furlough and on to a different unit. Some came back to hospitals. But we never had a welcoming parade, nor did we have any parade after we started to have reunions. This is the time for those interested in a parade who can come.

We have been advised that the parade route will be about 500 meters long. Expecting that there will also be walking to and fro, we would recommend that the MM's planning on parading get in shape by

walking a minimum of one mile per day three days a week, during the month of May and continuing on into June. It will be warm as well, so be ready for it. There may be a vehicle available to provide transport for those unable to walk. We have some of those, for sure.

We continue to have problems with members moving and not letting us know. The Postal Service (?) is supposed to provide us with a change of address for the B/N issue that comes out after you move. But they do not, in many cases. If you are interested in continuing the receipt of the B/N make a note to write us before or after you have moved. Please!

Some other news: At Christmas Time, I got a long letter from Mike McLaughlin, an Alaskan Lawyer. His father (deceased) was the Captain of A Company in the 1st Br and he is very much interested in hearing about his Father's experiences. Among the things he mentioned was that the Government Printing Office had re-printed the Original book about the "Merrill's Marauders". He said he had been traveling in the East visiting relations and when he stopped at Carlisle Barracks they told him that the book had been reprinted. So I stopped at the GPO Bookstore in Washington. Sure enough it was available so I bought 100 copies for resale to members. The cover is different but otherwise it is the same book.

Turns out they are re-printing all of the WW II books because of the 50th Anniversary. I have consulted with the B/I to figure out what to charge. They cost me \$3.60 each. But we must add postage and cost of envelope, etc and usually, they fee we should make a small profit for the good of the association. So we will be asking \$6. Do you have a copy of it? Do your children grandchildren have a copy?

A knock on the door Saturday, 2/1/97 PM. It was a former Marauder - Bill Kaufmann, 1st Bn. Visiting in the Valle and had saved a news clipping with my name and address for lo these many years. Off the top of his head, he could not recall the unit he was in except for it being 1st Lepore's Platoon.

I also had a phone call from Ray Ruksas. He was a pilot with the Liaison planes that pulled out our wounded. He recognized the photo of Sid Savitt in the Feb issue of BURMAN NEWS. He says that he was the first one that he evacuated from Hsamshingyang. Says he was the color of dirt and in bad shape, wearing the patch over the eye.

### HISTORIAN - DAVE QUAID

We are working on a project to provide maps for each 5307th battalion showing the trails used. We are missing the map section which covers the Myitkyina area. It is Map No. 92 G SW. We will make a copy and return your copy to you.

Help! At our next reunion in Richmond, the Historian needs some volunteers to spell him in protecting our historical material in the Registration Room. The Historian should be using the time to interview our members to amplify our unit history.



off soon after my arrival at the strip. As we got into the air, he immediately turned toward the hills as if to go over the hills and the enemy area of Warong, Auche, Manpin and the trails leading to Kamaing. Our intent was to cripple the enemy as much as possible and to harass them all we could.

Well, we didn't do that this time. As we approached the hills, I noticed the pilot looked at me with a concerned look and as we looked up, I saw that we were headed into the hill. We crashed and the pilot was killed instantly. I regained my senses as I climbed out of the plane. I checked the pilot and knew he was dead. I took the radio from the plane and found the antenna broken off and could not contact our troops. I managed to patch it in and being very thankful to a true and just God, I was able to contact a patrol which had been sent to help me. Needless to say, I was given first aid at the airfield, loaded



Mule Skimmers  
Left to right: Unknown, McGee, Mc-Gregor, Gibson.

into an L-6 Piper Cub plane to a rear hospital at Shingbuiyang and was taken from there over the hump to the 20th General Hospital at Ledo, India. This is to the best of my recollection, the way it was.

John A (Red) Acker, 5307/3/KCT/PACK ARTY, PO Box 833, Bessemer AL 35021

**MYITKYINA MEMORIES**

On the way to Myitkyina, the First Bn had the 150th Chinese Regiment attached to them. Those rascals would steal anything that you didn't have a good grip on. One time they stole some K-rations out of one of those little burlap bags they were packed in. The guy was using it for a pillow! At one air drop, I had asked the drop officer for one of the chutes to pad the sticks I had put over the mud, and he pointed one out that was hung up on a bush. I was to get it after the drop was over. Later when I happened to look at that chute, I saw the bush and chute shaking and yet, nothing had dropped near it. When the drop was over, I walked over to the chute, and the pack was already slit open. I left it alone and told the drop officer. Man, he went straight up! Well, they caught the Chinese with the rations. Their C.O. said that they had spoiled the reputation of the 150th Regt and should be shot. The only reputation they spoiled was getting caught.

While I was standing behind that big tree waiting for the drop to finish, the drop crew boys started kicking out grain - Free drop. They were trying to keep from putting it through the roof of the shacks and overshot the village on the first run. I saw a Chinese Major and his aid turn and run. The Major made it but just as his aid lifted his leg, a bag caught him and smashed his head against a log. The Chinese soldiers around me thought that was real funny. On the next pass, the kickers missed to my side of the village. One of the bags came so close to killing another that it knocked off his tin hat and rolled him down the hill. That was enough; they all disappeared.

On another occasion on that trip, we stopped in a village for the night. (I didn't like the looks of the location because of the commanding terrain around the village but then I wasn't running the show). The Chinese went on through us and on down to the river. They built fires to cook their rice and we had ANOTHER K-ration meal. The I & R Platoon was sent out on a recon patrol. They saw a seven man Jap patrol and let it pass. The Japs went on down river, saw the fires and opened up on the Chinese from across the river.

Well, all hell broke loose. Mortar shells were going off all around us and I thought we had really blundered this time. I thought the Japs were in those hills above us and were lobbing those shells at us. It turned out that wherever those Chinese had set their mortars down for the night, that is where they dropped the shells into the tube, regardless of where they were pointed!

When we started out the next morning, I happened to stop near an American Officer who was with the Chinese. He asked me if I could see that "happy" S.O.B. over there. Then he went on to tell me that his brother had been killed in that mess the night before and that made him the oldest son in the family.

In my opinion, the 150th Chinese  
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**HEADQUARTERS 475TH INFANTRY**

A.P.O. 218  
3 October 1944

GENERAL ORDERS)  
NUMBER 6 )

**AWARD OF COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE**

1. Under the provisions of WD Circular No. 186, dated 11 May 1944, the Combat Infantryman's Badge is awarded the following Officers and Enlisted Men of this organization, effective as of 20 February 1944, for exemplary conduct in action against the enemy during the North Burma Campaign.

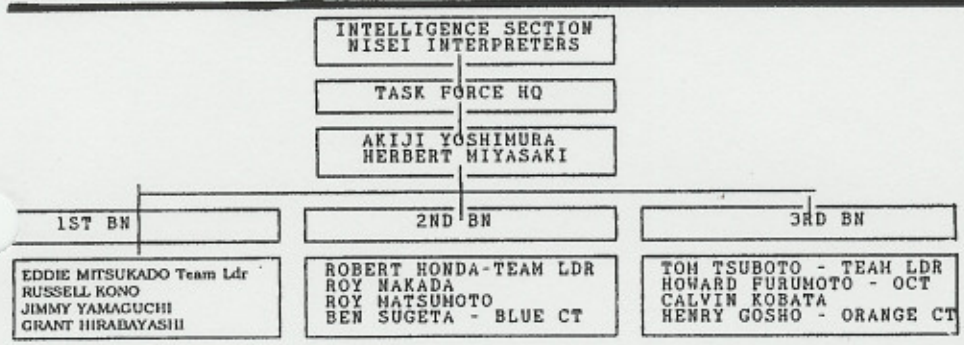
MAJOR GENERAL	FRANK D. MERRILL	017638	USA
COLONEL	CHARLES N. HUNTER	017710	INF
PRIVATE FIRST CLASS	ROBERT W. LANDIS	15071424	INF

By order of Colonel OSBORNE:

EDWIN A. ROTHSCHILD,  
1st Lt., Infantry,  
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

*Edwin A. Rothschild, 1st Lt.*  
EDWIN A. ROTHSCHILD,  
1st Lt., Infantry,  
Adjutant.





Regiment were very poor fighters. It was because of them shooting hell out of each other that they did not get into Myitkyina at first night and very possibly the cost of a lot of American lives. There were quite a number of Chinese in the Hospitals at Ledo with arm wounds. This is hearsay but I was told at the hospital that they got that way from keeping their body down and sticking their arm up. Some of them were sent from the airstrip to relieve us at Ziyun and it took them two days. Every time they met some Japs they dug in. **Ralph Pollock**, RD 1, Box 1494, Mt Union PA 17066, 475/1/WCT/B CO/MG SEC

**MYITKYINA TRAINING FIELDS**

There was a letter in the February '91 issue of the B/N about **Grady Corley**. I was in the area where he was killed. Grady and I were close friends as were **Jack Benfield** and I.

I came from the 33rd Infantry in Trinidad and was a member of the "New Galahad" contingent of the 5307th which came into Myitkyina as replacements. I commanded a rifle company in the Second Battalion - Grady commanded another. My memory is faulty so forgive me if I can't supply exactly what you want to know.

**Nellis Johnson's** letter was correct in stating that we got on-the-job training by small actions against isolated Jap units in the Myitkyina area. This was **Col Lloyd Johnson's** way (and a very good way) to teach us about combat. **Grady** was sent out on the first such practice mission and I tagged along as a volunteer observer because my company was slated to go on a similar mission in a week's time (which we did).

The action took place near the Village of **Charpate**. If you look at a map, you will see it northwest of the Galahad HQ in the outskirts of Myitkyina. South and West of Charpate is the Village of **Nam-kwi** where my company had a "training session" which was also tough. I had an officer killed and a platoon sergeant badly wounded. But that's another story.

Back to Grady's action. His company was crossing an open field covered with knee-high grass in a standard skirmish line. I was amongst the skirmishers and Grady was in front, leading his men. We proceeded toward the village and came under fire. From my position, I couldn't see Grady but someone yelled that he was hit. We got a lot of fire at that time and it was very confused. One of Grady's officers took over and, since the objective was "training" and not to take the village, the company withdrew. Grady's men recovered his body. I don't recall any other casualties.

If my memory is correct, Grady was hit once, in the head, and died instantly. He was not alone; he was out in front of his company's skirmish line. He probably should have been between the lead platoon's skirmish line and his reserve platoon but I really shouldn't and couldn't second guess him.

As to the rest of my war, after Myitkyina, I became a member of the 475th Infantry and commanded F Company. My war began in Myitkyina and ended near Lashio on the Burma Road when the 475th was

airlifted to Kunming, China. **Robert P Maxon**, 132 East 35th St, New York NY 10016-3892, 212-686-2214, 5307/2/F Co, Commander; 475/2/F/CO

**CHARPATE ACTION OUTSIDE OF MYITKYINA**

I have to admit I was somewhat dismayed when reading Dr Hopkins Report in the February '92 issue of the BURMAN NEWS, that I finally saw my name mentioned, but barely recognized myself -- my middle initial is "O", not "C", my Company was "K" not "L", I was not "prone in hole", when wounded, I was not struck by a grenade, and, I think I am being objective, my incapacity was not "slight".

Here is my recollection of events 23 May-25 May 1944. Early A.M., 23 May, Company K started advancing on Myitkyina. We didn't get very far --- just past a disabled and abandoned vehicle --- before we ran into resistance. There was no large amount of gunfire, but enough to deploy and take defensive measures. Our leaders and all the rest of us were just about played out, many collapsing from typhus fever and/or dysentery. We retreated to **Charpate**, where I, along with some others, were directed to the Medics. We were told the Medics would get us out the next morning. I thought I could make it back to my company, though, to switch my '45 and carbine to the next-in-command of my section, a Sgt Ervin J Pulchinski. The Sgt took my weapons but gave me his tommy gun in exchange.

The Company K weapons platoon had set up on the lower side of the terrain, about 30 yards from where I then lay down on the ground. It was raining, so I had a "shelter half", a tent canvas over me, and due to the typhus fever, I believe I passed out. Suddenly I heard hollering and shots and sat up. The rain had cleared enough for me to see several shapes approximately 25-30 yards to the north. With tommy gun trained on them, I challenged with our password --- "Lollypalooza-Lou", or some damn thing. I heard no reply, so pulled back on the bolt. Its clicking sound drew the attention of the shape nearest to me, who had been standing with his back to me. Only as he whirled and shot was I able to see he was a Japanese soldier. I emptied by entire clip at him and the others with him, but I had already been hit in the left chest. The bullet went through me, exiting about 1/2 inch from my spine, severing nerves, puncturing my lung and creating abdominal pain. Somehow I crawled down the hill to the weapons platoon, who got the Medics. The Medics (bless them!) did a great job patching me up and got me back to Dr Hopkins' unit. The Chinese (bless them, too!) carried me on a stretcher through water literally up to their necks, holding me up over their heads, to get me to the airfield. Even as they were transporting me through that swamp, there was incoming fire.

At the airport, Dr Seagraves, "The Burma Surgeon", worked on me. I was put on a small plane and arrived at 20th General Hospital in Ledo on 25 May. After about three months, I was sent back to the states.

ending up at Camp Atterbury IN for a year's convalescence, and was discharged in Chicago with 60% disability. In the long run, these things don't matter much, but I did want to see the record straight. **George O Blazier**, 225 No Clifton Av, Elgin IL 60123, 5307/3/OCT/K Co.

Excerpt from "BURMA: THE LONGEST WAR" by Louis Allen, Printed in England. Page 381 - The Backdoor.

**Mizukami Commits Suicide**

When Stilwell's men burst into Myitkyina, they found 187 prisoners, in the last stages of sickness and exhaustion, and learned that the commander of the garrison, Major General Mizukami, had taken his own life. It was an unnecessary sacrifice.

The situation inside Myitkyina was a little less monolithic than the besiegers supposed. In fact, there was a basic disagreement between the two senior officers about the purpose of the siege. Colonel Maruyama, Commanding Officer of the 114th Infantry Regiment, was in charge of the defence of Myitkyina before the attack on the town began, and his orders were to facilitate the future operations of 33 Army 'by securing the vital areas in the vicinity of Myitkyina' (Mitokina fukin no yochi wo kakuko seyo). He understood by this that he was not to defend Myitkyina street by street and house by house, but to go on fighting on the other side of the Irrawaddy if necessary to impede Stilwell's progress. If he continued to cut the Ledo-Kamaing route, he would have done his duty. When the commander of 56 Division Infantry Group, Major-General Mizukami, arrived to command the garrison, he explained this to him. But Mizukami apparently kept his own counsel and did not put forward a view of his own. Then on 10 July, a signal came from 33 Army: 'Major General Mizukami will defend Myitkyina to the death' (Mizukami shosho wa Mitokina wo shishu subeshi). This was not Maruyama's wider understanding of 'the Myitkyina area' but the town of Myitkyina itself. It was odd, too, in that it referred to Mizukami personally and not to 'the Myitkyina garrison' or 'the Mizukami unit.' This was no accident. This order was drafted by Colonel Tsuji, recalls the Staff Officer (Intelligence) at 33 Army Headquarters, Major Noguchi. 'He wept as he did it, and then without saying a word, handed it over to us staff officers. We were struck by a feeling of intense sorrow as we read it, and then Abe, as I remember, altered the words "Major-General Mizukami" to "the Mizukami unit" (Mizukami butai). Tsuji took it back, and said "No, let it stand. It's all right as it is", and kept his original wording.

When Honda's 33 Army was set up in April, the former GSOI at Rangoon, Colonel Katakura, who had already shown himself to be a thorn in Kawabe's and Mataguchi's flesh over the Imphal planning, was conveniently shunted upstairs as Chief of Staff of the new Army. Under him came Tsuji Masanobu, one of the legendary figures in Japanese Army since the days of



the China Incident. Tsuji was involved in every major campaign, Nomonhan, Guadalcanal, Singapore and now Burma.

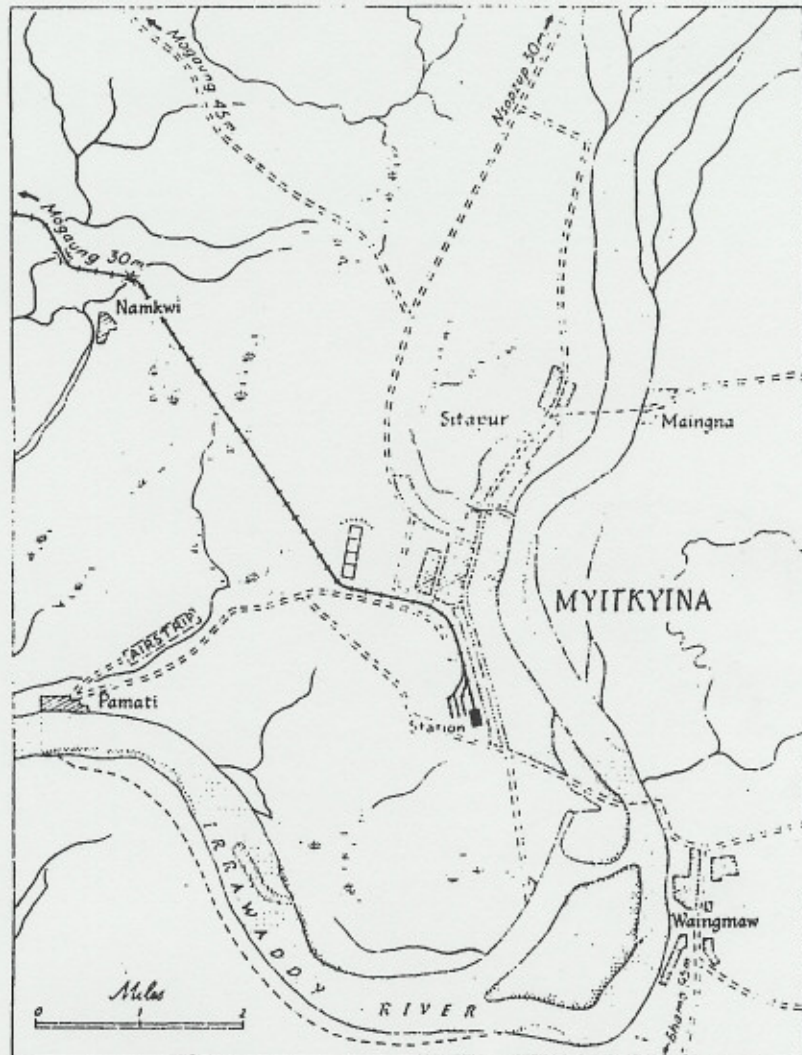
His egotistic account of the Malayan campaign makes it seem as if every success was attributable to his foresight and energy, and he was thought to have the ear of the Imperial family. He was also a savage, and was (quite reliably) reputed to have eaten the liver of an American pilot and handed it round to his appalled colleagues. This thrusting fire-eater, tears or no, now effectively consigned Mizukami to death.

Mizukami let no indication of his feelings escape, and we only have events, and Maruyama's account, from which to judge. Towards the end of July, seeing the destruction of the garrison to be imminent, Maruyama said to Mizukami that they ought, instead of hastening on their own annihilation to no purpose, to withdraw their men as fast as possible to the Mayan hills east of the Irrawaddy and plan further resistance there. Mizukami seemed, by his silence, not to disapprove of this, and Maruyama gave orders to the survivors - the garrison had had 1000 casualties since the end of May - to cross the Irrawaddy by night, in three nightly contingents, on 1, 2, and 3 August. It is in these terms that the official Japanese history describes the order, but the divisional historian Sagara points out that since Mizukami was still in command, it seems odd that the initiative should have come from Maruyama.

Mizukami had already signaled Honda that he expected to hold Myitkyina for two months. But Honda was puzzled when a second telegram came from Myitkyina: 'when the enemy puts in his all-out attack, anticipate difficulties in long-term resistance due to weakness of position, and shortages of food and ammunition.' 33 Army staff deduced that the second signal represented Maruyama's views. Hence the 10 July signal, the purpose of which was to indicate that 33 Army intended soon to start an offensive against the Chinese in the Lungling area, and that preparations for the defence of Bhamo and Namhkham were complete. The context of this offensive was, simply, that Honda had been informed by Southern Area Army that Mutaguchi's Imphal operations had been halted on 3 July, and that when the Imphal front crumbled, the Allies might then turn their attention to the Salween.

Tsuji himself attributes Maruyama's insistence on withdrawing from Myitkyina across the Irrawaddy to a respect for the regimental flag. This is by no means as odd as it seems. 'I don't want to think Maruyama was a coward'. Tsuji later wrote. 'His state of mind was, rather, that he couldn't bear the thought either of having his flag (gunki) captured, or burning it, and that, even at the risk of being called a coward, he wanted to use the flag as a core around which his regiment could be rebuilt. The fate of his men and the regiment were linked together by the flag. Regimental commanders come and go, but the flag is the heart of the regiment'

Whether or not that was Maruyama's motivation is not really the point; it is a



smoke screen put up by Tsuji to distract attention from the fact that a more carefully worded order from 33 Army would have prolonged the siege of Myitkyina as far as it would go, and have saved Mizukami from a futile suicide as well. When he was ready, Mizukami signaled Honda that he could no longer continue to hold Myitkyina and that the siege was entering its final phase. He had evacuated the wounded by raft down the Irrawaddy and asked for them to be looked after in Bhamo. Ordering his garrison to withdraw, and then killing himself, was, of course, Mizukami's way of flouting 33 Army's order 'defend Myitkyina to the death.'

The men themselves - well, their officers at any rate - were taken aback when the order to retreat came. So much so that Major Nakanishi Tokutaro, III Battalion commander, asked Maruyama to show him the written order. As Nakanishi saw it, his battalion's annihilation was only a question of time, in which case he preferred to be given an order for one last all-out attack. Maruyama then told him that their job was not to fight to the end in the streets

of Myitkyina but to continue a delaying action in the hills across the Irrawaddy. 'That's what he said', Nakanishi recalls 'But I think he'd simply lost the will to fight.'

Matsuyama, the general commanding 51 Division, was full of anguish as he became aware of what 33 Army was asking of the men who had been under his command. One of the garrison Medical Officers, Lieutenant Maruyama, remembers his signal to the beleaguered garrison. 'My heart breaks when I see your men going to their deaths without a grain of rice or a single round of ammunition being sent to them, but I hope you will fight to the last for the glorious tradition of the Imperial Army and the honour of the sons of Kyushu'. (51 Division was raised in Fukuoka and Nagasaki.) Lieutenant Maruyama thought that the receipt of that signal crystallized the garrison commander's intentions. Then another signal came, from Southern Area Army - or even higher up? - 'You are specially promoted two ranks to the rank of full general'. Mizukami knew what the

(Continued on page 81)



meant - it was almost a posthumous honour. Irony or black humour, it was hard to know which. Then a second: 'You have come a "god of the army" (gunshin).'

Lieutenant Maruyama remembers the confusion which arose in the various units about the order to withdraw. He was only 500 yards from the enemy, and Mizukami and about ten men went down to the river bank. Crossing the Irrawaddy was only going from one death to another, they knew, but even so, after sixty days cooped up in the garrison defences, going to the river bank was itself a kind of freedom. The country boat that was to take them rode on the waters as they made their way through the tall grass to the brink. They rested on a hillock crowned with a few trees until dawn on the 3rd. Mizukami seemed to be praying for the success of the crossing. As day broke, a fine rain began to fall, Lieutenant Maruyama left the general for a few moments and made his way through the jungle to the point of embarkation. In the direction of the river, he could hear occasional explosions - hand-grenades, the sound of his comrades hastening on the inevitable end. General Mizukami went to sit with his back against a tree.

Suddenly there was the sound of a pistol shot. It came from where Mizukami had sat down, and Lieutenant Maruyama sprinted in that direction with Captain Shugyo. The General's orderly was nervous, in tears. The general's body was inclined forward, in a north-easterly direction, supported by the tree-trunk, looking towards Japan. His was a ceremonial suicide. The general's dispatch case lay in front of him, with a piece of notepaper on top, held down by a little stone: 'The survivors of the Myitkyina garrison are ordered to proceed south.' The lieutenant felt his pulse, crying out 'General General!', but there was no point.

Lieutenant Horie ran off to report the general's death to Colonel Maruyama who, he said on his return, did not express a single word of grief over the general. Maruyama immediately readied the 700 survivors for their escape. An officer patrol had already reconnoitered the path. On the adjutant's orders, one of the general's fingers was cut off and wrapped in a bandage. A hole was dug, grass and leaves piled over it. There are a number of discrepancies in Japanese accounts of the evacuation of Myitkyina. The official history bases itself on Colonel Maruyama's notes, and says that he gave the order to

leave on 1 August 1944, and on that night and the following two nights - the moon being nearly full - the survivors crossed the Irrawaddy. The first to cross were General Mizukami's brigade headquarters and the walking wounded. Maruyama himself crossed on the last night, with the last units. The men concealed country boats under the river banks during the day and crossed to the far bank in a sequence laid down beforehand, then assembled in the jungle on the opposite side, as star-shells and tracer continued to light up the sky over Myitkyina.

Sergeant Nishiyama Hideo was one of those responsible for the embarkation, and his recollections are rather different. He believes either that Maruyama's memory is at fault, or that a certain varnishing has taken place. The first night, he says, the walking wounded did get across, but it was in the company of the regimental adjutant, Lieutenant Hirai, and officers and NCO's in charge of the records of meritorious service, and about twenty comfort girls; and General Mizukami and his headquarters. On the second night Colonel Maruyama crossed with his regimental flag, and the officers of regimental headquarters. On the last night, the rest of the officers and men. It is clear that Maruyama, according to this account, was not in the rear party. If Nishiyama's memory serves him right, the sky was clouded on that night, the moon could not be seen, and there were no star-shells or tracer.

Nor was Mizukami's suicide in the thinly wooded spot on the east bank, as Maruyama claims, but on an island in midstream called Nonthalon. The ambiguities are inevitable, given the lapse of time, and apart from the official giving a favourable gloss to Maruyama's conduct, the discrepancy in the suicide accounts can be resolved by a supposition that Mizukami crossed to the east bank with his group, re-embarked and landed on Nonthalon because that was considered as being still inside the Myitkyina perimeter, i.e. he was still obeying the order given to him personally 'to die in Myitkyina'.

When Lieutenant Horie, carrying Mizukami's relics, finally reached headquarters at Bhamo, he was greeted characteristically by Colonel Tsuji. 'You were told to fight to the last man! What are you doing here? You should be ashamed to be alive!' The 18 Divisional commander, Lieutenant-General Tanaka Shinichi, a martinet and disciplinarian himself, turned

to Tsuji and yelled at him: 'That's enough, Tsuji! You'd do better to have some sympathy for a changel!' But Tsuji's sympathy, even if he had any, would have been a little late for Mizukami, who should never have been saddled with responsibility for Myitkyina in the first place. The main body of the defence was provided by Maruyama's 114 Regiment, and he could well have been left in command of the garrison. As infantry group commander of 56 Division, Mizukami brought 1500 men with him. He also brought with him the strong feudal spirit of the samurai of North Kyushu, which would not allow him to interpret an order. Brought in to command the garrison, told to hold it to the death, he did exactly that; but his paternalistic attitude to his men ensured that he saved as many of them as he could. He makes an interesting contrast with 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell.

### CHAPLAIN'S TASKS

The time has come for me to fulfill a promise I made to myself some time ago. Namely to write a few words about one of the bravest men I have ever known - Chaplain James M Davis. I am sure there are many other who have strong memories of this fine soldier, who always insisted on being on the front lines, bringing comfort and reassurance to the men. My own experience happened toward the end of January 1945.

We were part of the 475th, 1st Battalion and had finished an exhausting forced march. We had started out at daybreak and walked on and on into the night, stumbling over water buffalo tracks, able to see only the compass tied on to the back of the pack of the man ahead. I recall passing native villagers squatting around fires, wondering I suppose, what the hell was going on ..... and on we walked into the morning. Sometime during the mid-morning we heard the crack of rifles, and we went into battle. I believe we had marched for around 27 hours.

At any rate, we dug in around a temple with the artillery below us in a defile. There was a hell of a lot of Jap artillery that came our way, the big stuff whistled as it came in, but the ones that really made you nervous were the ones that exploded first and then you heard the report afterward.

I walked down the hill to the valley below, stooping and running as a sniper opened up. At the time I was with Chaplain Davis and our mission was to retrieve the body of a Lt O'Brien, one of the first of many men to be killed. We walked down through the valley and up a kind of draw, where we recovered the body to take it to a little cemetery on the other side of the valley.

As we walked back through the valley, the Japs opened up. The most vivid memory I have of this Chaplain Davis is his calmly walking along, smoking his pipe and talking of his plans for the future. We did take cover in a little washout where Chaplain Jim sat with his back against the side, reading his Bible. I tell you I was impressed.

At the cemetery we had just finished

(Continued on page 9)

### LOST, STRAYED OR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THESE GUYS?

JOHN D JOHNSTON, 6524 MOSSWOOD DR, MONROE LA 71203, 5307/1/WCT/RE, 318-281-1288

FRANCIS K LUKE, 1006 BROWN ST C/O GAMBINO, PEEKSKILL NY 10566

WALTER F KRAMER, 1840 CLAREMONT, HOFFMAN ESTATE IL 60195

WALTER D STOCK, 4328 COMLY St, PHILADELPHIA PA 19135

STANFORD E WRIGHT, RT 10, SPARTANBURG SC 29302

KENNETH H DUNN, 96 ROCKINGHAM AV, LOWELL MA 01852

AJOR PETER PETITO, 548TH M I D, APO NY NY 09221

THE BIG PROBLEM IS THAT THE POSTAL SERVICE SENDS THE MAIL BACK MARKED "FORWARDING ORDER EXPIRED." IF YOU MOVE, PLEASE LET US KNOW, BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER OR TELL YOUR LETTER CARRIER THAT YOU WANT THIS MAIL FORWARDED.



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placing Lt O'Brien in his resting place, when all hell broke loose again. This time with that fast flat shooting piece, which must have been something like the German MGs, opening up. There was no running away, so Chaplain Jim and I slid into the open grave until it was all over.

Much has been said about the brave riflemen, artillery, etc. It is time credit be given to the equally valorous Chaplains, and in particular, Chaplain James M Davis, one of the bravest in my book. **Helmuth "Bud" Fichtler**, Lt Col USA Ret., 31310 182nd SE, Auburn WA 998002, 475/1/HQ

**THE WAY IT WAS FOR ME**

This is what happened to me in the 5307th/3rd Bn/Khaki CT and 475TH/HQ. I was on a Heavy Machine Gun at Walawbum, where so many Japs were killed at the River Crossing. The next action was at Inkangahawng. Not much happened for us in the Khaki CT in this battle. But lots of action at Nhpum Ga where Sam Rapisarda was wounded and so was I for the first time by a hand grenade shrapnel.

During that time period I was promoted to Sgt as a Squad Leader over Mortars and Machine Guns. I was wounded for the second time at Shadazup by mortar shrapnel. Then at Myitkyina, I was wounded for the third time and received a Silver Star from General Stilwell with six other GI's - Sgt Lewis Day and Lt Bob Bowman. He awarded seven Silver Stars and one DSC on June 5, 1945 at Myitkyina. I was then raised to the rank of Staff Sgt.

Then I was sent to China to train General Sun Li's troops at Encha with eight other GI'S. **John E Johnson**, 2957 Botony Dr, Jonesboro GA 30236, 404-968-8341, 5307/3/KCT/HW, 475/3/HW.

**MORE MYITKYINA MADNESS**

At Myitkyina, Col Hunter kept Braden's I & R Platoon nearby. Five of us were on patrol searching for Japs. We found out where they were, when one of our planes strafed us and them. Anyway, none of us was hit but I had to run a message back to the tracks thru what appeared to be an orchard ( a few snipers were there and I was kind of scared of getting winged in the legs.). Anyway, as I was approaching the tracks, I saw a sniper on the other side of the tracks, and cut down on him. From the other side came a bunch of guys laughing and they said, "Leave him go hero, he's been dead two days." Braden's bunch. They had

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The Bastards of Burma, a new book (part fact and part fiction) is out. M/Sgt Mike Gabbett has finally put together his recollections of what went on in Burma and apparently added to it to make it more interesting. For your copy, write Michael F Gabbett, PO Box 11606, Albuquerque NM 87192-0606. Enclose check or money order for \$9.95 plus \$1.50 postage handling (\$11.45 total).

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a .50 caliber machine gun and asked if I would baby-sit it for awhile. Hell, yes! - A new toy. I wanted to use it so bad, I could taste it - but nothing came thru. Ask Braden about it. I guess the Japs pushed them out of there before but they came back with that '50. Anonymous.

**RANGER COLUMN**

1. All Marauders are invited to join the current 75th Ranger Regiment Association, which has just been organized, as associate members. The fee is \$20. for a lifetime membership, as of now. They will receive their card and regular bulletins. If they do not want a lifetime membership, it is \$5. for an annual fee. They all will receive a membership card, a nice 8 x 10 certificate, quarterly bulletins, and discounts for special association functions. Anyone interested make payment to RS5, 75th Ranger Regt and mail to RS5, HQ, 75TH RANGER REGT, PO BOX 55843, ATTN: THE RANGER REGT ASSO., FT BENNING GA 31905-5843. If they do join, I would appreciate it if they could drop me a card saying they have joined, so I can keep a record of how many of our people are in. **Phil Piazza.**

2. The Regiment has also commissioned renowned Military Artist Jim Dietz, of Seattle WA to do a painting portraying the historic scene at Omaha Beach, 6 June 1944, where Gen Norm Cota gave the Rangers their Battle Cry, "RANGERS, LEAD THE WAY!". The profits from this sale of Limited Edition Prints will go to the Ranger Regt Trust and help defray the cost of the Large Ranger Memorial, which will be dedicated at the Anniversary.

**Price of the Print.** Ranger Regiment Assoc. Members: \$50 per numbered/signed print. \$25 for each un-numbered/unsigned print. Non Ranger Regt Assoc Member orders: \$75 per numbered/signed print. \$35 for each un-numbered/unsigned.

\$10 Shipping and Handling costs for up to 4 prints.

Checks made payable to the Ranger Regt Assoc, Box 55843, Ft Benning GA 31905.

The associations are also participating in a 50/50 raffle to defray expenses. Books of ticket chances are \$20 per book or \$2 per ticket. Drawing June 10, 1992. Anyone interested send check to me made out to Ruth Bojara, C.P.A. and I will mail them out to you. We have 200 books as our share to dispose of.

Col Grange's wife, Holly is arranging for the Ladies Luncheon at the Officer's Club and has to know as soon as possible how many will be attending. Cost will be \$7.50 per person, reservation and check to Holly Grange, 408 Wickersham Av, Ft Benning GA 31905. Tickets will be picked up at the Officer's Club on the day of the Lunch.

She is also setting up the bus trip to President Roosevelt's Little White House and the shopping trip to the quaint shops with country crafts and antiques for Saturday, June 20th from 10 AM to 3 PM, transportation provided. Cost is not yet known as she has to know how many will be going to determine what the bus company will charge. Write to her if you

plan to attend and/or write to Phil as an alternative on your plans to attend these trips. Men will be attending different affair at this time.

**COMBAT INFANTRY BADGE**

During a recent visit to an out-of-state antique shop which deals in silver and gold items, I was a bit disappointed to learn that an Indian-head penny I'd found as a boy was worth just that - one penny.

As the proprietor was busily telling me "There's millions of these things floating around the country," something among what seemed hundreds of silver and gold items piled in a wicker basket on the counter behind him caught my eye. I recognized it immediately as the "C.I.B." (Combat Infantry Badge).

I asked the owner if I might see it; and when he handed it to me I asked him if he knew what it was. This was his answer: "Some guy came in the other day - said he got it when he was in the Army -felt sorry for the guy so I gave him two bucks fer th' thing...be lucky if I git a half buck's worth' Sterling (silver) outta th' thing."

There's an old saying in the Army fo those who have earned the Combat Infantryman's Badge. As an officer pins this badge of courage on an infantryman's tunic it is customary for that officer to say, "Soldier, you are bound to go to heaven because this 'CIB' shows you've served your time in hell."

Yes, this badge with it's Kentucky rifle transposed on a field of Infantry Blue is not easily acquired; for its wearer has seen the lonely, cold stark nakedness of the battlefield. He has seen what the bomber pilot, the artilleryman and those who sit in the comfort of rear echelon headquarters never see. He sees the mud, the blood and the face and eyes of the enemy and watches his friends die close by.

And I thought, as I held this mark of a man in my hand, - how many - how many such badges were in the hands of those who deal in silver and gold - how many were awaiting the smelter's ladle.

I would ask those who have earned this most coveted award to think twice before handing it over to those who see only a small amount of Sterling silver in its composition, and could care less about the story behind it. I would ask them to look back - back to the day when that officer pinned it on their tunics and told them "You are bound to go to heaven, because this 'CIB' shows that you've served your time in hell..."

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Money still talks, but you have to turn up the volume.

I give much better advice than I take.

Middle age is when all people our age seem older than we age.

The buck stops here. Please start a few this way.

Give a book as a present. You can always borrow it back.

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# Letters

## EDITOR

My Father, T/5 Chester Wilcox was reported Missing in Action during the Battle of Myitkyina. He was a member of the 236th Engrs H & S Co, (c) who fought alongside the Infantry during the battle. He was wounded at Myitkyina. This much I do know. I have heard from one source that my father was captured by the Japanese and MAYBE executed. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who recalls my Dad and can tell me anything about his military history particularly during the Myitkyina Battle. Not only what happened to him but something about his personality. The date given to me by the Army of his presumed death is 14 June 1944. He is listed on the Tablet of the Missing in the National Cemetery in Manila, Philippines. Linda Turner, HCR 1, Box 260-1, Highlandville MO 65669, 417-587-3280

## EDITOR

Was really surprised and pleased, to receive all the good reading material about Merrill's MARAUDERS. Never knew the organization existed. There are many of us, who feel the time has passed us by - and forgot about the rough times we had in W. W. II.. But like other wars, we did the best we could to save our country.

I'm sending along a picture. I am the low with my back to the mule. Next to me Sgt Jack Thornhill, Mississippi. Never could contact him. He was my squad leader. The next guy in line is R. E. King, Georgia. Just over the hill, going east, the Japs were waiting for us. I & R had just reached the top of the hill, when we started getting some '77 stuff. The hill to the left was about a mile from the road. In one of your newsletters, a Jap wrote that he lost his tank there.

We were close to that area when this picture was taken. I was on a listening post the night that fight took place. I was probably a hundred yards from his tankette when all hell broke loose. He used up the rest of his ammo right over my head, firing at my unit up on the hill. I was in Co F, 475th Infantry. I was Regular Army. Took my Basic Training in Ft Davis, Canal Zone, 14th Infantry in March 1941. Came back to the states 1943. Joined newly organized 71st Div. Someone said they wanted volunteers - no questions asked. I was #10 on the list to go.

Landed Bombay, India and continued on to Ramgarh. The rest is some very bad memories, HA! I had a small pension from combat but all of a sudden, after several years after my SS checks started, the VA wanted more proof of my service connected disability. Since I was never treated at a hospital, I couldn't come up with enough evidence. All I had was a piece of my ear torn off by a sniper and shot through the right hand.

What made me mad was that they ruined my BAR. I stayed up front all through the campaign. We didn't have choppers to fly us out in those days. I remember Capt Josefski of Erie PA. He said, "Hell, Linn you

will have to shoot left handed now." Lt Fuller was my Platoon Leader. He put me in for the Purple Heart. Which I never got. Cliff H Linn, ex-Sgt, Co F, 475th Inf, 1621 E 24th St, Des Moines IA 50317

## EDITOR

I would like to give the membership an update on the progress toward getting a commemorative stamp issued for General Stilwell. As you will have seen, the Postal Service announced the complete slate for 1992 stamps and we lost out on that chance. We are now shooting for 1994. This will be the anniversary of the completion of the first phase of the main effort to free Northern Burma and reopen the Burma Road. (Capture of Myitkyina)

During a January 10th meeting of the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee, the Committee removed the stamp for nomination for the World War II series and placed it back in consideration in the Great American area.

It appears the nomination will get some active consideration over the next few months for an issue in 1994. Perhaps we will get a number of letters hitting at just the right time. John Easterbrook, 12454 Dover Ct, Saratoga, CA 95070.

## EDITOR

There will be a Reunion of the Nisel Military Intelligence at Camp Savage, Ft Snelling, Minneapolis MN May 28-30th. If interested, call 213-626-0441 or 310-820-3451. Ken Akune, 475/Hq, 1105 "D" Rycroft St, Honolulu HI 96814-2849.

## EDITOR

You wanted to know who the two men were on Page 83 of Book Nine, in "Confusion Beyond Imagination". I can tell you who they are. The one on the left with the Jap Flag is Linus F Rahman and on the right with the Jap Sword is Hugo J Wagner.

Wagner and I came into military service at the same time. My Army Serial Number ends with a five and Wagner's with a six. He lives on the North Side of Ferdinand and I live on the South Side. We didn't go to any reunions this year. Linus F Rahman, Rt 1 Box 265, Ferdinand IN 47532-9631

## EDITOR

I am writing a History of the 612th FA Bn (Pk). We were attached to the 475th Infantry of the Mars Task Force. If anyone has a short history of the 475th would like to include that with my 612th History. At Camp Landis, Burma, Ted Tompor of the 612th was awarded a Soldiers Medal for saving a man from the 475th from drowning in the Irrawaddy River. Tompor does not know the man's name or if he has survived the war in Burma. Anyone that has this name or any information on this incident, please write to me. We would appreciate any pictures, orders, etc., on Mars Task Force. Randall Colvin, 252 Flesher Dr, Ellisville MO 63011.

## EDITOR

I have some old copies of the Ex-CBI roundup that Ralph accumulated over the years. They are available to some one who is a collector. Mrs Ralph Klimek, 216 Osseo Rd, Independence WI 54747.

## EDITOR

At the Sunday Brunch El Paso Reunion, I met Leo Click from Victoria TX. During our conversation concerning our background, it turned out we were both born in rural Missouri (near a Post Office, grocery store and a filling station-garage) at a place called Dora. He was born 3+miles south of Dora and I was born 2+miles west. We had never met but my father knew one of his uncles. We had a good chat. Horace N Rieger, 5307/2/BCT/E Co, PO Box 97, Lakeside AZ 85929.

## EDITOR

The following was on the wall of Ranger Joe's Military Store in Columbus GA:

I was that which others did not want to be.  
I went where others feared to go,  
And did what others failed to do.

I asked nothing from those who gave  
nothing,  
And reluctantly accepted the thought  
Of eternal loneliness....should I fail.

I have seen the face of terror;  
Felt the stinging cold of fear;  
And enjoyed the sweet taste of a  
moments love.

I have cried, pained, and hoped....  
But most of all, I have lived times others  
would say  
Were best forgotten.

At least someday I will be able to say  
That I was proud of what I was.

.....A Ranger.

## EDITOR

The Mars Task Force Artillery Assn comprised of veterans of the 612th & 613th Field Artillery Battalions (Pack) of the Mars Task Force, will hold its 5th Annual Reunion in Columbus OH, during 17-20 September 1992. All Task Force Members and all ex-mulepackers, are welcome. WB Woodruff Jr, PO Box 515, Decatur TX 76234

## EDITOR

Ref: Funeral of Lyn Hightower, 5307/3/1/3; 475/3/1/3. I ordered a spray sent in name of Merrill's Marauders Association. On arrival at Sadler Cemetery, a well-tended cemetery, at 2 PM found a large delegation from Army; counted 18 personnel: 7 person firing squad, plus sergeant, plus six person honor guard/pall bearers, flag detail, plus one bugler, plus one Captain/Chaplain, and two warrant officers. Ceremonies and service were well done. I offered our commendations and appreciation, from the MMA, thru the Chaplain, to all troops involved. The MMA were somewhat impressive to the young officers, especially when I went into some detail about transport via mule-pack and assured them some of us were unconvinced that helicopters would ever satisfactorily replace mules. Attendance at funeral services by family and friends about 75. Hightower had one brother still surviving.

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He was aged and infirm, and required assistance in walking to and being seated in the tent proved by funeral home. The affair was well-conducted; the family must have been well pleased. I think all were impressed, and none more so than myself, that a World War II Vets organization, of world-wide membership, all by now over 65 years of age, was so well organized that on such short notice, it could and did provide representation from comrades of a long-ago war, at a funeral service at a rural cemetery in Grayson County, Texas. I wonder how many veterans organizations, of and whatever size or branch, could have done as well? I am proud to be a member. W B Woodruff Jr, PO Box 515, Decatur TX 76234, 475/2/Hq; 612th FA.

#### EDITOR

I served with 5307th and then with 475th in Burma. I was on the ship SS Jose Navarra which was sunk by Jap submarine in the Arabian Sea. Was not wounded, only had Malaria and Amoebic Dysentery. Very fortunate. I served with Robert Olmsted, St Louis MO; Glenn Friel, Rock Island IL; Russell Vaughn, Charles Trout, Graham Bennett, Everett Najar, Raymond Doons, Frederick Faulkner, Edward Cervenka, Bernard Bleker, Harold Bengston, Marvin Hall, Albert Higgins, Cecil Harris. I was Staff Sgt when I arrived in India. Later promoted to the staff, then to 1st Sgt. Also it was interesting to see at the top of Page 10, the last News issue, about Donald J. Logan. He was Captain and up for Major when he was killed. When he stood up to talk on the 300 radio, the Japs were standing right beside him. He and I had put up a shelter (poncho) and both tied to the same stake. How I escaped, I'll never know. Thurmond Hall, 315 W Terrace Ln, Peoria IL 61614, 5307; 475.

#### EDITOR

We were talking about the fact that the Merrill's Marauders Association had never had a parade. As a matter of fact, I recall that at the time we were walking the Ledo Road and had been hospitably entertained overnight by the Negro Engineer outfit that was working on the road, in the morning when we were leaving their band played for us as we marched by in column of fours. They played "God Bless America" and finally - "Old Lang Syne". It was really something special. Ray Braden, 5125 SE 31st St, Ocala FL 32671, 5307/3/OCT/K Co

#### EDITOR

Was with the 97th Inf Div, 387th Reg, Co G. After the LA maneuvers, we went to Ft Leonard Wood MO and were broken up. I was sent overseas on the Gen Butler. Found myself in Co F, 5307th, later 475/2/F Co, PFC. During the Battle at Loi Kang Hill, I was three foxholes up from where Col Thrailkill's foxhole was located and I received part of the hit. I was out for about half hour but fully recovered. But our 10 in 1 ration we had just received did not survive. Also a new replacement, we just got, who was just reporting to the Colonel, got a direct hit. How could the Japs miss? I went on a patrol to the Burma Road and when I got on the road and looked back, I



Early April, 1944. Hsamshingyang, Burma. Wounded Marauder brought into Aid tent for treatment. Tent is made of parachute canopy, and supported by its shroud lines. Man with pipe and glasses is Capt. [Dr.] A. Lewis Kolodny, surgeon. Photo courtesy of D. Lubin.

said to my squad leader, "God, the hill looks like a bald headed man." I would like to hear from some of my old buddies. Lawrence Fonte, 598 Schley Av, Alpha NJ 08865-4287, 5307/2/F Co; 475/2/F.

#### EDITOR

I was with the 25th Inf Div, 35th Regt, 2nd Bn, F Co on Guadalcanal and Vella Lavella. From there I volunteered for that mission in another Theater of Operations. When I arrived in India, I was immediately separated from the troops from the Pacific and assigned to Lt Larry Lindgren's platoon, which later became the 1st Platoon, Blue Combat Team, 2nd Bn, 5307th. I stayed with this platoon throughout our training in India and all the way to Myitkyina. After we were relieved at Myitkyina, I spent some time in a hospital at Ledo, India. In the latter part of August, I was sent back to Myitkyina and spent some time (about 30 days) with a platoon of

Engineers. From there I received my traveling orders back to the states. Gabriel Kinney, 4463 County Rd, Hanceville AL 35077, 205-352-5391, 5307/2/BCT/1

#### EDITOR

My father, JIMMIE NOBORU YAMAGUCHI, was indeed a Marauder. He was in the 5307th as one of the Nisei Interpreters. Further details of his unit assignment may be obtained in the book, YANKEE SAMURAI, an account of the Nisei troops in the Pacific Theatre in WWII. I remember listening to his stories of walking through the jungles of Burma, of leeches and forced marches, of eating army food, then mules, then not much of anything, during his marches. I remember listening to stories of the extraordinary bravery and endurance by the Marauders and by the Chinese KMT troops. I

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remember listening to his stories of the siege at Nhpum Ga, and of his disappointment when, after the airfield fell, the first allied transports brought in inedible British troops instead of real food! I also remember being taken to a black and white movie about the Marauders (sometime in the early 60's), and thumbing through the several books about the Marauders that were always in his library. When he was cremated at his funeral, I enclosed his cherished books in his casket so that (as the Japanese say) he could "take them with him".

My father passed away of colon cancer on November 19, 1982 in Tokyo, Japan where he had retired after a career as a civilian contract employee with the US Dept of the Army. His army career was started rather reluctantly in the Fall of 1941 with Roosevelt's peacetime draft, took him through boot camp, army cook and baker school, army language school, the Marauders, U.S. Army Intelligence in China after the Marauder experience, and finally General MacArthur's HQ in Japan. He was demobilized in the late 1940's in Japan, but he returned to Japan right away as a Department of the Army civilian employee to continue working with the U.S. Army intelligence through his retirement in the late 70's. He met and married my mother, a Japanese national, in Japan. I grew up as a U.S. army civilian "brat" in Tokyo.

A wreath that was signed by all the surviving Nisei Marauders, most of whom were living in Hawaii by then, arrived at my father's funeral in 1982. My father had a long and distinguished service in the army, both as a civilian and as a soldier, but his greatest pride was his service in the Merrill's Marauders. Among his many army mementos is a Bronze Star that he earned in Burma.

I grew up listening to and admiring my Dad's stories of service in Burma and China. I considered a military career at one point, but as a teen-ager who grew up and went to college during the height of the

Vietnam War, I ended up joining the Peace Corps instead. It was because of my father's example, however, that I requested service in SE Asia, and was posted to Malaysia. By an incredible coincidence, one of my fellow Peace Corps Volunteers in the same batch going there was Martha McLogan, one of the daughters of Ted McLogan. I was assigned to one of the remote states in Malaysia as an irrigation engineer, and Martha was assigned to a neighboring (and equally remote) state as a teacher. Martha (now Martha Morrow) and her husband Bob (another fellow volunteer in Malaysia - an Australian one, though!) have corresponded with us ever since we parted company in 1978.

I managed to visit Burma in 1978, upon completion of my Peace Corps service, but Myitkyina was unfortunately off limits to tourists at that time. (It still is.) I did manage to meet an American academic couple who did field work in linguistics and music in the Myitkyina area in the early 1960's. They recall that the airfield was mostly unused by any aircraft at that time, but the locals all were having a great time racing motorcycles up and down the strip.

I myself have continued to split my professional career between working in Southeast Asia and in the U.S. as a consulting water resources engineer until this past January, when I joined Burger King Asia Pacific in Singapore as a regional design and construction manager. I now work on siting and building restaurants instead of dams and irrigation canals! I credit my father and the Marauders with kindling my interest in Southeast Asia, an interest that has shaped my career and personal life (I married another Peace Corps volunteer that I met in Malaysia), and that has continued to this day. I will be proud to be placed on your membership roll as an Honorary Member. Howard A YAMAGUCHI, 56 Pasir Ris Heights, Singapore 1851.

#### EDITOR

Capt Willis Mead, Orange CT, died at his home, Jan 8, 1992. Willis's family is collecting an exhibit in his name at the local Museum. (Ed: Share with them, please.) Mrs Willis S Mead, 909 Old State Rd 60, Salem IN 47167

#### EDITOR

Am an author compiling material for a book on the art of sniping. I am reaching out to a wide group of veterans as possible, to draw on a myriad of experiences. With the mixture, the final result will hopefully be a solid manual on the training, tactics and anecdote of snipers and their teams. The idea is to be functional as well as entertaining. My request is to have my address be made available to your organization. Keith Everett, 300 W Via Alamos #613, Green Valley AZ 85614.

+++++  
 Harold Mortimer told me the story of this Tank Commander Sgt from an Armored Division. Immediately after arriving in Saudi Arabia, he went to the 1st Sgt and asked for a 3 day pass. Turned down, he asked to see the Company Commander to whom he repeated his request. The CO explained patiently that for the next two weeks or so, they would all be very busy getting their tanks set up for war. The Sgt left and was back again the next day with the same request for the 3 day pass. Again he was turned down. In desperation, he asked the Captain if he could get a 3 day pass if he brought him an Iraqi tank. The CO, to get rid of him, said, alright, he would consider it if he brought back an Iraqi tank. He returned in two hours with the Iraqi tank. The Captain incredulously asked how he had accomplished this. "Well, he said, "I went up to the border and hollered as loud as I could thru a bullhorn, Abdul, Abdul, would you like to have a 3 Day Pass?" There was silence for a while, then a voice came back across the border. "How could I get a 3 Day Pass?" "Let's trade Tanks," I said.



## MERRILL'S MARAUDERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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