



The Burman News



Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.

May, 1994

OVER THE KUMON RANGE = DOWN TO MYITKYINA

We are now thinking of the month of May fifty years ago. This was the time when we climbed the water-soaked trails over the Mountains on the way to Myitkyina. Those sure footed mules, some of them went over the side. Men had to go down and haul important pack loads and carry them up the slopes. Some mules were retrieved and helped back to the trails. Some were killed by the fall.

The monsoon season had arrived and it rained some every day. There was a battle by Khaki CT at Ritpong. While they were occupying the Japanese at that Village, the H Force went around them and continued on down the trail.

Sgt Clarence Branscomb led a three man patrol onto the Airstrip the night of May 16th. He reported that the Japs had been working on the field but had left it about midnight and there were no security elements apparent on the field. So the next morning the 1st Bn led the way to the airstrip, capturing it without significant opposition.

But the Chinese found it difficult if not impossible to continue on to the capture of the City. One of the things that went wrong was that the two Chinese Divisions that were flown in refused to leave the vicinity of the field until they had been provided with 3 days rations. Gen Stilwell flew in a day later to explain to them in Chinese that was not the way to win the war.

So the Japs continued to bring in troops from the North, East and West to reinforce their defenses. Ultimately the battle degenerated into a bloody, casualty filled attack against dug in Japanese positions. The New Galahad troops were flown in to replace the weary, wounded and medically unfit men of the Original 5307th. They were

handicapped by failure to have the opportunity to train together, to develop knowledge of their leaders and fellow soldiers.

But in the end, they triumphed and drove the remnants of the Japanese into the Irrawaddy River where they were for the most part shot up by Allied forces further down the River. A General who had been assigned the difficult task of defending Myitkyina committed suicide. The Colonel who escaped from the town later told General Merrill at a dinner in Japan that only 400 men had survived of an estimated 4500 troops. It was likely that most of them escaped in the early stages of the battle.

So on August 3rd the battle had been won. At that point, most of the original volunteers were evacuated for hospitalization and/or rest and rehabilitation.

Sharing the Story

LAST DAYS OF MYITKYINA BATTLE

I liked that Stilwell quote about the doughboy. But forgive me for saying it, a General can't possibly know how a GI on the very front line feels in an attack. And when I think of our unit attacking eight times in the last six days at Myitkyina, and being decimated,

how could Stilwell ever know the heavy, grim hearts of those of us who expected to die any minute in those six days? I'm sure the officers who were back of us had an inkling of what we were going through.

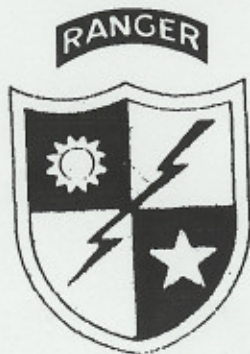
That's why, before the final push, they saw the handful of us who were left and tried to call off the attack. We were on the verge of - yes - mutiny. I still to this day salute and thank them for their bravery. And we who were still surviving, obeyed, when the officers were convinced by the Colonel, who had come forward, that we had a chance for survival because the intelligence had told him only a holding force of Japanese was left. The speed and success of our last attack proved this Colonel was right, but would you believe that the front line of our entire regimental front consisted of about 14 men. And I was one of four left in I Company! At the time I was amazed to see how few men from K & I Companies joined us on the bluff overlooking the Irrawaddy River.

And the wreckage of the crude rafts that the Air Corps caught before dawn that morning as the main body of the Japanese Army tried to flee across the river from us, under cover of darkness. We were the only survivors. We could hardly believe it. John Sheifele, 5307/3/I Co, Rt 1, Box 1692 River Rd, Mount Bethel PA 18342.

DOWN BY THE RIVER SIDE

My name is J T Tidwell, ASN 35725768. I want to tell about the capture of 25 Japs, on the Irrawaddy River sometime in the middle of July 1944. We shot flares into the air over the river every two hours for several nights, knowing the Japs were north of us - north of Myitkyina. The only way they could get back into town was to go down the river. We had a .30 cal. machine gun mounted on a motor boat. One morning after daylight we saw

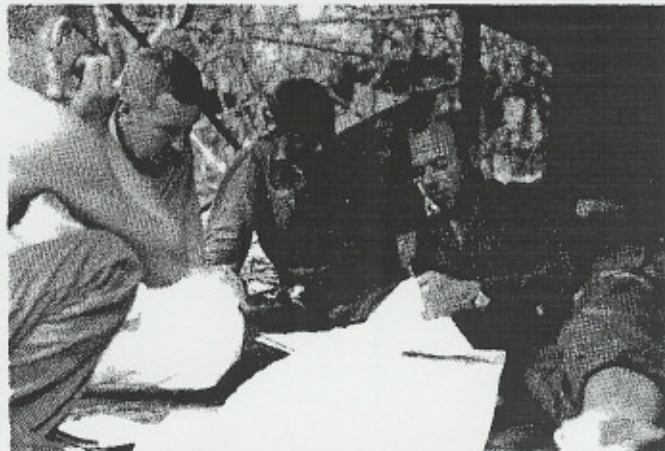
(Continued on page 2)



BATTLE FOR MYITKYINA - May 17 - August 3, 1944



May 17, 1944 - Lt. Ernest L. Sanford, Air Corps, directing dive bomber to enemy targets.



Left to right: Major Frank C. Hodges, Lt/Col. William R. Combs, Senior Liaison Officer, 150th Chinese Regt. being briefed by Col. Charles Hunter. Lt/Col. Combs was killed during the Battle of Myitkyina.



June 10, 1944 - Pack Train leaving Myitkyina air strip with ammo and supplies for New Galahad, 209th and 236th Combat Engineers fighting to take the town of Myitkyina from the defending Japanese.



July 11, 1944 - The Myitkyina Task Force command post at the Myitkyina air strip.

them up the river - a good way on, at our back perimeter. During the capture some of them jumped off the raft. I was told that the river was running at 35 miles per hour, half a mile wide, making survival almost impossible. The river bank was a steep fifteen feet straight up and down. At each end of the bank there was a way to come up out of the river. We brought them up at the south end, as we got them up on the bank, one of the men could speak English. He said he was in California before the war started. Another man was on his knees hollering as if he was in pain. One of our men tried to give him a knife, hoping that he would take it and kill himself. But he refused to take it. That was the last I saw or know

of them. During the last days of the siege of Myitkyina, I looked across the Irrawaddy River and saw three men coming down near the mountain in parachutes. (O.S.S.?) I was put on the detail to go get them, but something else happened and I did not get to go after them. J. T. TIDWELL, 5307/2/G CO; 475/2/G, Rt 7 Box 132, Mayfield KY 42066

MORE MYITKYINA MEMOIRS

I am not surprised that you can't recall the 504th Engineer Light Pontoon Co. It was a self-contained unit, where primary mission was an assault crossing, by use of our fast, flat-bottom storm boats, and our M-2 almost as fast assault boats. We were also

equipped with ferry equipment, treadway bridge, and 10-ton capacity Pontoon bridge. We belonged to no Battalion, Division or Regiment. Our control came from C.B.I. Theatre HQ.

When the 5307th captured the Myitkyina air strip, it appeared that the small garrison of Japs in town started evacuating across the Irrawaddy. I believe it was the second day when the 504th was ordered to the airfield at Ledo, India with all assault boat equipment for a major river crossing. The first plane was loaded with 6 M-2 assault boats, three 22 HP outboards, 8 enlisted men, and one 2nd Lt named W D F. Before we could get the second

(Continued on page 3)



July 12, 1944 - Galahad wounded transported 5-1/2 miles from the front to the 42nd Portable Surgical Hospital. An excruciating ride!



July 12, 1944 - The soldier with slung rifle is one of the guards who provided security from Japanese snipers.



July 14, 1944 - 37mm gun crew reducing a Japanese pill box just 60 yards away.



July 14, 1944 - PFC Hugo J. Wagner (left) and PFC Albert W. Weaver occupy Jap pill box. The helmet and rifle of its dead defender are in the foreground.

plane loaded, orders came to cancel our move to Myitkyina. The plane with Lt F his men and equipment was already airborne and was not recalled.

After landing at Myitkyina and unloading the plane, Lt F looked for someone to report to. I think it turned out to be Col Hunter. When the Colonel was told by F that 119 more boats would be arriving shortly, he, (the Colonel) almost flipped. He hadn't ordered any damn boats, didn't need any damn boats and didn't want any damn boats! He told F to drag his boats across the strip and dig in by Col Seagraves Hospital Aid Station. Which he did.

Sometime around the 28th or 29th of May, F without telling

anyone, caught a flight going back to Ledo. When he got to the Ledo strip, he called the 504th at Margherita for transportation. I, James L Watson, 2nd Lt, went out to the field with a 6x6 to get his men and equipment. He told me his men were still at Myitkyina and he had come back for some "supplies". By the time we got back to Margherita it was clear that Lt Flatley had just plain blown it, and bugged out. I went over and talked to our acting C.O., 1st Lt B H Lester, and told him what had happened. He talked to Flatley for some time and then told me to get on the first plane out of Ledo headed for Myitkyina and to get with the men, keep my mouth shut, and do whatever I was told to do.

The men were where Lt Flatley had told me they would be.

A few days later, I was told to take an assault boat, motor and a man down to Pamati, and leave them there with the men (Infantry) there. The ride down to Pamati with those 2 jeeps chained together, pushing or pulling on that slick, muddy ox cart road was a ride I'll never forget! The Engineer that stayed with the Infantry and operated the boat was Roy Appellation.

By now, a Lt Col, whose name I think, was Clambake or Kahlmbach or something like that was giving me orders. The second or third time he called me Flatley, I told him my name was Watson. He

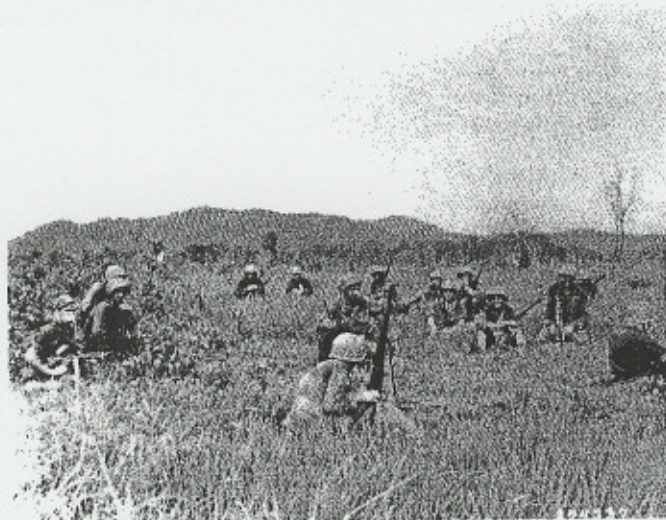
(Continued on page 4)



July 17, 1944 - S/Sgt. Victor Jelosak, Cpl. Louis Wgosky, PFC Vernall Jacobs and S/Sgt. George T. Campell of 1st Bn, Galahad man 60mm mortar a scant 200 yards from the front.



July 18, 1944 - Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell briefs American and Chinese officers at Sitapur.



July 28, 1944 - Galahad Forces: Company E, 2nd Battalion assemble for attack across a 400 yard rice paddy.



July 27, 1944 - 81mm mortar crew fire to support attack by Company E.



wanted to know where Flatley was. I said I wasn't sure, but I thought he was maybe sick. Anyway, he had me move to Pamati, where some infantry commanded by a Lt named Bradley, had an outpost.

I took a couple of men out that night in an assault boat to see what was happening. With nothing stronger than flashlights, we found several makeshift rafts with 2 or 3 Japs on each one. We broke the rafts up by coming by them wide open and turning them over, or knocking them apart. Any

swimmers we found were shot.

The next day I sent word to the air strip that I needed something with more power than flashlights. Two days later, a five KW generator and a 12-inch searchlight arrived and was picked up by me. There was a PFC in starched khakis with the equipment. He told me he was to return to his outfit at Chabua immediately. I told him we would talk about it later, about two months later!

To digress a little here -- when this PFC did get back to his A.A.

outfit, they were carrying him as a deserter! His Bn. C.O. came to see me in the 20th GH at Ledo in September to verify the kid's story. So here was a guy from an A.A. outfit that fought at Pamati with an M-1 rifle, operated a searchlight, tied up Jap prisoners, etc., and you will not find him on your books.

The searchlight worked fine and we could lay out in the dark and destroy anything that came down the river. We brought in prisoners

(Continued on page 5)



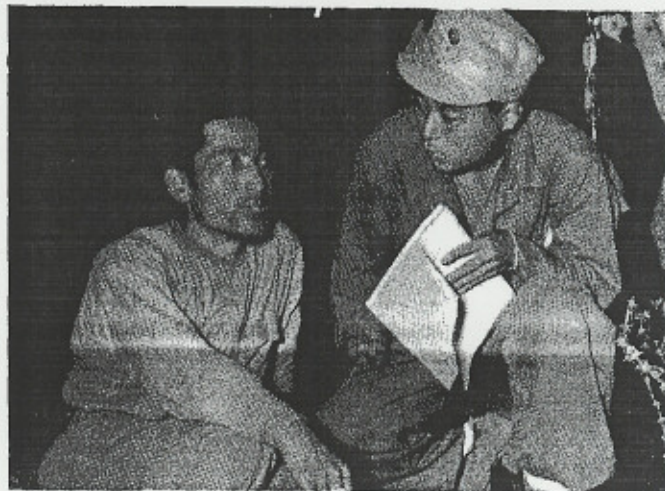
August 1, 1944 - S/Sgt. David Quaid inside of the town of Myitkyina with elements of the 150th Chinese Regiment two days before it fell.



August 2, 1944 - PFC Golman P. Elliott (left) and PFC Cecil L. Lawrence fire 4.2 chemical mortar.



August 2, 1944 - On the outskirts of Myitkyina, a Galahad heavy machine gun crew engages the enemy 100 yards distant.



August 3, 1944 - Captured by American Forces while trying to escape Myitkyina on a bamboo raft this sick Japanese soldier is interrogated by T/Sgt. Edward Mitsukado, member of the 5307th, an American Nisei interpreter.

on request. On the last request, we brought in 18. This got a bird Col named Willey highly P.O.'d. No more requests for prisoners came our way. One day, the Col named Kahlmback showed up at the river with a redheaded O.S.S. Major. He told me this was my new boss. The

new "Boss" asked me if I needed anything. I already had a light .30 Machine gun sandbagged in the bow of the assault boat, and had two BAR's and a tommy gun as well as our M-1 rifles. I asked for a heavy thirty. That evening two heavy thirties and one light fifty was delivered to me. Also, a bunch

of ammunition. Next we acquired a sixty mm mortar and some flares.

I could go on and on, but I think what I have told you here will jog your memory about some "nuts" down at the river, running around in assault boats and generally just doing a nasty job like everyone else

(Continued on page 6)



August 6, 1944 - PFC Linus Rahman (left) and Hugo J. Wagner with souvenirs from Japanese soldiers they had killed.

at Myitkyina.

Do you remember the C-47 that came every day, that had hand lettered on the nose "Pat-Four Days-Four Nights." ? I recall a Major named Healy and Col Hunter, a Chaplain named Culbertson. I had a good relationship with the 88th Fighter Group, too. But that's another "fishing-by-bomb" story.

After the last Jap was gone from Myitkyina, we moved our ferry equipment to a landing just south of Zigyan Island. We moved several hundred Chinese troops across here. On the last trip, a bunch of Chinese soldiers jumped onto the front of the ferry, into the boats. The ferry went down like a submarine. I lost one boat motor operator, Don Givens. The other operator, Ray Phillips, managed to swim ashore.

The 504th Light Pontoon Company which served under fire at Myitkyina did not belong to any Battalion, Regiment nor Division. No Regimental C O bucking for a star. No Battalion C O to question what we did or how we did it. Just one lone Company commanded by an unorthodox ROTC Captain. When we needed something for a specific task, we just went out and found what we needed and "acquired it". The rest of the 504th was flown to Myitkyina, the first part of September, 1944. we went with the British 36th Division on their drive down the RR toward Mandalay.

My platoon repaired the bombed out bridges. The other two platoons operated a supply and evacuation train, using Jeeps with rail wheels for locomotives. We left

the 36th at Katha and returned to Myitkyina. There my platoon operated a large ferry to supply the troops that were building a B-29 strip across the river. I flew back to the States in July '45 and spent 8 months in the tropical disease center at Swannanoa NC. There were two Officers from the 5307th in the same ward with me. One was Capt George Hickman, a veterinary. There was a Lt Finlayson. General Wessels was in command of this group. I later ran into General Wessels at Anniston Ordnance Depot, Alabama in 1952. The first thing he said to me was "How is the Commander of the Irrawaddy Navy?" James L Watson, 1101 Kendall St, Amory MS 38821.

MYITKYINA MEDICAL EVACUATIONS

With regard to Norman K Darling's comments about my making out evacuation tickets for men at Myitkyina Airfield. I recall that the last 30-40 men and officers in the 3rd Bn came out about May 31st, June 1st and 2nd. On May 30th I walked seven miles to the Airfield and explained the

Battle of Myitkyina Casualties:

American:
272 KIA 972 WIA

Chinese:
972 KIA 3,184 WIA

Japanese:
3,000/4,000 KIA WIA?

**Estimated Total Casualties:
9,400+**

situation to Col Hunter.

The few remaining men had been getting the Engineer Battalion settled down in our area. All of our men were sick, some critically. Col Hunter told me that I should do as I saw fit. He did not consider the situation at Myitkyina critical. I don't recall the statement that Darling makes. I was the only one who could write the EMP slips. We had recurrent malaria, scrub typhus, malnutrition, exhaustion and amoebic dysentery cases. The men were also to be checked at the airfield.

Logan Weston should have the Congressional Medal of Honor. His action saved us at Nhpum Ga. The control of his platoon just before Walawbum was a miracle. Dr James E Hopkins, 5307/3/OCT/SURGEON.

**PFC LEON HRALSTAD,
5307/3/OCT, KIA APRIL 7 1944,
NHPUM GA, BURMA**

PFC Hralstad was advancing at the side of his Platoon Leader while carrying a radio. The Japanese were about fifty yards in

(Continued on page 7)

FALL IN

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

HENRY J DE VITA, 269 N Delaware Av, N Massapequa NY 11758, 5307; 475

EDGAR GETHING, 9363 Sharrott Rd, Poland OH 44514-3508, 5307

ALBERT R GLOCK, 1203 Oakland Rd, Baltimore MD 21220, 410-687-1687, 5307; 475

TERRY HOY, Simpson College, Indianola IA 50125, 5307/HQ/COMM SEC; 5332 BDE/HQ/COMM

PHILIP SMART, 957 Stonehenge Cir, Corona CA 91719, 909-272-3482, 5307/2/

front. The Platoon Ldr told Leon to get down. As he was doing this, a Japanese bullet struck him above the left eye. He died instantly. He was buried nearby in a small cemetery in the jungle with about twenty other men.

He was in the Third Battalion of this regiment of men who had volunteered for a dangerous and hazardous mission. He, with the others, had walked 125 miles over mountains from Assam Province, India into North Burma. He had fought at the Battle of Walawbum, where the Japanese were defeated.

Leon died with twenty two other courageous men of the 3rd Bn during the Battle of Nhpum Ga, which lasted from March 30 - April 9, 1942.

The Second Bn had been ordered to block the mountain trail on a razorback ridge at 3000 feet elevation and surrounded by a dense jungle. They soon became surrounded and cut off by a large Japanese force which had artillery. This development forced a new mission on the 3rd Bn. They had to prevent the total destruction of the 2nd Bn and eliminate the Japanese troops.

Leon Hralstad's Bn in 12 days, accomplished the impossible. They courageously fought up five miles of jungle trail. This mission was completed against machine guns, rifles, mortars and artillery. It would appear to be one of the most successful offensive actions in World War II. The courage and brilliant tactics of the men surpassed all missions that I know of in World War II.

A somewhat similar mission on the Island of New Georgia in the Solomon Islands required three divisions and resulted in about 5000 casualties. The history books will speak little of the brave men of Merrill's Marauders, but the men of the regiment will carry to the grave their gratitude and admiration for their brave comrades who died in Burma with Leon Hralstad, your heroic brother.

I salute his memory and express my admiration for his courage and dedication to his comrades and country.

The above is from a letter written to the sister of Leon Hralstad by Dr Hopkins, 2 St Johns Rd Baltimore, MD 21210.

US ARMY COMBAT LESSONS NO 5, JUNGLE OPERATIONS

Burma Notes - "Merrill's Marauders"

An American force in Burma, popularly known as "Merrill's Marauders", picked up quite a bit of information on the Japs and how to work against them during their actions in North Burma. Here are some of the main points passed on.

Animal Transport - "When ordered to get animals off a trail quickly, take them off in pairs - they go better and don't bray so much."

Nisei for Combat Intelligence - "Some of the most valuable men in our outfit were the Nisei Japanese interpreters, not back with battalion and regimental headquarters, but up with a platoon in contact on the perimeter. The Japs talk loudly sometimes before attack. On several occasions the Japanese interpreters told us exactly what the Japs were shouting and enabled us to get set for an attack from a certain direction. Once an interpreter caused the Japs to attack into a trap by shouting orders to them."

Recognition of Foot Prints - "It is easy to teach a man to look for different types of shoe prints on a trail. On two occasions, a suspicious shoe print caused us to surprise the Japs, whereas if we hadn't noticed it they probably would have surprised us."

Cellophane Bags for Maps - "Flexible cellophane bags to carry your maps are invaluable. The top of your helmet is a good spot for mosquito head net and the map you are using."

Map for Every Soldier - "Some simple map should be provided for every soldier, not only for possible

use in case he becomes lost but to orient him on the situation."

Jap Ambush - "One of the our patrols took a route a previous patrol had used and was ambushed. The Japs are cagey - they will follow a patrol sometimes for long distances, then set an ambush in case it comes out again."

Keep Your Eyes Open - "The third battalion's lead scouts were cautiously moving up the trail near Wesu Ga when a Jap patrol opened fire on them from the opposite side of a small open field. The lead scout fell to the ground, and the Japs, thinking he was killed, rushed forward. The scout raised up and fired a full magazine from his tommy gun, killing two Japs and putting five others to flight, and the third battalion moved on."

Ding How - "Japs will do anything they can think of to entice our soldiers into a trap. Frequently the Japs shout 'Ding How' which are the words Chinese often use to identify themselves to U.S. troops. The term is equivalent to our 'OK'."

Dogs - "Japs often use dogs to attract fire which will reveal the positions of our automatic weapons. If possible, U.S. troops should withhold fire from dogs."

Tree Bursts - "Japs aim their mortar and artillery shells at trees near our troops. When a shell strikes a tree, the fragments are deflected downward rather than upward and sideward, which is the fragment pattern when a shell explodes on contact with the ground. Therefore our troops should not build foxholes near or under big trees."

(Continued on page 8)

PASS IN REVIEW

Deaths reported recently. Name & Hometown (Where Known), Organization, Where, When Deceased.

- EDWARD K BAYEROSKY, 81 MM Mortarman, 475th, November 18, 1992
 DAVID CONTESS, 67 Roxbury Dr, Commack NY 11725, 5307/3/OCT, January 10, 1994
 DAVID J D'EMIDO, 33 Barnum Rd, Larchmont NY 10538, 5307, 475th, August 1993
 ROBERT F NICHOLSON, 354 N Evans Ct, Scranton PA 18504, 5307/2, January 23, 1944
 FRANK G ROMANOSKY, 447 East Av, Bridgeport CT 06610, 5307, October 30, 1992
 JOSEPH F SWEENEY, 44 Watauga St, Asheville NC 28801, 704-258-2571, 5307/3/HQ, December 15, 1992
 VERNON R WHITE, 1783 Ferndale Rd., Cope SC, 803-534-0273, 5307/1/RCT, Member of Board of Directors, April 4, 1994

Improvising Bunks in the Jungle - Corporal Frank L Morris stated that member of his squad learned from the Gurka soldiers how to improvise dry, aboveground sleeping pallets in the jungle. The method is as follows: Bamboo poles 7 feet long are flattened out and lashed together to make a pallet 4 feet in width. Strings or fibers from the bamboo itself are tied together. Stakes 2 feet long, to which the corners of the pallet are lashed, hold it well above the jungle floor. Shelter halves and blankets are used on the pallets for warmth and protection against rain.

Camouflage - "Replacements should be taught that it is not good practice to cut out a firing lane in front of their foxholes or positions, because the recent removal of even a little brush or vegetation is easily spotted by the Japs with the result that the position is discovered."

Withdrawal Across A River Under Attack - Major John Jones, Observer with Merrill's Marauders, reports the following: "Six hundred yards north of Walawbum, Lieutenant Weston's intelligence and reconnaissance platoon began taking a heavy pounding from Jap Mortars just after daylight. At 0730 he was attacked from the north; at 1030 from the northeast; a little later from the northwest. The Japanese Nisei Interpreter with Lt Weston heard the Jap orders for attack at different points, and his warnings enabled Lt Weston to shift automatic weapons to the points of attack. By 1100 Lt Weston was surrounded on three sides by superior forces of Japs and almost out of ammunition. The Jap knee-mortar fire was close and very accurate.

The Combat Team Commander decided to withdraw the platoon immediately. He told Lt Weston by radio to withdraw under the cover of a squad on the south river bank and a smoke barrage on the Jap positions overlooking the river. Weston had his men take off their

(Continued on page 9)

OFFICERS ROW

PRESIDENT- Phil Piazza

The Ranger Rendezvous will be held again this year at Ft Benning GA. The date is August 24th through 27th. I was not too happy with the date, as the following week

is our own Reunion in Chicago. It could not be helped, as we had to work around the hectic schedules of the Regiment and the Training Brigade. If it is a choice of which you can attend, I would prefer that you make our Reunion in Chicago. But if you can make both, fine. Just let me know as soon as possible, who will attend THE RANGER RENDEZVOUS.

The Rendezvous will include the Dedication of the Ranger Memorial and the Induction of new members into the Ranger Hall of Fame. The Marauders will be inducting two men this year. You will be notified after June as to who they will be. The Selection Committee will be notifying me at that time. The Rendezvous will wind up on Saturday night with the 75th Ranger LRRP's, who carried our insignia into Viet Nam. They are very proud of this heritage. The Best Ranger Competition which is run by the Ranger Tng Brigade will be held on April 29th through May 2nd. If anyone is planning to attend that at Ft Benning GA also, let me know. There is still time to order Memorial Walk Bricks and Marauder Prints. We need the money to complete the construction.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Ray Lyons

We have issued the latest 1994 Directory to members who have made donations. We had a problem with the computer and as a result have bogged down on the correspondence. I did not throw it away. It is just buried. We continue to have problems with mail being returned because of your having moved. Please think of us at the time. That means summer-winter changes also. We counted 1437 regular members and 310 Honorary members while preparing the 1994 Directory.

HISTORIAN

Dave Quaid

My time has been taken up with the preparations for the Easter Weekend Pilgrimage to the graves of Generals Merrill and Stilwell at West Point. Several years ago, Gilbert Howland (Green Combat Team) broached the idea of a 50th Anniversary Meeting at West Point to commemorate the Easter Sunday Relief of "B" Battalion, surrounded on Nhpum Ga Hill. Phil Piazza and I have been

working on this project for some months. The two trips made by me to the Point logged well over 1200 miles. Ray Lyons will be putting out a supplementary issue of the BURMAN NEWS to report the event.

The new video tape is a major production which will be completed prior to our Chicago reunion. The delay in finishing it is due to my feeling that we need more interviews in order to flesh out the entire campaign. These new interviews will be done at West Point and perhaps on a swing around the country.

Prior to our Wakefield MA Reunion, I sent out a press packet to all of the various media in the Boston Area. We received excellent coverage at the time. One reporter went into the hospital that very week. Two weeks ago, he published the article. Three people have called me to buy our video tape. We have found a new member and the brother of a Marauder. I've advised them to contact Ray Lyons.

After a long talk with Ed Zaino recently, I put together a suggested Press Packet for his Chicago Reunion. He will take my Wakefield materials and customize them for his area's media needs.

PRESS ON TO CHICAGO
REGARDLESS

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. Send check to Merrill's Marauders Association % Ray Lyons, Executive Secretary.

We have available the Mike Gabbett Book, "The Bastards of Burma". \$10 per copy. Mike was one of the Original Marauders and the book covers in Regular Army Top Sgt style his observations of what went on in the 1st and 2nd Campaigns in Burma.

We had sold out of all copies of "The Marauders" by Charlton Ogburn. We recently received our back order. \$8. per copy.

Woody Woodruff is working on a re-print (again) of "Marsmen in Burma". Price appears to be going up but that is not news.

undershirts and put them on the river bank to mark the flanks of the place where they were going to cross, so the squad on the opposite bank could cover them. Then he called for smoke and started withdrawing a few of his men to the river bank, letting them infiltrate across under the protective fire of the BAR's on the opposite bank.

The Japs had anticipated this withdrawal and had placed two Nambus (light machine guns) near the bank. The BAR's opened on them, however, and the Nambus didn't fire more than 10 shots at the men withdrawing. One of Lt Weston's snipers, Chief Janis, a full-blooded American Indian, plucked off five Japs who had crept up to the river bank and were firing from close range at the infiltrating member of the platoon. A few men from each side of the perimeter withdrew at a time. BAR and Tommy-gun men were last. The Japs were throwing mortar fire at the perimeter all the time.

The first four men to cross carried litters, made of jackets stretched on bamboo poles, on which they carried two badly wounded comrades. When they reached the opposite bank, the Medics took the wounded and dressed their wounds even though bullets were flying about and mortar shells were bursting in the water 10 to 20 yards away.

Lt Weston was the last man to cross the river. The withdrawal was a success because of a perfectly coordinated plan. Communications by SCR-300 radio had been maintained all the time."

A Marauder Operation - Major General Frank D Merrill gives the following account of one of the operations of his "Marauders" in Burma. "The Chinese had for some time been carrying out operations against the Jap fortified positions, as shown on the sketch. The Japs had been there for about 18 months and were dug in pretty strongly. As the Chinese were having difficulty with their operation, it was decided to send us in to assist them. We made a long march around the Japanese right flank to 'A', where we pulled a feint. Leaving 40 mounted men at 'A' to do plenty of firing to deceive the Japs, the main body went on, making a 26 mile march to 'B' where we engaged the enemy in a big fight, successfully accom-

plishing our mission. We blocked two roads and all adjacent trails.

We had quite a stroke of luck at point 'C', where we tapped the main Jap telephone lines and listened in on their orders. The Japs ordered a withdrawal across the river and 48 hours later started crossing in the vicinity of 'D'. My three battalions were between 'B' and 'C', while the bulk of the Jap division was coming south to cross the river. At one point on the river where the Japs were crossing, we had 36 machine guns sited on them; you can imagine the slaughter at that spot. The water in that area actually 'ran red'.

I was weak in men, but my biggest difficulty was in trying to maneuver those I had. My men were so tired that I couldn't maneuver them as I wanted. We could have done twice as good a job here with mounted troops. As it was, we had to be content with the job we had already done, which wasn't bad. Although some Japs escaped southwest of 'D' we got about 4,500 in this engagement - in one small area we counted 435 bodies."

Obtained from Richard Avery.

WHAT HAPPENED AT WALAWBUM

At Walawbum my position was in the center of the line on a rise overlooking the river. I think it was named Numpyk Bum. To my front was an open field and approximately 500 to 800 yards was the Kamaing Road. At that time on the road a fleet of Japanese trucks were unloading troops to prepare to attack us. As the enemy came across the open space in droves, we opened fire upon them, inflicting heavy casualties to the wave upon waves of Japanese. I think my runner shouted to me "Hey look at the excellent mortar fire we were receiving from our mortar section". I turned and looked to see Andy Pung in a tree. He was directing mortar fire causing many of the enemy to fall back to the road. His directed fire was deadly and broke the back of the attack upon our positions. Through my field glasses, I observed heavy machine gun support fire from two machine guns, one on each of our flanks. They were sending blistering fire upon the attacking force. I didn't know Corporal Di Orto but he could

have been one of the machine gunners that did a good job and helped our forces.

It was quite a battle and I had an excellent view of the complete engagement. I saw Colonel Beach walk out to the battle field in front of our positions as he looked over the dead and wounded Japanese troops. His runner had to pull him back to our lines as it seemed to me he wanted to continue on to the Kamaing Road. John Keslik, 5307/3/OCT, Wening Str 30, 85053 Ingolstadt, Germany.

RANGER COLUMN

The Rangers of the 1st Range Battalion invite all Rangers past and present to attend Operation Platinum Jubilee from 24 through 26 May 1994, at Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah GA. It will start on the 24th with the 25th Anniversary celebration of the reactivation of the battalion at Eglin AFB, Ft Walton Beach FL. The MM's were there to turn over our colors to them. The 50th Anniversary of the historic capture of the Myitkyina Airfield will be recognized during this ceremony as well.

The Bn sports competition (Banner Day) will run through the morning of the 25th followed by a picnic at Lotts Island. This is a semiannual event for the Bn to choose the Banner Company highly competitive. Banner Day will be held at Tuttle Field or Hunter Army Airfield. A Battalion picnic will cost no more than \$5 per person. If you know now that you will make it, write to Comdr 1st Bn Rgr Regt, Hunter AAF Savannah GA 31409 or call SFC Hughes 912-352-6918.

The Ranger Ball is on the 26th at the Savannah Civic Center. The Ranger Ball tickets cost \$15 each payable in advance. Checks made out to Ranger Ball Account and mailed to: Comdr 1st Bn Rgr Regt Attn: S5, HAAF GA 31409. They are setting a May 4th deadline but will entertain later requests from Merrill's Marauders Association members since the B/N will not reach you in time. We are eligible for the Military rate at local Savannah hotels

+++++
Did you ever wonder how they put a fire out in the Post Office?
They stamp it out.

TRAILSIDE TALES FROM BURMA

I think the first place we stopped after we turned off the Ledo Road was Ningbyen. I do remember that it was dark when we got to the spot where we were told to bivouac and I had to brush aside stones to make a clear space to lay down. The next day we were assigned to a better area. This had been a battle area and four of us from our squad set out to investigate. Among the equipment left we found a case of British hand grenades. The detonators were packed in a separate container in the center of the crate. They had to be assembled before use. I believe it was the next day that we took off up river after fish. They were supposed to be four second grenades but they might go off in three, maybe six or seven and maybe not at all. We didn't trust any of them. Once we pulled the pin, we got rid of the grenade. We had gone upriver several miles and hadn't gotten any fish. We saw a cliff across the river and knew that there should be a deep hole at the base of it. We cut bamboo about

three or four inches in diameter and made a raft. Because there was water stored in the sections, the raft was heavy and with more than two people it would go under. One man ferried the others across one at a time. We had only two grenades left and only one of them went off. No fish! Above the cliff we could see parts of a bamboo fence. We went up to check it out and found that some fighting had taken place there also. We found an Indian soldier laying in some tall weeds. He had been shot through the middle and either fell or crawled into the weeds and had not been found. He had gotten his 1st aid pack open but never got to dress his wound. While we were looking around a Chinese renegade wandered in. He had two grenades - one British and one American. We talked him out of the British one but he would not part with the other. We went back down to the river and I threw that grenade up along the base of the cliff. When it finally went off, it looked like large snow flakes coming up. The largest ones would

surface and go under again. Jim Vavra started shooting at them with his M-1 rifle while two of us took the raft out and gathered up fish twelve to fifteen inches long. We made up two stringers about three feet long and Jim had gotten three about two feet long. We tied the stringers up to a pole and Murphy and I put it between us. Jim had his three on a pole over his shoulder and Meade helped carry the rifles. That's the way we headed back for camp! We had enough fish to feed half the company. We were still quite a ways from camp when we met a fellow that was looking for us. The outfit was moving out and he was sent to guide us to where they were to cross the river. We dropped all those fish and took off! We caught up before they all got across the river but we didn't get to tell anyone about the Indian soldier.

There was a couple of times in Burma that we used grenades to get fish. The Chinese interpreter attached to the third platoon would clean and cook them for us. We used either salt or bouillon tablets for seasoning. We would wrap the fish in palm leaves and stuff them into a bamboo container, fill it with water and build a fire around it. When you unwrapped it, the fish then fell off the bones. Man that was good. AT LEAST WE THOUGHT SO THEN!

I have often wondered whether anyone else ever found the Indian's body. This is no doubt the kind of thing that could account for some MIA's from any war.

You mentioned in your last B/N that Col Hunter, Lt Wilson and Sgt Matsumoto were presented the Ranger Hall of Fame Medal. I did have some personal contact with Col Hunter and Lt Wilson. Col Hunter held a horse while "Doc" Doallas and I loaded a machine gun and ammo at Walawbum. Lt Wilson told me that he liked men that no matter how bad they were hurting, they could go on. My feet were raw. But I wasn't going to wait for a truck to take me back to camp. This was at our first camp in India. Ralph Pollock, RD 1 Box 1494, Mount Union PA 17066, 5307/1/WCT/B CO/MG SEC

+++++
Garage mechanic to apprentice:
"The first lesson is to lift the hood and stare at the engine in

GENERAL ORDER #8 - PURPLE HEART AWARDS - Continued

Hq. 475TH INF, APO 218, GO #8, Sec. I, dtd 15 Oct 44 (Cont'd):

FRANK N SAPIO, 32805248, Pfc - 5 August 1944
 STANLEY M SASINE, 32809306, Pvt - 30 June 1944
 ANCIL SAWYER, 33558565, Pvt - 1 August 1944
 ARTHUR J SCHIESTEL, 32736131, Pvt - 2 July 1944
 WILLIAM B SCHMIDT, 35790140, Pfc - 30 July 1944
 HOWARD E SCHULTZ, 35547481, Pvt - 28 June 1944
 ROBERT L SCHULTZ, 34543671, Pfc - 5 August 1944
 JOHN J SCINTO, 32810841, Pvt - 3 August 1944
 CHARLES H SCOTT, 34208866, Pvt - 5 June 1944
 GLENE D SEIFRES, 35548072, Pvt - 16 June 1944
 JOSEPH SELESKO, 32010424, S/Sgt - 14 June 1944
 PRIMO F SERENI, 35470080, T/4 - 16 June 1944
 ARTHUR A SEVIGNY, 31316674, Pvt - 16 June 1944
 HOWARD W SHACKLEY, 31319612, Pfc - 5 June 1944
 THOMAS SHAFFER, 35749539, Sgt - 28 June 1944
 IVAN D SHARP, 35094608, Pfc - 14 June 1944
 FRANK J SHAFFER, 35758686, Pvt - 3 August 1944
 RUSSELL D SHAVER, O-1318335, 1st Lt, Inf - 15 June 1944
 RODERICK R SHAW, 20845915, S/Sgt - 28 July 1944
 WOODROW W SHELTON, 6936056, Pvt - 27 July 1944
 EARL A SHEPARD, 35629552, Pfc - 2 August 1944
 ANDREW R SHINSKY, 33433155, Pfc - 12 June 1944
 RICHARD W SHOOTMAN, 39040827, Pvt - 1 July 1944

ERNEST F EASTERBROOK,
Colonel, Infantry,
Commanding.
Distribution "A"

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

A TYPICAL DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN INFANTRYMAN!

I'd like to mention some events that are amusing now but close to "hell" then. A few days after the capture of the Myitkyina Airstrip, the 3rd Bn arrived. I had no idea where I was except in Burma. In fact, I did not see the airfield until I was evacuated. Our team, Khaki CT, was ordered to go to such and such a place. I happened to be near the CP where the Team radio was. The area we were ordered to occupy would have put us between the Japanese and the Chinese lines. This I heard with my own ears. As the CO explained the situation by phone, he got nowhere. At the end, this was said, "If you want Khaki to go there, send in another Commander". To make a long story short, we did not move to the stated area.

I believe it was only two days later that I went on sick call and received evacuation orders. Also this I heard from the voice of Doc Hopkins. Not word for word. He told another man that was working with him to give every man an evacuation slip regardless of complaint. As it turned out, he was very right.

During the request for volunteers for a secret mission, I was on the island of Vella La Vella. I was with a group of men, about

C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

As the Senior Officer of the 475th Combat Team of the Mars Task Force, of which the 612 Field Artillery was a part between 12 November 1944 to 2 March 1945, I hereby certify that the 612th Field Artillery Battalion was engaged in normally sustained periods of actual combat at the following times and at the following places:

Battle of TONKWA 5 December 1944 to 20 December 1944

Battle of Loi-Kang 17 January 1945 to 21 February 1945

I consider this unit to have been actually under enemy fire during these periods and to have been exposed to combat conditions equally as arduous as the infantry elements of the Combat Team.

/s/Reuben A Holden
/t/REUBENAHOLDEN

Major, Infantry
Formerly S2, 475th Infantry
Formerly C.O., 2nd Bn, 475th

ten from 2nd Bn, 35th Inf. Just prior to leaving we were spoken to by Col (at the time) Swede Larson. The only notice of where we might go came from him in this way - "I'm sure you will go the C.B.I. area." I cannot speak for others but for the 2nd Bn, 35th Inf, it was all volunteers, no one drafted, or ordered.

Now I must speak of the tragic event at Nhpum Ga. At the time we were very close to the 2nd Bn. As there was only room to set up a LMG, the one I was on was not used. At the time, I was in a hole along with Sgt Moore, forward operator for the Mortars. He was on the phone, connected with the guns. As he listened to the orders to be followed by the gunners, he hollered out, "Get down, it will hit here". It wasn't long after that when it did. Nolling died instantly, Lapan not long later and Marshal died in a hospital. As the Lt came down from the guns he made this remark, "If I used Hd E. light, I'd have made hamburger out of them". Horm, part Indian, heard this went for him. Luckily, Maj Briggs was there and cooled things off.

Another event happened here that turned out very well. Our rifle men were on the slope of a hill very close to sundown. Col Beach wanted to have the men stay there overnight but Maj Briggs and a Lt, (I can't remember his name) wanted to bring them off the slope for the night. This I admire from the Lt. He spoke to Col Beach and said this, "I know the Japanese would move out during the night and we could walk in". In the morning we did just that. Later on during my duties in Korea and Viet Nam, I never did see such a mess as I saw on the top of that hill.

During the evacuation of wounded and sick men, we had Burmese help us with a few elephants. Most of the pack animals had never seen an elephant. Some got very scared

and the mule skinnners had a job to keep them from running away. Some paid no attention. but we had the mule that wanted to attack. From what I saw, he was more trouble than all the rest. He sure was a fighter. Norman K Darling, 5307/3/KCT/HW/MG, RT 1 BOX 67A, Mauk GA 31058-9656

DO NOT LEAVE A BUDDY BEHIND!

I am writing to propose Ed Kohler for a Ranger Hall of Fame Medal. I have always thought that he should have gotten an army medal.

I was in Green Combat Team of 2nd Battalion on the retreat to Nhpum Ga. I was a BAR man and Rear Guard on this retreat. We came under artillery fire and we hit the ground. I was wounded in both legs by a tree burst. When the shelling stopped, everyone took off again. I tried to get up but couldn't. I was left behind. Ed was quite a ways up the trail when he looked back to see if the Japs were coming. He saw me lying on the ground and came back for me.

He was suffering from Malaria and had a very high fever. We threw aside my equipment. He picked me up over his shoulder and carried me for a mile or more. Then I was put on a horse that they had brought to the rear for me. If he had not done this I believe that I would have been tortured and killed.

I was treated at Nhpum Ga and gotten out on Good Friday, put on an L-5 and flown to 20th Gen Hospital.

My son Walter, thanked Ed personally. If it hadn't been for Ed he would not have been here. William Pete Henderson, PO BOX 21, Warsaw NY 14569-0021, 716-754-7725, 5307/2/GCT/B CO

+++++
The way I figure it, if you kicked the person who causes most of your troubles, you wouldn't be able to sit down for a month.

LOST, STRAYED OR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THESE GUYS?

JAMES F O'MALLEY, 4707 STATE RD, CLEVELAND OH 44109

(REPORTED SERIOUSLY ILL SEVERAL MONTHS AGO IN A HOME/HOSPITAL?)

CPL PATRICK J HART, 5307/1/WCT/I&R. Last known address PO Box M, Jacksonville FL 32203 back in May 1991

JOHN P D'ARCY, 1447 E 66th St, Brooklyn NY 11234-4012

MILTON KORNFELD, 9 Holly Av, Florida NY 10921, 475/2

Letters

EDITOR

I was reading the May '93 issue of the BURMAN NEWS when I found two of my buddies listed on the Purple Heart Award list. Mellard Crist and Henry J De Vita. I was lying right alongside Mel Crist when he got hit. I don't know his whereabouts now, but he was from Williamsport PA. Henry De Vita and I exchange Christmas Cards every year. He would like to be on the mailing list. John H Hartwell, Co L, 475th, 1753 W 1st Av, Columbus OH 43212. (ED: Can anyone from the Williamsport area help us find Mellard Crist. Check phone book for instance?)

EDITOR

I was one of the first ones to start the pin point air dropping, we were called the First Air Dropping Company. I dropped to you fellows from the beginning and until July of 1945 - one of five original air droppers who are left. I was at Myitkyina when we captured it, got a tire shot out. I forget the name of the Battle but when you fellows were trapped, I dropped water, flame thrower's, and ammo to fight your way back. But instead you went forward. God Bless you fellows, you were great. James De Stefano, 5240 Champagne Cir, Orlando FL 32808-2857, 407-295-9816, 1ST AIR CARGO COMMAND

EDITOR

My Father was T/4 Warren A Olsen, Radioman, HQ & HQ CO, 2nd Bn, 5307th. He came from Trinidad with the other men of the 2nd Bn. I would very much like to locate **anyone** who had served along with my father under Col Mc Gee. I would be very much interested in stories and especially pictures that he was in. If readers would contact me regarding information on my father, they can reach me at the following address. All letters will be answered. Thank you in advance for your help. Delphine Wixon, 29 Albany St, Wilmington MA 01887-2261, 508-658-2585.

EDITOR

I have just received information from Robert Hall about the Merrill's Marauders Association. I was in the 5307/HQ & HQ DET from 19 Jan 44 to 7 Aug. 44. Robert Jones Jr, 2433 Whitmire Blvd #74, Midland TX 79705.

EDITOR

My name is Horace Allen. I was a member of the 5307/1/HQ/COMM Platoon and the same with the 475th. I was flown out of Burma to the hospital in Assam, after Lashio. After convalescing in the hospital, and a two week recuperation furlough in Calcutta, I reported to Kunming and was assigned to the advisory team of the Chinese 57th Army, 32nd Division in Anlung. I returned to the U.S. in late December of 1945 on the Marine

Raven. Horace J Allen, 10 Little River Rd, Old Orchard Beach Me 04064

RANGER RENDEZVOUS

The dates for the Annual Regimental Ranger Rendezvous will be from August 22nd thru August 29th. It should be noted that our own Reunion will be the week of August 29th - September 5th, Labor Day. Some of us - Merrill's Marauders Association will be arriving in Chicago on Tuesday August 30th.

CORRECTION

Randall Colvin and Ambrose Jacob were good enough to provide detailed information on the names of the men who were shown in the February issue, Page 6 as a 75 mm pack artillery crew. The correct names for Battery C, 612th FA Bn were as follows: Man standing: Sgt. Taylor (deceased); man setting fuse on shell is Ambrose Jacob, Spring Hill, FL; man with shell waiting to load is Carl Anderson, Springfield, OR; man facing camera is Dewey Probst, Grant Pass, OR - Killed in Action on Feb. 5 or 6, 1945, during Battle of Hosi Valley at Burma Road. The gunner, Randall Colvin, all you can see is his fatigue cap. The action took place at the Battle of Tonkwa.

**Make Plans
NOW for the
Chicago Reunion!**



MERRILL'S MARAUDERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

RAYMOND V. LYONS

Editor

11244 N. 33rd St.

Phoenix, AZ 85028-2723

Forward & Address Correction

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