

into the Hump operation proved difficult. Troop carrier and combat cargo personnel, who looked down on ATC as being a "non-combat" outfit, resented being "demoted," as they saw it, to a menial operation. They were also offended by having to take a one-week training course on how to fly the Hump. Despite mutual recriminations between two organizations, however, the tactical units made a significant contribution to the tonnage delivered in 1945.

Under Tunner's spurs, and thanks to the almost unlimited resources finally flowing into the CBI, tonnage on the Hump expanded dramatically, rising from 24,715 tons in October 1944 to 44,099 in January 1945, and reaching a peak of 71,042 in July 1945. Perhaps General Tunner should have the last word concerning the significance of air logistics on the Hump:

*The war was over, but large-scale airlift, the conception and development of which took place there on the Hump, was just beginning. Halfway around the world, in a forgotten operation over high mountains and dangerous terrain, we pioneered it and established it. Lord knows there were areas in the world where the idea of air transport might have been tested a little more easily, but the Hump was designated the scene of this great proving ground by the exigencies of war, and perhaps it was just as well. After that we knew air transport would work anywhere . . . Airlift proved itself not merely feasible, but practical, and superior to other transport in many ways.*

One cannot leave the Hump without some discussion of "Operation Matterhorn." Matterhorn grew out of the development of the Boeing B-29 "Superfortress" and an early commitment to bring the war to the Japanese mainland. The struggle to develop the B-29 and the origins of the bombing campaign against Japan are far too complex to discuss here. Suffice to say that with the development of this bomber, the Army Air Forces found itself with a potent offensive weapon for use against Japan. The question was where to base the aircraft.

By mid-1943, estimates forecast that ten B-29 groups should be available by October 1944, but Pacific islands within the range of Japan would not be available under existing schedules. Might the

bombers be profitably used in China, in the meantime, especially since the prestige of having the big bombers would also placate the growing demands of Chiang Kai-shek? The Mariana Islands were not expected to be available until March 1945. Thus, for a year, China was the only location that the B-29s could use within range of Japan, and this fact overrode the obvious problems posed by logistics. Army Air Forces planners began looking closely at basing the big bombers in the CBI.

In late September 1943, General Arnold directed the preparation of an operational plan for bombing Japan from China with the maximum number of B-29s at the earliest possible date. The resulting plan called for an initial wing of 100 B-29s operating from area around Chengtu, China. The first wing of what would become XX Bomber Command would begin operations about 1 April 1944, followed by a second wing in September.

The planners attempted to deal with the logistical problems posed by the CBI in an interesting and unique way. The B-29 force would be made as self-sufficient as possible. The bombers would be based in India, not China. Supplies of gasoline and other necessities would be prepositioned at the bases in China by the C-29 bombers themselves, supplemented by 20 C-87s.

The combat-loaded bombers would stage through the Chinese air fields, where they would be re-

fueled and sent on to bomb Japan. Two other restrictions applied. None of the supplies prepositioned in China could be delivered at the expense of Tenth or Fourteenth Air Forces operations, and, of course everything had to be accomplished by air.

The basic premise of Matterhorn was sacrificed before the first B-29 reached India. In March 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to bypass Truk and seize the Marianas in mid-June 1944, substantially advancing the date for bombing Japan from the Pacific. This decision made the use of B-29s in China less attractive. Matterhorn was scaled back to the four groups of the 58th Bombardment Wing. The operation thus became less a serious attack on Japan than a training and shake-down effort that provided political support for Chiang Kai-shek and, also, might have some impact on the Japanese economy.

Work on the airfields for Matterhorn began in November 1943 using borrowed equipment. Ultimately, the construction force in India comprised some 6,000 U.S. engineer and construction troops and 27,000 civilians, and most of the airfields were ready for the first B-29s in April.

The advanced B-29 fields in China were located in the area around Chengtu, capitol of Szechuan province, 400 miles from Kunming. American and Chinese engineers supervised construction, while more than a third of a million Chinese men and women,



Air-Supply drops like the one shown above were the keys to success in Burma operations.

working almost completely by hand, built the runways and other facilities. Work began in late January 1944 and the first B-29 landed on the field at Kwanghan on 24 April.

XX Bomber Command's aircraft flew the 11,500 miles from the United States to India with their combat crews, but the plan to carry all combat personnel by B-29 had to be scrapped because of the unreliability of the bombers' engines. It proved more important for each B-29 to carry a spare engine. High priority passengers went on ATC aircraft by way of Natal, Khartoum, and Karachi, and the first contingent of 20 C-87s left the United States on 5 January with key personnel. Most personnel and supplies went by ship, however, some by way of North Africa and the Suez, others westward by way of Australia.

Initial spares estimates proved too low and ATC initiated a special airlift, "Mission 10," in which passengers and freight flew to Casablanca and then to Calcutta. Twenty-five C-54s were added to ATC's North African Wing for this effort, which lasted from 1 April through 1 June. It was just the be-

ginning, however. Three squadrons of C-46s were also added to the delivery system. In April, the first of these squadrons arrived and was placed on the Hump run. The other two squadrons were assigned to the North African run, beginning the "Crescent Blend" service on 6 June that guaranteed XX Bomber Command 333 tons per month. ATC provided Matterhorn with an additional 50 tons of air supply through its "Fireball" service for high priority cargo, as well.

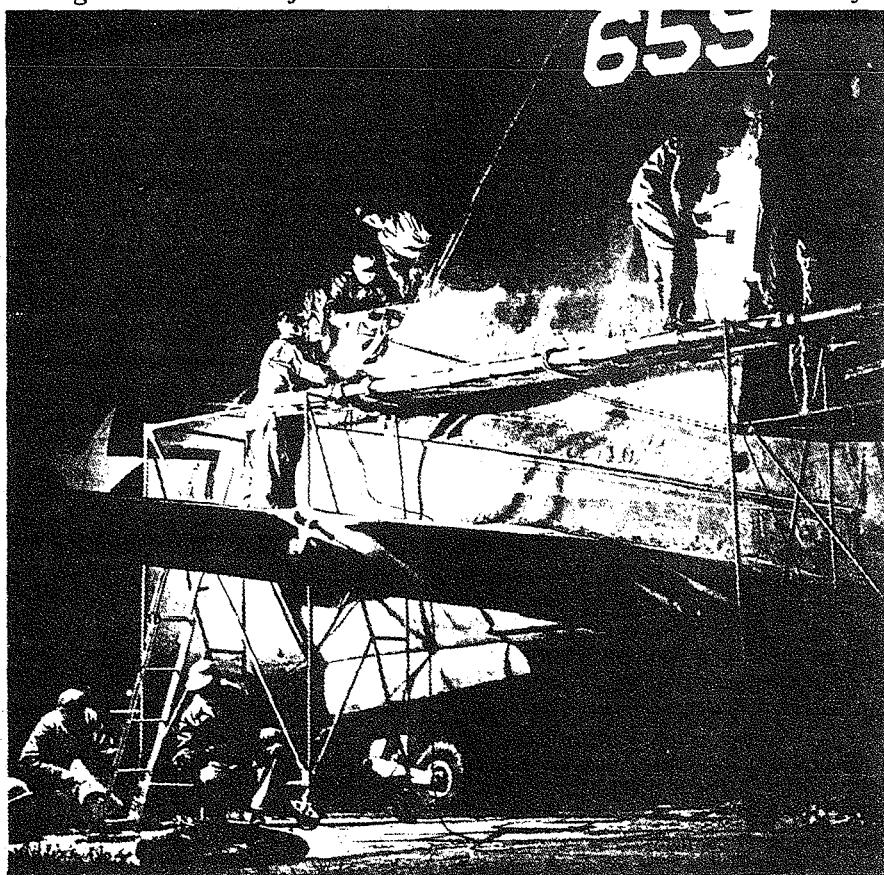
Despite such efforts, the buildup of supplies, especially in China, progressed slowly, and ultimately, proved insufficient to support sustained operations. Brig. Gen. Kenneth B. Wolfe, commander of XX Bomber Command, planned to have 6,000 tons stockpiled in China by 1 May to support two 100 plane strikes. Instead, he had received only about 4,000 tons. As of mid-May, the XX Bomber Command had flown 2,867 hours of B-29 time, of which 2,378 were on transport duty and only 439 in training for combat.

On 15 June, XX Bomber Command flew its first mission against Japan, bombing the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata in Kyu-

shu. Of the 93 B-29s that departed Bengal, 79 reached China where they were refueled. Of the 75 that took off, 68 got airborne and 48 actually reached the target. Bomb damage was insignificant. By then, the handwriting was on the wall. The Mariana Islands became available much earlier than had been planned, and the bases in China became less valuable. XX Bomber Command flew its last mission out of China on 6 January 1945, although it continued to operate against targets in Southeast Asia from India until March. The results of MATTERHORN were minimal. Of 3,058 combat sorties, only 498 were against targets on the mainland of Japan. These delivered 961 tons of bombs.

Logistically, the premise that XX Bomber Command could be made self-sufficient proved illusionary. Attempts to use B-29s to haul supplies were unsuccessful. The command could not support its aircraft in India without substantial ATC support. It was a tribute to the capability and flexibility of its operations that ATC could make available. The bombers, even augmented by transports, could not preposition sufficient material in China to sustain operations. Further, using the B-29s in this manner distracted bomber personnel from their combat mission and wore the aircraft out, complicating the burdens placed on supply and maintenance. As ATC was demonstrating through its worldwide operations and General Tunner was exhibiting on the Hump, air logistics was a separate profession that required an expertise of its own. It was not a part-time job for amateurs.

The logistical problems of defeating the Japanese army in Burma were daunting. India, as we have seen, provided a weak base. It was a largely impoverished country with few useful resources, problematical weather, and poor sanitary conditions. Its primitive transportation system led primarily to the northwest frontier, and the British had made almost no preparation for fighting on the eastern border. Further, a significant portion of India's population was actively hostile to British rule. The British forces faced additional problems. Fourteenth Army covered a 700-mile front from the Chinese frontier to the Bay of Bengal. The largely unmapped area of the Indo-Burmese border com-



Mechanics repair a C-46 at night, the sun made metal too hot to touch during the day.

prised heavy jungle and steep, treacherous hills. It lacked roads and railroads, and for six months of the year monsoon rains made it almost impenetrable. Gen. William Slim, commander of the Fourteenth Army, later wrote: "It could fairly be described as some of the world's worst country, breeding the world's worst diseases, and having for half the year at least the world's worst climate."

The British army had been defeated consistently by lightly-equipped Japanese troops that filtered through the jungle, flanking British positions and establishing blocks in the rear of the road-bound British troops. British dependence on motor transport, lack of ability to operate in the jungle, and poor training and equipment made it next to impossible to deal with these tactics, and the British army in Burma normally fought with one eye to the rear, hardly a prescription for victory. Air power would ultimately provide the best antidote to Japanese tactics.

The first break for the British came in early 1943, under one of its most unconventional officers, Orde Wingate. "Wingate was a strange, excitable, moody creature, but he had fire in him," General Slim later wrote. "He could ignite other men." Wingate had evolved the idea of a long range penetration force operating deep behind enemy lines and he based this tactic on the use of aircraft dropping supplies to his troops. In February 1943, he launched "Operation Longcloth."

For Longcloth, Wingate organized a special force of 3,000 men, the Chindits, into self-contained columns, and assigned a Royal Air Force section to each column to coordinate airdrops. The Chindits entered Burma on foot in three groups on 13 February, and received their first airdrop, 35 tons of supplies, three days later.

For the next few weeks, they meandered around in the Japanese rear areas, blowing up railroads, bridges, supply dumps, and other targets. Ultimately, the Japanese defeated some of the columns and forced the others to disperse. With the columns split, radios lost or failed, and the harried remnants moving quickly, air supply failed in the last days of the expedition, and the last survivors drifted back into India by June. Of 3,000 men, only 2,182 returned.

The Chindits paid a high price,

and their first operation was widely considered a failure in every way except on psychological grounds. Despite the heavy losses, British leaders concluded that Longcloth had proven that properly trained and equipped British soldiers could defeat the enemy in the jungle. For the first time, the British concluded, they had beaten the Japanese at their own game. And the use of aerial supply made this result possible. Wingate would be heard from again.

By the end of 1943, the number of transport squadrons available to support British operations in India and Burma had increased dramatically. Lord Mountbatten integrated his air forces with British Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse in command and American Gen. George E. Stratemeyer as his deputy. Stratemeyer, in turn, commanded Eastern Air Command, and under him Brig. Gen. William D. Old commanded the joint American-British Troop Carrier Command. The creation of Eastern Air Command, which united Tenth Air Force with Royal Air Force (RAF) Bengal Command, on 15 December 1943 brought all American and British air units under one command for the first time.

By January 1944, Stratemeyer had 532 RAF and 287 Army Air Forces aircraft, including 576 fighters, 70 medium bombers, 79 heavy bombers, 10 reconnaissance aircraft, and 84 transports. This gave the Allies a preponderance of air power over the estimated hundred or so Japanese fighters in Burma and made tactical air transport operations possible. General Old took command of Troop Carrier Command under the new organization in January 1944.

In the meantime, during the fall of 1943, the British XV Corps, consisting of the 5th and 7th Indian Divisions, advanced down the coast in Arakan toward Akyab. In October, General Slim directed that a formation be sent down the Kaladan River to protect the invasion's left flank independent of the main advance. The terrain dictated that this force, the 81st West African Division could be supplied only by air, and Slim later claimed that this was the first time that a standard formation at divisional level was "committed to complete air maintenance." It should not be the last.

The British advance was a

threat the Japanese army could not ignore, and its response at the beginning of February 1944 caught the British by surprise. The Japanese attack on XV Corps was a bold and resourceful right hook that cut off the 7th Indian Division, blocked its line of communications, and threatened to destroy the command in classic fashion. By 7 February, 7th Indian Division was surrounded; however, in contrast to previous battles, the force neither panicked nor retreated. Instead, Slim put 7th Division totally on air supply.

The newly integrated Troop Carrier Command reacted immediately. Japanese fighters forced the first flight of C-47s back; however, General Old personally led the second attempt while RAF Spitfires and Hurricanes flew cover. This effort succeeded, and the tactical airlift began. C-47s flew three to four sorties a day, often at night to avoid fighters. Army supply units prepared the loads and mechanics served the aircraft around the clock. ATC supplemented Troop Carrier Command's aircraft with 25 C-46s diverted from the Hump. While 7th Indian Division held its positions under ferocious attacks, Slim ordered 26th Indian Division and later 36th British Division against the rear of the Japanese blocking force. Attempts to reinforce and resupply the Japanese force were interdicted either by patrols on the ground or from the air. Attempts to wrest control of the air from the Allies were defeated in the largest air battles fought to date. Ultimately, the Japanese force was almost completely destroyed, and XVth Corps passed to the offensive, throwing the Japanese out of prepared positions. Slim later wrote that

*This Arakan battle . . . was not of great magnitude, but it was one of the historic successes of British arms. It was the turning point of the Burma campaign. For the first time a British force had met, held, and decisively defeated a major Japanese attack, and followed this up by driving the enemy out of the strongest possible natural positions that they had been preparing for months . . . It was a victory . . . and its effect, not only on the troops engaged but on the whole Fourteenth Army, was immense.*

General Stratemeyer, in the meantime, wrote General Arnold that, "All in authority here are convinced that General Old's Troop

Carrier Command . . . was to a large extent responsible for the success of the battle."

Air supply of troops cut off by Japanese attacks became the standard. During the major Japanese offensive against Imphal and Kohima in northern India from March through July 1944, Fourteenth Army took impressive advantage of its rapidly expanding air transport capability to supply cut off units, borrowing aircraft diverted from the Hump when necessary. This approach was doubly effective because the Japanese army normally launched its attacks based upon the slenderest of logistical threads, counting on the seizure of enemy supplies and transport and upon quick victory for success. Air power and tactical air supply denied them those conditions. Further, the Allies extended the use of air transport to deliver reinforcements to threatened areas and to support units as they attacked through the rough terrain.

At the height of the Japanese offensive, Orde Wingate struck again with a vastly expanded Chindit force and an imposing battle plan. Wingate's force included an infantry strength of six brigades and featured its own air force. Longcloth had depended on air support, but the second Chindit expedition, "Operation Thursday," went Longcloth one better. Wingate planned to land most of his force by glider deep behind Japanese lines at specially selected locations. There they would establish strongholds, hack out primitive airfields for air support, and operate mobile columns against the Japanese rear areas. Wingate's goal was to sever the supply lines to the Japanese forces in northern Burma. The air component was the unique contribution of "Operation Thursday."

The 1st Air Commando unit, under Col. Philip G. Cochran, was a composite force comprised of 13 C-47s, 12 C-46s, 12 B-25H Mitchell medium bombers, 30 P-51A Mustang fighter-bombers, 100 L-1 and L-5 light aircraft, 6 helicopters, and 225 gliders. General Old's Troop Carrier Command was also available.

Wingate's force began its movement on 5 March and, despite serious losses, the first base at "Broadway" was soon secure. American engineers had cleared a landing strip, and General Old

brought the first C-47s in to the site. Chindits began arriving at a second site, "Chowringhee," on the 6th. At the end of some 600 sorties, 9,000 men, 1,400 mules, and two artillery troops had been inserted into the heart of Japanese territory.

The Japanese 5th Air Division attacked Chowringhee on 10 March with 20 fighters and two light bombers and Broadway on 13 March with 55 fighters and three light bombers, but by then antiaircraft guns and fighter aircraft operating from Broadway opposed the attack. By 20 March, Chindit columns sustained entirely by air were operating throughout the Indaw area.

Ultimately, Chindit forces established other strongholds, designated "Blackpool," "White City," and "Aberdeen." Soon the railroad around Indaw was cut, Japanese supply depots were burning, and Allied aircraft dominated the skies. Ultimately, however, the Chindits failed to achieve their main goal, complete isolation of the Japanese 18th Division, and on 29 April they began withdrawing. The last of the force flew out in August.

The success of the composite 1st Air Commando and the troop carrier units led to plans for the establishment of additional air commando units designed to deliver an assault force and its equipment directly into combat, and a wing of four "combat cargo groups" specially trained to supply the ground force while in action and evacuate casualties.

The Army Air Forces activated four combat cargo groups in mid-1944. One participated successfully in tactical operations in Burma while the others augmented the Hump operations in late 1944-early 1945. Troop Carrier Command absorbed the combat cargo units after the war.

The impact of the operations in CBI on tactical air logistics was immense, and perhaps is best described by the commander of Fourteenth Army, General Slim

*A most distinctive aspect of our Burma war was the great use we made of our air transport. It was one of our contributions toward a new kind of warfare, and I think it fair to say that, to a large extent, we discovered by trial and error the methods of air supply that later passed into general use. We were the first to maintain large formations in action by air supply and to*

*move standard divisions long distances about the fighting front by air . . . To us, all this was as normal as moving or maintaining troops by railway or road, and that attitude of mind was, I suppose, one of our main reformations.*

Ultimately, the legacy of World War II for American logistics validated two separate organizations. The success of ATC around the world and especially of airlift to China over the Hump validated the role of Air Transport Command as a worldwide military airline. The tactical success of airborne operations in the Mediterranean and Europe and the success of tactical air operations in Burma, especially aerial supply of units locked in combat, validated the role of the troop carrier units. Following the war, unification in strategic air transport did take place.

In June 1948, the newly independent U.S. Air Force's Air Transport Command was combined with the U.S. Navy's strategic air transport service to form Military Air Transport Service (MATS). A proposal to combine all air transport under MATS and eliminate the troop carrier units failed to gain support, however, and strategic and tactical airlift remained separate within the U.S. Air Force until the 1960s.

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## Rescue in Burma

By William Toy  
Valley of the Sun Basha

It was the year of 1944. WW II was raging on all fronts. Europe was under invasion by the allied forces. In the South Pacific, the allied forces were successfully pushing the Japanese northward from island to island. I was in the China-Burma-India front, with the Northern Area Combat Command Detachment under Col. John P. Willy attached to the British 36 Division under General Festing. The Japanese occupied North Burma, cutting off the supply line to China. We pushed them southward on the western side of Burma, after forcing them to retreat from Myitkyina.

Fall in Burma signaled the end of the monsoon season. Nourished by the torrential summer rain, the forest was in full growth, lush and thick. The air was perfumed by the aroma of scented flowers and ripened fruits. The symphony of insects, birds and animals was audible. I was on dual assignment that day to hunt for jungle fowls and to seek Japanese information on order of battle. There was a standard custom at camp. Scarcity of food necessitated hunt for jungle fowls to augment our meager diet. Col. Willy, a tall, stern and no-nonsense leader, provided each of us two shells and a single-shot 12-

gauge shotgun to do the task. We all took turns. It was everyone's hope to reap a bountiful harvest of two birds with one shot. And, it was my turn that day.

Armed with Col. Willy's shotgun, I climbed alone onto my jeep and set out on my expedition along the railroad corridor between the village of Pinwei and Mawlu. The sun beamed in the cloudless blue sky. I forged forward, feeling the cool autumn breeze brushing my face. Somewhere out there I found a cache of Japanese rifles. All my senses were on alert. My close scrutiny of the surroundings yielded no sign of any Japanese soldier. I concluded that this was an abandoned hiding place. Carefully, I stored the rifles in the trailer and moved on. My jeep trundled along and brought me near a village a few miles from headquarters. The open strip beside the village glowed in the setting sun. Noise of an airplane engine was audible. I gazed upward and spied a C-47 circling erratically, and dropping rapidly. I recognized the plane was from the tenth or eleventh Combat Cargo Squadron out of Dingan or Tinsukia or Chabua. It was obvious that she was in trouble and was attempting to perform a safe crash landing. And crash it did, skidded to a halt, with wheels up, on the railroad corridor. After the dust settled, I saw five soldiers tumbled out of the wreckage, unhurt. I breathed a sigh of relief.

I approached them from the trail, and shouted my offer of rescue. They looked at me with doubt and fear; their hands on their .45 pistols were ready for combat, for they thought I was their enemy, a Japanese soldier. You see, my appearance concealed my true identity. My ragtag uniform was a conglomerate of an Australian wide rim hat, a farmer's jacket under the collar of which hid my first Lieutenant bar, fatigue pants and no army boots. You add to this an Oriental face and a small stature, and you will make a skeptic out of any beholder. At last, after countless exchanges of dialogue to prove my true identity, they were semi-persuaded that I was a friend and not a foe. Their faces still expressed suspicion as they cautiously approached the jeep under the lead of their leader, Flight Officer Ben Blue. Fear rekindled itself again as their eyes fell upon the

Japanese rifles in the trailer as they mounted my jeep. My explanation of a successful hunt seemed to ease, though no completely dispelling their doubt. Who could blame them for their frame of mind? In a hostile war zone, under the watchful eyes of the likes of me, it is only normal for a soldier to imagine the worst.

Night was falling. Darkness gradually enveloped us as we sped along the railroad corridor leading to headquarters in uneasy silence, as unsettling suspicion rendered my rescued crew reticent to conversation. Presently, we drew near camp. Signs of military life was evident. Sprawling basha huts, army hardware, soldiers in uniforms, people with Caucasian faces. CAUCASIAN faces! At last a solid proof that this was a genuine American military camp and that I was a true American soldier.

Welcoming fanfare was reduced to a minimal as "black out" commenced after dark. Since my hunting yielded no jungle fowl, our guests "feasted" only on canned rations. Soon it was bedtime. They all retired in our bashas for the night. I, too, appreciated the opportunity for a good night's sleep. It was a long day for all of us.

Day broke early, and the sun's brilliant rays energized the camp to action. Each unit began busily to engage in its routine of the day. My rescued soldiers also prepared for departure to their home camp. Their faces radiated with gratitude as they assembled to ascend the L-4 and L-5 to Myitkyina, where they would board an L-1 or a larger C-47 or C-46 to continue their journey to home base in India. Before they departed, they promised me their key to St. Louis, their home city, and a lifetime reward when we got back to camp. It was indeed a generous expression of gratitude which I felt undeserving. I was grateful that fate brought me to the right place at the right time, turning my anticipated two dead jungle fowls into five live soldiers. I am grateful for this miraculous exchange.

In the past few years, I attempted to locate these St. Louis citizens, but to no avail. I have placed advertisements in the CBI Roundup, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Hump Pilots Journal, et cetera. To this day, I have not been able to contact any survivors of this C-47 crash.

CBIVA

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# Sound-off

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MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN



## National China-Burma-India Veterans Appreciation Day, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

More than 40 years after the end of World War II, America is a Nation proud, strong, and at peace. We should be ever mindful, however, that the peace and the freedom we now enjoy have been won through the sacrifices of those who served during times of conflict.

Many courageous Americans fought long and arduously to stop the Japanese advance in the Far East during World War II. These patriots surely deserve our admiration and respect. We should especially recognize the heroism and unwavering purpose of those who took part in the battles and campaigns of the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations, scene of some of the most intense fighting during the war. Thousands risked their lives to transport military supplies across rugged and treacherous terrain after the fall of Burma and the loss of the famous Burma supply route in 1942. Many others flew with the U.S. Air Transport Command over a 500-mile route, the "Hump," which stretched over the Himalayas from India to Western China. When the first supplies were brought into China over the "Stilwell Road" in 1945, a victory was won for all free nations.

It is most fitting that on Veterans Day weekend, 1988, we acknowledge the special contributions made by these fellow citizens in our country's cause.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 12, 1988, as National China-Burma-India Veterans Appreciation Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

Ronald Reagan

# Gliderborne Engineers During OPERATION THURSDAY

By Mark P. Zaitoff MAJ, EN – USAR (Ret)

E-mail: [lempz@bellatlantic.net](mailto:lempz@bellatlantic.net)

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The 900th Airborne Engineer Aviation Company made more landings than any other gliderborne unit. This article gives an account of their missions in Burma in March-May 1944 during OPERATION THURSDAY.

## Situation

The Japanese occupied Burma in 1942 after a fighting withdrawal by Allied forces to India and China. The Allies discussed war strategy at a conference in Quebec in August 1943; they decided to increase efforts to liberate Burma and reopen the ground route to China. British, Indian and Chinese divisions would attack east out of India while the Chinese armies attacked west from China. By early 1944, the Japanese were in eastern India and were threatening to invade the rest of the country.

## Chindits

In 1943, British MG Orde Wingate formed Long Range Penetrating

Brigades, called the Special Force or Chindits, and led columns into northern Burma to attack the Japanese. Although he withdrew at the start of the monsoon season, he proved his concept and convinced the Allied leadership to make a larger effort in 1944. He advocated attacking the Japanese to disrupt their plans and ease the pressure on British and Indian troops near Imphal and Kohima, India. In 1944, the Chindits consisted of six brigades of British, Scottish Black Watch, Gurkha and West African troops, totaling about 23,000 men.

On 4 February 1944, Wingate received the following missions from his commander, Field Mar-

shal William J. Slim:

- 1) help the advance of US LTG Stilwell's Chinese divisions to the Myitkyina area by drawing off and disorganizing the enemy forces opposing them, and preventing the reinforcement of these enemy forces;
- 2) create a favorable situation for the Chinese to advance westwards across the Salween River into Burma; and,
- 3) inflict the maximum confusion, damage and loss on the enemy forces in northern Burma.

## 1st Air Commando Group

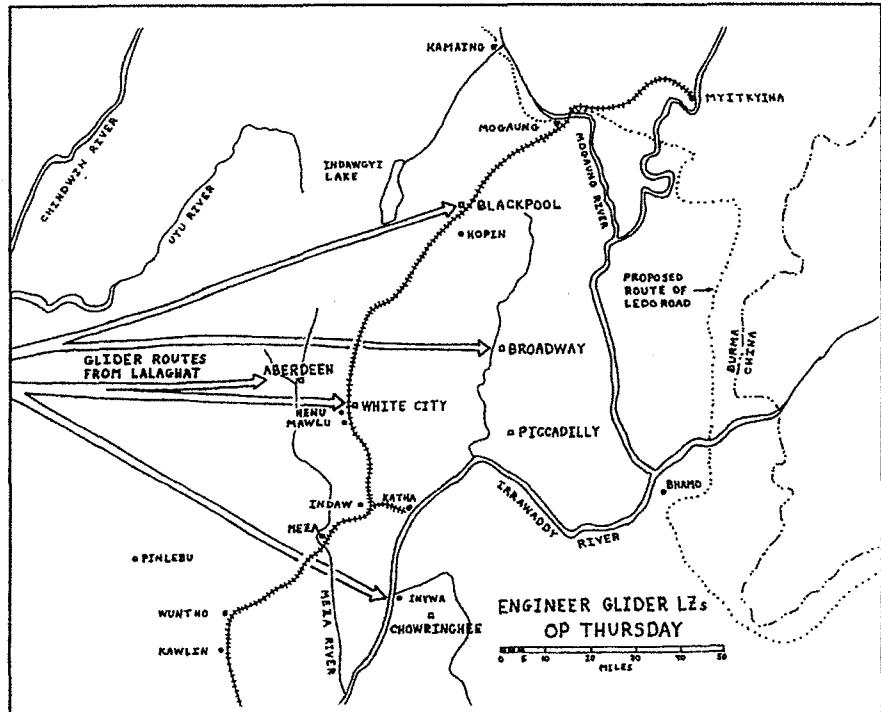
It was also agreed at the Quebec conference that the US would take on a larger role in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater. Part of the American contribution to Wingate's efforts was the 1st Air Commando Group (ACG) under the command of COL Philip G. Cochran. It was a small self-contained air force equipped with liaison aircraft, fighters, bombers, transports, gliders and helicopters. The 1st ACG was to provide dedicated tactical airlift, aerial resupply and medivac, and fighter/bomber support to the Chindit penetration of Burma. By the end of December 1943, the group was established at two RAF airfields in Assam province in India – the headquarters, fighters and bombers were at Hailakandi while the transports and gliders were at Lalaghat.

## 900th Airborne Engineer Aviation Company

Another American contribution was the 900th Airborne Engineer Aviation Company, activated on 3 June 1943 and trained at Westover Field, MA. The airborne aviation engineers were formed to provide a force that could be delivered by glider or transport plane and was capable of building or repairing airstrips.

The 900th arrived in India on 10 August 1943. They worked on airfields at Ledo, Tagap, and at Shingbwiyang where they built the first airstrip behind enemy lines, finishing on Christmas Day 1943. They were assigned to the 1st ACG in February 1944; they moved to Lalaghat on the 7th to train on loading and lashing down equipment in gliders and C-47s in preparation for missions in support of the Chindits.

CPT Patrick R. Casey was in command of the unit, which had a strength of 4 officers and 124 enlisted men in March 1944. They



were equipped with airborne engineer equipment - the Clarkair CA-1 bulldozer, Case SI wheeled tractor, Adams 11-S towed grader and LeTourneau Q carryall - and engineer hand tools. The equipment was lightweight, but the 4230 pound bulldozer still exceeded the 3750 pound nominal payload of the WACO CG-4A glider. All the equipment could be loaded without disassembly into C-47s or gliders.

#### OPERATION THURSDAY

Wingate's plan for 1944 was called OPERATION THURSDAY. He planned to airlift two infantry brigades (77th and 111th) while a third (16th) walked in from India, a total of about 12,000 men and 1800 mules. (The 3rd Brigade was held in reserve to garrison the strongholds; the 14th Brigade was temporarily lost to operations against the Japanese in India.) He chose to make the air-landings in the Indaw-Katha area, about 150-175 miles behind the Japanese lines. Landing there, he'd attack less experienced service troops and disrupt their support of the units threatening Stilwell and India. The Japanese would be forced to pull units from the front lines to deal with the danger that such a large force would pose to their rear areas.

Wingate planned to establish strongholds from which columns would attack the Japanese. The first (BROADWAY, PICCADILLY and CHOWRINGHEE) would be established by airlanded forces, a later stronghold (ABERDEEN) and fortified roadblocks (WHITE CITY and BLACKPOOL) would be developed as the operation progressed.

OPERATION THURSDAY was set to go on Sunday, 5 March 1944, during the full moon. BROADWAY and PICCADILLY were to be seized simultaneously by gliderborne troops from the 77th Brigade. CHOWRINGHEE was to be captured the next night by the 111th Brigade. Airlanded forces would then reinforce all three strongholds - the 77th flying out of Lalaghat to BROADWAY and PICCADILLY, and the 111th to PICCADILLY and CHOWRINGHEE from Tulihal airfield. ABERDEEN was to be developed by the 16th Brigade after they walked into the area.

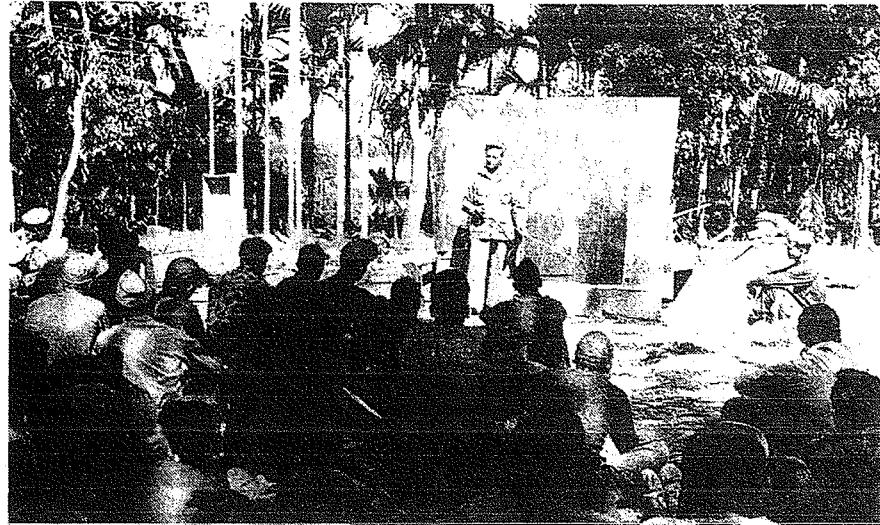
It was the 900th's job to land their equipment by glider and prepare the airstrips, behind enemy lines, for the follow on airlanding

missions. Only fair weather airstrips would be built, as Wingate did not expect the operations to continue into the monsoon season without the capture of an existing all weather airstrip.

#### PICADILLY - BROADWAY Switch

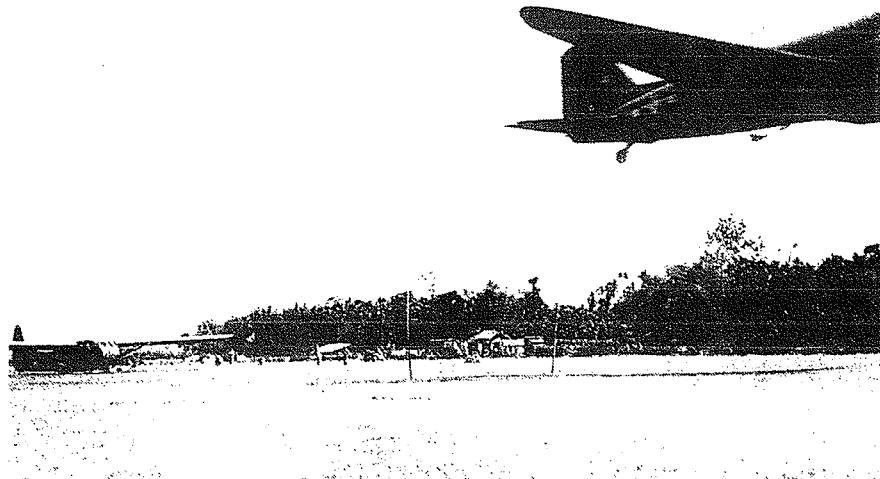
MG Wingate had prohibited any last minute photo reconnaissance

flights of the LZs to avoid alerting the Japanese. COL Cochran sent them anyway and discovered that the LZ at PICCADILLY was covered with logs. The photos arrived only 40 minutes before the planned takeoff time and caused great concern among the Allied leaders. Had the operation been compro-



*Pointing to Broadway, a Jungle Clearing Mapped on Bed Sheets, Colonial Cochran Gives His Men Their Final Briefing*

They are to take off at dusk, each transport towing two gliders, and fly 200 miles into Burma. The gliders cut loose over Broadway and landed in the dark. Troops fanned out to hold off any Jap attackers. At dawn engineers started the airstrip for powered planes. The map partly hidden by "Flip Corkin" is of Piccadilly, unused rendezvous. White areas are clearings surrounded by dark-colored jungle. The hazards of landing gliders on a never-before-used field prompted the Colonel's final remark - "Tonight you are going to find out if you've got a soul!"



*Snatching a Loaded Glider Off the Ground, a C-47 Races Across the Blue Lalaghat, India*

Only way to recover a glider in a small area is by this pick-up system. A nylon towline attached to the glider is looped over two poles. From the towplane extends a nylon leader, to which is fastened a hook. The other end of the rope is connected with a steel cable reeled on a drum in the plane.

mised, had the Japanese put antiglider obstacles on PICCADILLY, and were they waiting to ambush the glider landings at BROADWAY?

Slim, Wingate and Brigadier Michael Calvert, 77<sup>th</sup> Brigade commander, discussed replacing PICCADILLY with CHOWRINGHEE. Calvert objected because CHOWRINGHEE was on the east side of the Irrawaddy River, which would create problems with concentrating his brigade to the west of the river. Wingate decided to

send all the gliders to BROADWAY; the pathfinder tow plane/glider combinations started taking off at 1812, only half an hour after the planned time.

The Japanese were not waiting; Burmese timber cutters had dragged the logs out of the jungle onto the clearing to dry. They still created an effective antiglider obstacle.

#### BROADWAY

BROADWAY was 250 miles and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours flying time from Laggat.



*Two Gliders Tangle in Night Landings*

Landing gear of the glider to left was crippled by logs or nuts. Before runway flares could be changed, two more "whisper ships" came down to land. The first saw the cripple in the faint moonlight and swerved in time. The second smashed head-on. Here, on the morning after, survivors survey the wreckage before starting to clear Broadway for transports to land. *W RONG CORTON*

The original plan called for forty gliders to go to both PICCADILLY and BROADWAY - now all eighty would go to BROADWAY. CPT Casey and 2LT Robert C. Brackett had checked the engineer equipment and men while awaiting takeoff. Brackett was originally headed to PICCADILLY; now both of the six man teams would go to BROADWAY. Each team had two bulldozers, one grader, one jeep, one carryall and engineer hand tools.

The main body started taking off at 1905, only half an hour after the last pathfinder. Each C-47 towed two gliders - all were overloaded to at least 4500 pounds - and strained to gain the 8000' altitude needed to clear the Chin Hills. The engineers were in 9 gliders near the front of the main body.

The pathfinders landed at 2200 to discover that the LZ was covered with logs, buffalo and elephant wallows, and ruts created when timber cutters had dragged logs out of the jungle to dry. All were hidden from aerial view by four-foot tall elephant grass. The full moon didn't provide enough light to see them as the gliders landed.

COL John R. Alison, Cochran's deputy commander, was in charge on the LZ. He tried to delay the main body of gliders but the radio had been damaged in the landing. Before it could be repaired, the transports arrived overhead and gliders starting cutting loose for their landings. Alison and the others kept moving the landing lights around to guide the gliders to the best remaining landing areas. Confusion reigned as gliders arrived and crash-landed in the darkness.

Two gliders, carrying bulldozers, crash-landed among the trees. The cockpit section of a glider was hinged to swing upward for loading and unloading. Cables and pulleys were rigged to pull the cockpit up and out of the way if the dozer broke loose during landing. This feature saved the lives of two pilots (1LT Jackson J. Shinkle and Flight Officer Gene A. Kelly) and their engineer 'copilots' (SSG Raymond J. Bluthardt and SGT Joseph A. DeSalvo). Both dozers shot out of the gliders and turned over several times. DeSalvo was injured when the dozer hit his head on its way out and was evacuated the next day.

At about 0230 on the 6th, Alison got a message back to La-

laghat. Further takeoffs were stopped and tow/glider combinations not yet past the point of no return were recalled. The last glider in landed safely with a bulldozer. In all, 35 gliders crash-landed on BROADWAY that night. Alison and the others worked to sort out the mess, then settled down to wait for daybreak. Fortunately, the Japanese were unaware of the landings.

Daylight revealed the extent of the losses; all but three gliders were wrecked, about 30 men were injured and 23 men killed. CPT Casey had been killed when his glider overshot the LZ, tried to circle but stalled and crashed, also destroying a bulldozer. Several engineers had been hurt and a carryall damaged during the landings. 2LT Brackett was left with 9 men to complete the airstrip. The engineers had first and second echelon repair parts, mechanics tools, and gas and oil for the equipment. Brackett gave this account of the work on the airstrip:

At 0600 hrs while Col. Allison and I were on reconnaissance grading was begun in the general direction of the flight strip. When the direction had been determined we ran a base line with the jeep and grader the length of the field missing as many buffalo-wallows as possible. At this time there was one grader, one jeep, two bulldozers, and a carryall in operation. The glider carrying the third dozer was damaged, but parts salvaged from the fourth 'dozer which had gone through the trees and turned over on its back were utilized. At 1000 hrs COL Allison informed us that light planes would arrive in one hour - redoubling our efforts, the light planes were able to land on a runway 2000' x 300' at 1100 hours! During this period British troops helped to level the grass and ground with bayonets and kukri knives, and the R.E.'s [Royal Engineers] blew up a tree standing in the middle of the field.

We continued on the other 2400' of runway, making it 150' wide to insure sufficient area for landings that night. The main job consisted of filling in the log ruts caused by elephants hauling logs in the wet season, to the river. Now hard as stone, some sixteen inches deep and two to four feet wide, they accounted for much of the damage to the gliders on the previous night. Grading was kept to a minimum, to keep as much grass as possible on

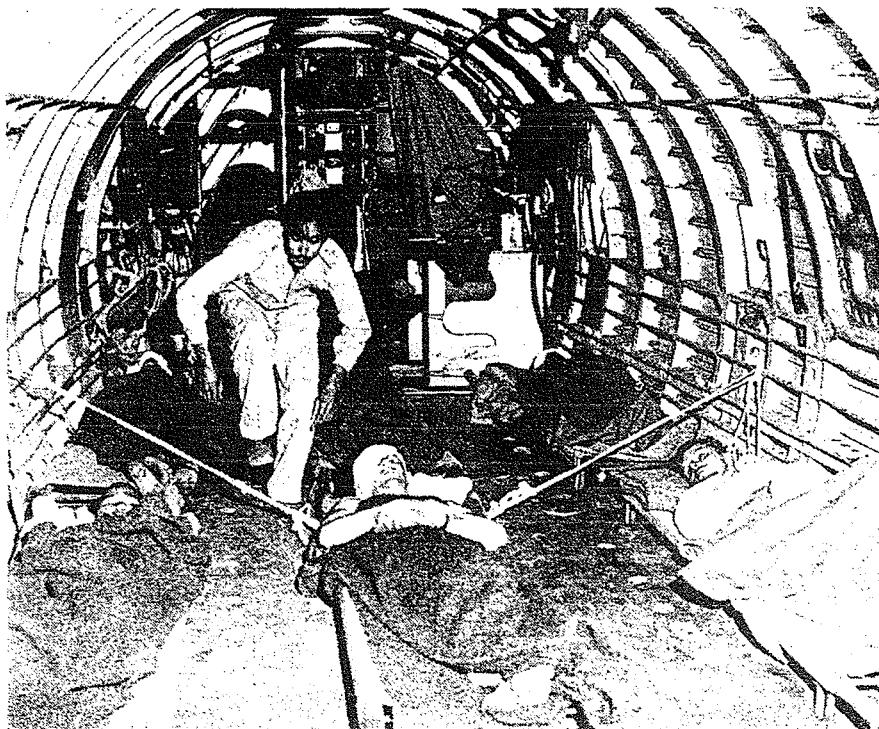
the runway, taking off only those bunds [dikes] over three inches high. At 1910 hrs the first transport landed, we dispersed our

equipment and prepared for the first meal since leaving [Lalaghat]. The next morning we continued work on the strip and unloading



*Two Gliders Tangle in Night Landings*

Landing gear of the glider to left was crippled by logs or nuts. Before runway flares could be changed, two more "whisper ships" came down to land. The first saw the cripple in the faint moonlight and swerved in time. The second smashed head-on. Here, on the morning after, survivors survey the wreckage before starting to clear Broadway for transports to land.



*British and Gurkha Wounded Are Swiftly Flown to Base Hospital in India*

Huge aerial ambulances, like this Curtiss Commando, operated a shuttle service, carrying in fresh troops and bringing out wounded. Gurkhas, fearless north-Indian fighters, were hesitant at first about entering gliders. One of them whispered to his British captain, "These planes don't have any motors!"

area. By that evening we had a 2400'x300' runway and unloading areas for eight planes on both sides of the runway.

At first light CPL Walter J. Hybarger was up on a dozer pulling logs and wrecked gliders off the LZ and starting on the airstrip. SGT William W. Geider and PFC Paul F. Johnson worked to repair the third dozer. Brackett didn't want to disturb the clay soil of the LZ so he cleared a minimum of the elephant grass, made few cuts and filled the ruts to level the airstrip. He soon had an airstrip 5000' long and 300' wide.

On the night of 6 March, sixty-three C-47s landed on an airstrip with a fully lit runway and tower radio. The fly in of the 77th and half of the 111th Brigades continued until the 11th. The Chindits immediately moved out on missions to attack the Japanese. The 77th Brigade moved southwest toward Mawlu and established the WHITE CITY roadblock. The 111th Brigade marched farther west to Pinlebu and eventually north to establish the BLACKPOOL roadblock.

ILT Fred S. Beard and 6 men

relieved Brackett and his men on 10 April. They improved and maintained the airstrip until the 20th, then returned to Lalaghat by C-47. The Chindits started leaving BROADWAY on 1 May, by the 7th only the garrison battalion was left. They were flown out on the 13th and BROADWAY was abandoned.

#### CHOWRINGHEE

At dusk on 6 March, twelve gliders took off from Lalaghat to seize the second stronghold, CHOWRINGHEE. On board were an airfield control party, engineers and three platoons of Gurkhas for security.

The LZ was about 1000 yards long by 200 yards wide and in better condition than BROADWAY. Eleven gliders landed safely but unfortunately, the twelfth, piloted by 1LT Robert L. Dowe, crashed. He overshot and made a 180° turn, but hit a tree and cartwheeled across the LZ. Onboard were a bulldozer and two engineers, CPLs Harold C. Coker and Billy F. Boen, who, along with Dowe, were killed. The dozer broke loose and was destroyed.

1LT Jerome A. Andrulonis was

in charge of the engineers. Without a bulldozer there was little he could do to prepare an airstrip that night. LTC Clinton B. Gaty, maintenance officer of the 1st ACG, was in charge of the LZ. He radioed COL Alison at BROADWAY for help. They laid low in the jungle all day on the 7th to avoid detection by Japanese planes.

At sundown Andrulonis started the Gurkhas cutting the elephant grass on the LZ with their kukri knives. They had cleared 12 acres by 2100 when they heard transports overhead. Two gliders, piloted by FOs Vernon Noland and William Mohr, had been snatched out of BROADWAY loaded with a bulldozer (and CPL Hybarger) and jeep. Fifteen minutes later, three gliders arrived from Lalaghat with a grader and another dozer and jeep. All five made safe landings. The engineers were working by 2130 and prepared a 3000' long airstrip in only four hours. The first C-47 carrying the 111th Brigade landed at 0130 on the 8th.

All that night the engineers leveled and graded the airstrip, continuing the next day and into the next night. PFC Robert Bennett fell asleep and fell off while running a dozer; he looked back to see that CPL Ronald J. Cain had also fallen asleep and off the grader. SGT Joseph D. Walker and PFC Kay C. Eminhizer took their shifts operating the machinery.

The fly in of the 111th continued the next night. One hundred and twenty five C-47 sorties brought in half of the 111th; the other half was landed at BROADWAY. The Brigade moved out on its missions near Pinlebu.

CHOWRINGHEE was abandoned on 10 March. That morning the engineers left by C-47, their equipment was snatched out by glider and returned to Lalaghat. Only two wrecked gliders were left at CHOWRINGHEE. The Japanese bombed and strafed the airstrip just hours after the last Chindit column left the area.

#### ABERDEEN

The 16th Brigade started walking in from Ledo on 5 February; by 19 March they had covered 450 miles and were in the Meza River valley northwest of Mawlu. They set to work establishing the ABERDEEN stronghold for themselves and the 111th Brigade, and for the fly in of the 14th Brigade.

LTC Gaty flew in on the after-



*Jap Guerrillas Got in a "Sneak Punch"  
At Night Against Cochran's Plane "Sports"*

The enemy apparently did not discover Broadway until eight days after it was built. Then they sent 20 fighters over the field. This plane, however, was damaged on the ground sometime later. "Squads of Jap infantry practically lived with us," Colonel Alison said. "They hid in the jungle by day and infiltrated at night to cripple equipment and steal food."

noon of the 21st in a liaison plane to supervise the building of a glider strip. The Chindits worked all night and at dawn on the 22nd five gliders with engineers and equipment landed safely. A sixth tow and glider, which had gotten lost, arrived an hour later. Twenty engineers with two dozers, a carryall, grader, tractor and jeep started to work on an airstrip. With help from the Chindits, a 3600' long airstrip was ready the next day. The engineers loaded themselves and their equipment on the first six C-47s to land at ABERDEEN; the planes also towed the gliders back to Lalaghat.

The fly in of the 14th Brigade started on the 23rd, was delayed by weather and aircraft availability, and was not completed until 4 April. The fly in of the garrison battalion wasn't completed until the 12th. Their arrival completed the fly in of the Chindits to Burma.

The 14th Brigade was given the mission of preventing Japanese reinforcements from moving against the 77th Brigade at WHITE CITY. They and the 16th Brigade made successful attacks in and around Indaw at the end of April. The 14th was then ordered north to protect BLACKPOOL. The 16th Brigade was evacuated from ABERDEEN by the 5th of May and it was abandoned the next day. Almost 700 sorties had been flown onto the airstrip at ABERDEEN.

#### WHITE CITY

The 77th Brigade moved southwest out of BROADWAY heading for Mawlu. They destroyed a Japanese railway engineer detachment at Henu on 16 March and established the WHITE CITY fortified road and rail block. It was astride the north-south supply route to the Japanese fighting Stilwell, so after only eleven days the Chindits had accomplished their first mission. After supplies were airdropped, the block was completed on the 19th. The Japanese probed the roadblock for several nights, then attacked in strength on the nights of the 21st and 22nd. After improving his defenses, Calvert attacked and cleared Mawlu on the 27th.

A C-47 airstrip was needed to supply WHITE CITY. The Chindits cleared a 400 yard long glider strip and five gliders landed on the evening of 3 April. 1LT Leonard P. DiSandro gave the following account:

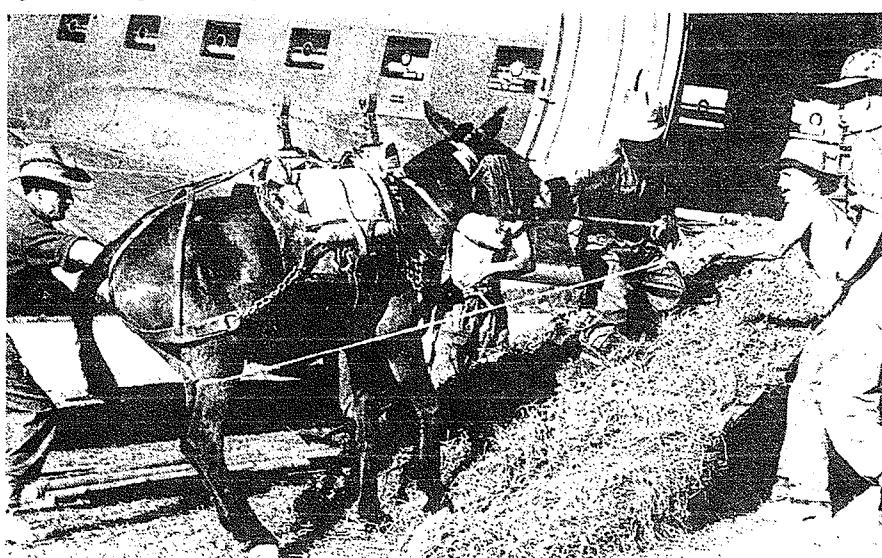
*On a Monday [3 April] I was called to a meeting with the CO of the glider organization. There I first heard of the proposed strip to be constructed. Just one piece of equipment, a bulldozer, had been requested. I protested that any work done by the dozer would have to be followed by a grader and since there must be considerable work for a dozer, I requested permission to take two bulldozers and one grader. Luckily my request was granted. I say luckily, because as usual we found more work than we expected.*

*Take off time was set at 1700, then moved back to 2200. Five gliders were tested and loaded. We had our equipment, gasoline, and two jeeps to be delivered to the British, in addition to the usual field lighting equipment and rations. We picked four operators and one mechanic [CPL Leonard W. Dean, CPL Murlin E. Snead, PFC Medra Cousins, SGT Jack McGee and CPL Alvin H. Barrows]. I decided to go myself to have a glider mission under my belt. We arrived over the field in the first glider at 0015 and made a very good landing. The field had been lighted by the British, and since it was blessed with a perfect approach, all landings were uneventful.*

*While the last piece of equipment was being unloaded, I walked around the field with a Captain from the glider outfit and an RAF*

*man. I found the problems very like those at another strip we had just finished [ABERDEEN]. The bunds (dikes) between the rice paddies required the dozers, but that wasn't the least of our trouble. The field was very rough, but it wasn't level ground with high spots - it was level ground with holes. Water buffaloes wandering across the field during rainy seasons had torn it up so badly that a tremendous amount of grading would have been necessary to bring it down to condition anywhere near smooth. That amount of grading would have turned the field into a bog after the lightest shower or into a dust bowl when dry. The soil was almost pure clay, which turned very slick when wet, and was difficult to grade when dry. It refused to break up under the blade - large pieces would pile up, and finally the grader would jump the whole windrow ... and all this happened while we were merely trying to lightly top it off!*

*We worked the rest of the night but could accomplish comparatively little. When dawn came I got a better picture of the situation. I put one dozer to leveling the bunds with the grader smoothing off behind. Since we had to have the field in operation Tuesday night I decided to get the strip and parking area roughed out, and leave the finer touches until the next day. By 1730 Tuesday we had the strip and*



*"That Doesn't Look Like a Barn!"  
Says Long Ears, Balking at His First Plane Ride*

Even airborne soldiers need pack mules. In specially prepared bamboo stalls, six mules were carried in this transport plane, three in gliders. After practicing at the India base, the mules usually became accustomed to air travel. One kicked a hole in the side of a glider at 8,000 feet - highest mule kick ever recorded.

parking area completed. It was about 3,500 feet long and 120 feet wide. The parking area measured about 150 by 300 feet.

Due to rain at our base no planes took off for the strip that night. However one transport did come in from another field. The pilot found the field bumpy, but satisfactory. We all got some sleep Tuesday night. On Wednesday we graded the field from end to end, and enlarged the parking area to 300 feet square. That night a whole bunch of transports landed - we had taken a heavy rainstorm, but all planes landed safely in spite of the slick condition.

On the 7th, the Chindits flew in some 25 pounders and the dozers were used to move them into position. They were also used to improve trails within the protective wire, regrade the airstrip and build aircraft parking areas.

The Japanese launched air, artillery and mortar attack, and finally a ground attack on the night of the 10th. After repairing minor damage to the airstrip, the engineers and equipment were flown out by C-47 the next afternoon.

The garrison battalion took over the defense of WHITE CITY on 10 April. On the 17th, Calvert marched the 77th Brigade north towards Mogaung. WHITE CITY was evacuated on 9 May after the



*Blood Plasma  
Saves a Tommy's Life*

Though the landing was unopposed, 23 men were lost in glider crashes. Ruts and grass-hidden logs, not shown in aerial photographs, ripped off undercarriages. Many British troops were from the English north country and Scotland. Australian-type hats were issued by General Wingate in India.

111th Brigade established BLACKPOOL.

#### BLACKPOOL

After operating near Pinlebu, the 111th Brigade was ordered to establish a fortified roadblock in the



*The First Dawn at "Chowringhee"  
Finds Commandos Asleep Beside Their Equipment*

In honor of the Indian troops under Wingate, this auxiliary strip was named after Calcutta's main street. It handled air traffic from near-by Broadway, but was abandoned when the congestion subsided. The push cart is a wire reel on wheels.

vicinity of Hopin. After resting at ABERDEEN they marched north on 23 April.

MAJ John Masters, 111th Brigade commander, picked the location for BLACKPOOL (known to the engineers as CLYDESDALE) on 7 May. He made a personal reconnaissance to determine the suitability of the area for a glider strip and C-47 airstrip. He and RAF Flight Lieutenant Jennings paced off the available distance. There was about 3900' of useable paddy land; unfortunately, the northern 1400' were five feet lower than the southern 2500'. All that night and the next day the Chindits worked at leveling the paddy dikes by hand to clear a glider strip, as well as preparing positions within BLACKPOOL.

LT Andrulonis gave the following account:

Two C-47's of the First Air commando Group landed at [Lalaghat], bringing news of "CLYDESDALE" mission. We immediately loaded one bulldozer, one Case tractor, one grader, and one carry-all, and took off. S/Sgt. Tierney, Cpl. Jones, T/5 Hybarger, and Pfc's Lovelace and Fisher together with myself comprised the engineering personnel. My 'dozer loaded glider was the first to take off for what proved to be a smooth uneventful flight, arriving over the site at 0615 [9 May] in broad daylight.

We had difficulty in locating the strip, no expected support ground troops were to be seen even after one pass up the valley. During our search for the strip the second glider had arrived, and spotting the field he cut loose. Still on our approach we sweated out his landing - everything seemed under control until he was about 100 feet up - then we watched as he stalled out and nosed straight down! A second later my pilot [FO Marilyn O. Satrom] cut loose. We settled back and braced ourselves for the initial shock - we hit with a bump, raced along for a second or two, then came to a screeching stop.

British troops rushed out of the jungle to give us a hand - landing gear washed out, wing collapsed, we had overrun the field knocking out a few bunds. No casualties - all ropes held, the dozer never moved an inch. The next gliders landed in adjoining paddy fields - washing out their landing gear - and never touching the "strip"! The glider that nosed in, killing both pilots [LT Donald A. Lefevre and FO

*Hadley D. Baldwin], contained Pfc's Fisher and Lovelace - both injured - and the grader, completely demolished. The site for the C-47 strip was laid out in paddy-land nearest the hills approximating the British stronghold, with miles of clear approach on one end. The other end was obstructed by 30 yds of tall trees so it was decided that a one-way approach would suffice. From this end ran terraced paddy land with 6" to 1' variation in elevation which after 2500' ended in an abrupt 5' drop - to continue in terraced paddy land for 1400'.*

*The first day Cpl. Jones and I alternated on the 'dozer, assisted by 50 British with pick and shovels. By noon we had a rough liaison strip ready, expecting light planes which never arrived.*

*At 0200 hrs on May 10th, S/Sgt. Tierney and T/5 Hybarger whose glider had failed to take-off, crash landed with the carry-all. Since they were not expected only air-drop fires were lit - their only landing target! Tierney slightly wounded, and Hybarger shaken up, the carry-all arrived in good condition. By 1900 hrs 2400 ft had been roughly graded, and that night three C-47's arrived - all good landings. At 0400 hrs a First Air Commando C-47 landed on a 3600' rain soaked field, rolling over the graded depression (done with only bulldozer and carryall) so our worries were over. That day the newly arrived grader did wonders smoothing the entire runway, while the dozer and carry-all continued to fill in the depression, minimizing the grade.*

*That afternoon we were grading the last paddies on the end of the field, when we heard shells dropping a short distance away beyond the woods. My men continued work. After five or six exploded, each closer and closer, a British runner told us to hit for cover - it was a Jap 75 mm! The barrage lasted about an hour - we inspected the results after dark. The C-47, apparently their target, had been riddled with shrapnel, the dispersal area suffered 15 craters. Shrapnel also put our Case tractor, carry-all, and 'dozer out of commission. That night I sent Lovelace out on a C-47, he had performed admirably after bruising and shock, in the landing, which had killed both pilots and by now appeared fatigued. Twenty transports landed that night without mishap - and in-*

*spection of the runway the following morning showed it to be in perfect condition - hardly a trace of indentation where tires had touched in initial impact on landing.*

*The next day, May 13th, we continued smoothing the field pulling the grader with the jeep. Transports began landing about 2100 hrs that night. About 2115 hrs Jap ground troops attacked the rear of our stronghold position. In the midst of a pitched battle we were ordered out at 2230 hrs taking off in a C-47 to return to base.*

*Although the block was established and receiving resupply by air, Masters did not get expected reinforcements and was being severely punished by the Japanese artillery. Aerial resupply and evacuation became impossible after the weather closed in and the Japanese brought in antiaircraft guns. Masters decided that the block had to be abandoned and on 24 May, carrying his wounded, he made a difficult withdrawal under fire.*

#### **Summary**

*The 900th made more landings than any other gliderborne unit. Although nowhere near the size or scope, their five glider missions in nine weeks in Burma equaled those made in the Mediterranean and European theaters in 1943 - 1945.*

*The 900th ably executed the mission it was established to perform. They conducted glider-borne insertions deep behind enemy lines*

to build airstrips for follow on air-landing missions. The 900th provided responsive engineering support and materially contributed to the liberation of northern Burma. They continued to provide airfield support missions throughout Burma during 1944 and 1945.

All told, the 900th, Chindits and 1st ACG made a total of 14 glider landings in nine weeks. Unfortunately, their accomplishments in Burma in the spring of 1944 were overshadowed by events that summer in Normandy.



*A Burmese Chaplain Reads Final Rites over 15 Allied Dead*

The airmen died in a glider crash. The native chaplain, attached to the British forces, added one more nationality. Gurkhas, West Africans, Indians, Burmese, English, and Americans made up the striking force.



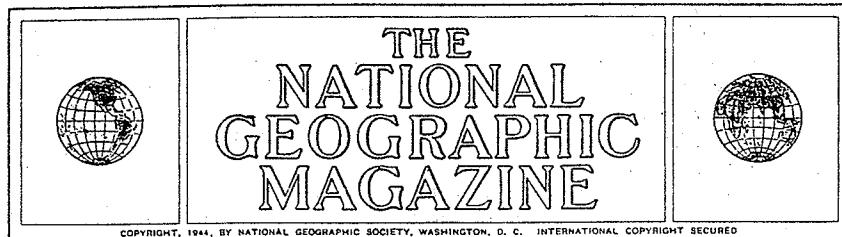
*Pioneers in Aerial Warfare: These Glider Pilots Spearheaded the Air Invasion of Burma and Paved the Way for Ground Troops*

On them depended the success of the whole operation. They had to carry in and land the Air Commandos who would build the airstrip, even if it swarmed with Japs and was jammed with obstructions. Capt. Vincent Rose and Maj. William Taylor (front row center); Flight Officer Jackie Coogan, former movie star, at right.

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AUGUST, 1944



## The Aerial Invasion of Burma

BY GENERAL H. H. ARNOLD

*Commanding General, U. S. Army Air Forces*

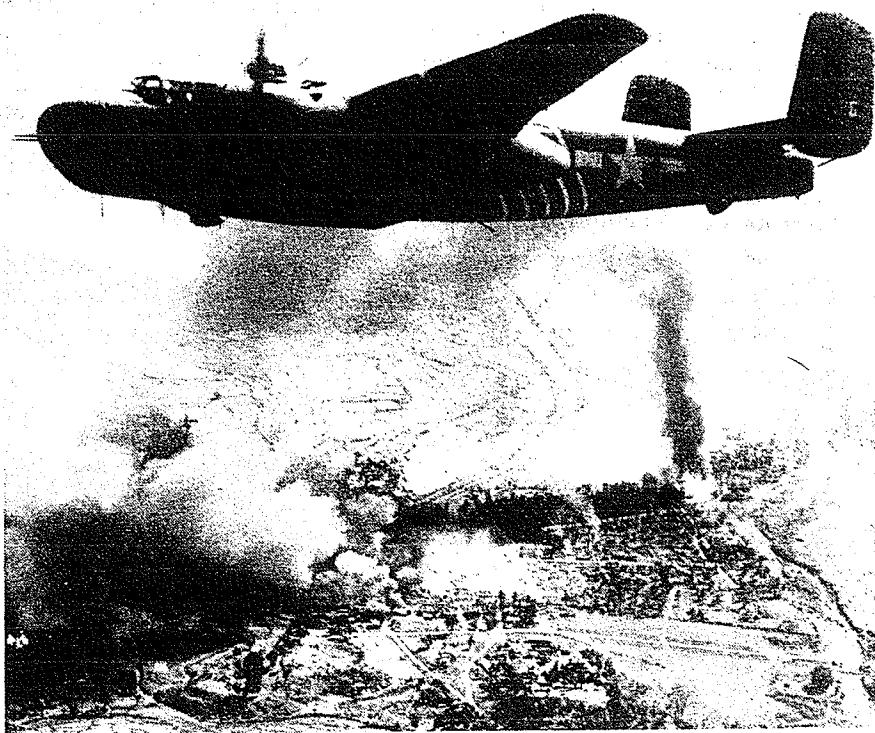
*With Illustrations from U. S. Army Air Forces Official Photographs*

In 1943 the late Major General Orde C. Wingate led a daring campaign against the Japanese in Burma.

He proved that Allied ground troops could operate behind the enemy's lines, cutting off his supply system and upsetting his schedule. General Wingate marched fast and struck hard. The enemy, never knowing where he

was going to strike next, was completely thrown off balance. Indeed, this British general's behind-the-lines operation in Burma brought to mind the brilliant cavalry maneuvers of Nathan Bedford Forrest in our own Civil War.

In 1944 General Wingate wished to lead another expedition into Burma on a larger scale. Previously he had had to leave some of



*Prelude to Wingate's Raid: Bombers Blast Wuntho, Jap Burma Base on the Mandalay-Myitkyina Railroad*

In March, 1944, the enemy was threatening Allied airfields in India. British Maj. Gen. Orde Charles Wingate's forces and the U.S. First Air Commandos delivered a lightning counterblow at the Jap rear in Burma. Gliders and planes flew in engineers, troops, supplies, mules, bulldozers — in fact, everything needed, landing them in a jungle clearing called "Broadway."

his sick and wounded behind his swiftly moving columns, but in 1944 he wanted to fly all of them to safety.

We promised we would do that — and more.

We visualized an Air Commando Force, the first in military history. Large numbers of Allied ground troops would be conveyed by aircraft deep into Burma and, once there, they would be wholly supplied by air. General Wingate believed that, while the Japanese were excellent jungle fighters, well-trained Allied troops could defeat them at their own game, provided they were mobile, in sufficient force, and exploited the military value of surprise.

We would not only evacuate all wounded by air; we would also replace them with fresh combat troops. Furthermore, none of the soldiers would have to make long marches through tough jungle to get inside Burma. They could start fighting in top physical condition. In the same project, the AAF would gain airbases from which we could fight the Japanese at closer quarters and relieve the threat to our aerial life line to China over the Hump.

Obviously, the men to lead this unprecedented project had to be aggressive, imaginative, and endowed with organizational talent of a high order.

### The Original of "Terry and the Pirates"

To AAF headquarters in Washington came two young men who were strongly recommended.

One was a 34-year-old fighter pilot who had shown remarkable leadership in North Africa, Col. Philip G. Cochran, of Erie, Pennsylvania. In my office Cochran still wore his Natal leather boots with the trouser tops stuffed in. In North Africa he had originally headed a unit of replacement pilots, but before anyone was aware of it he had them up at the front fighting as a unit. Later he commanded a squadron of fighter pilots who were frequently so far ahead of our other forces that it was humorously remarked that they were fighting a war of their own.

At the time, I did not know Cochran was the original of the character Flip Corklin in the comic strip "Terry and the Pirates," but he sounded like a good man for the

job.

The other man was Col. John R. Alison, who had been an outstanding fighter pilot with the 14th Air Force in China and had also fought the enemy from England, Russia, and the Middle East. He was short, slender, and self-possessed. He knew his business.

I told both of them that they were going to Burma. Cochran immediately protested that he wanted to go "where there was some fighting." I informed him that he would get all the combat he wanted. I explained the unprecedented mission and ordered them to carry it out. "To hell with the paper work," I added. "Go out and fight."

Perhaps my last words constituted a personal whim, for systematic organization work is necessary in modern war, and I knew they could do it.

Cochran, as commander, and Alison, as deputy, established their first headquarters in a Washington, D.C., hotel in August 1943. Their initial task was to select men to help them. They then flew to England to coordinate plans with the British. General Wingate was enthusiastic and said heartily, "We are going in this to stay."

The aircraft Cochran and Alison selected for the mission were: transports and gliders to move troops, equipment, and supplies; light liaison, or "grasshopper-type" planes to evacuate the wounded; fighters; and medium bombers.

The glider pilots were selected volunteers. Liaison-plane pilots were chosen for ability to repair as well as fly ships. An exhaustive training program was begun in America and concluded in India. Everything to be transported by glider was loaded and unloaded endlessly. Army pack mules became accustomed to bamboo stalls in the gliders.

In India there were work-filled months of final preparations. Visitors to our installations were confounded by the lack of rank.

Morale was high, and there was little paper work. The men said, simply, "If Phil or John says we can do it, then, by God, we do it!"

Officers and men, hot, dusty, and bearded, line up together at the chow lines, ate quickly, and went back to work. They sweated shoulder to shoulder unloading freight cars. For security reasons native help was kept to a minimum. At one base the headquar-

ters was a bamboo hut, and the men slept at night on hard charpoys, or native cots.

There were many obstacles.

At first, some cooperating Allied units were not sure that the AAF could do what it promised; so Cochran and Alison put on demonstrations and proved their points. At one base, until it could get equipment, Cochran's photographic section developed its photos at night, using water from a near-by well and posting a sentry so that no wandering jeep's headlights would spoil the print.

The Gurkha troops had never seen gliders before. They went through their training doggedly, but finally said, "We aren't afraid to go; we aren't afraid to fight. But we thought we ought to tell you — those 'planes' don't have any motors!"

The battle plan was as follows:

The C-47 transports would tow the heavy gliders carrying General Wingate's troops and equipment to the areas he had selected in north-central Burma. He would indicate the areas; the AAF would pick specific places where our gliders could land. The first troops to land would guard the fields while Airborne Engineers built an airstrip with air-

borne bulldozers, scrapers, and other engineering equipment. C-47  
(Continued on page 54)



*Wingate and Cochran, a Ground-Air Team That Stunned the Japs*

Called the "second Lawrence," the late Major General Wingate cleared Axis-backed Arabs in 1936 from British pipe lines in Palestine. He entered Addis Alaba, Ethiopia, at Emperor Haile Sclassie's side in 1941. Cochran's Air Commandos made his 1944 airborne invasion of Burma possible.



*"Flip Corkin" Comes to Life as Col. Philip G. Cochran, USAAF*

The adventures of the popular comic-strip character in "Terry and the Pirates" are based on the real-life exploits of the leader of the First Air Commandos. Here at his India base headquarters, he buckles on his parachute before taking off for Burma. One of the war's most brilliant and likable air officers, the 34-year-old colonel came to General Arnold's attention as commander of a fighter squadron in Tunisia.

**AERIAL INVASION OF BURMA**

(Continued from page 53)

transports could then land with antiaircraft guns and other field equipment, so that any Japs attacking in force could be held off. Our fighter planes could also use the field for aerial patrol and offensive operations.

Cooperating with the AAF in this project were a British Army unit under Lt. Gen. W. J. Slim, the In-

dian forces under General Wingate, the tactical air force under Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin, and the Troop Carrier Command under Brig. Gen. William D. Old, of the U.S. Army.

All would work together.

At the time, Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell was pushing down in northern Burma with Chinese-American forces. The Japs were threatening our airbases in India,

just over the Burma border to the west. The Chinese were holding mountain positions against the Japanese in east Burma. If General Wingate could establish his men *behind* the Japanese in north-central Burma and cut their various supply lines, the Japs would be put in a difficult position regarding Allied attacks on three of their Burma fronts.

**The Fighting Begins**

In February, 1944, the fighting began. Fighters and medium bombers flew into Jap-held Burma, blowing up bridges, destroying warehouses, supply centers, and supply trains.

General Wingate had indicated two areas where he wanted troops to set down. Cochran and Alison had surveyed the areas in their fighters; then photo-reconnaissance planes mapped the areas thoroughly. The two open places were picked to set the gliders down in, nicknamed "Broadway" and "Piccadilly" to suggest the joint effort of the two nations. Once decided on, planes did not fly over these places again, to allay Jap suspicion.

D Day arrived.

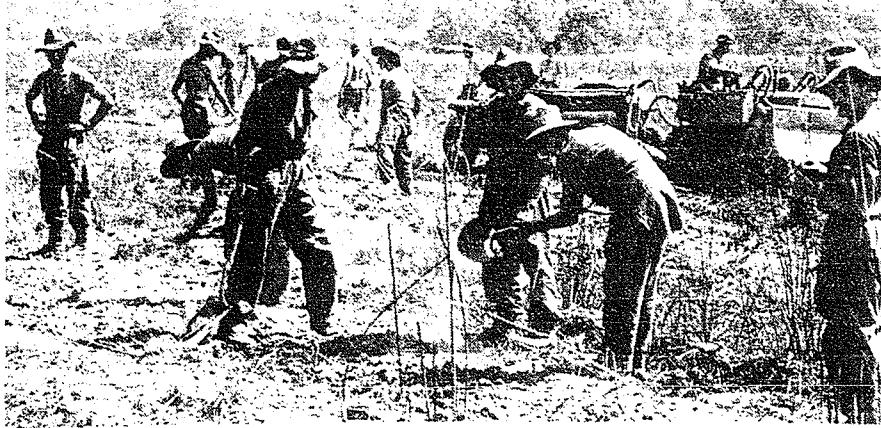
The Japs had been repeatedly bombed and strafed. The weather was suitable. But on D Day Colonel Cochran, on a hunch, ordered a last-minute photo-reconnaissance of Broadway and Piccadilly to make sure that both fields were clear. The year before, a C-47 had made a landing at Piccadilly to pick up some of Wingate's wounded; so the Japs might expect landings there. Their espionage must have warned them that something was up.

Transports, gliders, pilots, troops - all were ready for the great adventure of March 5, 1944.

The first take-off was set for 5:40 p.m. At 5:15 the last-minute photos of Broadway and Piccadilly were rushed from the laboratory. Cochran's hunch was been a good one. The Japs had dragged huge tree trunks all over the open space at Piccadilly and very possibly had mined it as well! No glider could possibly land. However, Broadway was clear, and although the Japs might purposely have left it that way to draw us into an ambush, it was decided to land all gliders at Broadway.

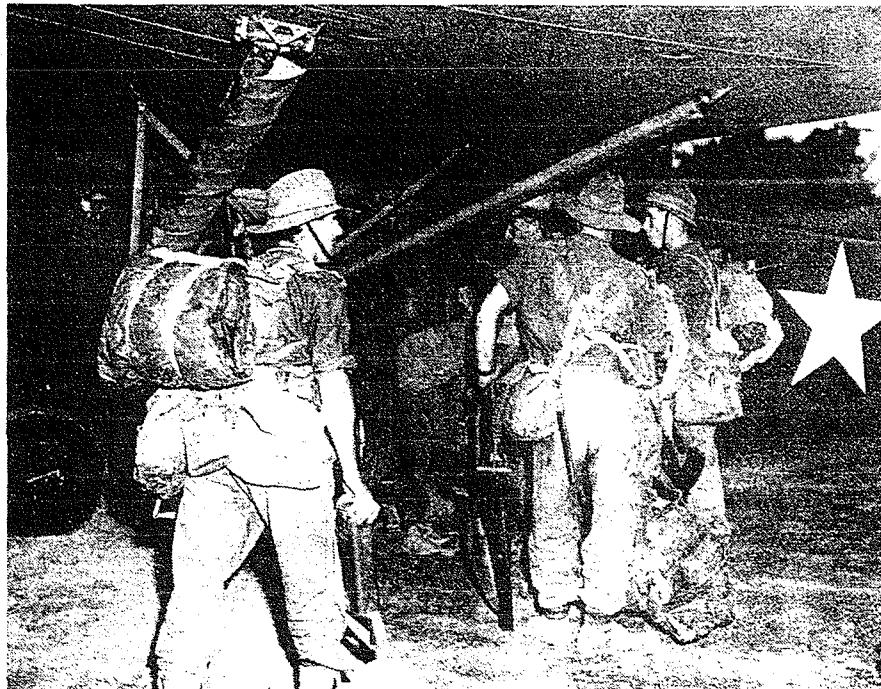
D Day would stand.

The first C-47 took off at 6:12 p.m., towing two heavily loaded



*In One Day Engineers Turn Broadway into a Bustling Airfield*

By evening of the first day nearly 100 C-47s landed with thousands of troops. This end of the field needed little leveling, but the other was badly rutted. Glider-landed bulldozer and carryall in background easily filled big holes.



*British Troops, Armed to the Teeth, Board an American Glider Bound for Broadway*

Carrying enough ammunition and rations for several days, these Tommies were well fortified against Japs and hunger in case the glider cast off before reaching its objective. Several craft made forced landings, obliging soldiers to fight through jungle to the new airstrip. Rough air over the mountains caused towlines to foul.

heavy gliders. Others followed. From a green tea-garden valley they rose in wide sweeping circles to gain altitude, for they had to cross a range of 7,200-foot mountain peaks.

The gliders carried cargoes of resolute men, armed with Tommy guns, carbines, rifles, pistols, and hand grenades. The men knew that, because of the distance and the heavy loads, the gliders would have to land at Broadway. They could not be towed home, even if the Japs disrupted our plans.

There was not turning back.

The sun was going down, and its golden tints were gradually swallowed up in the jungle haze below. The men settled down in cramped positions for the 200-mile flight to their destination – and their fate. As Cochran had told his men, "Tonight you are going to find out if you've got a soul. Nothing you've ever done, or nothing you are going to do counts now. Only the next few hours. Good luck."

#### **Mule Makes a High-altitude Kick**

Some of the gliders held heavy bulldozers, tractors, jeeps, and pack mules. Most of the mules rode calmly enough, except one which kicked a hole in the side of his glider at an altitude of 8,000 feet. This must have been the highest mule kick every recorded! But to the muleteers it was no joke.

As the gliders crossed the Burma frontier the moon came out, but there was too much air turbulence over the mountains for the men to appreciate it. Some of the heavily loaded gliders were in trouble because of the rough air. The night had to be clear for the operation; the moonlight would reveal the aircraft to any Jap fighters who might be waiting for them. There was an enemy airfield close by.

The pilots and passengers anxiously searched the sky, but no Japs appeared. As they neared their destination, each man checked his firearms.

They were now over Broadway; it was time to cut loose.

Colonel Alison was one of the first to land. He was signaled in by the crew of the pathfinder which landed under the hand of Maj. William H. Taylor. The big craft came down out of the darkness to the jungle glade that was Broadway.

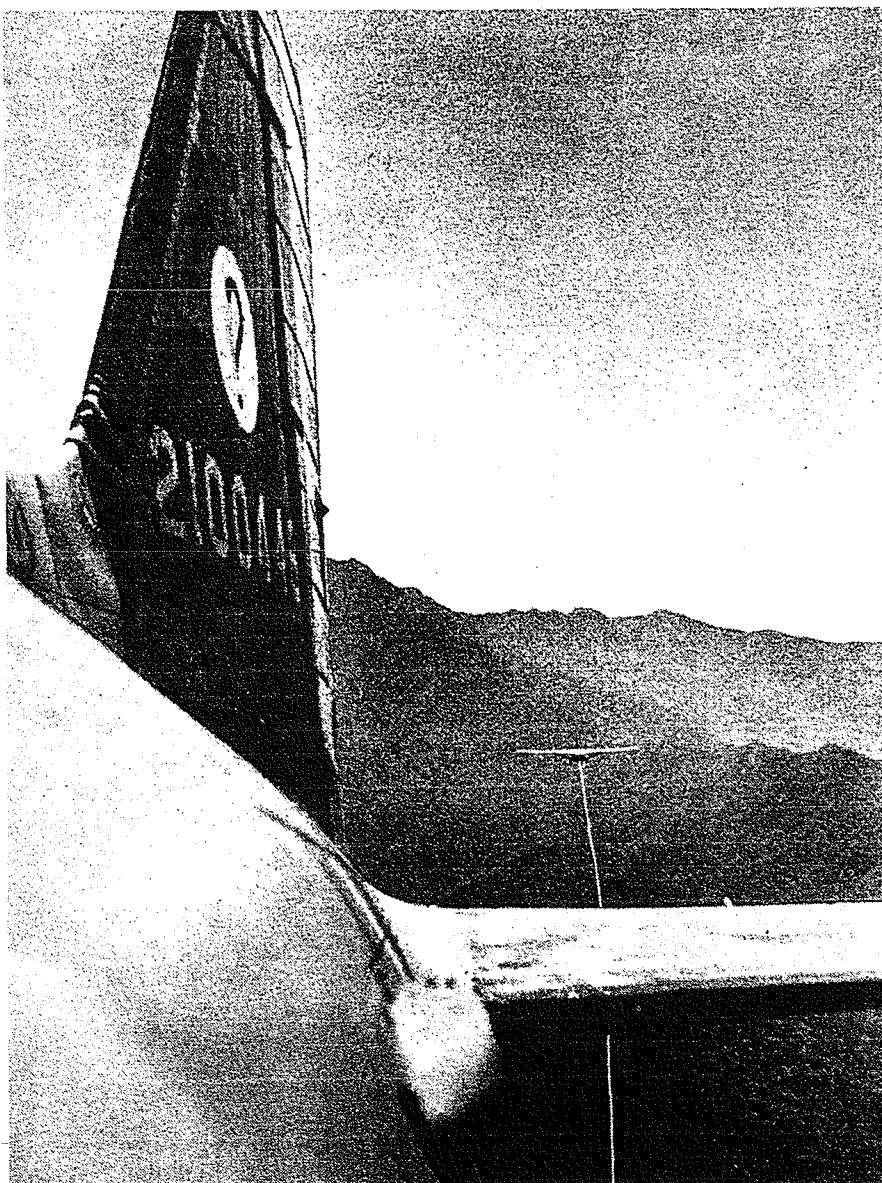
Unfortunately, the field had numerous ruts and holes covered with high grass which had not shown up in aerial photographs. Teakwood had once been cut in the neighborhood, and the logs had been dragged by elephants over the ground when it was wet and soft.

Some of the gliders had their undercarriages torn off and landed hard on their skids. Some were wrecked. As soon as possible, a new landing strip was marked out with flare pots to avoid the crashed gliders. Landing a glider at night under ideal conditions is difficult,

but here conditions were at their worst.

The first ground troops to land immediately fanned out to scout Japanese opposition. Photographs had showed that there were two places where the Japanese might mount machine guns. The first glider crews to hit the dirt went on the dead run to these two points – but no enemy machine guns were there. A green flare was sent up to indicate to gliders still in the air that the first ones to land were not being fired on.

There was no opposition. We



*Aerial Locomotive Hauls a Troop-filled "Flying Boxcar" into Burma*  
Sailing 400 feet behind a Douglas Skytrain (C-47), the glider ferries reinforcements for General Wingate's columns far behind enemy lines. At 8,000 feet it easily crosses the Chin Hills, which form a natural barrier between Allies and Japs. Question mark on tail is the unofficial squadron insignia.

had taken the Japs completely by surprise!

A second wave of gliders, on their way to Broadway, were recalled to their bases by radio. With no opposition, they were not needed immediately.

One glider in the first wave, which contained a bulldozer, missed the landing area and slashed off both of its wings between two trees. The bulldozer had been lashed in the glider so that its first forward movement would lift the nose of the glider. It was a

happy thought, for the bulldozer, torn loose from its fittings, kept right on going. It threw the glider nose up, pitching the pilot and co-pilot into the air. They landed unharmed, save for a broken thumb.

#### **Gliders Bring in Bulldozers**

Three undamaged bulldozers were enough to start building, with the first morning light, an airstrip on which our C-47 transports could land later with more troops and antiaircraft guns. The Japs might attack any minute. That first morning there was a burial of the

23 men who had been killed in glider crashes. A Burmese chaplain read the service, while overhead circled Allied planes, alert for any Zeros.

The Airborne Engineers filled in Broadway's holes and ruts and leveled the humps. By evening the airfield was ready, and nearly a hundred C-47 transports of the Troop Carrier Command flew in and landed with thousands of armed men, enough to stand off any force the Japs could bring to bear upon them in that area.

In any large military operation there are bound to be mishaps. A few gliders were released before they reached Broadway because of their heavy loads, air turbulence over the mountains, or the poor visibility met in descending. Some landed in friendly territory.

Most of the crews landing in enemy territory escaped to safety. One medical officer, a glider pilot, and co-pilot, with 15 native troops, walked 85 miles to Broadway in ten days. Out of food at one point, they tossed a hand grenade into a pond and killed 60 fish. There was a soldier hero in one crew whose men were crossing a river in Jap-held territory. This man drowned rather than call for help and thus endanger the lives of his friends.

The plan for flying out the wounded in light liaison planes worked out as scheduled. To elude the Japs, they flew at treetop height, under the noses of enemy antiaircraft. A man could be wounded behind enemy lines in Burma during the day and be resting in a hospital in India that night. All troops received equal care: British, Gurkhas, Burmese, Yanks, West Africans, and Indian soldiers.

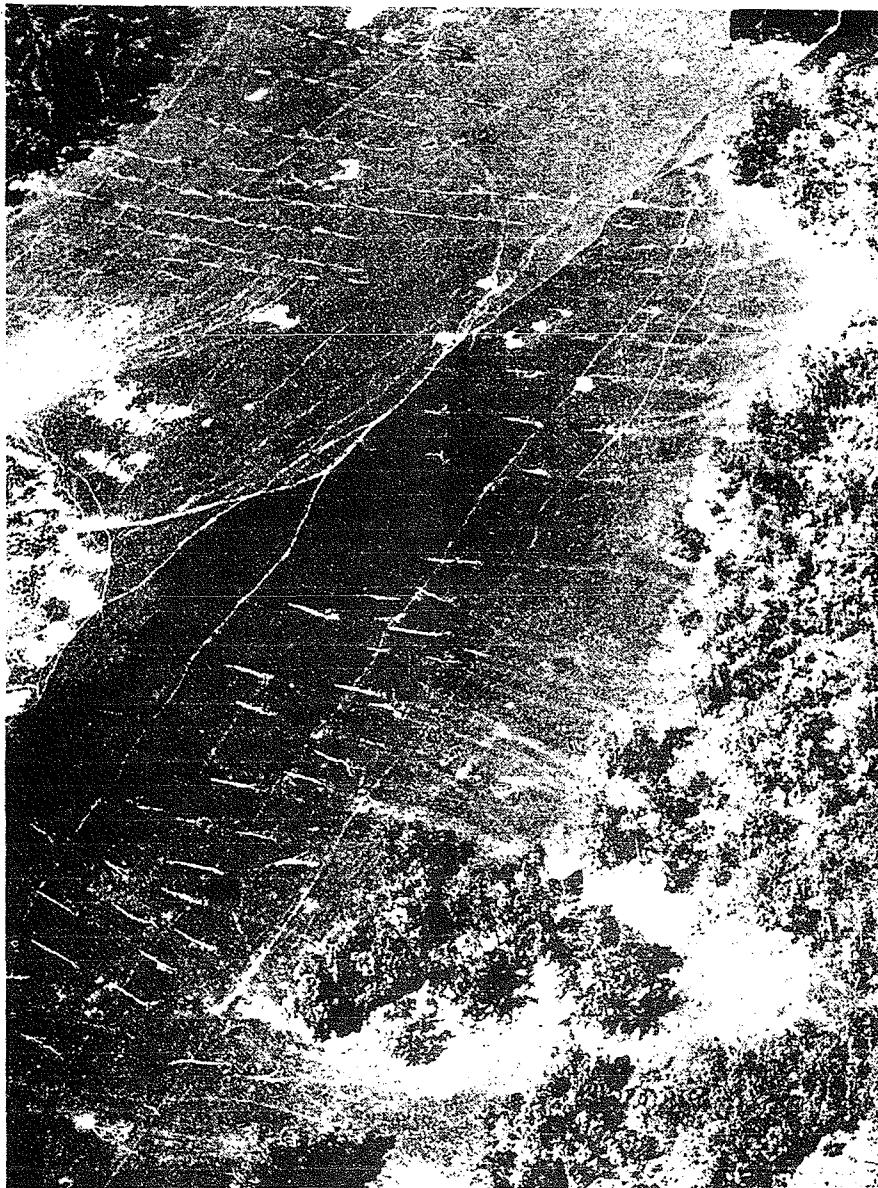
#### **Gliders Confuse Japs**

The Japanese did not realize what was up for a whole week, or could do nothing about it, and the gliders that made forced landings before they reached their destination added to the Japs' confusion.

During the first six days, thousands of Allied troops, 175 ponies, over 1,000 mules, and 500,000 pounds of supplies were brought in by air.

On the eighth day the Japs discovered the field.

Twenty Japanese aircraft came over, but our detection apparatus warned us they were coming and we were ready. Four Japanese planes were shot down by fighters,



*Logs and Ditches Blocked This Clearing at Piccadilly;  
So Yanks Landed at Broadway*

Last-minute reconnaissance of the two fields showed Piccadilly unusable for glider landings. As Broadway was untouched, the whole force landed there, completely surprising the enemy. The names were suggested by the British-United States joint operation. During the weeks of preliminary bombing, planes deliberately avoided these clearings to allay Jap suspicion.

and one was destroyed by our antiaircraft.

The Air Commando Force discovered that the Japanese were bringing more airplanes into Burma. Twenty P-51 Mustangs promptly raided enemy airfields and destroyed 34 planes, with a loss of two.

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#### Broadway and Chowinghee

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At this writing, it is too early to estimate the military significance of this operation, except to say that its successful execution gave a terrific lift to all Allied operations in the China-Burma-India Theater. Many lessons were learned that will be valuable in the future. The able General Wingate was killed in March of this year in an airplane crash but his good work continues.

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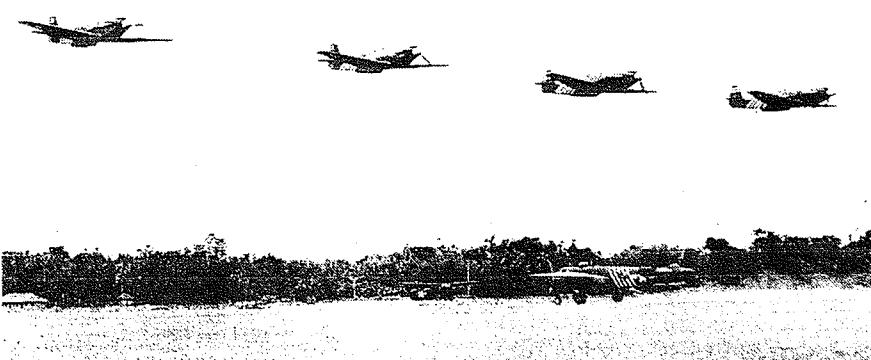
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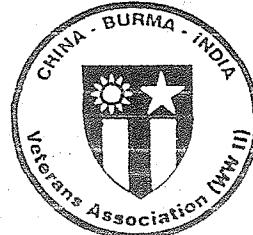
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**UNIQUE?****WE THINK SO!**

WE'RE THE VETERANS OF THE CHINA, BURMA, INDIA THEATER OF OPERATIONS IN WW-2 "WHO DARED TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT WHAT WAS 'IMPOSSIBLE' FOR THE FAINT OF HEART WAS QUITE POSSIBLE FOR AMERICANS" QUOTE FROM LESLIE ANDERS' BOOK "THE LEDO ROAD"

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- THE ARMY AIR FORCE CREWS "MASTERS OF THE HUMP"
- GEN. CLAIRE CHENNAULT'S FLYING TIGERS & 14TH AIR FORCE
- OSS DETACHMENT 101 - 'WILD BILL' DONOVAN'S FIRST SPECIAL FORCE
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- "MERRILL'S MARAUDERS" AMERICA'S FIRST COMBAT INFANTRY UNIT IN C.B.I.
- THE "PIPELINERS" WHO LAID THE LONGEST PIPELINE IN THE WORLD
- THE SIGNAL CORPS WHO STRUNG "COPPER TO KUNMING"
- THE RAILWAY OPERATING BATTALIONS WHO GOT MUCH NEEDED SUPPLIES MOVING "ON TIME IN A TIMELESS LAND"
- THE BOMB GROUPS WHO HIT JAP TARGETS ALL OVER S.E. ASIA IN SOME OF THE WARS LONGEST MISSIONS
- THE "MARS TASK FORCE" TROOPS WHO DISLODGED JAP FORCES FROM THEIR HOLD ALONG THE "BURMA ROAD"



FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD DATED FEB. 13, 1945, THIS EXCERPT FROM CONGRESSMAN (LATER SENATOR) MIKE MANSFIELD'S REPORT TO CONGRESS ON THE ROAD AND THE PIPELINE. "THE BOYS WHO DID THE WORK, WHETHER THEY CARRIED RIFLES, DROVE TANKS, CATERPILLARS OR TRACTORS, FLEW PLANES, OR BUILT PONTOON BRIDGES, ARE HEROES. EVERY ONE OF THEM, AND THE NURSES WHO LOOKED AFTER THEM, PERFORMED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN BEHALF OF OUR COUNTRY AND CHINA."



SIGN BY WARREN S. JONES

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BULK RATE

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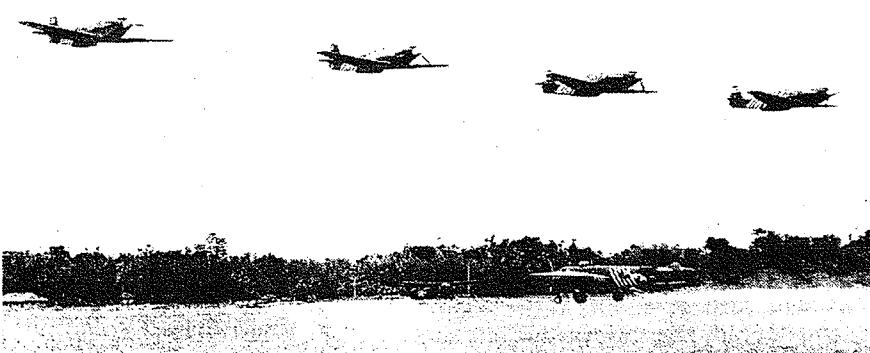
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## Springboard for Victory? C.B.I.T.O. Role Potential

By Joseph B. Shupe

It is disappointing to read "A Brief History of the US Army in WW II," a 48 page booklet (of the U.S. Army Campaigns of WW II series) to find out why we are called the "forgotten theater," all the glory went to the European and Pacific Theaters; there is only this brief paragraph pertaining to the CBI T/O as follows:

*"As late as 1943, the American JCS had not adopted a clear policy for winning the war in the Pacific. Early in the war, they assumed that the burden of the land fighting against Japan would fall on Chinese forces. The bulk of the Japanese army was deployed in China, and Chinese leaders had an immense manpower pool to draw on. But supplying and training the Chinese Army proved to be an impossible task. Moreover, fighting in China did not lead to any strategic objective."*

The CBI Theater could have been the springboard for victory in the Pacific War if the advice of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was followed. According to naval historian Samuel Eliot Morrison who had spoken to Gen. MacArthur in 1950, the latter said that the strategy of by-passing Japanese strongholds and letting them wither on the vine (island hopping) was his. It was Nimitz however, who was for the by-passing of Rabaul in New Britain thus isolating some 100,000 Japanese troops. Until late in 1944, Nimitz wanted to employ a grand strategy whereby a leap to the Mariana Islands would be followed by the greatest island hopping of all - to Formosa - by-passing the Philippines and ignoring the strong Japanese forces there. From Formosa, Allied armies would then land on mainland China to unit with the Chinese Nationalist Army and bomb and invade Japan from those bases.

Mac Arthur, on the other hand, considered the liberation of the Philippines to be primary importance, from new Guinea thence to the Philippines, contending that once Japanese forces were beaten there, the Japanese would surrender. MacArthur favored this approach to fulfill his "I shall return" pledge.

MacArthur also needed to erase

the disgrace of having his B-17's destroyed on the ground despite having been told about the raid on Pearl Harbor nine hours earlier, and having been ordered to initiate preparations for war. He had also refused to allow his air commander (Gen. Brereton) request to bomb Japan's Formosa air bases, which would have caught the Japanese bombers on the ground in early morning fog and prevented the destruction of his B-17's in the Philippines. As Adm. Edwin Layton wrote in "And I Was There": "In strategic terms, the Japanese raid at midday in the Philippine airfields was a far greater triumph than the attack on Pearl Harbor. At a single blow, it had removed our ability to strike back and guaranteed the success of the impending Japanese invasion on the islands."

The issue of whether to continue Nimitz's successful island-hopping strategy came to a head in July 1944, when President Roosevelt met in Hawaii with Nimitz and MacArthur. There Nimitz outlined his strategy for hopping to Formosa and thence to the Chinese mainland as the springboard to Japan. Nimitz argued against the invasion of the Philippines.

Gen. MacArthur had previously opposed this strategy in June '44, sending to the JCS what Layton described as "an eloquent plea for honoring his and America's pledge to the Filipino's" and contending that failure to do so would cause all Asia to lose faith in America's honor."

At the July '44 meeting, MacArthur said that by-passing the Philippines would be politically detrimental to the President's campaign for the fourth term, that American public opinion would turn against him.

The President went along with MacArthur. The JCS adhered to the Formosa strategy but finally agreed to MacArthur's plan in September. As a result, we incurred thousands of casualties in taking the Philippines, also in taking Iwo Jima and Okinawa which would not have been necessary.

Fortunately, before the invasion of Japan was necessary, Adm. Nimitz forces won the war from advance bases in the Mariana's (Guam, Saipan and Tinian), bases that Nimitz had taken despite MacArthur's opposition, because they detracted from his Philippine

plan. From those bases, B-29s were able to reach Japan. After the A-Bombs were dropped, Japan surrendered.

Morrison in his "History of US Naval Operations in WW II" suggests many arguments for invading Formosa, together with a beach-head at Amoy, China. It would "put a cork in the bottleneck" of Japan's communications with her conquests of 1942; it would be closer to Japan than Luzon. To invade Formosa after Leyte would continue the successful "leapfrog" strategy, leaving the most powerful strong points (of which Luzon was one) to wither on the vine. Morrison added: "Also, the presence of an Allied Army on the mainland of China at the end of the war, might have helped Chiang to retain control of China."

In the end, Nimitz strategy succeeded despite efforts to block it; but if his original plan had been adopted, we CBers would have been able to say that we directly contributed to the defeat of Japan.



Ed Uebel shows the St. Louis Basha his Silver Star awarded for the aid he gave a wounded crew mate on a 14th AF bombing mission.

Staff Photo



Dave Dale presents a painting of a B-24 flying the Hump to St. Louis Post-Dispatch military columnist Harry Levin.

Ruth Rode Photo

## ADDENDUM

The following pages contain contributions from readers who responded to articles in previous *Sound-Off* issues or who wanted to get the story told of their units in CBI or of their experiences. One article is even an early effort of Lt. Col. Shupe to write the history of our theater.

The experiences of a GI in CBI were different from the rest of the 16,000,000 Army, Air Corps, Navy and Marine veterans of WW II. The Theater was assigned a low priority. The Germans on the North African and European continent were to be defeated first and then attention would pivot to the Japanese. The U.S. Navy and Marines recaptured the Pacific islands one bloody beach at a time. McArthur's army troops received supplies to fight in New Guinea and later in the Philipines.

CBI got very little. The military tried to keep Chennault's 14<sup>th</sup> AF in the air as our only support for the war-weary Nationalist Chinese. Every ounce of material to China had to be flown over the Himalayas in planes whose maximum altitude was less than the height of their surroundings. The "jet stream" was unknown until it was discovered the hard way. There are still remains of 100 planes and their crews on those mountains and in those jungles which may remain inaccessible forever.

Most rations came out of cans. Beer tastes best in the first thirty days of its life (I'm told.) Ours spent six months in the hold of a ship which took a circuitous route to avoid Japanese submarines and upon the beer's arrival it was rationed and hot. Hot beer shot like a geyser from cans upon opening so one tried primitive methods of cooling. It was a tough war.

Perseverance has become exhausted so that what you see is all you will get from your editor. If your interest in the CBITO is piqued we recommend your contacting **Joe F. Whitley, Publisher** at 2337 W. Canyon Dr., Coeur D'Alene, ID 83815 and order the ten-volume *Confusion Beyond Imagination*. The author, the late William Boyd Sinclair, had been an editor of the theater's *CBI Roundup*.

Book Seven of that series is devoted to SACO, a U.S. Navy venture in China, of which nothing is written in this collection, but it is extremely interesting and highly recommended by this editor.

David Dale  
8915 Hollymont Dr.  
St. Louis, MO 63123  
[dedale@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dedale@sbcglobal.net)

## The American Effort in China, Burma, and India

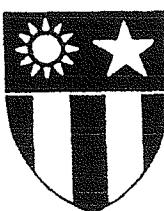
(Stilwell Basha Commander Joseph Shupe prepared the following for the basha's CHATTA SHEET and promises articles on specific CBI events as we observe the Golden Anniversary of each. Joe's source was "History of the U.S. Army" by Russell Weigley. - Ed.)

While American forces in the Pacific, under the unified direction of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, made spectacular advances, the Allied effort in Southeast Asia bogged down in a mire of conflicting national purposes. The hopes Americans held, in the early stages of the war, that Chinese manpower and bases would play a vitally important role in the defeat of Japan were doomed to disappointment. Americans sought to achieve great aims on the Asiatic mainland at small cost, looking to the British in India and the Chinese, with their vast reservoirs of manpower, to carry the main burden of ground conflict. Neither proved capable of exerting the effort the Americans expected of them.

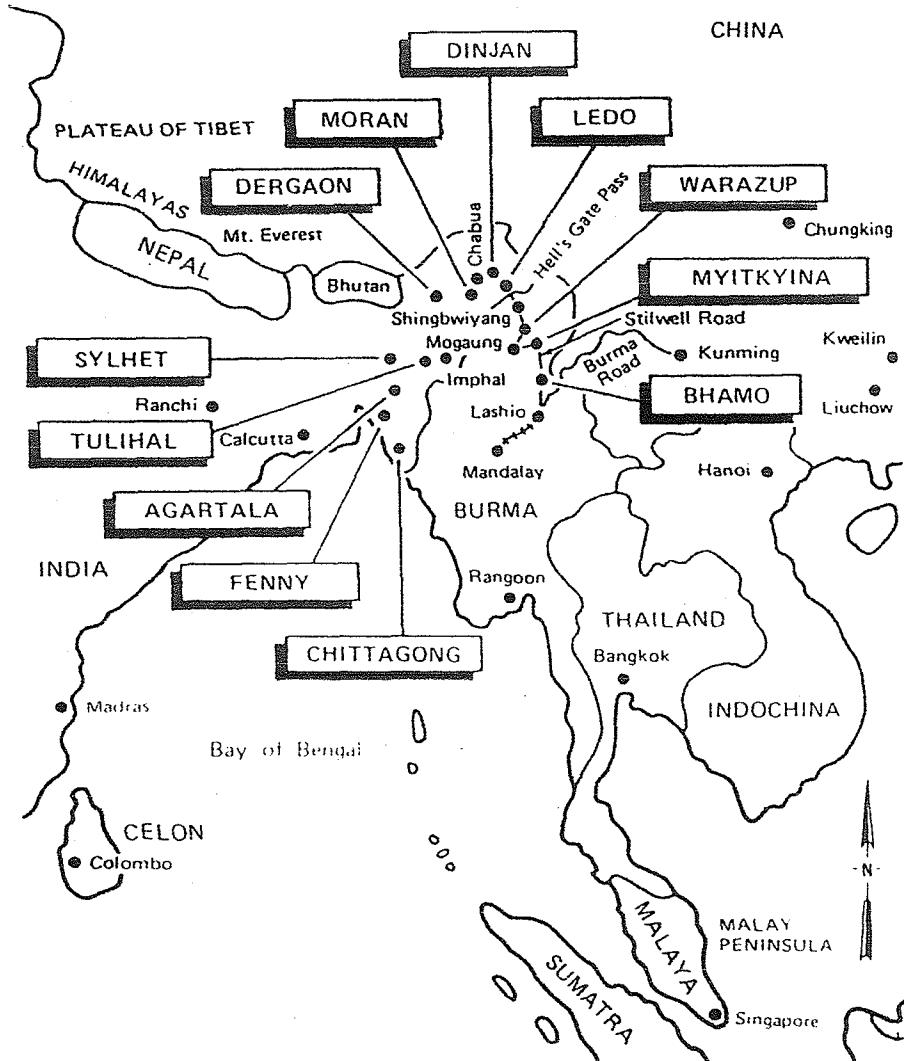
Early in 1942 the United States had sent General Stilwell to the Far East to command American forces in China, Burma, and India to serve as Chief of Staff and principal adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of Nationalist China and Allied commander of the China theater. Stilwell's stated mission was "to assist in improving the efficiency of the Chinese Army." The Japanese request of Burma, cutting the last overland supply route to China, frustrated Stilwell's designs, for it left a long and difficult airlift from Assam to Kunming over the high peaks of the Himalayas as the only remaining avenue for the flow of supplies. The Americans assumed responsibility for the airlift, but its development was slow, hampered by a scarcity of transport planes, airfields, and trained pilots. Not until late in 1943 did it reach a monthly capacity of 10,000 tons, and in the intervening months few supplies flowed in to China. The economy of the country continually tottered on the brink of collapse, and the Chinese Army, although it was a massive force on paper, remained ill organized, ill equipped, poorly led, and generally incapable of offensive action.

Stilwell thought that the only solution was to retake Burma and reopen the land supply line to China, and this became the position of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. To achieve the goal, Stilwell undertook the training and equipping of a Chinese force in India that eventually consisted of three divisions, and sought to concentrate a much larger force in

Yunnan Province in China and to give it offensive capability. With these two Chinese forces he hoped to form a junction in north Burma, thus re-establishing land communications between China and India. Stilwell's scheme became part of the larger plan, ANAKIM, that had been approved by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at the Casablanca Conference. Neither



## CHINA - BURMA - INDIA THEATRE



courtesy of Airlifter Quarterly

the British nor the Chinese, however, had any real enthusiasm for ANAKIM, and in retrospect it seems clear that its execution in 1943 was beyond the capabilities of forces in the theater. Moreover, Chiang was quite dilatory in concentrating a force in Hunnan; Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault, commanding the small American air force in China, urged that the Hump air line should be used to support an air effort in China, rather than to supply Chinese ground forces. Chennault promised amazing results at small cost, and his proposals attracted President Roosevelt as well as the British and Chinese. As an upshot, at the TRIDENT Conference in May 1943, the amphibious operation against Rangoon was canceled and a new plan for operations emerged that stressed Chennault's air operations and provided for a lesser ground offensive in central and northern Burma. Under this concept, a new road would be built from Ledo in Assam Province, India, to join with the trace of the old Burma Road inside China. The Americans assumed responsibility for building the Ledo Road in the rear of Chinese forces advancing from India in Burma.

Logistical difficulties in India, however, again delayed the opening of any land offensive and kept the airlift well below target figures. Until the supply line north from Calcutta to the British and Chinese fronts could be improved – and this job took well over a year – both air and ground operations against the Japanese in Burma were handicapped. In October 1943, Chinese troops under Stilwell did start to clear northern Burma, and in the spring of 1944 a U.S. Army unit of regimental size, Merrill's Marauders, spearheaded new offensives to secure the trace for the overland road. But Myitkyina, the key point in the Japanese defenses in north Burma, did not fall until August 2 and by that time the effort in Burma had been relegated to a subsidiary role.

After the SEXTANT Conference in late 1943, in fact, the American staff no longer regarded it as probable that the overland route to China could be opened in time to permit Chinese forces to drive to the coast by the time American forces advancing across the Pacific reached there. While the Ameri-



Hostesses in the hospitality room of the Fall Executive Board meeting in Las Vegas are Golden West Basha workers Geri Richardson, Marion Tarpeta, Marion Greengard and Carman Klein.

Chester Greengard Photo

cans insisted on continuing the effort to open the Ledo Road, they now gave first priority to an air effort in China in support of the Pacific campaigns. The Army Air Forces, in May 1944, started to deploy the first of its B-29 groups to airfields in East China to commence bombing of strategic targets in Korea, Manchuria, and Japan. At the same time, Chennault's Fourteenth Air Force was directed to stockpile supplies for missions in support of Pacific forces as they neared the China coast. Again these projects proved to be more than could be supported over the Hump air line, particularly since transports had also to be used to supply the ground effort of both British and Chinese forces. Then the Japanese reacted strongly to the increased air effort and launched a ground offensive that overran most of the existing fields and proposed air base sites in east China. Both air and ground resources inside China had to be diverted to oppose the Japanese advance. The B-29s were removed to India in January 1945, and two months later were sent to Saipan where the major strategic bombing offensive against Japan was by that time being mounted. In sum, the air effort in China without the protection of an efficient Chinese Army fulfilled few of the goals proclaimed for it.

To meet the crisis in east China, President Roosevelt urged Chiang to place his U.S. supported armies under the command of General Stilwell; Chiang eventually refused and asked for Stilwell's recall, a request the President honored. In September 1944, Maj. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer replaced Stilwell as

Chief of Staff to Chiang and commander of American forces in the China Theater; a separate theater in India and Burma was created with Lt. Gen. Dan I. Sultan as its commanding general. The command issue was dropped and the American strategy in China became simply one of trying to realize at least something from previous investments without additional commitments.

Ironically enough, it was in this phase, after the Pacific advances had outrun those in Southeast Asia, that objects of the 1942 strategy were realized, in large part because the Japanese, hard-pressed everywhere, were no longer able to support their forces in Burma and China adequately. British and Chinese forces advanced rapidly into Burma in the fall of 1944, and on January 27, 1945, the junction between Chinese forces advancing from India and Yunnan finally took place, securing the trace of the Ledo Road. To the south, the British completed the conquest of central Burma and entered Rangoon from the north early in May. The land route to China was thus finally secured on all sides, but the Americans had already decided that they would develop the Ledo Road only as a one-way highway, though they did expand the airlift to the point where, in July 1945, it carried 74,000 tons into China.

With increased American supply support, Wedemeyer was able to make more progress in equipping and training the Chinese Army. Under his tutelage, the Chinese were able to halt the Japanese advance at Chihchiang in April 1945, and, as the Japanese began to withdraw in order to prepare a citadel defense of their home islands, Wedemeyer and the Chinese laid plans to seize a port on the Chinese coast. The war came to an end, however, before this operation even started and before the training and equipping of a Chinese Army was anywhere near completion. Chiang's forces commenced the reoccupation of their homeland still, for the most part, ill equipped, ill organized, and poorly led.

**ALL THE SHIPS AT SEA**

Remember broadcaster Walter Winchell? He used to open his 15 minute radio show with "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. America and all the ships at sea . . . dot . . . dot, flash."

Well, we have flash news about ships too: the results of the Ships Coupon Project are in. You overwhelmed this column! More than 200 replies were received. Stragglers keep comin in, (you're welcome).

Thank you, Mister and Missus CBI. You're the greatest, Jackie Gleason would shout. It is impossible to reply to all, individually. Those who asked specific ship questions and or sent detailed material, which gladdened our heart, indeed, will get a reply. But, be patient. This is a shoe-string operation but we labor at it with diligence. Some even sent money to keep the ship project afloat. All of the funds, about a hundred smackers, have been returned however. This column has nothing to sell. We just bring you recollections of a period long past, yet very much alive and well, and worth talking about.

Reader Charles Schaeffer, 89th Fighter Squadron, Alamo City Basha, said it very well: "My journey to and from CBI was very eventful. I was able to meet people, see many things and places which would be expensive today and many you could not go to any longer today. You might say I had an all-paid vacation tour which gives me fond memories as well as pictorials of these places."

The thousands of returnees were lucky. Many, many could not come back but are now part of that large army out yonder.

Now then, nota bene, caveat emptor: We list below only those ships which readers reported on the coupons. So, if your ship is not listed, send the coupon and go on record. We aim to make the ship project the most accurate and complete log of ship movements to and from CBI. Today's column deals with 'Outbound to CBI'

sailings. Another column will be about the ships which brought us home. Thanks, Coast Guard; Thanks, Navy; Thanks, American and Foreign ship owners!

Troop movements to India were done in a number of ways. A.) From East Coast ports down to Rio, then across the South Atlantic, Capetown, South Africa. B.) From East Coast ports to North Africa after belligerent France had given up there, then tranship the men through the Mediterranean, Suez Canal. C.) From East Coast ports through the Panama Canal then to Australia. D.) From West Coast ports heading far south into the South Pacific and making landfall in New Zealand or Australia, then transshipping to India. Many of the 'Down-under arrivers' were actually meant to become part of the then starting South Pacific campaigns. But snafus, excess troop capacity, perhaps and the growing importance of the India and China war theaters got many men and women to India. Indian arrival ports were Karachi and Bombay. Calcutta was not considered, at least not in the beginning due to the Japanese sub danger. E.) Once the ATC Gobal Airline was functioning many men flew in increasing numbers to India via Ascension Island or via North Africa. I'll discuss this transportation mode once I have significant data from flyers. I'm waiting, men!

**Ship Departures from U.S.,  
West Coast Ports**

**ARGENTINA** (Moore McCormack Line) — San Francisco, 7/43 to Bombay via Hobart.

**BRAZIL** (Moore McCormack Line) — San Francisco, 7/43 to Bombay, India.

**USS ADMIRAL BENSON** — Los Angeles, 12/44 to Bombay via Melbourne, also 2/45.

**JUAN FLACO BROWN** — San Pedro, 10/43 to Calcutta via Hobart, Tasmania. Only three troop passengers were on board.

**USS NATHAN B. FOREST** — Los Angeles, 9/44 and 12/44 to Bombay via Hobart.

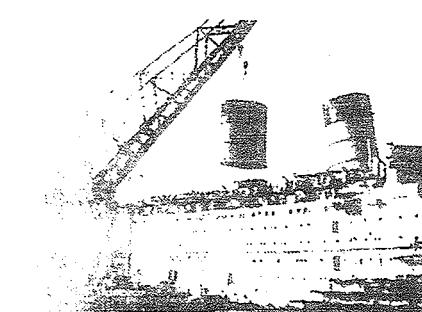
**GENERAL BUTNER** — Los Angeles, 7/43 and 12/44 to Bombay via Melbourne, Perth.

**GENERAL CALLEN** — Los Angeles, 3/45 to Calcutta.

**GENERAL ELTINGE** — Wilmington, 3/45 to Calcutta via Melbourne.

**GENERAL FREEMAN** — San Diego, 6/45 to Calcutta.

**GENERAL HASE** — San Pedro, 5/45 to Calcutta via Melbourne and



**From War to Peace:** The Mauretania being stripped of her wartime fittings and restored to her peacetime condition in Liverpool

The Mauretania is now being refitted in Gladstone Dock, Liverpool, for the resumption of her peacetime service. One thousand workmen will be engaged for nearly six months in restoring the recently released 33,000-ton Cunard White Star liner to her pre-war condition. Later, the Mauretania may go to her builders, Cammell Laird and Co., for an overhaul before resuming her North Atlantic service early in the New Year. Then she will again sail from London.

Perth.

**GENERAL MANN** — San Francisco, 2/45 to Calcutta, India.

**GENERAL MCRAE** — San Pedro, 1/45 to Calcutta, India.

**GENERAL MITCHELL** — Los Angeles, 12/44 to Bombay via Hobart, Tasmania.

**GENERAL MORTON** — Long Beach, 1/45 to Calcutta, India.

**GENERAL JOHN POPE** — Los Angeles, 11/44 to Bombay.

**GENERAL RANDALL** — Long Beach, 8/44 to Bombay.

**HERMITAGE** (Ex Conte Biancamano, Lloyd Triestino) Mare Island, GA, 3/43 to Bombay. Long Beach, 7/43 to Karachi via New Zealand; Wilmington, 11/43 to Bombay via Society Islands.

**ILE DE FRANCE** (French Line) — Fort Mason, S.F., 12/42 to Bombay via Pearl Harbor, New Zealand.

**LURLINE** (Matson) — San Francisco, 9/43 to Bombay via New Caledonia, Brisbane, Perth, Australia.

**MARIPOSA** (Matson) — Fort Mason, S.F., 1/42 to Melbourne; Wilmington, 12/43 to Bombay via Perth; Wilmington, 3/44 to Bombay via Perth.

**USS WALTER A. MANN** — Wilmington, 2/45 to Bombay, via Melbourne.

**MONTICELLO** (Ex Conte Grande, Lloyd Triestino Line) — Wilmington, 1/43 to Bombay via Pearl Harbor, Perth.

**MAURETANIA** (Cunard) — Fort Mason, S.F., 1/43 to Bombay via Pearl Harbor, Perth.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

**NIEUW AMSTERDAM** — (Holland-America Line) — Fort Mason, 5/43 to Karachi via Colombo, Perth, Australia.

**PRESIDENT COOLIDGE** (American President Lines) — Fort Mason, S.F., 1/42 to Karachi via Colombo, Perth.

**URUGUAY** (Ex California - Moore McCormack Line) San Francisco, 8/43 to Bombay via Tasmania, Perth.

**MOUNT VERNON** (Ex Washington, United States Lines) — San Pedro, 2/44 to Bombay via Melbourne.

**GEORGE WASHINGTON** (Big George) — Wilmington, 9/43 to Bombay.

**BENJAMIN IDA WHEELER** — Los Angeles to Calcutta via Colombo, Perth.

#### DEPARTING AUSTRALIAN PORTS

**WILLARD A. HOLBROOK** (Ex Buckeye State, Ex President Taft) Brisbane, 2/42 to Karachi.

**TSMV DUNTROON** (Netherlands East India Line) Melbourne, 2/42 to Karachi via Colombo, Perth, Australia.

These were the first ships to arrive in CBI. Another one, the KATOOMBAA was in the same group.

**DEPARTING COLOMBO, CEYLON**  
**KOSCIUSZKO** (Gydnia-America Line) — 11/42 to Bombay, India.

**CITY OF LONDON** — (Ellerman Line) — 6/43 to Bombay, also 8/43.

**CITY OF PARIS** (Ellerman Line) — 11/42 to Karachi.

#### DEPARTING U.S. East Coast Ports

**ATHOS II** (French Line) — Hampton Roads, Va., 1/44 to Bombay, India via Panama, Galapagos Islands, Bora Bora, Perth. Trip required 94 days, the longest, due to repeated engine failures.

**ANDES** (Royal Mail Line) — Hampton Roads, Va., 12/43 to Casablanca, Morocco, North Africa.

**ATLANTIS** (Royal Mail Line) Hospital Ship, New York, 4/43 to Karachi via Capetown, Durban, South Africa.

**BRAZIL** (Moore McCormack Line) — Charleston, S.C., 3/42 to Karachi via Panama, Perth, Australia.

**CAPE ST. ELLIAS** — New York, 9/43 to Calcutta via Panama, Perth, Australia.

**EMPEROR OF SCOTLAND** (Ex Empress of Japan) Newport News, 1/44 to Bombay via Capetown.

**EXCELLER** — Hampton Roads, Va., 5/43 to Basra, Iraq via Capetown, Durban, South Africa.

**GENERAL ANDERSON** — Hampton Roads, Va., 7/44 to Bombay, via Panama Pitcairn Islands.

**GENERAL BUTNER** — Newport News, 4/44 to Bombay via Capetown.

South Africa.

**GENERAL MANN** — Hampton Roads, Va., 3/43 and 10/44 to Casablanca and Bombay via Suez.

**GENERAL MITCHELL** — Newport News, 8/44 and 10/44 to Melbourne via Panama.

**GENERAL RANDALL** — Hampton Roads, Va., 6/43 to Bombay via Panama and Perth, Australia, also 5/44 to Bombay via Cook and Bass Straights and Perth.

**M M GUHIN** — 9/43 to Oran, Algeria, North Africa.

**ANDREW HAMILTON** — Newport News, 10/43 to Oran.

**JOHN B. HOOD** — Newport News, 4/44 to Bombay.

**WILLIAM H. JACKSON** — Newport News, 10/43 to Oran.

**MARIPOSA** (Matson Lines) Charleston, S.C., to Karachi via Rio de Janeiro, Capetown.

**JAMES J. MCCOSH** — Newport News, 10/43 to Arzew, Algiers, North Africa.

**MAURETANIA** (Cunard) Newport News to Bombay via Rio de Janeiro, Durban, Suez and Colombo, Ceylon. Also 5/43 to Colombo via Rio and Capetown.

**LOUIS PASTEUR** (French Line) — Newport News, 9/43 to Karachi.

**LEELAND STANFORD** — Newport News, 5/44 to Oran, North Africa.

**SANTA PAULA** — (Grace Line) — Charleston, S.C., 5/42 to Karachi via Bermuda, Freetown, Durban.

**JOSHUA SENY** — Newport News, 2/44 to Oran.

**WEST POINT** (Ex America, United States Line) — New York, 7/43 to Bombay via Rio de Janeiro, Capetown.

**GEORGE WHYTHE** — Charleston, S.C., 8/42 to Capetown, South Africa.

**USS LST 209** — New York, 7/43 to Calcutta arriving 1/44 via Oran, Italy, Colombo. Six months to reach India on the same boat? Hard to believe. Must be a dating error or the Skipper got lost or his LST had worse malfunctioning than the 18 year old rust pot ATHOS II which took 94 days to India. Hm!

**Ships Departing North African Ports**

**BANFORA** (French Fabare Line) — Oran, 11/43 to Bombay.

**CHAMPOLLION** (French Line) — Oran, 5/44 to Bombay via Naples.

**DURBAN CASTLE** (Union Castle Line) — Oran, 5/44 to Port Said.

**NEA HELLAS** (Ex Tuscania, Greek American Line) Algiers, 1/44 to Bombay via Suez, Aden.

**HMS KAROA** (British India Line) — Oran, 11/43 to Bombay in convoy with Banfora, Rohna and others.

**LANCASHIRE** (Bibby Line) — Oran,



Lt. Gen. Hal Grant greets Gen. Albert Wedemeyer at Friends Advice, Boyds, MD, during the American Branch of the Burma Star Ass'n visit celebrating General Wedemeyer's 80th birthday. The General had just been presented a British Flag from Countess Mountbatten of Burma. Bob Kadel Photo

2/44 to Bombay, India.

**MALOJA** (P&O) Line — Port Said, 6/44 to Bombay.

**GEORGE G. MEAD** — Oran, 4/44 to Bombay.

**HMT RANCHI** (P&O Line) — Oran, 5/44 to Bombay.

**ROHNA** (British-India Steamship Co.) — Oran, 11/25/43 destined for Bombay. Sunk a day later by aerial torpedo off Djidejilli, Algeria, with loss of over 1000. Worst allied ship disaster. Read account of sinking written by Thomas Hooks in Ex-CBI Roundup, 7/86 issue.

**TAKLIWA** (British-India Line) — Bizerte, Tunis, 1/44 to Bombay via Aden.

**JOHAN DE WIT** (Holland-America Line) — Algiers, 1/44 to Bombay via Aden.

#### California Camp Stoneman News

Camp Stoneman was the subject of my column in last issue. It is now the site of a Fall Reunion (September) for those who shipped out of that camp and others who just want to come for a look-see. The citizens of Pittsburg and its Historical Society are staging the event in connection with their well known Seafood Festival which draws thousands. Yours truly will be there, (in the parade as well). Would anyone join me? Get details from Marti Aiello, 196 School Str., Pittsburg, CA 94565. If we have enough CBers we could do a post reunion tour of San Francisco. Hit all the high spots as in years past, visit the ship anchorage at Suisun Bay, be piped aboard a real Liberty Ship at Fort Mason and continue sightseeing as far as the Casa Grande, the Randolph Hearst Castle at San Simeon, down California One Highway.

**Support CBIVA!**

## What Bugged CBlers Per Army Medics

Joseph B. Shupe, Jr. Vice-Commander-East, is spending his retirement in the U.S. Archives in Washington. Among things he uncovered is the following treatise in the U.S. Army Medical Department's History of Neuropsychiatry concerning morale problems in the CBI Theater.

Sixteen complaints were heard often enough to warrant listing. If it weren't for these we wouldn't have needed T.S. Cards or the chaplains to punch them. We will run the entire article as space permits, continuing in future issues, if necessary.

### **U.S. Medical Department History of Neuropsychiatry in WW II Morale in CBI Theater**

The consultant found it most difficult to offer an authentic quantitative estimate of the state of morale in the theater. During his six months of active service, in India-Burma, he saw only hospitalized psychiatric patients whose morale was usually poor, as would be expected under the circumstances. He did not have the opportunity to observe troops who were productively and happily occupied with duties in the field. The state of morale is difficult to estimate as it varies from time to time and from unit to unit. It is a complex and somewhat intangible quality, easily diminished by factors such as inadequate leadership, poor motivation, misassignment, domestic difficulties, and improper orientation to military necessities and demands. Major variations in the state of morale are meaningful indicators of the efficiency of the command and indicate the direction for corrective measures.

After interviewing many people who were supposedly knowledgeable about the subject of morale and consulting what few records were available, the consultant reached the following conclusions: Nothing was known about the state of morale of the theater during its first three years of existence. Several of the oldtimers stated, "the morale was good during the first two years of the theater (1942-43), as living conditions were primitive, and the few people who were here had so much work to do they had no time to become unhappy." The

morale officer, Col. Donald Young, remarked that morale manifested a steady downward trend during 1944 and 1945. In August 1945, it reached its lowest point, after which time it began to show noticeable improvement.

The following are some of the factors that tended to lower morale in this theater:

1. The discomforts and hardships of living in the India-Burma theater, such as dull routine assignments, vicissitudes of climate, lack of feminine companionship, isolation, shortage of supplies, and the filth and disease of the natives. Many soldiers considered this a forgotten and unappreciated theater.

2. The inefficient, cumbersome, and ever-changing rotation policy was a constant source of complaint. A bad situation was made worse by the release of premature and inaccurate information by stateside radio commentators, relative to War Department changes in rotation policies.

3. Poor leadership due to immature and inadequately trained officers and noncommissioned officers.

4. Poor motivation and orientation as to why it was necessary for them to be in this theater at all. Many believed that the theater had no military value or function and that they could do a much better job in a defense plant in the States.

5. Promotions were slow and limited by tables of organization. Many soldiers remarked, "It's who you know, rather than what you know, that gets you promoted."

6. Many enlisted men objected to what they called the "preferential treatment" received by officers, such as monthly whisky rations, dates with American Red Cross workers and nurses, better food and quarters, and extra transportation for recreational purposes.

7. Complaints and dissatisfaction regarding misassignment were numerous and constant. An example of this was a soldier with 15 years' experience in civilian life as a diesel engine operator, who during his 40 months in the Army had served as a typist.

8. Replacements sent over from the States were young and untrained in their jobs.

9. There were numerous in-



This table decoration at the Winter Park (FL) Christmas party was judged so attractive that we'll run it a few months late. Wilford Welch Photo

stances where American soldiers resented the British and Chinese soldiers, and felt that the latter were getting better American food and clothing than they were.

10. Insufficient rest leave and poor insanitary rest camps.

11. Some men claimed that they received poor medical attention and medical officers frequently told them, "You are a goldbrick," and "there is nothing wrong with you, it's all in your head."

12. Soldiers were sent to the frontline without sufficient training, and this resulted in unnecessarily high casualties.

13. Severe shortage of post exchange supplies in certain sections, reportedly due to "black marketing."

14. There were relatively few instances of Negro soldiers who claimed they were discriminated against because of their race.

15. Some medical officers were very resentful of rumors that they would be involuntarily detailed in the Army or transferred to Veterans' Administration hospitals for long periods of time. They believed that this measure was sponsored intentionally by the Government in an effort to advance the cause of socialized medicine.

16. The chief complaints of the nurses were the slowness and unfairness of promotions, the ineffectiveness of rotation policy, the shortage of clothing and toilet articles, and the fact that they had had no Director of Nurses for the

first two years.

In January 1944, a research unit was sent to the India-Burma theater from the States to "study the attitude and opinions of soldiers," and made two questionnaire surveys during 1944. On 26 October 1944, Gen. George C. Marshall, the Chief of Staff, wrote a personal letter to the theater commander, stating that the morale was in need of improvement, and enclosed a list of complaints made in stateside "sound-off sessions" by CBI returnees. He also recommended the appointment of a full-time morale and leadership officer whose duty would be the study and improvement of morale.

In December 1944, an informal morale board was appointed. According to information at hand, they did little except to meet occasionally and discuss certain theoretical considerations. This arrangement naturally proved unsatisfactory as no effective action ever resulted, and meanwhile, morale continued to deteriorate rapidly. In May 1945, Colonel Young was appointed as morale and leadership officer and immediately inaugurated an active program. He organized a new morale board, consisting of the Inspector General, the information and education officer, the public relations officer, the special service officer, and the theater chaplain.

The following measures were instituted by Colonel Young in an effort to improve morale:

1. The number and quality of research unit teams in the field were increased so that each section of the theater had its own permanent team. Numerous "trend" questionnaire surveys were made and effective action was taken on their recommendations.

2. The active and interested assistance of the Inspector General was obtained in the investigation of complaints revealed in the research unit questionnaires and "gripes" from the stateside "sound-off sessions" sent each month by the War Department.

3. Frequent and detailed inspections of units were made by the morale officer.

4. Radio programs and stations were reorganized and intensified. Finally, there were 16 radio stations which gave coverage for the entire theater. More authentic information was released through radio programs relative to theater

policies, plans, rotation schedules, promotion, and so forth, to prevent rumormongering.

5. Seven rest camps were established with modern recreational facilities, sanitary quarters, and good messes. Rest leave was made easier to obtain.

6. The information and education programs at the various units were enlarged and made more active. Several booklets were published periodically, such as "CBI Talks," explaining certain local and national problems.

7. The theater paper, Roundup, was given more official information for publications, such as changes in rotation policies and personal interviews with high-ranking staff officers in which future plans were outlined and explained.

8. Public relation officers sent home writeups and pictures of men to their local hometown papers.

9. The post exchange stock were increased and most articles removed from the list of rationed goods.

10. The officers' monthly whisky ration was suspended. (Footnote: Did this ever build morale! It was a dog-in-the-manger device. American officers traded a case of beer for the British enlisted men's ration of Scotch whisky, and upped their consumption of local whisky and South African brandy. We did not, at the time, realize that our morale was being improved — we thought that the end of the war in Europe had "snafu'd" the transportation system.)

11. The quality and frequency of movies and USO (United Service Organizations) shows were improved. An adequate supply of athletic and recreational equipment was received and issued to all units.

(The morale problems of the Merrill's Marauders in next issue.)

<b>CBI Jewelry</b> <b>CBI Caps, Tie Tacs</b> <b>Buckles, Ribbons, Medals</b> <b>CBI General Store</b> <b>GREEN'S</b> <b>P.O. Box 191</b> <b>Roseland, FL 32957</b>
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## Hello . . . Remember Me?

Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your flag . . . the flag of the United States of America. Something has been bothering me lately, so I thought I would talk it over with you . . . because it is about you, and me.

I remember sometime ago, people lined up on both sides of the street to watch the parade, and naturally, I was leading every parade, proudly waving in the breeze. When your daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat, and placed it against his left shoulder, so that his hand was over his heart . . . remember?

And You . . . I remember you, standing there straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute. Remember little sister? Not to be outdone, she was saluting the same as you, with her right hand over her heart . . . ?

Remember when some misguided college kids were wearing the flag of our country on the seat of their pants? And now . . . to make matters even worse, it is perfectly all right to burn me, as a protest of what is wrong in America. THIS I don't understand.

What has happened? I'm still the same old flag. Oh, I have a few more stars since you were a little boy. A lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.

And NOW . . . I'm happy to see a resurgence of patriotism. Many people are showing the flag . . . and displaying yellow ribbons in honor of those serving in the Armed Forces. THEY haven't forgotten BUNKER HILL . . . GETTYSBURG . . . FLANDERS FIELD . . . ANZIO . . . GUADALCANAL . . . OMAHA BEACH . . . KOREA . . . VIETNAM . . . PANAMA . . . and now, THE PERSIAN GULF.

Take a look at the memorial Honor Rolls sometimes, of those who never came back, while trying to keep this republic FREE . . . ONE NATION, UNDER GOD.

Well, it won't be long until I'll be coming down your street again. So, when you see me . . . stand straight, place your right hand over your heart . . . and I'LL BE SALUTING, YOU, by waving right back . . . and I'll know that

**You Remember Me!**

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**FLY THE FLAG — JUNE 14!!**

## "The Bastards Got Jack Knight"

In December of 1944, the men and mules of Mars Task Force left Camp Landis at Myitkyina in Burma to trudge 300 miles over the dusty roads and the mountainous, jungle trails to place a road block on the Burma Road and trap retreating Japanese who were trying to escape from the pincers of the "Y" Forces in China and the combined forces that had wrested Myitkyina from their grip.

By early February, much of their mission had been accomplished and they were busy driving out the enemy which was entrenched in the hills overlooking the Road. Ap-

proximately 400 Japanese were in defensive positions, facing an equal number of Mars attackers. With this scene set, we quote directly from John Randolph's "Marsmen in Burma":

"At 0600 the morning of the 2nd, the fireworks began. Field artillery, fire support from the 1st Squadron, the Chinese, and 2nd Squadron's own mortars laid down a heavy barrage. At 0620, the troops left their line of departure and the battle was on.

"F Troop probably had the longest approach to make. From their line of departure they ran 1500 yards (almost a mile) down into a jungle valley and up a steep 400-foot climb to the hilltop that



American Legion Post 163 dedicates the government's Medal of Honor plaque on the grave of Jack Knight.

Weatherford (TX) Democrat photo by Robin Sherman

was held by the Nips.

"Staying well in the lead was Lt. Jack Knight, the troop's CO. With him was his brother, Curtis, who was first sergeant. Both had come into the Army when the 124th had been inducted into Federal service, November 18, 1940. F Troop was from their home town, Mineral Wells, TX. Once comprised entirely of men from there, 13 now remained. The rest of the original group were scattered all over the world as a result of periodic shipments from the Texas Border stations. Some were in other troops in the regiment. Men from other Texas towns and from all over the country made up the remainder of the Troop. They were as determined to follow Jack through Hell and high water as were the Mineral Wells men.

"Sam Whatley, who had been F Troop's first sergeant for a long time, was at the squadron CP listening to the radio reports when he wasn't scurrying here and there helping Major Vitek, the squadron executive officer, fill the urgent requests of the squadron's three troops. He was the squadron sergeant-major.

"Sgt. Wayne Doyle, of Santos, TX, had cooked for F Troop for three years. As was usually the case with all the troops, F was going into action without its full strength. Doyle could have stayed behind, but he chose to go with Jack and went as a messenger. He stayed as close to fast-moving Jack as he could, until he was killed.

"On the way to the crest of the hill, they met two Japs. Jack killed both of them. At the top he called back to the men scrambling up behind him, 'There's nothing up here! Come on up!' Under heavy mortar, Whiz-Bang (Jap 77 mm high velocity projectile - Ed.), and small arms fire they could not locate immediately, they deployed on the hill and Jack gave instructions for digging-in.

"He took off immediately to investigate the southwest slope of the hill and saw a pillbox. F Troop's battle began.

"He threw a grenade in that pillbox, saw another, and went for it. He called back, 'Come on, there's a whole nest of 'em down here!' He kept going down and found himself in the center of a horseshoe formation on well-built dugouts.

"Fear was no part of Jack's make-up. He preferred doing a

dangerous job himself to calling on his men. By this time, they were coming over the side of the hill to see what was going on. They later described him as looking and acting as if he had to get all of those emplacements by himself. He was fighting like a madman. A grenade sailed toward him from one of the pillboxes. Men yelled at him. Instead of dropping to the ground, he backed up. Shrapnel hit him in the face. He was out of carbine ammunition. He dropped back a few feet to Lt. Leo C. Tynan, Jr., of San Antonio, an artillery observer who had requested assignment to Jack's troop and who had stayed with him from the start of the attack — as close as one possibly could to a man motivated by an inner jet propulsion.

Tynan shared his carbine ammunition and Jack turned back to the hornet's nest. His only comment was 'I can't see.' One eye was closed and blood was running down his face. His men, now fighting around him, were dropping like flies. He hesitated long enough to organize them by arm motions, shouting, 'Come on, we've got 'em now!'

"He was out in front again. He grenade another rat hole. Another Jap grenade hit close, wounded him again, and he went down. Curtis called out, 'Jack's hit!' and ran toward him. He fell, seriously wounded. Jack pulled himself up on his elbow and cried, 'Curtis, are you hurt?' Someone else answered 'Yes!' Jack pleaded, 'Go on back! Somebody get Curtis back!' Propped on one elbow, he then urged his men forward, beckoning to them with his free arm. He tried to reach another, his sixth pillbox, when a Jap bullet hit him, and he lurched forward, dead.

"When the tumult of the battle was over, and the excitement of making evacuations, digging-in, avoiding sniper fire, and exchanging stories died down, the most oft-repeated words were: 'Jack Knight is dead!' Those bastards got Jack Knight!"

"He was a trooper's trooper, loved and admired by all. They knew he would do all that he did. They were sorry that he tried to do so much alone.

"Jack was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award a soldier can receive. It was the only one bestowed in the China-Burma-

India Theater."

Lord Louis Mountbatten, Earl Mountbatten of Burma, the Supreme Allied Commander of the Southeast Asia Command, designated the hill upon which Jack died to henceforth be known as "Knight's Hill."

Jack Knight was remembered by his family, friends and neighbors on March 17 when a Texas Historical Marker was unveiled at his grave as well as a Federal Government bronze plaque placed on his grave at Holders Chapel Cemetery in Cool, near Millsap which, in turn, is five miles east of Mineral Wells.

According to the Weatherford (TX) Democrat, which gave extensive coverage to the occasion, members of the State Historical Commission, the National Medal of Honor Society and American Legion Post 163 participated in the event. The Weatherford High School's award-winning Top Band performed patriotic music and sounded bugle calls while National Guard units from Weatherford and Mineral Wells presented color guards for the ceremony. Riding groups from the Parker County Sheriff's Posse and Greenwood 4-H

(Continued on next page)



The unveiling of the plaque commemorating the life of Lt. Jack Knight on a Texas Historical Marker, March 17, in Holders Chapel Cemetery outside Mineral Springs.

Weatherford (TX) Democrat photo by Robin Sherman

## What Bugged CBlers Per Army Medics

(In the Spring issue of SOUND-OFF, we ran the first half of U.S. Medical Department's History of Neuropsychiatry concerning morale problems in the CBI Theater. Sixteen of the most common complaints were listed followed by 11 measures instituted to offset them. The second half, printed below, deals with the morale problems of matters of the Merrill's Marauders.—Ed.)

### Combat Psychiatry

The War Department never intended to send any large American

ground combat force to the China-Burma-India theater, but in the end did send some specially tailored units. The major campaigns in which American troops participated occurred intermittently from February 1944 to May 1945 in North Central Burma. The two principal organizations engaged in this combat were Merrill's Marauders and the Mars Task Force.

Merrill's Marauders began fighting on 25 February 1944, above Ledo, and fought until they were relieved, on 4 July, during the Battle of Myitkyina, by the Mars Task Force. This latter organization, with the help of Chinese forces, captured Myitkyina on 3 August 1944, and, after this, spearheaded the Chinese "New First Army" in the drive to Lashio, which fell on 16 March 1945.

No attempt was made to organize a setup for on-the-spot treatment of psychiatric combat casualties. After relatively long delays, the psychiatric casualties were evacuated to field and evacuation hospitals where they were cared for on the medical and surgical services by general duty medical officers. No psychotherapy was given, and after a few days of oral sedation, they were returned to duty or eventually transferred to the 20th General Hospital at Ledo or to the 234th General Hospital at Chaubua. A total of 220 psychiatric casualties were reported as having occurred in the 5,000 soldiers engaged in the campaign. This is a small per-

centage, and does not present a true picture of the actual number of psychiatric casualties produced. Colonel Mays believed that amongst the tremendously large number of casualties evacuated for malaria, dysentery, and typhus were many individuals who, had they not been evacuated for these medical reasons, would have broken down later as psychiatric casualties. This belief is supported by the fact that many of these medical evacuees, when returned to duty, developed psychiatric disorder that ultimately necessitated their return to the Zone of Interior.

Major (later Lt. Col.) Marvin F. Greiber at the 234th General Hospital treated 40 cases of acute combat neuroses from this campaign and returned 39 or 97.5 percent of some type of duty. The more severe cases were treated with narcoticsynthesis and the milder ones with oral sedation and group psychotherapy.

Major Herbert S. Gaskill, MC, and Capt. Milton Korb, MC, at the 20th General Hospital, treated a total of 143 cases of combat neuroses among Merrill's Marauders and the Mars Task Force. They reported an interesting observation on the return-to-duty rate in these two groups. In the Merrill's Marauders group, which consisted of approximately 3,000 well-trained men with stable personalities, there were 56 cases of combat neuroses; 62.5 percent were returned to duty after treatment. In the Mars Task Force group, with approximately 2,000 poorly trained men with preliminary histories of instability and maladjustments, there were 87 cases of combat neuroses; only 13.8 percent could be returned to duty after treatment. In the former group, anxiety states predominated, and in the latter, conversion hysterias were most common. This bears out the frequently made observation that the prognosis is much better when the reaction is an acute anxiety state and occurs in a stable personality than when the reaction is a conversion hysteria and develops in an unstable predisposed personality. The value of early intense treatment is also illustrated.

In a letter to Colonel Mays, 11 July 1945, Capt. Irving Chipkin, MC, also reported some experiences with a few psychiatric combat casualties from Merrill's Marauders, who were hospitalized at

### JACK KNIGHT . . .

(Continued from preceding page)

Trailblazers commemorated the horse cavalry troop commanded by Lt. Knight.

Jack Knight was one of seven brothers, all of whom were in U.S. service during or after WW II. Curtis survived his wounds and the war and now resides in Killeen, TX. He received the Silver Star for his part in the same action that took his brother's life. Younger brother, Bill, is now Superintendent of Schools in Mineola, also the home of Texas Dept. Commander Clem Massey, and thus the connection that garnered the information and photos of this event.

SOUND-OFF is most grateful to Clem Massey, Bill Knight and the Weatherford Democrat as well as "Marsmen in Burma" for the information for this article.



The Federal Government's bronze plaque was placed on the grave of Lt. Jack Knight, March 17.

Weatherford (TX) Democrat photo by Robin Sherman