



Ted Calhoun

Ex-CBI Roundup

— CHINA — BURMA — INDIA —

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October, 1996



Sign Said "Hellsgate?"

• I have a couple of favors to ask. One is a request and the other is to satisfy a curiosity that I have had for years. First the request, as I recall, and I may be wrong, there was a sign up in the pass that said "Hellsgate." Would there be anyone out there who has a picture of the sign that they would be willing to give me — or a copy — to be put into a history book that the Texas Department CBIVA is assembling? Our goal is to have a record of our service in

the CBI. It will be put in a college or library so that generations from now will know of us and our service in that hostile and unforgiven country. The name that I have chosen is "BECAUSE WE WERE THERE."

The other is that I received a letter of commendation in 1944 from a BG A. H. Gilkeson 10th Air Force. I have never heard of the general, nor have I ever seen his name on any list of generals that served in the CBI. Could you please tell me what his job was? I feel

that he was in communications since I was in the 51st Fighter Control Sqdn.

BOB FAGELSON,
3500 Kings Row,
Nacogdoches, TX 75961

20th General Hospital

• Seldom see letters from those who served with the 20th. Your magazine keeps our memories alive.

EDNAMAY KESTER
TOBRO,
7330 Kingston,
Hesperia, CA 92345



EX-CBI ROUNDUP

CHINA · BURMA · INDIA

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Ex-CBI ROUNDUP, established in 1946, is a reminiscing magazine published monthly except AUGUST and SEPTEMBER, at 16040 Leffingwell Rd., Whittier, CA 90603, by and for former members of U.S. Units in the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II.

DWIGHT O. KING Editor

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Letter FROM The Editor

- **Here we go again!** After two months vacation, we resume publication of the Ex-CBI Roundup. We have some good stories, photos, etc., coming up in our Fall issues.
- **We are still** counting on our subscribers for new stories, photos and letters. So, keep them coming! It does help a lot if the stories and letters are typed.
- **Now is a good time** to send a gift subscription to a CBI friend. Christmas will be here soon and the Roundup makes a great gift.
- **Thailand may rebuild 'River Kwai' railroad.** Thailand hopes to attract tourists and improve trade by rebuilding the notorious World War II railway featured in the film "The Bridge on the River Kwai." Interior ministry officials said that they hope both Japan and the Allied nations would help finance the reconstruction of the 280-mile connection between **Bangkok** and **Rangoon, Burma** - once called the "Death Railway."

Editor's note: We hope this will not happen.

- **This month's cover** is of the beautiful Jain Temple in Calcutta.



It Is S.A.C.O.

• I always enjoy reading the Ex-CBI Roundup, and go through it from cover to cover. It brings back many memories.

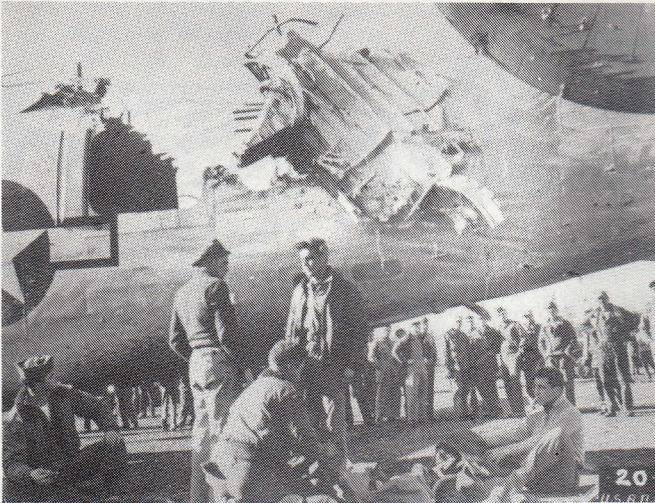
There is one error, however, in the June 1996 issue of which you should be aware. On page 29-30, the Naval Group China is referred to as "Socko." While the pronunciation of this word is the same as the correct acronym S.A.C.O., the real meaning of S.A.C.O. is not brought out: Sino-American Cooperative Organization. Perhaps the confusion of terms is understandable when it is realized that S.A.C.O. was a secret organization for cooperation in intelligence and weather information between the U.S. Navy and the Chinese Intelligence Service, and information on it was not widely disseminated. Just how S.A.C.O. became Socko as used, is not clear. I am sure Adm. Miles, author of the book on S.A.C.O., *A Different Kind of War*, would not make that mistake.

KINSELL COULSON,
119 Bryce Way,
Vacaville, CA 95687

10th AAA

• Served with the AAA in Myitkyina.

BERT WAYNE,
4724 E. Melanie Dr.,
Cave Creek, AZ 85331



*B-24 returns from raid on Rangoon with damage.
Photo by Norm Collard.*

Fatehpur Sikri

• I just received the June issue. '96, enjoyed it, as usual, but was also compelled to reply to some things. First of all, the significance of the City of Fatehpur Sikri, which is not in Agra, but a few miles away, on the road to Jaipur. I had the privilege of visiting there, in March '94, on a tour, with a very knowledgeable Indian guide, with a history major, who explained the meaning of each building, including the Emperor's council chamber, the palaces for his various wives, the largest for his favorite who was Hindu, although Akhbar as a Mogul Emperor was Muslim. He was known to have made a study of the prevailing religions, including Christianity and made a stab at coming up with a combination.

The most striking thing about Fatehpur

Sikri, is that in spite of the elaborate workmanship, that is evident in the buildings, with beautiful stonework, consisting of carving and filgree, the city was abandoned after 14 years, and Akhbar moved to Agra, where his son Shah Johan built the beautiful Taj Mahal. The reason for the abandonment is not known, but it is suspected that the water supply, consisting of a large reservoir, failed. The tallest building that your picture shows, may be ascended for a birds-eye view of the whole city.

B. TRENT COOPER,
12815 U.S. #24 W.,
Fort Wayne, IN 46804

Salween Impressive

• The first time I crossed the Salween River, I decided that the Grand Canyon was just an irrigation ditch.

GENE FULKERSON,
PO Box 354,
Plentywood, MT 59254

About C-54

• In reading my most recent copy of the Roundup, I noted your request for information on the C-54.

The C-54 was built by Douglas Aircraft Company and was called a Douglas Skymaster. It had four 1350 HP Pratt Whitney R-2000-7 radials, maximum range of 3600 miles at 190 MPH.

I was a crew chief flight engineer, flying on a C-54 from Tezgoan, India, over the HUMP to China.

After the war, it became the commercial airline DC-4.

I hope this tells you a little about the C-54.

DAVID DOUGHTY,
6704 Pleasant Valley Dr.,
Morrow, GA 30260

Record Flight

• On March 19, 1945, our crew was stationed in Pandaveswar with the 7th Bomb Group, 9th Bomb Squadron. On that day, we were sent on a combat mission, down along the Isthmus of Kra. The target was a railroad bridge. The flight was very long, 17 hours and 10 minutes, to be exact. Can anyone tell me if this was a record?

HORACE (MAL)
MALLINGER,
3 Cinnamon Fern,
Bluffton, SC 29910

308th BG

• Was with the 308th Bomb Group, 14th Air Force.

ROBERT H. THWEATT,
38 Sugerberry Cir.,
Houston, TX 77024

**Tell Your CBI Friends
About Ex-CBI Roundup!**

EX-CBI ROUNDUP

Remembers Bird

• Received the May issue and read it cover to cover as I did in India in 1945.

Was glad to see the "Another Bird Story" on page 5, from Walter Wegner. I remember that spring day of 1945 as I was in the Quartermaster Warehouse of the 605th Air Materiel Sqdn, of the 381st Air Service Group that serviced the Tezpur Air Base. This warehouse was to the right of the end of the runway.

I heard the roar of several airplane engines and wondered what was going on as it was exces-

sive to what was normal. I looked up and saw three or four B-24s approaching the runway at the same time as if going to land at the same time. Three of them peeled off with one coming over our warehouse. I thought that we were going to lose our thatched roof, but it didn't happen. I, and others, watched as the group landed.

We didn't know the outfit, but heard that they were going to fly supplies over the Hump. The 381st was transferred to Jorhat later and after Japan stopped fighting we were

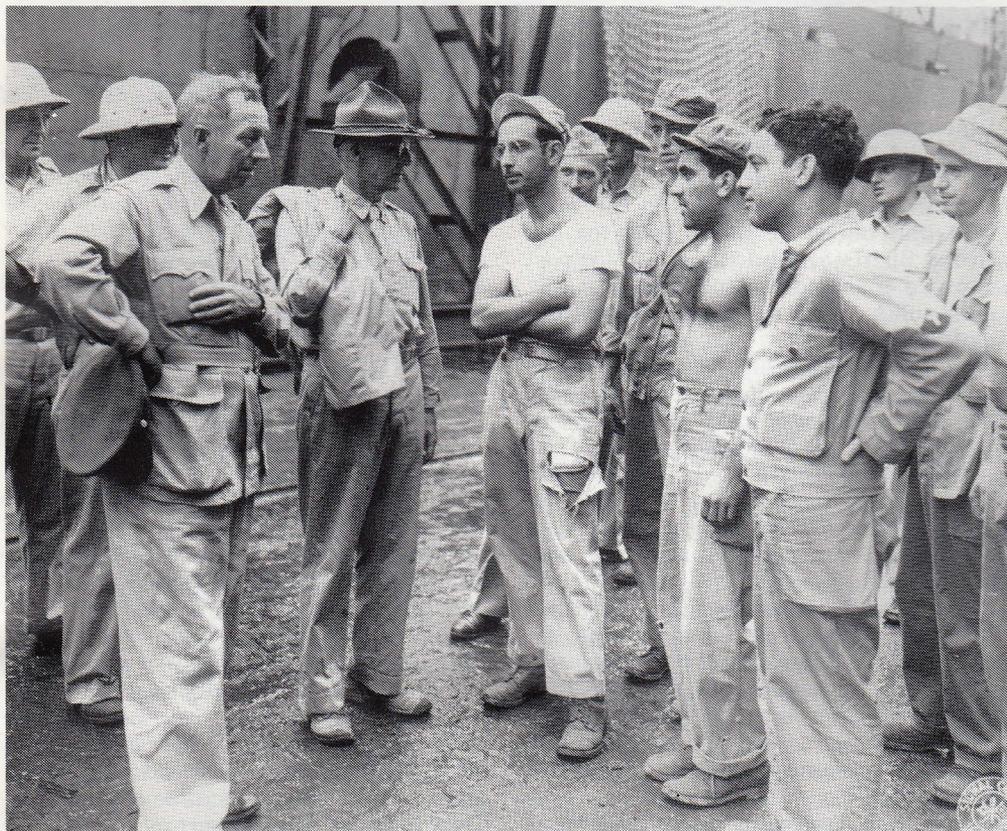
flown over the Hump from Chabua in C-46s to Loochow, China, and then on to Shanghai in C-54s to operate Shanghai Air Depot (SHAD).

JAMES T. (JIM) LOGUE,
907 Brookfield Ave.,
Brookfield, MO 64628

Major Kelly

• Can anyone locate Major Kelly? He was rescued with me from the Mediterranean on our way to the CBI.

ANDREW FETSKO,
20967 Morewood Pkwy,
Rocky River, OH 44116



GENERAL STILWELL chats with Gen. Cheves and other members of the Port Battalions. U.S. Army Signal Corps photo.

Search Into Burma

By Ge Shuya, Kunming, PRC

Editor's Note: This story tells of a recent trip into Burma to find the remains of a downed WW II aircraft. The author currently lives in Kunming. His story was translated by Judith Mills who is English speaking. If readers wish to contact Ge Shuya, it can be done using the following address - Ge Shuya, XI Zhan Gan Xiu Suo, 04222, (Retirement Housing in West Station), Long Xiang Jie #135, Kunming, Yunnan, PR China 650031. He cautions not to have the CBI patch visible on correspondence, as that may delay the message.

Last year (1995), in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the end of WW II, the Yunnan TV Network produced a documentary called, "Stories of the Burma Road" for which I was the writer and researcher. While on location in West Yunnan, we found out about several sites where, even after 50 years, the parts of downed American aircraft still remain.

Discovering the Tales of Downed Planes

For many years, I had heard rumors of downed American craft in the area that had been the flight path for the Hump flights and had seen a TV report about a plane found in Tibet, but like most folks, I had never seen one of the planes myself.

On March 9, 1995, I got an excited call from our film director. "Get ready! We have discovered a plane! We're going out tomorrow to take a look."

The next morning, we left out of Kunming going west on the Burma Road. (The road is now called the Kunming-Wanting highway but old-timers still know it by its wartime name, the Burma Road.) We hadn't gone far when we got ourselves into an auto accident. Because it was our fault, the police were about to seize our vehicle until they saw the signs saying what our project was. They were happy to know someone was going to tell the story of the road. I'll bet the road, if it could have spoken, however, might have pointed out that our car was Japanese - a Toyota.

Waiting for the News

We travelled to Ying Jiang near the Burma border to wait for news. Our final destination was a little town, ZhiYa, about 20 kilometers from Burma and about 100 miles east of Myitkyina. This border area is the home for several different minority groups including Shan, Lisu, Karen, Kachin and so on. On the Burma side of the border, many of these groups are independence fighters that have been in guerilla warfare with the Burmese government for 20 years. The government holds Myitkyina and a few other towns and the roads between them, but the rest of the place is held by rebel groups. If you want to travel in these areas, you better get the permission of the "Chairman" of whatever group is in control.

While we waited for two days in Ying Jiang, one of our group, who had become a sort of unofficial liaison with the guerillas in the area, went out to secretly meet with their leaders, get some information about the planes whereabouts, get permission to come into their area and ask for their escort and protection.

Into the Territory

Finally, we started out. As we approached the border, our hearts were pounding wildly. We were crossing into Burma illegally and could be caught and arrested. But because our lead vehicle was a local government car, the guards lazily waved us through without a glance.



AUTHOR-RESEARCHER Ge Shuya (center) with companions as they find an Allied aircraft propeller.

As soon as we entered Burma, the road turned into a muddy cowpath hanging precariously on the side of the mountain. The 4-wheel vehicle in front was doing all right, but our van was bouncing around from rut to rut. We were thinking that any moment, we were going to become wreckage for someone to look for.

Suddenly, as we made a hairpin turn, the right rear tire slipped off the edge and we were staring into the ravine below. It was enough to give you religion. Gingerly, we climbed out of the teetering van to allow the weight to shift back onto the road. Then using a vine from a nearby tree as a cable, we were able to pull the van to relative safety.

By now, the sky was beginning to grow darker. On both sides of the road which was barely more than a path, rose huge trees, maybe two or three hundred years old, covered with thick moss and draped like curtains with

vines as thick as a man's wrist. The jungle was so thick that, once off the road, a man could only travel on foot with the greatest of difficulty. Anyone who had been on the team cutting the Ledo Road through this jungle in 1943 would have recognized the scene.

Finally, around ten, we saw a light off in the distance. Two of us proceeded on foot to meet the guerillas as we had arranged and then after greetings were exchanged, the rest of the crew joined us.

We were at a Kachin checkpoint. On the side of the road was a primitive bamboo hut for the soldiers to live in. At 3000 km above sea level, the night air made us shiver and hunch around the fire. The red glow of the fire cast eerie shadows across the guerillas smoke blackened faces, giving them the look of demons. They gave us the very best they had to eat - boiled potatoes and we spent the night shivering and trying to sleep as best we could

huddled up on the common sleeping platform. By morning, it had snowed heavily.

The Search Through the Jungle

The area where the plane was supposed to be was about 3 km inside Burma in an area held by the Kachin Independence Army. Some of the soldiers were ordered to take us up to the sight. A Lisu tribesman and hunter who had been to the site before also came along.

We tramped through the jungle for several hours and finally just as we were about to give up the search, we heard the hunter up ahead calling and banging on something metal. We rushed toward the sound and when we broke through to where the hunter was, we could see the propeller of a plane, its tips bent from impact. Its surface was black and covered with moss. We were all speechless, knowing we were looking at the remains of a plane whose crew may have perished trying to help our country.

I had brought some materials about US planes to try to identify whatever we came across. From what I had, it looked like the propeller came from a C-46 transport plane. The hunter told us he and others had carried off many small pieces of wreckage from this site. We were disappointed we could not find some part with a serial number or ID which could positively identify the plane or its crew. The Hump pilots did a tremendous service for us, the Chinese, but we have not done enough to remember them. We should have gone out to find and protect the remains of these brave men.

Returning from the site, one of the guerilla soldiers kept repeating the only English word he knew, "Democracy, democracy." I had heard in a letter from an American veteran the story of how in WW II, he had called on Kachin guerillas to help the Allies locate downed planes in the wilds. The Allies would receive the distress signals from the planes in trouble and he would get the Kachins to find the planes and rescue the men. These

young soldiers did not know the history of this previous cooperation, but their respect for the West was readily apparent.

I asked oldtimers in the area what they knew about the plane we had seen. Piecing together the record, it seems that the plane was downed during the battle of Teng Chong (that would be between May and Sept. of 1944). It came in from the east (returning from Kunming) with its tail on fire. As it fell, it hit several trees and burst into flames when it hit the ground. The oldtimers say the plane had stones inside, perhaps some kind of ore. No one knew anything about the pilot or crew.

The Continuing Story

The folks of this area have lots of stories of downed planes. Most were big planes - transports. But one was a little one, with steel plates under the wings and equipped with guns - probably a Japanese fighter from Myitkyina. In one site they say a plane crashed, wedged in a tight crevice, high up on a mountain. After it crashed, people say they heard several rounds of shots. They thought, perhaps men were calling for help, but there was no way to get to them. Because of its remote location, they say the remains are still relatively intact.

We decided to try to get to this second site. To get there, we had to go into the territory of another guerilla group, the National Democratic Army. We tried unsuccessfully for several days to get to the area but, unfortunately, our time was running out and we soon discovered the terrain was so treacherous that it would require special preparations, so we had to turn back. Finding this site would have to wait for a later day.

In addition to sites we have heard about in this area, there is a more northern area in Gong Shan County along the Du Long River, high up in 4000-6000 meter high mountains where reliable sources say there are other planes. *Saw them*



SNOW DID FALL as the expedition made its way on the old road.

The Spirit of the Hump Lives On

After we returned to Kunming, we visited the Hump memorial in a park west of the city that was dedicated May 5, 1993. Carved in the stone is the moving story of the Hump flights but it doesn't say that 486 planes and 1546 men were lost in the heroic efforts.

As I stood at the base of the marble peaks representing the mountains those planes had to cross to reach China, I thought to myself that our work is not done. There are planes that, after all this time, remain missing. We have a responsibility to find those planes, honor the men who flew them and send word back to the people they left behind.

The Hump flight supply lines were a vital and important link for China. More supplies were delivered via this route than over the Burma Road it replaced or over other supply routes to China during the war.

Current Circumstances of West Yunnan

The western portion of Yunnan bordering on Burma is an area where

many airplanes were lost. That area includes Ying Jiang County's western portion all on the Burma border and the area above the Salween River in Gong Shan County along the Du Long River banks. These areas are under the southern and northern routes respectively.

Ying Jiang County and the portion of Burma east of Myitkyina is very rough country. The area is populated by a number of nationalities including Han Chinese, Burmese, Shan, Kachin, Lisu, and Karen tribes. In Burma, the government troops control Myitkyina and the Ledo Road and towns along the road. But, guerillas from the minority groups control other areas. The border between Burma and China is along the crest of a mountain range of 4000 meters in height and is snow-covered year-round.

If an airplane crashed in a populated area in China which was relatively flat, it is unlikely that the remains would have survived the scavenging by the local population. However, if a plane fell in a mountainous



THE MEMORIAL in Kunming that was dedicated in 1993. It honors all Hump pilots.

area or in Burma, significant portions of the remains are likely to still be intact. We have identified four sites of downed planes in the area from information which we believe to be reliable from the local populace. I have personally seen a portion of plane remains at one site.

Along the northern route, in a remote area which cannot be reached by roads, there are many reports of other sites. In Gong Shan County on the west slope of the Himalayas and northern slopes of the Gao Lin Gong Mountains, there are several reported sites. This area is snow-covered high mountains of 5000-6000 meters. The

only way to reach the areas is on foot. The populace of the area include Lisu, Dulong, Hkamti and Karen. Many decades ago, Western missionaries from Germany, Switzerland, France and America visited this area but for the last 50 years it has had virtually no contact with the outside world. From parts and pictures, we believe there are four sites of downed planes in this area.

If we could have access to information about the last known locations of planes lost along the route, we could identify probable locations of other sites in the area, conduct site surveys and locate, identify and research the areas. In remote areas, we believe there may be a good possibility of finding relatively intact remains.

OUR PROPOSAL

1. Outline of Proposal

We propose to conduct research regarding the probable locations of missing planes along the "Hump" routes, conduct field research, document sites, and record and recover as possible. We are seeking the cooperation and assistance of additional parties.

We are a private research group wishing to establish a cooperative venture with private research units or institutions, colleges or individuals who have interest in the question. We feel direct government cooperation is not appropriate at this time because of the complicated political situation, geography, populations, and languages of the area. We wish to avoid any potential difficulty or tensions that might arise out of the use of non-private organizations. Our interests are limited to research and history aspects of the question and do not extend to other areas of involvement.

2. Research Team - China

The research team core currently consists of specialists in many aspects that will be necessary to the successful completion of the project. They include:

A historian of the CBI Theatre with knowledge of the Hump flights and war activities.

A professional cameraman with ex-



GUARDS ON THE FIND. Your editor has been advised that this prop may be that of an English Spitfire.

tensive experience in production of documentary television and film photography.

A specialist in research of the minority nationalities populating the area with familiarity with the location and terrain.

A contact person with established contacts with Burmese nationals and guerillas who can arrange safe passage for the team in contested areas.

An American in Kunming who will be a translator.

3. Nature of Cooperation Sought

We are seeking financial assistance and wish to establish an exchange of information regarding the specific information about the times and probable locations of lost planes in the area and about identifying information such as the make, model, serial numbers, crew ID and other identifying information.

If we locate a downed aircraft, we would like cooperation on identification of the plane and its occupants (if any). We would like to make contact with people who are knowledgeable on

the Hump history.

We wish to work with the other side to establish what research methods should be used to conduct the field research and what methods will be used to produce reports of the research. We feel that successful results could be formatted in a variety of media including report, film, book or other.

We wish to work with the American side to develop a budget for the project and determine the distribution of work. Although the locating and visiting the downed planes is central to the research, the work should include the history of the planes, people and Hump project, as well. All of these aspects should be included in the research.

The Hump was an event of primary importance in the history of flight and was imminently important to the outcome of World War II. Our work in finding the remains is important work that will take several years to complete and can help to enhance the friendship between America and China. This is a new operation with an old ally.

OSS-Det 101

• I found it interesting and enjoyed reading the article in the July 1996 issue by James Edwards, "On Being Shot Down . . . And Walking Out of Burma."

James Edwards, in his story, characterizes the Kachin Tribes as a loosely organized OSS guerrilla group, which is a misnomer. Due to the hush hush nature of the OSS, little was known about the organization or its operations.

Detachment 101 was created early in 1942 when President Franklin Roosevelt instructed General "Wild Bill" Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), to support General Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell's efforts to reopen and secure the Burma Road to China.

Detachment 101 was given the two-fold mission of conducting espionage and guerrilla warfare operations behind Japanese lines in Burma. A small number

of American personnel armed, trained and led a guerrilla force at top strength of 10,800 Burmese hill tribesmen, known as Kachin Rangers. These guerrillas were organized into battalion size infantry units.

The "101" provided General Stilwell's headquarters with 85% of its intelligence, and the 10th Air Force with 75% of its targets in Burma. The "101" also rescued 425 Allied airmen whose planes crashed in the jungles. Lt. Bill Martin and his Company of Kachin Rangers led Merrill's Marauders to the edge of the Myitkyina air field thru unknown jungle trails known only to our Kachin scouts.

Detachment 101 of the OSS played a significant role in the guerrilla warfare battle against the common enemy during the Burma campaign. The Detachment was the first United States unit to form an intelligence screen, and organize and employ

a large guerrilla army deep in enemy territory. They pioneered the unique art of unconventional warfare, later incorporated as fundamental combat skills of our Army Special Forces (Green Berets). They have been credited with the highest kill/loss ratio for any Infantry type unit in American military history.

Yes, the friendly and brave Kachins knew what they were doing and thoroughly enjoyed doing it. They were responsible for all the success Detachment 101 was credited with and we owe them much for this. The heroes in your story are the Kachins and am glad for your sake you came across them.

As you can see from this brief synopsis, the OSS was a bit more than a loosely organized band.

HERB AUERBACH,
5822 Bevis Ave.,
Van Nuys, CA 91411

CBI Editor-Cartoonist

• During WW II, I was editor and cartoonist for the Army Air Force newspaper, "The Carrier."

Although I was a radio operator and parachute rigger, I spent a lot of time doing nose art on aircraft and painting nudes on airmen and officer clubs around China. I also wrote stories for magazines. I was furnished an L-5 and a jeep for those activities.

EARL J. HOHLMAYER,
19 West 7th Street,
Antioch, CA 94509

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The Last Truck Convoy Out of China

By Robert M. McAlister

For many of us who were in China when the war ended, our wait to go home had only begun in September 1945. The point system was put into effect, and like thousands of others, I had less than the magic "45," points needed for a fast trip home. I had 44 points to be exact. As Maxwell Smart later said, "Missed it by that much!"

At that time, I was a T/3 in Kunming, assigned to the 3198th Signal Service Battalion at Camp Casey, as a wire chief for the open wire telephone and teletype line that connected Calcutta to Chungking via Ledo, Myitkyina, Kunming, and Kweiyang.

As one of his favors to me before he shipped out, our unit commander had me promoted to Tech Sergeant, effective October 11. Then orders came for us low pointers to return to our parent unit, the 3101 Signal Service Battalion, in Yunnanyi. I was assigned a 6x6 truck, (condemned by the Chinese as unserviceable) loaded my gear in it and drove to Yunnanyi, by way of the Tsuyung repeater station, where we picked up our personnel there. Before I left Kunming, I observed the formal ceremonies during which our Signal Corps buildings and equipment were officially turned over to the Nationalist Chinese Ministry of Communications.

Since June 1945, I had been instructing a team of Chinese civilians in the installation and repair of "C Carrier" long line telephone equipment, and I was sure that Mr. Lee and his people would be able to run it well. The background noise during the ceremonies was the thud of mortar and artillery shells, since the Yunnan Provincial Governor, General Lung had revolted from the Nationalist government, and as usual, American troops

were caught in the midst of the fighting. I had decided that since I would have to wait for the boat for some time, I would rather drive a truck back to Ledo than sit around in a replacement depot.

The main purpose of the last convoy out of China in late October and early November 1945 was to close up the Signal Corps repeater stations, and turn them over to the Chinese government. It was getting increasingly hazardous for our personnel in isolated repeater stations like Lungling and Paoshan.

The Chinese Nationalist infantry divisions which were being marched out of Burma along the Burma Road, would often "liberate" everything our people had, including their personal possessions. They had the firepower and we had the signed receipts. Complaints did no good, since many of the American commanders had gone home, and the others didn't want to "make waves" with our Chinese allies.

In late October 1945, a truck convoy was formed up in Yunnanyi, which I believe was the last one out of China along the Burma Road. The motor pool personnel had to work miracles getting the trucks ready, since all of them had been refused by the Chinese lend lease officials as defective. As I pulled my truck into line our last morning in Yunnanyi, I slammed into the rear of the parked truck ahead - my brakes had failed!

One lucky event was that we were issued the new "10 in 1" rations, replacing the almost inedible "C" rations which were standard issue until then. The convoy commander said that we should eat the new rations, and the "C" rations would be given to the Chinese.

After driving a few miles, the convoy commander told me to get right behind

his jeep, as the lead convoy truck. Since my truck had no muffler, the drivers behind could tell from the engine sound when I shifted gears up or down, and would do so at the same place on the road. We would stop for the night at each repeater station, load up our personnel the next morning, and drive on. In most cases, there were Chinese officials who would sign for the Signal Corps equipment, but sometimes we just left an empty station. In his rear view mirror, the driver of the last truck would watch the Chinese residents swoop down on the station and loot it.

Southwest China was barren, dangerous and very inhospitable for a Westerner. However, in the fall of 1945, the countryside was beautiful. I enjoyed the drive to our repeater stations at Yungpi, Hsiakwan, Yungping, Paoshan, and particularly Lungling. As we left Paoshan, we could see the town of Lungling on the other side of the Mekong River, but it took all day to drive down to the bottom of the gorge, cross the bridge, and climb back up to Lungling.

The weather was good, the road was dry, and paved in many places with stretches of asphalt or stones. One way that the peasants in that area paid their taxes was to break up large stones by hand, and scatter them on the road. Some of the switch backs were so sharp that we had to pull up to the retaining wall, then back up until we could hear the stones cascading into the canyon from the rear dual tires, turn the steering wheel as far over as we could, and drive off, hoping the engine would not stall.

Whenever we had a flat tire, it would be replaced from a stack in the rear of each truck. The old tire was rolled into the canyon. There was a canyon along one side of almost every mile of the Road, and no guard rails anywhere. The rule of the Road was that the largest truck had the right of way, and since there were no American trucks coming into China, we always had the right of way.

My fondest memory of that drive on the Burma Road was a sign on the

shoulder, at the very edge of the road, indicating that a driver should sound his vehicle's horn. As you approached it, all you could see was blue sky above and empty space below the road. Rounding the sharp curve brought into view a river many hundreds of feet below. But every truck driver blew his horn at the sign, more as a prayer than a warning. *me too, but I don't*

After five days of hard driving, we crossed the border into Burma, and pulled into a grassy area near the village of Muse. The cooks were starting their fires so that we could heat our "10 in 1" rations and coffee, when a liaison plane landed on the road and taxied up to our line of trucks. The pilot asked if we were the 3101 Signal Service Battalion, and if Private Smith (I forget this real name) was with us. Private Smith spoke up, was informed that he had been given emergency leave back to the States, and that he would be flown to Myitkyina, where he would board a flight home.

Then the pilot said that we should unload six large boxes from the rear of the aircraft. He told us that our battalion commander had sent us frozen steaks from Chicago, and that they were beginning to thaw.

The C.O. had told us in July 1945 that we would all be home by Christmas. He was, we weren't, but he remembered us the very best way he could. The cooks tore open the boxes, gasped at the sight of real American beef, fired up the field ranges, and we ate steak until we almost popped. I forget if we even told the pilot and his passenger goodbye as they taxied back onto the road and took off for Myitkyina.

The trip up the Ledo Road from Bhamo to Myitkyina was uneventful until we came to the Irawaddy River. Early in 1945, when I had helped to install the telephone central office in the Myitkyina jail (the only building left standing after the fighting), crossing the river meant driving down a very steep ramp built into the bank, driving across a pontoon bridge, then back up a steep ramp on the opposite bank.

This time, we drove for miles in axle

deep water, between stakes on both sides of the road, then up a steep metal ramp to the pontoon bridge, across it, and back down the other side. This was the road that the British had told us could never be built.

During this short time in Myitkyina, I worked in the central office, shutting down our circuits, and getting ready to destroy everything, since the British wanted none of our equipment. One night, while checking circuit quality, I overheard a British brigadier tell the area commander that His Majesty's Government would accept the Irrawaddy river pontoon bridge as lend lease, only if the United States government would indemnify all persons injured on it for an extended period of time. The rich profanity issuing from the American general was ended by his guarantee that the bridge would be destroyed in the very near future. Signatures for the bridge ownership were exchanged the next day, after suitable ceremonies.

All of the "high value" equipment warehouses contained materiel which we would have given our eye teeth for in China, but which was then destroyed before we left. Bulldozers were placed against the long walls of the warehouses. They would push the warehouses into huge trenches which had been dug alongside them. Rifles, ammunition and ordnance of all kinds were trucked back to India.

My last view of Myitkyina as we slowly drove north up the Ledo Road, was watching hundreds of natives frantically digging into the huge mounds which covered the warehouses and their contents.

The Ledo Road in the valley north of Myitkyina was hot and dusty. The dust was so bad that we spaced out the convoy trucks so as to leave a quarter mile between them. Otherwise, we couldn't see, and there was no reason to have a rear end collision, and hurt someone.

The war was over and we wanted to get home in one piece. We stopped at the repeater stations in Warazup and Shingbwiyang, loaded up the few re-

maining personnel and equipment, and pressed on to Ledo. As we came down from the Pangsaw Pass through the Naga Hills into the Ledo-Chabua area of India, we saw huge parks of bulldozers, road graders, concrete mixers, and other evidence that there had been much bigger plans for the Ledo and Burma Roads than we had ever imagined.

It was with great relief that I turned in my trusty 6x6 truck, the "Alice R," to the Chabua Motor Pool, where the sergeant assured me that he had about 5,000 spare mufflers, and that my truck was first in line for a new one. I never did find out who "Alice R" was.

After a few days in Chabua, we were flown to Dum Dum Airport near Calcutta, and trucked to the Kanchrapara Replacement Depot. My good friend Larry Hulbert and I were assigned to the 508th Port Battalion in Tollygonge, he as the NCO Club Manager, and me as the Battalion Supply Sergeant. As they often said during WW II, we never had it so good.

We arrived in Calcutta during the riots on our Thanksgiving Day in 1945, and left for Seattle on the transport ship General Hodges, shortly after the riots around St. Valentine's Day in 1946. We would often sit in the late afternoons on the veranda at Firpo's Restaurant in Calcutta, watching the Royal Air Force dive bomb and strafe the Indian rebels in the city's northern suburbs. All that was soon forgotten as Seattle came into my view in late March 1946, and I was home again.

Years later, Americans watched as the U.S. Force dive bombed and strafed Viet Cong from the veranda of the Caravel Hotel in Saigon. It was *deja vu* all over again, as Yogi Berra said.

**Tell a Friend
About the
Ex-CBI Roundup!**

THE ROYAL EXPERIENCE

From the India News

The Palace-on-Wheels, a joint venture of the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation and the Indian Railways, is undoubtedly the best way to explore and capture the grandeur pomp and pageantry of Rajasthan's royal past. Relaunched in September last year on the broad-gauge section of the Indian railways, this train is absolutely brand new and ensures full comfort of its privileged passengers. It replaces the earlier Palace-on-Wheels which used to be run on the meter-gauge section. Completely self-sufficient, its public spaces include two restaurant coaches and a bar coach with an attached library. Deep veneered wood encases large picture windows through which guests can see the countryside of a thousand battles

slide effortlessly past. Inside, the lights glow intimately and stained glass mirrors reflect a myriad of images. Soft music plays in the background as master chefs serve up superb meals and the bartender mixes your favorite cocktails. Blinds are layered across the windows in a manner reminiscent of palaces, in colors that are traditional.

The 14 coaches are named after former Rajput states. Each evokes visions of those royal kingdoms. Each coach has four coupes, done in colors most reminiscent of that state, and highlighted by its royal emblem. Of the four compartments, two each feature double beds, the other two twin beds. A third bed, for an additional person, or an accompanying child, is in the form of a foldaway bed on a higher tier. Each



DINING ROOM on the "Palace on Wheels."

compartment has an attached bath with running hot/cold water and showers, built-in wardrobes, overhead and night lights, piped music, reading lights etc. The furniture with its inlaid motifs had been specially created for the Palace-on-Wheels. At the end of each coach is a separate lounge where passengers can relax when they wish to move out of their bedrooms. Here they can unwind with a book or magazine, engage in conversation, or simply watch as the panoramic vista of the great Indian desert unfolds.

The Maharaja and Maharani restaurants offer seats arranged in groups of twos and fours near the windows. Chefs in the attached pantry prepare gourmet continental and Indian specialties, with an accent on the cuisine of Rajasthan.

For a full glorious week, this train rolls back the pages of time and takes you to the most fascinating and exotic locations in this colorfully beautiful princely state of India. The destinations have been so carefully chosen as to provide a glimpse of Rajasthan's rich

cultural and architectural heritage. Be it the Hawa Mahal in Jaipur, the Victory Tower in Chittorgarh the lakes and palaces in Udaipur, the tiger sanctuary near Sawai Madhopur, the mesmerizing sand dunes of Jaisalmer, the bird sanctuary in Bharatpur or the world-famous Taj Mahal in Agra, you have it all in this seven-day trip down the history lane! As the Manager of the Train Mr. Pathak says: "You get to see so much in just one week as you would normally see in at least three weeks. And that too in a royal way." Mr. Pathak is right. Because the whole journey seems to be a dream sequence of a historical magnumopus, in which breathtaking images fly past your eyes in quick succession! And by the time you wake up from this reverie, you are dazed and bidding adieu not just to the train but to an experience which is sure to linger in your memory for a long time to come. You leave with a yearning to return to this "dream journey" once again. No wonder The Palace-on-Wheels is rated as one of the ten best trains in the world!

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8918 Palmyra Road
Canfield, Ohio 44406
Phone 1-330-533-2518

GEN. CHENNAULT

a rebuttal

By Wayne G. Johnson

I enjoy the *Ex-CBI Roundup* - have every issue since it was first printed in January, 1947, and rely on it for interesting historical material.

Joseph E. Bennett's *Gen. Claire Chennault - The Early Years*, in the March 1996 *Roundup* concerns me. The article is interesting but, unfortunately, replete with errors. It is regrettable that those who write articles of historical importance do not more carefully research their material. I regret that I find it necessary to comment adversely on Bennett's article.

Claire Lee Chennault was born September 6 1893, not 1890 as Bennett states. Some sources list 1890 as his birth date and others repeat that error. Family records clearly publish he was born in 1893. I have a copy of a page from the family Bible where his birth is recorded.

Claire's father did not die when Claire was five as Bennett reports. His mother, Jessie, died when Claire was eight. His father, John Chennault, remarried when Claire was ten. His stepmother, Lottie, died when Claire was 16. Claire had two half brothers, Ernest Nelson Chennault and Joe Y. Chennault (both still alive).

Claire Chennault did not "author a book entitled, 'the Role of Defensive Pursuit' in 1935" as Bennett writes. Chennault wrote a series of three articles cumulatively called *The Role of Defensive Pursuit*. All three articles were published in the *Coast Artillery Journal*. The first article, *Part I The Next Great War* was published in the November-December 1933 issue. There he discussed the prominent role air warfare would play in the next war. The second, *Part II Interceptions*, appeared in the January-February 1934 issue setting forth his view of the importance of pursuit aircraft. The final article in the series, *Part III Pursuit Operations in the Fort Knox Exercises*

appeared in the March-April issue. That article analysed the importance of an early warning system.

Chennault did not "volunteer to serve in Chiang's air force." He accepted a position as air advisor to the Chinese Air Force, but he did not serve in the Chinese Air Force. He was not a Colonel in the Chinese Air Force. He was "appointed" a Colonel by Jimmy Noe, the Governor of Louisiana. It was a purely southern honorific title. Chennault was a reserve captain in the Army Air Corps but he was referred to as Colonel during his China advisory and AVG days.

Bennett's most serious distortion of history is his claim that Chennault "shot down scores of planes . . . probably far more than any flyer in any war." He also contends that "Some historians estimate his personal 'kills' to total as many as 200." There are no reliable sources to support these claims.

The myth was probably perpetrated by Joseph Alsop, a newspaper writer with a penchant for embellishment of facts. In an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1950, he wrote that Chennault had shot down over 40 Japanese planes. Later writers upped the score. Joe Archibald in his *Commander of the Flying Tigers Claire Chennault* credited Chennault with 63 confirmed. And now, Bennett has the score up to 200! Archibald writes that "They were confirmed by accredited witnesses of the Chinese warning net." No researcher or historian, to my knowledge, has been able to confirm that statement. Military records can be, and sometimes are in error. But, there should be some evidence somewhere to verify the record.

As one of the editors of *Chennault's Flying Tigers*, produced by the 14th Air Force Association in 1982, I researched records in the U.S. and

Taiwan and was unable to locate any verification of any combat by Chennault. I checked with Chinese officials, librarians and people who knew Chennault. No one could verify that he shot down any enemy aircraft. There is not the slightest inkling in Chennault's diary or papers that he ever shot down a Japanese airplane or flew in combat in other than reconnaissance missions.

Martha Byrd, author of *Chennault, Giving Wings to the Tigers*, was unable to verify that Chennault shot down a plane. Her *Chennault* is the most definitive, objective, and best researched biography of Chennault ever written. Jack Samson, in his excellent biography, *Chennault*, does not report any aerial victories by Chennault. Samson is a careful historian. He served as Chennault's public relations officer in CAT Airlines and knew him intimately. Craven and Cate, in their six volume history *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, devote considerable space to General Chennault but make no mention of his participating in aerial combat. Could these historians and capable researchers not have found any evidence that Chennault "shot down scores of planes."

P.Y. Shu, Chennault's interpreter during his China years, told me (in an interview in early 1981) - most emphatically - that "the General (Chennault) never shot down any airplanes to my knowledge and I would have known if he did." Shu was with Chennault almost constantly from 1937 on. He was Chennault's interpreter for over 20 years and one of his closest associates.

Sebie Smith, Chennault's mechanic during that China period, said he "doubted that Claire ever shot down a plane." Billy McDonald, Chennault's flying companion in *Three Men on a Flying Trapeze*, joined Chennault when he came to China in 1937, denied that Chennault claimed he ever shot down a Japanese plane. Thomas Trumble, Chennault's secretary in the AVG, is reported to have said that Chennault flew lots of surveillance but never any actual combat. Royal Leonard was an-

other intimate of Chennault's. Leonard was Chiang Kai-shek's personal pilot from 1935 to 1940 and often shared an apartment with Chennault. In his book, *I Flew for China*, published in 1942, Leonard details Chennault's activities as advisor to the Chinese Air Force but makes no mention of Chennault flying combat. Could these men who worked with Claire Chennault on a day to day basis be so blind they would not know that he was flying combat and shooting down scores of Japanese planes?

It stretches credulity to believe that a man of Claire Chennault's prominence and position in the China conflict could shoot down 40, 63 or 200, or become the top ace in the world without the news media catching on. Capable journalists and news reporters from throughout the world were in abundance in China during the entire Japanese invasion from 1932 and on. They reported in detail the invasion of Manchuria, the Marco Polo Bridge incident, the capture of Shanghai, the rape of Nanking, the sinking of *Panay*, the bombing of Chungking and other Chinese cities, the exploits of the Chinese flyers, and, later, the aerial victories of the AVG. Would these investigative reporters have missed Chennault's aerial feats? Alice Smedley, who wrote for the *Christian Science Monitor*, met with Chennault in the early days and knew him well, never mentioned any aerial victories. She would never have let a scoop like that go by. Malcolm Rosholt, a reporter for the *China Free Press*, went to China in the early thirties. He was there during the entire conflict. Rosholt says "it is impossible for Chennault to have shot down any Jap planes without the media learning about it."

Chennault was a teacher. Would not he have conveyed to his pilots his technique in shooting down superior Japanese aircraft with his old *Hawk 75*? Would he have not hinted to his wife, children and grandchildren that he was top ace in the world?

**Tell Your CBI Friends
About Ex-CBI Roundup!**

A Trip to the Crash

By Marshall Wikey

Reprinted with permission from Reminisce Books

I went to India in 1942 as part of the 10th Air Force. I was a P-40 mechanic, so, naturally, they made me a combat photographer.

My assignment was temporary - a Signal Corps unit was due to arrive in the next convoy. But photos were needed right away, and since I had some experience behind a camera, I was selected to stand in.

My job was to photograph the bombing raids in the China-Burma-India Theater. Since I was the only photographer, I went along on every mission.

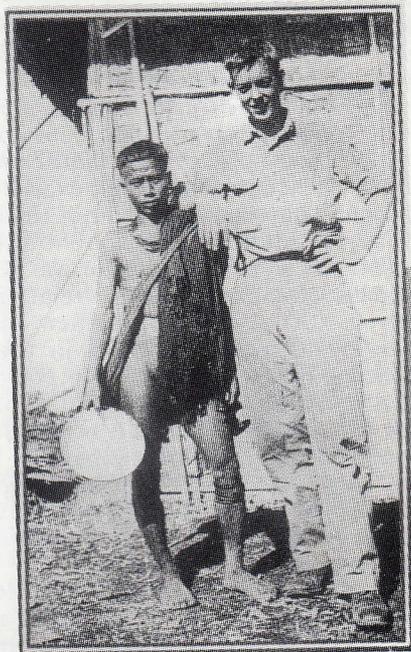
On one such sortie, one of our B-25s went down somewhere in the Naga Hills near Dinjan, in the northeast corner of India. It was a mountainous area of extremely dense jungle.

That plane was equipped with a top secret Norden bomb-sight, and we couldn't allow it to fall into enemy hands. A lieutenant, another enlisted man and I were assigned to retrieve it.

We flew to Calcutta, took a train, then drove a jeep as far into the bush as the trails would allow. We rode on elephant back until we got near the crash site, then organized a search party.

We used two native Naga bearers, who carried supplies and led the way. We didn't know where the plane was, but the Naga did, and they navigated our way through the jungle by relying on the native drum communications system.

Small in stature, the Naga had extremely powerful legs from climbing up and down the mountains with heavy loads. They could go to the top of a hill without stopping, then look back and laugh at us lagging far behind and panting from exertion.



GIANT? No. at 5 feet, 11 inches, author towered over one of his Naga bearers. The Naga were at home in rugged country.

The Naga were not warriors, but they did practice head-hunting. Great Britain, which controlled India, assigned overseers to circulate among the tribes to discourage the activity.

We paid the natives in Indian coins. They had no use for money since they used a barter system, so they'd turn the coins into pendants to wear around their necks.

We traveled for two days in jungle so thick we had to hack our way through with machetes. There were times the foliage was so dense we could see neither ground nor sky.

We covered less than a mile a day. Not only was it tough going, but we had poisonous pythons to contend with as well as a smaller snake whose venom was said to be so potent that once bitten, a man would be dead before he hit the ground. *KRATES*

We finally arrived at the crash site late one afternoon and camped overnight. Chattering monkeys and unknown animals constantly spoke out in the darkness, making sleep a real challenge.

The plane had fallen in a ravine so deep we had to use ropes to slide down to the bottom. The craft had apparently ricocheted off the sides of the ravine, scattering pieces all over.

None of the crew had survived. We buried the remains, then made preparations to blow up the wreckage. We dismantled the bombsight, taking all the parts we could carry. I took the photographs we needed, then we armed the bombs.

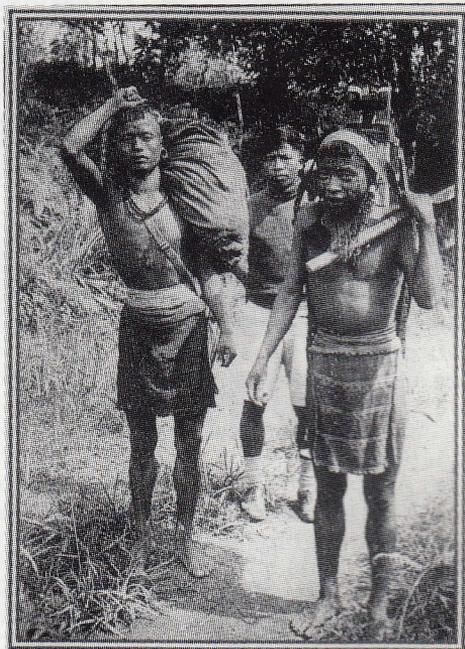
When we set them off, pieces of debris rained all around us.

The return trip took half the time because we could follow the tunnel-like trail we had cut on our way in.

In spite of the grim aspects of the

mission, it was a complete success. We had accomplished all our objectives, thanks to our friendly aborigine allies.

SAW [unclear]



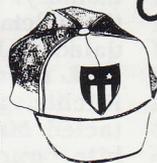
BEARING UP. The Naga bearers, in front, didn't even breathe hard toting loads in the hills.

— WANT ADS —

WANT ADS in Ex-CBI Roundup cost 20 cents a word, minimum \$4.00 (for 20 words or less) per insertion. Copy with payment must be received 10 days before first of month preceding month of issue.

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What Is This?

A Japanese Rupee! We ran across this note. It must have been printed and circulated by the Japanese. We, here at Roundup, confess we have never seen one of these. Perhaps some of our readers can tell us about this one. Where was it found and could it possibly have had any value?

780th EPD Co.

• Once again you have stumped me. Some time ago, you ran a picture credited to a Mr. Tom Ritchie. This was a shot of Sgt. Huey Goodman and another GI from the 780 EPD Co. doing some work on the pipeline in China. Page 9, of the June issue, has another picture of S/Sgt. Troska and Sgt. Will of 780 working on a tank foundation.

I was a charter member of 780 when it was formed at Camp Claiborne, LA, in 1943, and cannot recall any Tom Ritchie in the outfit at

any time. Not trusting my memory, I have checked the official roster of 780, dated 1 July 1945, and find no record of Mr. Ritchie, and have contacted Mr. Harry Dollahite, our former company clerk, who also knows nothing of Mr. Ritchie. My question is - who the heck is Tom Ritchie and what was his connection with the 780 EPD Co?

If you know Mr. Ritchie, and he would be interested you might pass along the information that the 780 will be holding its 20th reunion

in Huntsville, AL, on October 17-19. I'm sure the fellows would be happy to meet Mr. Ritchie and see more of the pictures of our buddies, if he has any. For reunion info contact:

R. A. SMITH,
406 Skyline Shores Dr.,
Scottsboro, AL 35768

**Tell Your
CBI
Friends
About Roundup!**

Climbed Towers

• Re your pictures of Fatehpur Sikri in the June 1996 issue . . . it was one of the first cities and is famous for the Royal Mosque. Emperor Akbar built this in thanksgiving for a son, and children are prayed for by putting a saffron thread in the lattice of the sanctuary. Since this, 300 years ago, the lack of water has made it completely abandoned except for water sellers and singers to greet the few tourists who make the hot, dry 25-mile trek from Agra. We climbed the towers of marble and mother of pearl.

CARL DELEEUW,
1328 Via Margarita,
Palos Verdes Estates, CA
90274

On the Holbrook

• I arrived at Karachi on the USAT HOLBROOK, March 1942, with the 7th Bomb Group (H). Came back to Riverside, CA, Camp Anza, CA, December 1944, on the General Anderson. The Group originally left Salt Lake City, November 1941, via Angel Island (Ft. McArthur) on the USAT REPUBLIC. Our convoy had to divert to the land down under because of PEARL HARBOR. From Brisbane, Melbourne, Fremantle/Perth, Java, Ceylon, Karachi. We changed from REPUBLIC to the Holbrook at Brisbane.

CHARLES E. KRAMER,
4865 Nelapark Drive,
Huber Heights, OH 45424

Correct Those Planes!

• Not trying to be picunish, but for your interest relating to page 9, upper photo, June issue, by W. T. Basore. The two planes pictured are Mitsubishi Ki-51's. They were attack aircraft for troop support. You will notice that the landing gear have wheel pants therefore are a fixed gear (non retractable). The Zero aircraft was a Mitsubichi A6M series. (Zeke) was a fighter aircraft with retractable landing gear. The Oscar was a Nakajimi Ki-43 series also a fighter type known as a Hayabusa or our ID as (Oscar). It also had retractable landing gear.
GEORGE W. MURPHY,
5757 N.W. Galloway Lane,
Redmond, OR 97756

1st Combat Cargo

• Seeking all 1st Combat Cargo Squadron/344th Airdrome Squadron veterans for historical information. Have a short history available on request. Specifically seeking Capt. Frank Buckley (Historian), Capt. Jack Miller (Flt Surgeon), Lt. Edward Sampson (Communications) and Lt. Bruce MacCarter (Adjutant), or anyone with information on them. Please contact . . .

GERALD WHITE,
1818 Barbee St.,
McLean, VA 22101

Truck Driver Flies

• In the May issue of Roundup an article (Azon P-38s) asked if any non pilots rode in a P-38. In the summer of 1942, I was a gas truck driver at Edwards AFB at Muroc, California. At that time there was a P-38 squadron there. One of the instructors told me if I kept his flight gassed up, he would take me for a ride in his P-38. Someone had taken the armor plate out from behind the pilots seat and also the radio. So a passenger could sit with his legs on either side of the pilot. It was a hunched position. We were up for about one hour. It was the ride of a lifetime and I'll never forget it. The pilot did everything but turn the plane inside out!

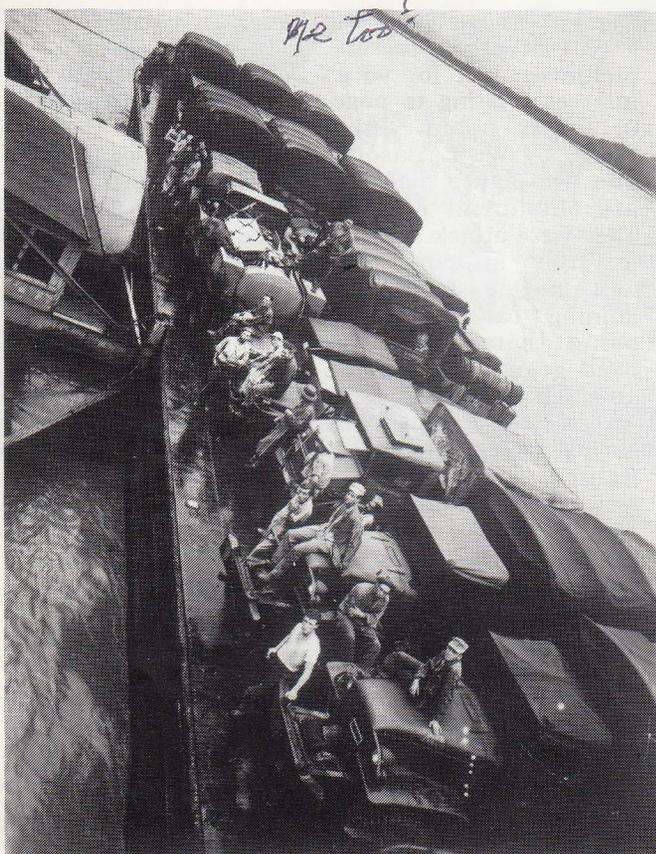
WILLIAM R. WIEGAND,
3597 S. Center Hwy,
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Better Than British Planes

• I'm quite sure the C-54 was the military model of the DC-4 made by Douglas who also made the DC-3 (C-47) or "Gooney Bird." I know it was good for our ego to see a sleek C-54 come into Dum Dum and see the envy of the British Air Force personnel who shared the base. They were using the old Halifax.

HOWARD J. BEATTY,
Box 196,
Atkins, IA 52206

**Some Roundup Back Issues
Are Available . . . Ask Us!**



GETTING READY to cross the Bhrmaputra River.
Photo by Earl Pearson.

Douglas Built Plane

• The C-54 was manufactured by The Douglas Company of Santa Monica, California. It was a four-engine follow on to the world famous two-engine DC-3 and C-47, the Glooney Bird. The C-54 was the mainstay of the Military Transport System of the Army Air Corps in WW II. I was an early B-29 flight engineer in the CBI, March 1944 to December 1944. The C-54 flew the Cannon Ball

Route from the U.S. to India, hauling cargo and some passengers. It flew the Hump, along with the C-108 (B-24 tanker) and C-46 Curtis-Wright. The C-54 was the early version of the Douglas DC-6 and DC-7, commercial airliners after WW II. The C-54 was a very popular plane because of its reliability and cargo carrying capacity.

JOHN V. PATTERSON, JR.
3955 S.W. 316th Street,
Federal Way, WA 98023

Indian Ghost Town

• Page 25 of your June '96 issue indicates no information on the buildings pictured. Fatehpur Sikri 37K.M., west of Agra, was built by Akbar the Great in 1569 A.D. It is now known as the deserted city.

In the 16th century, Salim Chishti, a mystic, came to this little community of stone-cutters and spent his days meditating in a grotto. Legend soon grew around him and word came to the Emperor Akbar who set out on a pilgrimage to ask the holy man the blessing of an heir. When a son was born, the king named him after the mystic and decided to shift his capital to Sikri. Within five or six years, a complex of forts, palaces and mosques sprang up. But Akbar was forced to abandon his new capital and Fatehpur Sikri became a ghost town. It is haunted today by memories of a resplendent era.

J. E. WITHROW,
250 Jefferson Rd.,
Webster Groves, MO 63119

Mars or Marauders?

• In mid 1945, I volunteered to help drop supplies to infantry in the jungle, just south of Myitkyina. I didn't know if we were dropping to the Mars Task Force or the Marauders. Does anyone remember the place?
HOMER J. CAMPBELL,
7210 SW Philomath Blvd.,
Corvallis, OR 97333

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A Marauder's Recollections



**"The Bastards of
Burma"**

By Michael Gabbett
(Reprinted from Albuquerque, NM
Journal 15 Sep '91)

Review by Charles Googe

"The Bastards of Burma" deals with a part of World War II few Americans know - much about - the China-Burma-India Theater.

The "Bastards" in the title are Merrill's Marauders, named by a reporter after Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill - officially, the 5307th Composite Unit, Provisional. Later, most of the Marauders became part of the 475th Infantry.

Their exploits in driving the Japanese out of Burma are legendary. Albuquerque author Michael Gabbett, who fought with the Marauders, tells not only of key battles for Myitkyina and later for Bhamo and Lashio, but also relates adventures during their all-too-infrequent rest and recuperation periods.

Surprisingly, Gabbett also gives us the Japanese viewpoints.

For those who love books about jungle warfare, it makes for solid reading.

For your copy of "Bastards of Burma" write:

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ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87112-5350**

Enclose check or MO for \$9.95, plus \$1.50 postage and handling (Total \$11.45).

Red Cross Trainmobile

By Andy Brydon

September 4, 1944, was a special day at our railroad shops in Dibrugarh, Assam. It was the dedication of the new railroad coach that had been modified

for use by the Red Cross. It was designed to service troops that otherwise didn't have access to a permanent facility.



SOME OF THE FIRST CUSTOMERS relax inside the Red Cross coach. Photo by Andy Brydon.



RED CROSS GIRL VIRGINIA CADLE shows some equipment in the coach. Photo by Andy Brydon.

I flew the "Hemp" with him & his officers.
A FRIEND (visited them in Kittering, Pa) after the way with Polly

Red Cross Trainmobile

TED



Paul

GENERAL YOUNT and other officers preside at opening of the railroad coach. Photo by Andy Brydon.

A regular rail car had been sent to the shops for the necessary changes to meet that need. The interior of the coach was stripped down and cleaned up. A ten foot kitchen was installed in one end of the car. Within the kitchen was a stove, doughnut making machine and coffee brewer. The other end was devoted to a servant's quarter. This unit was self contained with its own power supply to operate all the equipment aboard. It also had an air conditioning system. This left a 27-foot club room where GIs could gather and enjoy themselves. It could be a little bit of home away from home. There were various games available to play, an area for writing, and there was a radio plus a record player.

January 31, 1945. This was the big day when the coach would be opened

for inspection. The assembled brass included Gens. Yount, Cranston, and other officers that had been involved in the operation. A six by six truck was brought to the shops and it provided the stage for the group. An orchestra from the 758th Shop Bn. was added to the festivities. They played music that would brighten spirits. Part of the dignitaries were the recipients of the trainmobile. The Red Cross Director, for the area, a Mr. Tweedy, and the two Red Cross gals, Virginia Cadle and Maxine Robertson would operate the trainmobile.

This unit was designed to provide this little bit of home away from home. It is not known if it served its purpose, for once it left the shop area it was not seen again in the area of Dibrugarh.



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How's your

CBI I.Q.?

by HUGH CRUMPLER
1943 AFS, British Indian Army
- 45 UP War Correspondent



Do you approve of burning the American flag as a political protest?

The person who submitted this question says he is a CBIer and he signs himself "Sam Striver, the Goony Bird Driver." Well, Sam, you may be surprised at my answer to your question.

I do not object to flag-burning as a protest if the flag is first soaked in napalm and the protester wraps himself in the napalm-soaked flag before he sets the flag on fire.

- CBI IQ -

I heard that on the first convoy over the Ledo Road, white troops drove until the convoy had passed the photographers and then black troops took over the driving. Is that true?

George W. Bell, CBIer and member of the 45th QM Truck Rgt. say that's the way it happened. Bell reports as follows: "... they put white soldiers in the trucks and let them drive past the photo men, but about a mile from Hellgate they transferred the trucks to black drivers who were in the back of the trucks all the time." Bell's outfit was in Ledo for most of the war. His address is 2661 Cadjew Ave., Sacramento, CA 95832. (See the story of Capt. Lewis B. McCammon elsewhere in this column.)

- CBI IQ -

A QUIZ FOR WORKING STIFFS

The minimum wage for American workers in 1995 was \$4.25 an hour. What was the minimum wage 50 years earlier in 1945 when most CBIers returned home at the end of World War II?

(The answer will be found elsewhere in this column.)

Those Pesky Mongooses and Troublesome Mongeese

Bill Zimmerman, 502nd M.P. Bn. in CBI, read the "pet mongoose" item in my May 1996 column. He was reminded of the experience of an M.P. in Myitkyina who wanted a pet mongoose. The M.P. wrote an animal dealer in Bangalore saying he needed "two mongooses." That didn't look right, so he erased it and wrote "Two mongeese." That didn't look right either. So he wrote, "Send me a mongoose." He signed the letter and added a P.S. - "While you're at it, you might as well send me two."

Bill's address is 1735 26th Ave., San Francisco 94122. Thanks, Bill. Next time we get together, remind me to tell you the story about Jason and the Golden Floose.

- CBI IQ -

This is CBI IQ column number 167.

CBI'ers DISCOVERY OF JAPANESE BATTLE VESTS

Dr. U. Maung Gyi, Chief Instructor of the American Bando Association, read in the June 1996 about Jim Fletcher's Japanese battle vest, captured at Myitkyina. Dr. Gyi added the following information:

"During World War II, I was in C Co., 3/10th Gurkha Rifles, 37th Infantry Brigade, defending Shenam Pass near Imphal. We soundly defeated the Japanese 15th Army.

"Going through articles from dead Japanese soldiers, my unit discovered that some of the Japanese were wearing home-made type vests with different writing, including religious sayings. They were not official military issue. Probably they were worn as good-luck charms."

The Shenam Saddle and Shenam Pass, where Dr. Gyi served with distinction, were the scene of vicious fighting during the Japanese invasion of Manipur state, India. The Shenam area is south of Imphal between Pale and Tamu on the Tamu trail.

Thanks, Dr. Gyi for adding to the information on the little-known Japanese "battle vests" of WW II. The material published in the Roundup is

apparently the first time these unusual vests have been reported in the public prints. Jim Fletcher deserves recognition for bringing these vests to the attention of World War II historians and readers. Jim's address is 169 Wilhelmina Dr., Austell, GA 30001.

Dr. Gyi is one of the founders of the American Bando Association. Among the objectives listed for the Association is "to preserve the combatitive arts practiced in Burma during World War II." Among the events sponsored by the association are the National Fire-fighting Championships and the National Bando Boxing Championships. The Bando newsletter is called *Crossed Swords*.

Dr. Gyi's address is 23 Strathmore Blvd., Athens, OH 45701, phone (614) 592-2027.

- CBI IQ -

WIT AND WISDOM OF CBI

Fletcher Hanks, 1943-45 veteran of Chinese National Aviation Corporation (CNAC, See-Nack) sends a comment on the headline on my Hump article in the *San Diego Union Tribune*. The headline read, "Pilots Defeat Treacherous Weather, Terrain of the Hump." Fletcher writes that a book could be written with the title, "Treacherous Weather and Terrain of the Hump Defeat Pilots." He adds, "But dead men don't talk or write books." No one would know this better than the 700 Americans who lost their lives on the Hump to keep open the lifeline to China. Thanks, Fletcher, for a reminder of a fact that can never be repeated too often. (Fletcher Hanks' mailing address is PO Box 560, Oxford, MD 21654.)

* * *

The Taj Mahal is exactly what it is said to be, one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. The first surprise is that it is not all the little ivory toy that one is accustomed to see on postcards, but extremely large . . . The second surprise is that its beauty does not depend upon frippery, but upon a superb sense of proportion." - Sir Kenneth Clark in *Civilization*.

SEEKING RECOGNITION FOR BLACK TROOPS



Lewis B. McCammon

George Bell's comment on switching drivers on the first convoy over the Ledo Road (second item in this column) is reported in a compilation of remembrances sent to Capt. Lewis B. McCammon, Co. Commander of the 3651st QM Co., and Executive Officer of the 153rd QM Bn. (M). His list of 31 March 1966 includes comments by more than 50 CBIers. It also includes a list of all (or most) truck companies in CBI. McCammon explains:

"My current hobby is to do all I can to get more recognition for the black troops who built the Stilwell (Ledo) Road, and the QM Battalions (white and black) who were part of the Motor Transport Service operating on the Road. I will greatly appreciate re-

ceiving any info anyone . . . can provide."

Lew sent an explanation of the Japanese material in the photo that is reproduced here: "I can't remember how I came upon the Japanese rifle, helmet and ammunition. But I do remember that I tried the rifle out and found that the sights were way out of line, which may account for what happened to its original owner!"

"The flag was given to one of my section leaders (sergeant) by a black South African soldier who was in a group of British who had hiked north from Central Burma to the Stilwell Road. We picked them up in our trucks and carried them back to Ledo. I gave the helmet and rifle away before I left Burma, but I still have the flag."

Lew's compilation of "Quarter-master Truck Units - CBI, 1942-1945" has resulted in a list of 96 outfits, which he has identified by number. Roughly 60% were manned by black personnel and 40% by white personnel.

"I am amazed by the large number of QM truck units," Lew said. "Even so, I'm sure I did not get them all. I am also puzzled by some of the QM unit designations. If anyone cares to enlighten me about how his unit was redesignated, I would be most appreciative."

Lew also has a copy of "History of Burma Convoy Control Station Number 1, Shingbuiyang, Burma." It was written in 1945 by Maj. William J. "Jim" McQuiston, C.O. of the 153rd QM Bn (Mobile). Lew writes: "It was a pleasure for me to serve as his executive officer as the war wound down in 1945."

Lew is doing a great service for CBI because little has been written about the truck outfits that did the hard and dirty work in the theater. If you have anything to contribute for his QM truck archives, be sure to contact Lew.

On a geneological note Lew would like to hear from any members of the family of a CBier with the same family name as Lew's. He was Col. John E. McCammon, who served as Stilwell's

G-3 and commanded the Myitkyina Task Force during the last ten days of May, 1944.

Lewis B. McCammon's address is 105 N. Cordova St., Alhambra, CA 91801, phone (818) 284-4535.

- CBI IQ -

ANSWER TO QUIZ

The minimum wage in 1945 was .40 (forty cents) an hour. So now you know why we all rushed out and bought a new Cadillac and a two-story house as soon as we got home and landed a minimum-wage job.

- CBI IQ -

How long do you research questions sent in by readers?



Gen. Bill Olds' C-47 at Myitkyina strip

If the question is legitimate and of general interest, I never give up. Here's an example: In December 1982, Lt. Col. John C. Habecker, Air Liaison at Stilwell's HQ for the Tenth Air Force (later commander of the 528th Fighter Sqdn "Dragon Flys") reported landing at Myitkyina on May 17, 1944, in an L-5.

"My passenger was Mone Ascensio, later to reach Lt. Gen. rank in the USAAF." Jack Habecker was surprised to see a C-47 on the field because he had been told that his aircraft would be the first on the field after its capture by the Marauders.

"Who was it?" Jack asked about the plane and its pilot.

During the summer, Col. Paul L. Jones of Stilwell's staff was going over his extensive collection of photos when he ran across the one reproduced above. The official caption on the photo, passed by the press censor, Capt. Julian M. Sobin, reads as follows:

"Jeanie the Second was the first tow ship to bring in the first glider to land at Myitkyina. The ship was piloted by Brig. Gen. William D. Old of Uvalde, Texas,

The ship then returned to its base and was the first to return carrying equipment." (General Old commanded the Troops Carrier Command of the British-American joint Eastern Air Command, with HQ at Hastings Mill.)

Sorry, Jack, that it took 14 years to answer your question, and to tell you that the C-47 on the airstrip at Myitkyina was piloted by Bill Old. And your question would not have been answered at all had not Paul Jones been examining the material in his CBI archives.

Suddenly it occurs to me that this answer to Jack's question might be wrong. Maybe there was another C-47 on the strip before General Old arrived. If so, Jack, you may have to wait another 14 years before we get the story straight.

- CBI IQ -

WIT AND WISDOM OF CBI

"During its glorious career, the 27th Troop Carrier Squadron (10th and 14th Air Forces) flew 6,805 missions over the worst terrain in the world in the most vicious weather Mother Nature could dream up. The largest percentage of missions were at or behind enemy lines. On many occasions, personnel of the squadron served as liaison with ground forces. The squadron received 25 commendations from theater command, from Washington, DC, from Britain, and from China. Personnel received 1,271 decorations. No other unit gave more of itself. The 27th TCS was inactivated in China on 27 Dec. 1945." - Harry A. Blair, Historian, 27th TCS, PO Box 582, La Crosse, WI 54602.

"Vinegar Joe Stilwell, as resourceful a general as we had, was losing out on the political front. Embittered by Chiang's zest for fighting communists in north China but not the Japanese, their common enemy, he made no attempt to hide his disdain for the Generalissimo and was finally relieved by President Roosevelt." - Lowell Thomas in the book *So Long Until Tomorrow*.

* * *

"In some parts of the U.S. powdered eggs are unavailable. You will have no choice but to eat directly from the shell." - Tenth Air Force *Tips for Airmen Returning to the U.S.*

* * *

"Orphan Ann, your favorite enemy." - Broadcast signature of *Tokyo Rose*.

* * *

"There are only two rules of war: Never invade Russia. Never invade China." - *British Field Marshal Sir Bernard Law Montgomery*.

* * *

"No air attack, once it is launched, can be completely stopped." - *Gen. Curtis E. "Iron Ass" LeMay, commanding XXth Bomber Command, CBI*.

* * *

Roundup Publisher Dwight King, a B-29 bombardier in CBI and in the Pacific, was on a bombing mission on the last day of WW II. Leigh Logan of the Whittier, CA, newspaper, quotes Dwight on the celebration by his Wing that night on Tinian Island in the Pacific: "We brought out whiskey and gin and everything else we had and made a big cocktail in huge garbage cans. We took out our canteen cups and drank the garbage-can cocktails all night long."

* * *

"Occasionally we caught one of our pilots smuggling gold out of China . . . One officer told me that if I went home without a million dollars, I was crazy." - *Col. Dean Rusk*, in his postwar autobiography.

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