



HINTS

on

MANI : INDIAN ARMY OBSERVER
(20 MAY 1944 - 1 NOV 1944)

BATTLE OF MANIPUR

STORIES

96 pages

for

BRITISH & INDIAN UNITS

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MESSAGE *from the* B. G. S.

"You will never get a chap to fight, if he's got something on his mind"; so said "Dusty" Miller, famous boxer and Army trainer.

True for the Ring; far truer for the Big Ring we're in to-day.

To-day, YOU officers, British and Indian, are true trainers and YOURS is the task of taking those "somethings" off the mind of each soldier by understanding, by interest, by sympathy and by explanation.

The D. P. R. aims at providing YOU with the authentic material necessary to help YOU in YOUR task. More paper? Yes, but a crib to help you satisfy an eager examiner who seeks accurate knowledge and demands logical explanation.

LAP IT UP.

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 31 May '44
Reinforcement

Story I

When their supply of hand grenades ran short a resourceful Eton schoolboy with a Reinforcement Camp made fresh ones from old cigarette tins to ~~hurl~~ ^{hurl at} the Japs at Kanglatongbi, writes an Indian Army Observer.

Capt. (now Major) E. I. Hamilton Parkes, R.E., used ~~up~~ ^{nearly} 50 'Players' tins with a large quantity of broken glass and gelignite to make his grenades which had a deadly effect on the Japs.

ends note: home address not available locally.

~~Begin~~

Carrying with them large quantities of ammunition, stores of nearly 2300 men and rations, a Reinforcement Camp moved within 24 hours ~~of~~ ~~receiving~~ to take up new defence positions nearly seven miles away at Kanglatongbi and within another 24 hours moved again to another position. Here they inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy who attacked them, writes an Indian Army Observer.

After keeping vigil every night for nearly a week and working throughout the day, Reinforcement Camp No. 20 at MS II0 received orders at 2200 hours on March 31 to move and take up new defence positions at Kanglatongbi nearly seven miles away. It was a pitch dark night and no lights could be used owing ~~to~~ to the near proximity of the Japs. Working the whole night and the following day, British and Indian Sikhs, Mahrattas and Madrasis, assisted in evacuating nearly 150 tons of stores, reserve ration for 14 days for the 2300 men and large quantities of ammunition including 3000 ~~of~~ 3" mortar bombs ~~and~~ and a quarter million rounds leaving nothing to the enemy. All bunkers and defensive positions were completely destroyed.

Within another 24 hours they had to move to new defensive positions where they were attacked by ~~the~~ a strong force of the enemy. All combatants and non-combatants who normally compose a reinforcement camp where troops receive the final "battle course" before being sent to fighting units in the front line joined together and inflicted heavy casualties on the attacking enemy.

Major Norman Sinclair, 7th. Baluch, educated in Holland where he was working formerly in a steel firm and whose wife lives in Karachi, for the first time in action was in command of the SE sector of the box and inflicted large casualties on the enemy. He toned up and maintained the fire ^{discipline} ~~discipline~~ at a high level after an initial bad start since most of the troops

Story 2(Cont.)

were seeing action for the first time. In addition to organising and sending out patrols, Major Sinclair was the last man to leave the position when they later withdrew ~~xxxxx~~ remaining behind to see that everything was scorched.

Lt. David (Sparkes) Calcutt, 13th. Frontier Force Rifles, of 93, Gypsy Lane, Headington, Oxford, and ~~xxxxxxx~~ also a commando who took part in the Luftwaffen naval engagement, led a party of Mahrattas into the perimeter of the NW sector which the Japs attacked and killed nearly 20 of the enemy. Our tanks also accounted for a number of Japs. Finally he threw the enemy out capturing a Jap LMG and two swords covered with blood.

A few Japs foraging for food near the Engineers Officers' Mess were killed and ^{of} two more who were lurking near the BOR mess, one gave himself up and the other was killed later.

ends

How he and his men on three successively dark nights did not give away their position ^{in response} to the wiles of the Japs who came within 100 yards of his position only to move away in another direction to attack a different spot was the story ~~xxxx~~ related to me by Capt. G. Sethuram, 3rd. Madras Regiment, of Odayur village, Chidambaram taluk, South Arcot district, writes an Indian Army Observer. Capt. Sethuram graduated from the Presidency College, Madras

On April 4, Capt. Sethuram was defending an I.G.H. area with 150 Madrasis, all reinforcements to the 3rd. Madras Regiment on their way to join their battalion. In the night after he had ordered his men to stand to, at about 0130 hours red tracers came in their direction from about 300 yards in the north, completely illuminating the dark sky. They kept quiet and for the ^{next} three hours more flares ~~started~~ ^{burn} appeared from every other direction in ~~turn~~. "This led me to believe that the enemy was all round us but since we had kept quiet they didn't spot us. The patrols I sent out at dawn could not find the enemy and they must have disappeared into the jungles".

The next night he and his men were defending the southern sector of the Garrison Engineer's area at Kanglatongbi when at about 0200 hours the Japs began their attack. Using a nullah in front of his position as a covered approach, the enemy, nearly a platoon strong, attacked from behind in small parties. The ~~pitch dark night~~ silence of the pitch dark night was disturbed by their 2" mortar fire and machine gun fire and ^{the} ~~their~~ shouts which lasted the whole time. "We did not open fire as we could not see them. Since we were in bunkers and trenches their fire did not cause us any harm and as we kept quiet the Japs who came within 100 yards of us moved away to attack another position".

Again the next day when the enemy attacked his position early in the morning in pouring rain, Capt. Sethuram and his men had been standing to for ~~the~~ whole night, A party of 30 or 40 Japs approached from the nullah firing at random and on all sides ^{to ascertain dispositions}. When the enemy came to within 100 yards of them, he and his men who had been quiet all the while were about to open up when they found that the enemy had once again disappeared. ends.

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 2 June '44
Slumber

Story 4

A complete non-chalant indifference to enemy fire~~s~~ was shown by a Madrasi sepoy who went into deep slumber although Jap shells were bursting all around him, writes an Indian Army Observer.

Sepoy Boddy James Elliah of Mallipula St, Vizagapam, was one of the 'bearers' serving in a reinforcement camp which was attacked by the enemy at Kanglatongbi. Not prepared to lose his sleep whatever the Japs might do, tying a piece of cloth round his head in typical Madrasi fashion and keeping his officer's loaded pistol close to him, Sepoy Elliah stretched himself and slept quietly for the whole night even though enemy shells and mortars were bursting only 20 yards from him.

Sepoy Elliah left his school to join the army and is a cheerful lad with always a smile on his face.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 2 June '44
Signals

Story 5

Devotion to duty in the face of heavy enemy fire was the example set by a Madrasi lance-naik of the Indian Signals and three of his men, writes an Indian Army Observer.

No. 1841 L/Naik V. Anthony, No. 12294 Signalmán Faquir Mohd, No. 61568 Signalmán Sanwar Shah and No. 56898 Shah Hussain were serving with a unit which was attacked by the Japs at Kanglatongbi early in April.

~~When the enemy opened up with their fire support~~
A telephone wire between one sub-sector HQ and the Box HQ was cut by fire from enemy guns and mortars. In the pitch darkness this lance-naik and his men moving under shell fire from the enemy and feeling their way over the snapped wire, joined the cut pieces together again and established ^{Communication} ~~contact~~.

They proceeded with their work undeterred even though shells were bursting all around and very close to them.

Reporting himself to his C.O., the lance-naik told him that he and his men were prepared to go again in case of necessity but a second occasion never arose as the Japs were driven away

ends

note: Their addresses are not available locally and may be had from their depot at Jubbulpore. They have been recommended for awards.

By deeds of personal valour and courageous leadership, Indian Officers, most of whom have come fresh from their colleges, are maintaining the great traditions of the ^{Indian} Indian Army on the Imphal front.

Lt. Harpratap Singh, ^{d/a} ~~7th~~ Cavalry ^{Regiment} (the first Indian tank regiment to go into action in this theatre of ~~the~~ war) of Daudpur, Ludhiana district, He was leading a troop of tanks to clear a road-block on the Tiddim Road. While advancing with Gurkha infantry support the enemy in entrenched positions attacked them and his troop ~~was~~ came under heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire. Lt. Harpratap Singh brought down the enemy snipers in the trees and destroyed ^{an} enemy bunker. Some of the ^{Japs} enemy who came close to his tank to dislocate the vision instruments ~~and the driver~~ ^{and} were killed ~~at~~ enemy attempts to use anti-tank weapons were frustrated.

While withdrawing under orders because of ^{the} increasing darkness of the night he and his troop were ambushed by a party of the enemy at a curve further down the road. They killed 15 Japs and rescued under heavy fire from the enemy two wounded Gurkhas who were ~~in~~ lying right across the road.

When his troop went again the next ~~next~~ ^{on} day ~~to~~ the road the enemy had disappeared but had laid trees and other obstructions ~~and~~ ^{and} mines on the road which they cleared and enabled our supply convoy to pass. They then relieved the troops who were held up by this road-block.

Lt. Harpratap Singh graduated from the Government College, Ludhiana.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla; 4 June '44
Diljit Singh

Story 7

The 24th. of May witnessed a gallant young Sikh officer leading the Rajputs in a ^{bayonet} ~~bayonet~~ attack on ~~a~~ strong Jap position of Shinam ⁱⁿ on the feature Gibraltar, on the Palel Road.

Lt. Diljit Singh Randhawa, 6th. Rajputana Rifles, of Chak No. 66/12L, district Montgomery, was in the forefront of ^a ~~the~~ bayonet attack on ~~the~~ knife-edged ridge where the Japs were entrenched. The enemy were concentrating fire from their machine ^e gun posts on the higher slopes of the ridge. The Rajputs who had to climb the slope suffered early casualties but Lt. Diljit Singh undaunted went ahead and when within a couple of yards from an enemy LMG post ~~and~~ threw two hand grenades into it which ^{accounted for} ~~killed~~ two Japs. ^{accounted} All the while he was covered by LMG fire from another section of the Rajputs from behind. Four Japs who came from his right to ^{close-in on him} ~~attack~~ were pinned down by the Rajput LMG and killed.

Very far ahead of his men, he advanced further. The next few moments were dramatic. He, and a Jap were facing each other only a few yards between them. Their eyes gleaming they had a full measure of each other from top to toe. "It was ~~xxx~~ a tense moment for me", said Lt. Diljit Singh describing the incident to me in "The Jap beckoned to me with his finger but I said 'Tairo!', the hospital where he is recovering from his wounds." ^{The next} thing I did instinctively was to throw my remaining two hand grenades at him. I could not see the result as I was injured immediately but I am sure I did not miss the mark"

While having his field dressing, Lt. Diljit Singh requested his C.O. to send him again to have a crack at the Japs but it was not granted. However his men cleared the position of Japs and held it. In addition to large enemy casualties, part of the booty were two Jap LMGs.

Lt. Diljit Singh graduated from the Foreman Christian College Lahore. ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Impnal: 10 June '44
Commander

Story 3

Lt. General Slim, Army Commander, 14th. Army, accompanied by the Commander of the famous 17th, Indian Division visited ~~yesterday~~ ^{battlefield} yesterday what was recently a battlefield where only a few weeks ago Indian ^{troops had} troops had once again proved ^{their superiority} their superiority over the Japs.

During the ~~period~~ ^{attacked} period when a party of the enemy attacked a one HQ of the 17th. Indian Division, about 300 of them entrenching themselves in ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ dug-outs and bunkers on the ~~farther~~ ^{farther} side of a ~~pimple~~ ^{pimple} in front of one of our boxes on a neighbouring pimple began an attack on our positions. In a counter-attack launched by the 10th. Baluch, 12th-F.F.R., and 5th. Mahrattas, the enemy positions were completely destroyed and nearly 150 Japs were ~~killed~~.

The battle-scarred ^{area} bears evidence of the ^{thoroughness} thoroughness with which our troops had razed the enemy positions to the ground. The remains of two Jap dead and one ^{machine gun} machine gun were still ~~lying~~ lying in the field.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Impnal: 10 June '44
Commander

Story 8

Course

Impshel

In the course of a visit to the Imprial front Lt. General Slin, Army Commander, 14th Army, saw yesterday what was recently a battle-field where only a few weeks ago Indian troops had once established their superiority over the Japs.

It was here that ~~500~~ nearly 300 Japs had entrenched themselves in bunkers and dug-outs from where they attacked one of our defensive positions. In a counter-attack by our troops they suffered large casualties including about 150 dead.

The battle-scarred area bears evidence of the thoroughness with which our troops had razed the enemy positions to the ground. The remains of two Jap dead and one machine gun were still lying in the field.

ends

From: Lachar Army Observer
Imphal: 11 June '44

MESSAGE FORM

ARMY FORM C (REV)

Story 9

C.C.S.

'Dr. Julu, D.S.O.' is a familiar figure in a ~~hospital~~ ^{patients} on the Imphal front. He has been dubbed 'D.S.O.' by ~~his patients~~ and is known as 'Dahi (Curds, Supplying Officer)'

He prepares curds daily for his patients - sometimes even from tinned milk. In abdominal ~~cases~~ and surgical cases Julu's dahi is given to IORs on the recommendation of the surgical specialist. Dr. Julu is enthusiastic about introducing in his hospital a cup of buttermilk instead of tea.

'Dr. Julu' is short for Capt. K.J. Somayajulu, I.A.M.C., of Vizianagaram and was practising in the Jeypore State.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 12 June '44
Guerillas

MESSAGE FORM
ARMY FORM 5 (REV. 1-43)
S tory 10

Surprised by a guerilla platoon of the 14th Punjab Regiment, a withdrawing party of 50 Japs on the Kohima Road went back after ~~being badly~~ being badly shaken, writes an Indian Army Observer.

While withdrawing north up the road this enemy party bumped in the darkness ~~into~~ of the night into one of our forward positions a couple of days ago. Our troops opened fire immediately and scattered them. Next morning when a fighting patrol went to look for the result, they found them in a mullah below the road. Our troops engaged them and killed 14 besides wounding 20 more. The rest of the enemy fled leaving behind one MMG, one LMG, grenade dischargers, 75 mm shells and their wireless set and telephones.

The same Punjabi guerilla platoon killed another ~~about~~ 10 Japs the next day in the same area who were also moving up the road.

ends

MESSAGE FORM
Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 13 June '44
Drivers

Story 11

Working right up to the front on the Tiddim Road, eight drivers of a ~~transport~~ ^{G.P.T.} company of the R.I.A.S.C., coming from different parts of India, saved all their vehicles from the enemy who were close on their heels even though their tyres were flat and their hydraulic brakes refused to work because of the damage due to enemy shelling.

Under the command of Lt. C.B. Karumbayya of Sidapur, Coorg and formerly of the Nizam State Railways, Secunderabad, these men showed devotion to duty ~~by~~ removing as many vehicles as possible when one of our positions was being evacuated owing to heavy artillery and mortar fire from the enemy. It was a dark night and during a lull in the enemy firing these drivers started their vehicles but the fire opened up again ~~so~~ as soon as the sound of starting reached them. Due to shelling tyres ran flat, hydraulic brakes refused to function and the engines would not start. Remaining cool and calm they succeeded in rescuing all the vehicles leaving none ~~for~~ behind. The drivers were: MTS 953447 Nk. Mahadev Shivts of Ehain, Satara District; MTS 928274 L/Nk. Khader Hussain Khan, Deccani Muslim of Chilkalguda, Secunderabad; MTS 755920 Sepoy K. Bab Jahn of Big Masjid St., Wallajapet, North Arcot district; MTS 928612 Sep. Basweni Mekalki of Hukeri, Belgaon district; MTS 988008 Sepoy Hussain Khan Pathan of Upali Burj, Bijapur district; MTS 784464 Sepoy Gurpadappa Murbagi of Murbagi, district Bijapur and MTS 885474 Sepoy Vemanari of Parakondlapalli, Anantapur district.

More strange was the adventure of their companion MTS 929024 Naik J. Jesuratnam of Thandalam, Chingleput district, who saved his vehicle ~~with~~ with a resourceful memory. During the enemy shelling his radiator received damage incapacitating it. Having previously seen a damaged vehicle five miles behind on the road towards the enemy, he walked back alone and personally removing the radiator from the damaged vehicle, ran back with it to fit it to

Mabi

Story 11(contd.)

his own vehicle which he drove back to safety. " I was really worried and nearly gave him up for lost when he suddenly turned up with a spare radiator", his C.O. said to me. "There was no more time except to smile because we understood him immediately and he had saved his vehicle and the ammunition it contained".

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 15 June '44
Jap

Story 12

Dramatic amusement is provided by a Jap here and there to our troops who fight in the rains, knee deep in the slush and mud.

One unarmed Jap approached our post at Chothe in the Bishenpur area from the south with both his hands in the air. Losing his nerve at the last moment he tried to run away but he was shot and killed by our Gurkha troops.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 15 June '44
Convoy

Story 13

Nearly 95 dead Japs were counted in an attack by ~~xxxx~~ ^{a party}
12th. Frontier Force Regiment on a Jap convoy in the Iril Valley.

On 12th. June, this convoy was approaching ~~xxxx~~ ^{our} positions
~~xxxx~~
from the west and was moving east. Our troops engaged them and
our artillery inflicted considerable damage. After the attack
95 dead Japs and 55 dead cattle were counted. 20 dead or
wounded Japs were seen being carried away. One Jap, five horses
and 15 cattle were captured.

The entire convoy is believed to have been either
destroyed or dispersed.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Palel: 18 June '44
Name

Story 14

Begins quote he had his name written on it unquote. Our most forward troops in Shenam on the Tamu Road recently witnessed at close

range one of our 25 pounders hit a Jap and immediately he was blown to pieces. The humour of the situation was ~~made~~ ^{made} by our men one of whom ~~explained~~ ^{explained} quote He had his name written on it unquote. ends
Begins One sunny morning after a very rainy day a Naga village headman walked into one of our battalion headquarters and asked for the C.O. He had two of the enemy with him who were looking tired, worn out and hungry. He was very proud when he handed over his charge to the C.O. ends

Story 15

Begins Amidst enveloping monsoon clouds and 5200 feet above the roar of civilisation, Shenam is the crowning glory of an ascent over hills where our troops are fighting the Japs. The road is the all-weather road from Imphal to Tamu via Palel.

The road twines in hair-pin bends every hundred yards and one false turn ~~will~~ will send one's vehicle into the jungle-valleys below. The country is beautiful and abounds in deer and gibbons (monkeys). Shenam itself experiences nearly 200 inches of rain annually and the ground due to the rains is very slippery.

Malta and Gibraltar are ~~two~~ the two highest peaks here ~~which~~ which like their cousins in the Mediterranean are our cornerstones in this part of the world. They are ~~two~~ nonetheless heroic and Gurkhas and Rajputs are daily making history. The bone of contention

is "Scraggy" a less higher feature in a bee-line with Malta and Gibraltar. The Japs are entrenched on the farther side of Scraggy and our Gurkhas frequently lead attacks on them. It is remarkable how our troops go on undisturbed by the monsoon conditions. It is quite chill here and dense clouds and mist intermittently envelop the hill-tops making it impossible for you to see a person even a couple of yards from you. Between heavy downpours a thin rain beats against your face which you may enjoy if you are on a skiing holiday on snowy slopes but not when you are fighting when it is certainly a nuisance. But our men are unperturbed and they go up and down the slopes carrying huge loads of supply and ammunition without even a propping stick to protect them from being sent rolling down from the dizzy heights. They just do it without ~~bestowing~~ bestowing much attention on it.

As I stood on the top of Malta and watched the Gurkhas around me in warm admiration, the serene atmosphere was disturbed by an occasional enemy 75mm hitting without aim one of which fell 20 yards behind me as I was returning. Frequently our guns roar and strike terror amongst the enemy.

Our officers and men are in good fighting spirit and the day is not far off when a decisive battle will be fought on these heights and our troops will be able to eject the Japs from Scraggy in our drive to push the Japs beyond the Chindwin which is only about 25 miles as the crow flies from Shenam. ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Palel: 18 June '44
Volunteer

Story 17

Begins A silent wooden board with the words 'Welcome to Gilliam Manor' at the entrance to an R.A.P. at the foot of Malta has a story to tell. It speaks about the fame that Cairo-born Neil Gilliam of a Field Ambulance has earned on these dizzy heights.

During an enemy attack on our positions on Scraggy ^{he recently} went right forward to the frontline to evacuate the wounded and when our communication between our most forward troops and our rear HQ failed he acted as a jeep despatch rider between them, all under very heavy fire from the enemy.

The wooden board has been put up by his admirers in the Field Ambulance. ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Palel: 18 June '44
Green Diamond

Story 18

Leading conditions

Begins The green diamond strikes again (battle sign of 10 Gurkhas) Leading a three man recon patrol in torrential rains on a dark night without the moon, Nk. (10065) Siriman Sunwar, 10th. Gurkhas, a Gurkha of East Nepal, laid a successful ambush on a Jap convoy on the Tamu Road behind the enemy lines-- so far the farthest position that any of our patrols have reached on this road.

Working their way across waist deep nullahs of running water the patrol penetrated behind the enemy lines and laid up two nights running at milestone 44 on the Tamu Road. On the second night (14 June) they ambushed an empty Jap convoy of five trucks. ~~With their tommy guns they shot and killed the drivers.~~

As the leading lorry came level with him the Naik opened fire at close range with his tommy gun, and killed both the driver and the man sitting close to him. The other two Gurkha riflemen followed suit and opened fire on the second and third lorries and killed both the drivers. More Japs jumped out of the lorries at whom the Gurkhas threw grenades.

The Green Diamond patrol returned to the Battalion HQ with important information. The Naik had previously done an outstanding patrol previously on another part of the Imphal front.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Palel: 18 June '44
Gurkhas

Story 19

Begins An offensive patrol of a battalion of 5th. Gurkhas with the object of killing as many of the enemy as possible worked their way silently into enemy positions on Scraggy and burst into a party of about 40 Japs.

On 17/18 June night, Naik (44094) Narbahadur Gurung in command and Naik (10200) ~~Mahbhar~~ Pun as second in command moving round the west flank of Scraggy worked their way up to the ~~tip of the Scraggy~~ extreme north of the hill. Keeping an I.M.G. behind with one of the Gurkhas to attract the enemy fire the two Naiks slowly ~~inched up~~ crept up to the skyline and behind the enemy sentry post. As they were ~~moving~~ moving further they heard snores from a bunker. Exactly locating the place from where the snores came and dug into the bunker right over that point, from the roof. They then dropped two grenades into the hole. Immediately cries of terror and pain and shrieks rent the air. One Jap who ran out of the bunker was hit by a grenade. In the confusion and in the thick darkness of the night more Japs came out of their ~~own~~ bunkers and began to run helter skelter in terror. The noise was terrific. Those who went into the slit trenches were hit by more grenades thrown by the Naiks. By now they had hit two bunkers and an I.M.G. and throwing their last grenade, they collected the rest of their patrol and came back to the west side (our side) of Scraggy, suffering no casualties.

The Gurkha Naiks threw in all 13 grenades killing at least 10 of the enemy and they noticed that the Jap sentries were slack. end

An attack by a battalion of the 9th Jats Regiment was the beginning of the end of Jap domination on the Manipur Road. The objectives were the small hills "Pill" and "Liver" overlooking the Manipur Road about half a mile to the north of Safaraina from where the enemy had established a successful road-block. Once the Japs were driven away from these ~~two~~ features it was quite clear that the opening of the Manipur Road was only a question of hours.

On the evening of 21st, a company of Jats attacked "Pill", the feature nearest to the road, preceded by a heavy artillery barrage and captured the feature without many casualties. "Liver" was attacked by a company of Muslim Rajputs (of the same battalion) from the east. Simultaneously a company of Punjabi Muslims of the same battalion attacked it from the west. Our company ~~was held up~~ from the east was held up by strong enemy fire while the other company from the west ~~got on~~ got on to the lower slopes and consolidated their positions. It was raining hard and the terrain was difficult of movement. During the night there was a lot of enemy sniping and their guns were active but in the morning the Japs had disappeared from the ~~main~~ feature. Nearly 50 Japs were killed and a large amount of enemy equipment was captured.

The Dogras who were the first troops ~~to~~ proceeding from Imphal to observe our ~~front~~ troops approaching down the road from ~~Kohima~~ Kohima had a much easier time and it was literally a walk-over. Flanking to the left of the road and moving in the hills they reached the approaching troops without encountering any opposition from the enemy.

"Burton Bridge" was the next point on the road where the Japs had a beating to which the picturesque ^{rough here} with its blooming wild ~~flowers~~ roses all around still bears silent witness. It was here that a ~~company~~ of a Punjab Regiment cleared two road-blocks in which four Japs were killed and 10 wounded out of a platoon. ~~of them~~. When the company went forward they came under heavy fire. So they withdrew for the night (21st night) and when they advanced to the Bridge next morning they found that the Japs had disappeared, probably realising the futility of further resistance on the Road.

On the 21st morning the same battalion of the 14th Punjab Regiment that recently took Mapau, ~~two~~ of their companies moving forward to lift the road-block at the ~~111 1/2~~ 111 1/2 M.S. contacted the enemy on the feature known as "Patch". The enemy counter-attacked but were repulsed. 23 Japs were killed besides many more wounded. The enemy was then disengaged and we poured artillery fire on them which disorganised them. Immediately our troops started mopping up and killed 45 more Japs. A Jap battalion flag was part of the booty captured. The last enemy cleared off early the next morning. Walking in the mud ankle deep and in pouring rain with leeches crawling on them, the Punjabis showed magnificent fighting spirit as they cleared the last road-block on the Road. During this action Havildar Puran Singh ~~of~~ of Sohadan, Anabala District, averted by his prompt action what would otherwise have been an inconvenient situation to us. He saw a party of the enemy moving an LMG towards a pill-box overlooking our troops. Rushing forward alone with his tommy-gun he occupied the pill-box before the enemy could reach it. He won his I.D.S.M. for gallant action at El Alamein. In this encounter he killed one Jap and his prompt action enabled our capturing this important feature "Patch".

ends

Major: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 26 June '44
Monsoon 1

21
Story 20

With leeches clinging to him and mosquitoes biting him, Major R.A. Anthony of Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, England, heard the news of the opening of the Second Front in Europe while sitting in a slit trench on the Manipur Road.

He heard the news on the telephone from his battalion H.Q..

Major Anthony was commanding a company of the 14th Punjab Regiment who were engaged in ~~striking~~ driving the Japs from the Road. They were sent behind the enemy lines to cut their Ls of C. After a hard journey ~~for three days~~ in torrents of rain over ~~xx~~ quite rough terrain where the steep slopes were slippery with the deep valley ^{below} opening its mouth ready to receive any unfortunate, he and his company of Punjabi Muslims captured "Squeak Hill", a feature between two enemy positions.

Under constant sniping by day and counter attacks at night they spent the next three days in slit trenches with water ~~in~~ it to nearly a foot's height. They had to sit in ~~it~~ ^{with} and their only clothes were completely soaked wet making them suffer severely from cramp. Their rations were short but the leeches had plenty and were growing fond of the fighting blood. Mosquitoes were busy making their sharp painful injections on their unresisting victims. Even their living space was becoming restricted owing to the landslides caused by the heavy rains. The mud from the walls of the trenches were gradually burying them.

But what should come at the end of these three days of misery except the news that our forces have invaded Europe.

ends

ni: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 26 June '44
Tumbler

Story 21 22

Begins It would not stay in Japs hands stop A brass tumbler (Drinking Vessel) belonging to an officer of an Indian State Forces regiment fighting on the Imphal front would not stay in captivity with the Japs and returned to our lines within twenty days.

While the officer was moving forward he had put the tumbler in a dump in the rear but a cook took it with him to the forward areas where the Japs seem to have stolen it during a battle.

When a battalion of the Indian State Forces regiment/attacked Sakpao twenty days later, they found a tumbler on the person of a dead Jap officer. On identifying it with the aid of the number stamped on it they recognised it to be their own and from that day it adorns their mess table smiling on every visitor with its adventurous tale and quite joyous of its renewed freedom.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 26 June '44
Patiala

story 22 23.

Unique in their tactics, Rajendra Sikhs, a battalion of the 1st. Patiala Regiment, are striking terror in the hearts of Japs on the Imphal front.

Their objective was a hill-feature south-east of Litang, a good observation-post nearly 4600 feet high and 15 miles ~~hexing~~ across from where they were. The enemy 80 strong were well dug-in on this steep height isolated from all directions and there were no other heights nearby.

At ten O' clock during the day, Naik Mohender Singh, 11 years with the battalion and an experienced soldier, went with another naik and silently crept into the enemy positions. Staying there for four hours he heard them talk and after gauging their defences returned to his H.Q. He then volunteered to take a section into the midst of the enemy.

The same evening one of their companies went round to sit behind the enemy L of C next morning at the appointed time. Another company was sent at four O'clock in the morning to approach the enemy position from the north ~~xxx~~ but still remained in hide till the signal was given to attack. When O.K. was heard from both companies before half past six, the Naik and his section slowly crept to the enemy position and lay in wait there.

Half an hour later, our company coming from the north started a vigorous attack and the enemy opened fire. As soon as the enemy opened fire the Naik and his section shouted 'Sat Sri Akhal' from the centre of the enemy position itself followed by the same war-cry by the attacking company. The enemy was confused, stopped fire and dispersed immediately leaving the feature to us. We captured the position without any casualties on our side while one Jap was killed besides many wounded. The enemy did not retreat by his L of C; otherwise he would have had a worse fate. They merely scattered themselves away.

ends

Beating off four successive heavy enemy attacks in one night a company of the 13th, Frontier Force Rifles defending 4000 feet high "Sausage" on the Imphal-Ukhrul Road have earned hearty congratulations from the Corps Commander.

A company of them under A/Major James Braine Watson of 123, Bridge Road, East Molesey, Surrey, were defending this position which lies nearly five miles to the north-east of Yaingangpekpi and nearly 17 miles from Imphal.

The night of June 24/25 was a dark night when at about seven-thirty in the evening the Japs put in their first attack preceded by heavy 4" mortar barrage and 75 mm guns. Two companies of the enemy attacked our bunkers with LMGs, grenades and mortars to which we replied with LMGs and mortars. Beaten back they withdrew about 200 yards in all suffering nearly 20 casualties.

In another three hours they attacked again with the usual barrage preceding but yelling and shouting like wild animals and mad men. After quarter of an hour's fighting they were beaten back once again.

It was a pitch dark night and our men were fighting from trenches half filled with rain water. Meanwhile they collected their dead and after four hours they put in the third attack when a party of about 15 Japs broke into our perimeter through the wire. Two Japs were killed near one of our mortar positions and three more who approached our company H.Q. were shot down. The rest of the Japs fled.

Two hours later for the fourth time they attacked our position and did not press it in strength because they had suffered depletion in their numbers. In a fight lasting for about fifteen minutes our troops rushed at them with tommy-guns and bayonets and inflicted heavy casualties. They withdrew with a total of 110 casualties.

During this time another Jap company was digging in on the north side of the hill only 75 yards away from our wire. During the day there was heavy sniping and exchange of mortar. At ten in the morning a couple of platoons of Japs crept into within 400 yards of our position and started shelling us with mortar

ans started shelling us with mortars. Within ten minutes our guns were ranged on them and knocked them off.

"Sausage" is a prominent feature with a bald patch on its top and when I saw it there was quiet on its summit but beyond on its northern slopes were the enemy who were being greeted with our 25 pounders.

Subedar Abdul Rauf of village Shadi Khel, Dt. Kohat, was second in command during these attacks when he showed complete disregard for his own personal safety and exposed himself to enemy fire as he went round encouraging his men. "The Japs were like madmen", he said. "Their behaviour looked like that -- one of them was clinging to one ~~reference~~ of our mortars with a tight hold whom I had to shoot down. Another officer of theirs was running like a mad man all over the place whom also I had to shoot down. Our men are in good fighting spirit and the enemy is no match for them".

These men look like real jungle inhabitants in their jungle caps and this company has to its credit another beating that one of its guerilla platoons gave to the Japs only about a fortnight ago at Thawai five miles to the west of Yaingangpokpi when it attacked and inflicted large casualties on a company of the enemy. Major Watson and Subedar Abdul Rauf were leading the guerilla platoon.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 27 June '44
Mules

Story 24 25

"Little Mule, little man, little feet" is the song in a mule company on the road to Tamu.

The little mule affectionately known as "China" escaped from Burma and attached himself to a Naga pony and has never left him. He is only about nine hands in height and both he and his inseparable were caught by a muleteer in the thick jungles on the border of Burma. The muleteer is only four feet in height but army boots do not have the size to ^{suit} his little feet. All three can always be found together.

"China" is a kind of pet in the mule camp and roams as he likes but always with the Naga pony. He doesn't work but ^ya willing follower.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Luphal: 27 June '44
Mules

Story 25 26.

Just returned from a 24-hour patrol in the mountains, Risaldar Ghulam Mohideen, a Tiwana Punjabi Muslim of Mitha Tiwana, tehsil Khush Ab, district Shahpur, and troop commander in an Animal Transport Company could only have a shave and a cup of tea before he went on another ^{carrying} errand/food and rations to our forward troops on the Tamu Road where he was caught between our ^{own} fire and the enemy fire through an erring guide but delivered the goods all the same without any loss either to themselves or to the rations.

On the way with the rations from the supply point he and his ~~ix~~ troop were lost in the jungle. The guide did not remember the way and the destination was eight miles further away with a ~~fast~~ ^{the} darkness ^{fast} setting in. As it was a dense forest they decided to camp there for the night. The guide was made prisoner for misleading. ^{The Risaldar} ~~he~~ chose for his camp a nullah a little away from the jungle. When he had moved 15 yards ~~xxxxxx~~ ⁱⁿ the nullah, he saw cigarette sparks at a distance. Then he saw them moving in the grass. Scenting that it was the enemy he decided to move away from them with his precious cargo. As he was turning back the enemy fired at his company with mortar, bren and other guns. Covering his ^{with channel} ~~movement~~ with bayonets in case of attack ~~when~~ ^{when} he proceeded further ^{he} found that ~~xxxxxx~~ his company was being fired at even from the front. These were our own troops to whom he was carrying supplies but who mistook him and his men for the enemy because they were coming from the ~~xxxxxx~~ direction of the enemy positions.

Caught between two fires the Risaldar slowly extricated his company away from the area of fire but ten mule loads of ration fell off in the confusion. He delivered the rest of the rations to the unit and went back to fetch the fallen rations which he collected and delivered to another unit as per schedule.

On his way back he passed through the same nullah the next

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Mules-page two

morning where he rescued two of his mules which had fallen into the nullah the previous night ~~during the scuffle~~. He found that the Japs had ~~disappeared~~ disappeared from there.

Risaldar Ghulam Mohideen has 25 years service and served in the last war with the Baluch Horse (37 Lancers) in Persia, France and Afghanistan and later in Waziristan with the 41 Camel (Government) Transport Company. "He is amazing", says his C.O. "The animals know him very well and he too understands them; otherwise he would not have risked to go and rescue the two fallen mules in the nullah".

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 2 July '44
Supremo

Story 26 ^{- 27}

In the course of a five-hour tour of the Imphal front, the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, visited several Indian and British units.

Among other V.C.O.s and men presented to him were: Subedar-Major Birbahadur Gurung, I.O.M., 5th. Gurkha Rifles, Subedar-Major Mohd. Khan, O.B.I., 10th. Baluch, Subedar-Major Sukh Ram, O.B.I., 12th. Frontier Force Regiment, Subedar-Major Purna Rai, O.B.I., 10th. Gurkha Rifles.

He also visited the 5th. Indian Division whose Dogras, Punjabis and Jats recently cleared the Manipur Road of the Japs from the Imphal side. The Supremo was appreciative of the medals on the chest of Subedar-Major (Hony. Lt.) Sirdar Bahadur Badruddin, I.D.S.M., O.B.I., 2nd. Punjab Regiment, of village Kaslian, district Jhelum, Punjab, while shaking hands with him.

At every place he visited the Supreme Commander told the officers and men that ~~they~~ ^{had} they have thoroughly earned the praise bestowed on them for their gallant show during all the time Imphal was besieged on land by the enemy who ^{attacking} attacked with three Divisions but ^{was} has been repulsed with ~~quite~~ heavy losses to himself.

ends

Mani:Indian

Army Observer

Imphal:5 July '44

Prices

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25

Story 29

Within ten days of the opening of the Manipur Road by Indian and British troops, goods for civilian comforts have come down the road. The road has also been opened for civilian traffic now.

The needs of the Manipuris are very little. Cigarettes are essential equally for men and women and they are

very often the ~~main~~ token of friendship between our troops and the local population. A cigarette tin is commonly used as a measure here. One packet of cigarette used to cost nearly two rupees during the time when Imphal could be supplied by air only. Now it has come down to six annas a packet.

Salt, another essential commodity, at one time was being sold for 10 rupees per seer but now costs a little less than four rupees. The prices of soap, oil and vegetables have also become normal.

The Manipuri who has been quite cheerful during the last few months now rejoices as normal is being gradually restored in his land as the Japs are being driven away from the frontiers of India.

It was a strange coincidence-- that as the road was being opened by our gallant troops, at the same hour the Maharajah of Manipur was leading his temple-gods in a procession with the same chantings, sounds of conches and cymbals as is seen round a Hindu festival in India.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Trophies: 5 July '44
Trout

Story 29 30

Like a trout reaching out for its first ~~fly~~ may-fly, Captain Leslie Clements, I.E.M.E., of 63 Brunswick Place, Hove, Brighton, was recently rocketed out of a tank through the driver's hatch-- none the worse for it and it with a smile over his strange experience.

Attached as L.A.D. to a cavalry unit, he had gone out to watch a battle near Kanglatongbi. He was asking for a job and quite suddenly he was led to rescue a tank ~~banked~~ up in a mullah by the driver who had lost his direction.

When Capt. Clements was driving back the tank to ~~the~~ the rear, about 30 yards from the mullah he ~~had~~ a terrific *heard* explosion and the next moment he saw himself flung out of the tank.

The tank had run over a mine-- the only mine in the area.

ends

7th July 44 / Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 18 July '44
Patiala

30³¹

As early as April 1942 a battalion of the 1st. Patiala Regiment came to the Manipur region of the Indo-Burma border and have ^{been} ~~remained~~ *fighting here since then*. They know intimately every part of this terrain upto and beyond the Chindwin. They have traversed nearly 7000 miles across dense jungles and marshy plains, both in the heat of summer, in the monsoon rains and in the biting cold of the winter, clothes soaked in perspiration and drenched in the torrential rains, leeches sticking to their bodies and mosquitoes swarming around their faces and arms and for nearly four months in a year their dry skins covered with bleeding blisters.

They are the oldest battalion in the Patiala State and are known as "Rajendra Sikhs" after the name of the grand/father of the present Maharajah. More than ~~more~~ three centuries back a lady of the name of Bibi Sahib ~~Haur~~ led them victorious in battles. With the British they have fought in the Gurkha War, in the Afghan War of ~~1872~~ 1878, in the Great War in Egypt, Gallipolli and Palestine. In the last battle against the Turks they were part of the brigade which captured 14,000 Turks. Since 1940 they have been in Wazirstan and in the Tappi, Ahmed Khel and Toda China operations.

For their conspicuous good work they earned congratulations from their Corps Commander within six months of their arrival on this front. Appreciating their soldierly bearing, turn-out, discipline and physique as a model, their Divisional Commander wrote to them: "You have met the enemy face to face and have inflicted on him casualties greater than those which you yourselves have suffered and in short you have established over him that moral superiority which is so essential in winning battles".

Their first job was quite a big one. As the Burma Army came out they advanced into Burma under the most unfavourable conditions. It was the peak of the monsoon, ^{and the} personal hardship was great ^{aggravated by} ~~with~~ uncertain communications and continually reduced rations. Besides manning for posts, they sent out constant patrols involving long marches, crossing ~~of rivers in spite and sleeping in the damp jungle.~~

About this ~~time~~ time it was felt that a spectacular patrol into ~~Burmawood~~ Burma by our troops was essential and the Patialas were chosen to do it. Early in September 1942 they set out on a 361 mile-patrol into Burma, proceeding south from Shenam via Hiangzaung, Kabaw Valley, Yazagyo and coming back north via Manbi. With 88 miles through virgin jungle it took them only 21 days under the most ~~trying~~ weather conditions. Their ten days emergency rations sufficed them for 16 days. Only four of them went sick. ~~They~~ They had no transport and carried their rations and ammunition themselves.

The party avoided visiting villages as it was essential that the enemy should not ^{know} of their movements. But at one place in the Chin Hills a few boys had seen them and informed their elders. Anxious to see that the villagers did not form the idea that a body of troops were moving in their vicinity, the C.O. of the Patialas hit upon an idea. He went straight to the village headman, an ex-Chin Levy Jemadar, with only a few others and pretending as a Survey Officer asked him for maps of the area. He even promised to repair the bad roads on behalf of the government!

During this time they met the Collector of the area who sticking to his post was cut off from the rest of the world and helped him to obtain supplies. Also they made a daring improvisation to cross rivers in floods. Harnessing the force of the stream, they clung to a log tied to a rope whose other end was fastened to a tree, and swung into the floods from a bend on the bank ~~further~~ further up the river.

Between April and November 1942 holding nearly 50 miles of the front from Mintha and Minthami, they stood as a bulwark against the Jap hordes advancing into India, and helped thousands of Indian refugees to get across. After a few months rest they advanced again, late in January 1943, and taking up positions on the west bank of the Chindwin, made some daring raids across the river. One of these was a raid on an important enemy base by only one company. The Japs were fooled by demonstrations ten miles in rear while this company secured this strong enemy military and civil centre. The Japs left the town without offering much resistance and Jap ammunition, a V.C.O., POW left by the Japs in a hurry, Indian refugees, Burmese nurses, Persians and Egyptian Jews were all sent under escort to India. The Patialas went a further 30 miles east into Jap territory to harass his communications before returning to the Chindwin leaving permanent patrol bases two days' march east of the river.

In the beginning of February 1943, this battalion played a notable role in helping ~~the~~ Wingate's party to cross the Chindwin and when they returned two months later, they covered the party's recrossing into India. In order to release pressure on the party, the Patialas during the two months attracted the enemy's attention. After a small clash they occupied the ~~xxx~~ enemy's Kaungkasi HQ. Using deceptive ~~tactic~~ tactics they played blind man's bluff with nearly a combined force of about 1000 Japs with the result that the enemy pressure on the main body of the returning forces of Wingate was relieved.

Chindwin became the boat-club of these Sikhs who spent three months on her banks. So cordial were their relations with the local population that distant bazaars from across the river drifted to sell to the Patialas. Even civil affairs came to them for arbitration, one being a case of the eternal triangle. The Sikhs in their turn visited the Buddhist shrines with flowers.

Once again they were chosen to help the Wingate forces. In March 1944, preparatory to Wingate's air-borne invasion of Burma, the Patialas made feint crossings of the Chindwin in force in order to draw the enemy away from Wingate's landing ground 200 miles behind the Japs.

The rest of their story belongs to recent months. First engagement of the season was when they ~~went~~ went in support of the tanks to a place 18 miles south of Tamu where they gave ^a good beating to the enemy. This was in March and early in April, sent to cut the Jap LOC between Ukhrul and the Kabaw Valley, they reached their destination without being seen by the enemy and kept it cut for ten days so that the enemy was forced to change his LOC. In the middle of May they were clearing enemy position to the north and east of Shenam and harassing the Jap LOC. On one raid a bridge and much enemy MT were destroyed including many Jap killed.

In the last week of May they captured an important hill feature without much ado. One company went in to make a fake attack, another sat on the enemy's LOC while a section crept into the heart of the enemy and shouted 'Sat Sri Akhal'. Simultaneously the "attacking" company made the same war-cry and wrought such confusion among the enemy that they dispersed, leaving the feature.

I have seen the Patialas both ~~in the~~ on the field and while

Mani: Indian Army Observer
page four Patialas

they were at rest entertaining themselves in a Punjabi nautch-party-- some of the jawans dressing themselves as dancing-girls were throwing away kisses all around. They make one realise that India possesses such fine types of fighting men and that the Indian Army, as in the Middle East and Italy, is here also establishing a heroic name for itself in the history of the war.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 7 July '44
Monsoon 2

32
Story 32

Moving in waist-deep flooding water and the slush and mud underneath catching his feet in tight holds, former London University student Capt. Donald Bishop, of Indian Pioneer Corps, of 87, Mantilla Rd, Footing, London, SW 17, lent a helping hand to Indian Pioneers as they were rolling petrol drums across nearly 800 yards of paddy fields under water in order to put them into lorries waiting on the road.

The monsoon rains had flooded the petrol depot and the surrounding area and the Pioneers by ~~their~~ this effort of theirs almost under impossible conditions kept up the supply of nearly 5000 gallons of petrol to our most forward troops on the Imphal front.

ends

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MESSAGE FORM

33

Mand: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 10 July '44
Ukhrul

Troops of the 33 Corps have ~~successfully~~ cleared one more road of the Japs-- the 44 mile long road from Imphal to Ukhrul in the north-west. While the Kohima-Imphal Road was the supply road from India to Manipur, the Ukhrul Road is ^{one of} the exits for the Japs from the frontiers of India.

The Devons flanking to the west of the road and proceeding north have contacted the KOSBI s who were coming south at Lemu, the 33 mile-stone on the road from Imphal.

Ukhrul and the surrounding important features ~~are~~ are now in our hands. After a tough battle on the 8th., the 12th. Frontier Force Regiment have occupied Chepu in which as nearly as 84 Japs were killed and a number of POWs were captured. ^{A valiant effort by us} 2/11 Sikhs who have been honoured recently with a V.C. in the person of Naik Nand Singh, after a vigorous march along the hills to the west of the Ukhrul Road during which they killed many hundreds of Japs, have occupied Shangshak on the east side of the road. They cut across the road a few miles south of Ukhrul and proceeding via Lungshong reached Shangshak today. For quite a long time they have been supplied by air. ~~Sidgaur~~

Nearly as many as 300 Japs have now been trapped to the west of the road ~~now~~.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 12 July '44
Silchar

Story = 34

Indian and British troops of the 5th Indian Division have cleared the 130 mile-long "Silchar Track" from Imphal to Silchar. The track is now clear of the Japs on both ~~its sides~~, *either side*.

Rajputs who fought well at Kohima, Punjabis and Dogras fresh from their battles at the ^{front} south-end of the Imphal-Kohima Road, ~~fighting~~ ^{have} alongside with equally ^{valiant} ~~valiant~~ British troops, cleared the "track" in less than three weeks.

~~It will not be long before convoys to Imphal can~~ ~~run on this track~~. The Royal Engineers are sweeping the track for mines ~~and~~ and the ~~surface of the track~~ is being ^{attended} ~~reconditioned~~ to make it suitable for the ~~convoys to come through~~ ^{use even in} ~~inspite~~ of the monsoon.

To the Manipuri the track means much as it will bring him plenty of his betel-nuts ^{now} and ~~the~~ ^{for} fruits during winter. Once more coolies will run in relays of 16 miles on ~~it~~ carrying the betel-nuts and fruits in baskets ~~swing~~ on their backs. Originally only a bridal path the Army Engineers have made it a ~~usable~~ ^{usable} track and probably in the future a pucca metal road. Besides other things the Army has ¹ definitely improved the road-communications ^{from} in these plains surrounded by high hills and dense forests.

Since the opening of the vital Imphal-Kohima Road, operations on this front have been at an accelerated pace. Within three weeks the road to Ukhrul has been cleared closely followed by the clearance ~~of~~ ^{for} Japs on the Silchar track. Of late it has been noticed that the Japs have walked out of important positions without ~~even~~ ^{even} offering a shadow of resistance inspite of the ~~apologetic~~ ^{apologetic} Orders of the Day of their Commanders bidding them to capture Imphal. The famished, starved and stricken Jap knows that their hopes will prove futile and ~~incapable~~ none better than a wild goose chase. There are also indications that ~~the~~ his mind is afflicted by the doubt that he will never be able to recross the Chindwin ~~again~~ to reach his dear ones at home. But ~~our~~ ^{our} swift steam-roller moves and will move on till the last Jap on Indian soil is mowed down. What surprises the 14th Army have during ~~the~~ ^{the} coming weeks for the Japs is well worth watching @

in the

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Dughal: 13 July '44
Sowar

35
34

Wounded mortally ^{and} with both his legs broken, Driver No. 4558 Sowar Sher Zaman of an Indian Tank Brigade and of village Mitial, Cambell-pore district, displayed a very high standard of courage and fortitude when in a dying condition he assisted ^{the crew} ~~himself~~ with covering fire in their efforts to preserve the tank from total destruction.

In the middle of April on the Ukirul Road his tank came under heavy mortar and small arms fire from the enemy which blew ^{off a} ~~the~~ track of the tank ~~off~~ ^{also} and wounded him. Both his legs were badly broken, by a heavy mortar ^{which} came through the plate right above his knee.

The rest of the crew evacuated the tank and put out the flames with the small fire extinguisher and earth. During this time Sher Zaman in spite of his desperate condition and unaided provided covering fire for them. With both his legs in a broken condition how he managed to fire two bursts from the 37 mm and several from the Co-ax Browning is still a wonder to the crew.

After the fire had been put out the enemy fire became intense and the crew were compelled to take cover in a mullah. Meanwhile Sher Zaman climbed out of the tank and expired on the ground near his tank a few minutes later.

To ~~save~~ save one's tank is one of the highest codes of honour in any tank regiment and Sher Zaman even while dying ~~managed~~ ^{the} saved his tank. His gallantry augurs well ~~for~~ ^{the} future of the first Indian Tank Brigade to go into action.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Diphai: 13 July '44
Tanks

35 36

Unable to extricate itself from a steep sided and blind mullah into which ^{the} a tank had fallen, its crew were rescued by a Senior Risaldar, ^{its troop leader}

In the middle of May near Kanglatohgi which ~~was~~ moving in support of the Infantry, owing to the ^{denseness} density of the jungle the tank troop on the left became separated from the accompanying infantry. ~~The~~ The right hand tank of this troop plying its way through the jungle fell into a blind and steep sided mullah from which it was unable to extricate itself.

The commander of this fallen tank signalled to his troop leader on the wireless saying that his tank was out of action. The troop leader asked him to give his position. But this was difficult owing to the sameness of the jungle and the lack of landmarks. The troop leader ~~who was a Senior Risaldar~~, ordering his remaining tank (a troop consists of three including the leader) to cover him, went forward to locate the stuck tank. Owing to enemy snipers and enemy IFF fire, the crew of the stuck tank were unable to bale out.

However, the troop leader directed by wireless and very lights reached within 50 yards of the tank in distress. After nearly four hours stay the commander of the stuck tank sent out his gumer to contact the troop leader in the manner of Noah sending out a pigeon from the Ark. After locating the troop leader the gumer came back to show the rest of the crew the route. Having disabled the tank and ~~removing~~ ^{XXXX} the guns, the Noah and his crew assisted by the pigeon made a dash for the Risaldar and got into his tank without any mishap.

They returned to the base under cover of the same third tank ^{while returning} who had the pleasure of seeing a Jap sniper fall out of a tree with the 'tap' of a coconut when one of its Brownings gave a burst.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal; 17 July '44
Stones

37

After losing 18 of their men when their stock of grenades and rounds of ammunition were exhausted, the Japs began to throw mud and stones ~~at~~ on a company of the 1st Punjab Regiment who drove them out of an important ridge south of the Silchar track and captured it.

Nearly 3700 feet ~~high above the coast~~ in altitude, this bare ridge is about three miles to the south-west of Bishenpur and overlooking the surrounding country.

The Japs had dug themselves in on its rear~~ly~~ slopes. Preceded by an artillery barrage, one section of our company climbed up and finding the sentry-post empty occupied it. Then the enemy opened fire but within a short time his stocks of grenades and rounds of ammunition were exhausted and 18 of his men were killed. In utter despair, he started throwing stones and mud at our Punjabis who rushed up and captured the ridge. About 10 of the enemy who attempted to break away down south through a mullah were wounded by our fire.

~~The Japs lost~~ One Jap LMG and one gren discharger were captured. The Punjabis did not suffer any casualties.

ends

38

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 21 July '44
Scuffle

Ahead of his men in a bayonet charge on a strongly-held enemy position, Jemadar Sattar Khan, 12 F.F.R., of village Shakrdhara, district Kohat, N.W.F.P., engaged a Jap officer in a hand-to-hand scuffle and while on the point of vanquishing him was mortally wounded by ^a ~~the~~ grenade with which the Jap Officer killed himself.

It was a misty day when a company of the 12th F.F.R. led a bayonet-charge on a steep and barren hill north-west of Bishenpur. Though there was our artillery barrage prior to that, because of the poor visibility our attack completely surprised the enemy, who were strongly entrenched on its crest and further slopes.

When our company was quite close the enemy started firing their mortars and shells. But this undaunted Jemadar went ahead of the company and was the first to reach the crest where he grappled a Jap officer who unable to rescue himself from the hold of the V.C.O. threw one of his own grenades at himself which killed both of them. Only two weeks earlier Jemadar Sattar Khan while on patrol had killed 12 Japs and captured one enemy I.M.G.

The Japs lost the position but counter-attacked the same night when they came within three yards of our forward line on the crest but were driven off by our grenades. 32 Jap dead were counted in the morning.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
 Imphal: 21 July '44
 Grass

Eating grass from ~~his~~ his mess tin which was filled with it, a famished, starving and sick Jap would not surrender himself and he had to be killed when recently near Sokpau nearly 300 Japs faced annihilation from our men of the 13th Frontier Force Rifles and 10th Gurkha Rifles who had surrounded them.

This Jap soldier was disturbed while ~~working~~ eating his grass-lunch by Havildar Baggi Ram, 13th Frontier Force Rifles, of village Chodial, tehsil Palanpur, district Kangra. He was asked to surrender and he replied with a grenade which ~~wounded him alone~~ ^{wounded himself}. The Havildar advanced but the Jap threw another grenade at him which Baggi Ram dodged. Now a mortal stab from the bayonet of the Havildar was the end of the Jap.

During the last eight months not a single day has passed ~~without~~ without ~~this~~ this battalion of the 13th Frontier Force Rifles contacting the enemy either by patrol or by attack.

ends

Advancing to within twenty yards of a Jap officer, Naik Lakshman Shinde, 5th. Maharattas of Rajnagiri district, Bombay Presidency, had a good measure of him with his Maharatta quickness and gave him a burst with his IMG which ~~him~~ blew ~~the Jap officer~~ to pieces the Jap officer who was holding ^{up} our advance by throwing grenades at our troops from a height. He also silenced two enemy IMGs which ~~were~~ firing down a spur were harassing our men.

Early in July, this N.C.O's platoon was held up within 100 yards of its objective at Kumbi (four miles east of Palel) by heavy fire from two enemy IMGs firing down the spur up which the Maharattas were advancing. Our advance was also held up by a Jap officer throwing grenades down the spur. Naik Lakshman Shinde's platoon suffered several casualties including the Nos. 1 & 2 of the Bren gun.

At this critical moment, this Maharatta Naik on his own personal initiative showed complete indifference to danger as he advanced at the head of his section slinging his TG and picking up his IMG. He crept round to a flank and getting to within 20 yards of the enemy IMGs, knocked them both out and killed the Jap officer. His prompt and quick action enabled his platoon to advance and capture the objective.

ends

41

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Palel: 28 July '44
Madras

How a recon patrol of the 3rd Madras Regiment successfully attacked a Jap party more than twice ~~on their~~^{its} strength ~~in~~^{near} the 27 m.s. on the Ukhrul Road in the middle of July was narrated to me by Naik Kuttiya Pillai of Oomarikottai village, Timmelly district, Madras Province. Out of the Jap party of 25, 10 were killed besides many more wounded and important identifications in addition to two swords belonging to Jap officers, were obtained.

Forcing their way through thick jungle and scaling steep hills on hands and knees, the patrol first sighted two of the enemy on a jungle path. Fire was opened on them but the Japs managed to escape into the jungle. The patrol followed them and their leading man Naik Kuttiya Pillai saw a party of 25 Japs hiding ⁱⁿ a mullah nearby. Deciding to attack they closed in on the enemy from all around. Within a few minutes the Japs bolted leaving atleast ten dead.

Havildar Ravunni Nayar of Edakkulam, Ponnani Taluk, South Malabar, climbed down the mullah to make sure that all the enemy were dead. But a Jap officer who was there threw a grenade at him but the Havildar escaped and the grenade burst close to the Jap officer himself and killed him.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Road to Tamu: 31 July '44
Indian Troops

As Patialas, Punjabis, ~~and~~ Mahrattas and Rajputs push along the road to Tamu the Japs are fleeing in great~~er~~ hurry into the ~~wide~~ yawning mouth of the Valley of Death-- the Kabaw Valley.

Our troops are fighting under the most difficulty conditions. The roads are rivers of mud, their way lies through jungles of steep ravines and swift-flowing nullahs. The rain beats constantly and thick mists envelop ~~the~~ ~~their~~ surroundings. Frequent landslides suddenly ^{appear} stop ~~their~~ ^{their} progress. For some days most of them had no time to rest and have been sleeping as they stood in the knee-deep slush.

All along the road to Tamu one can see signs of the hurried exit of the Japs. Paddy is growing on their rice-bags which ^{they} ~~have~~ have left behind. Ammunition, rations, staff-cars, trucks and pack-saddles are lying all along the road inviting every souvenir enthusiast.

The Patialas flanking to the north-east of the road and the Mahrattas fighting all the way from Sita in the jungles/met ^{to the east of the road} at Lokchao Bridge on the 73 m.s. The Patialas "boxed" the enemy near Chimol and went to the rear of his gun positions and forward troops without his knowledge and completely surprised him at Ralph Hill. The Japs knew of their presence only when they were 250 yards ^{near} ~~ahead~~ and opened fire. Our troops had no supporting arms nor mortars. Our wireless went out of order and bugles were used for communication and our foremost company commander sounded two Gs as soon as he had taken Ralph Hill. At the end of the battle the Patialas counted 83 Jap dead (the enemy was 200 strong) and four prisoners were taken besides a dozen MT, lots of wireless equipment, maps and documents. Part of the booty was a ribbon of the Order of the Rising Sun belonging to a Jap general who seems to have left his kit behind in ^a hurry. Since the position we had taken overlooked their guns the enemy was anxious to pull out and one platoon of the Patialas were sent forward to put a road-block on their retreat. This platoon caught the enemy battery escorted by a company withdrawing hastily ~~and~~ ^{at} which they shot ^{at} effectively. Two medium guns and one anti-tank gun were captured from the enemy who also left behind in a hurry vital parts of several other guns.

ends

43.1

Mani: Indian Army Observer
On the road to Tamu
July 31. '44
Jeep

Feeding our troops pushing the Japs to Tamu is one of the oldest GPT companies in this area. This RIASC unit carries rations, petrol and ammunition to our most forward troops along the Tamu Road with its hair-pin bends, steep slopes and muddy and slushy pits. One false turn will send a vehicle down the deep valleys with dense forests to escape from which will be a dire struggle with death.

They have been on the road night and day for the last 14 days with an average of nearly 130 vehicles a day which include three tonners, 15 cwt and jeeps. Mines ^{are} ~~have~~ the night-mare of drivers on this road and the feeding tracks.

Recently Sepoy Mahmud Khan of village Kheda Afghani, ~~dis-~~trict Shahrampur, a jeep-driver in this company was running his jeep-ambulance down the Sita track with two seriously-wounded ~~and~~ four sitting casualties when his jeep was blown up by a land-mine left by the retreating Japs. Under enemy sniping, this sepoy ~~driver~~ took the casualties under cover and placing them under the protection of muleteer ran three miles and fetched another ambulance by which he cleared the casualties. By his courage, promptness and quick ^{action} ~~he~~ had saved the lives of the seriously wounded casualties.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
P. 101: 23 July '44
Madrasis

44

Describing it as a stout performance the O.C. of a battalion of the 3rd. Madras Regiment related to me how a three man patrol of Madrasis dispersed a party of 15 Japs killing two of them. *in the dense jungles to the north of Imphal*

Lance-Naik Krishna Reddy of Kanipakkapatnam village, Chittoor district, Madras Province, while leading the two other men along a jungle-path ~~noticed~~ heard some noise behind and on turning back noticed a party of 15 Japs of whom one was in the act of throwing a grenade. The grenade burst wounded ~~missed~~ the N.C.O. and another slightly but undeterred the N.C.O. gave the Japs a well-aimed burst from his TG killing two of the enemy and making the rest flee.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
On the road to Tamu
July 31. 1944
Landslide

45

Working all night an Indian Recovery Company on the Tamu
Road transported ^{down} a gradient of one ^{over} ~~by~~ two a battery of 25 pounders and two
mediums along with their towing vehicles. These guns were necessary immedi-
ately to pound the retreating Japs fighting a rearguard action and the
regular road at this point had become unfit due to the heaviest landslide
known on this road in recent years.

The battery took them eight hours and the mediums another
three hours. The carrier of the first gun ~~skidded~~ "skidded" on the muddy slope
and somersaulted but landed safely on its feet 250 yards below.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 4 August '44
Rawley

46

Commanding a battalion of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment ^{in action} on the Imphal front, Lt. Col. Navin Chandra Rawley ^{M.C.} is the first Indian volunteer to command a battalion of the Indian Army on the field. Only 24 years old, he left his studies at St. Xavier's College, Bombay, in May 1941 to take up a commission.

Lt. Col. Rawley won his M.C. in the siege of Kohima when as a malarial patient in the hospital he found himself suddenly forced due to the emergency to assume command of a mixed force of sappers, transport personnel and B.O.R.s. This was his ~~first~~ first command and won him the M.C.

From Murree, Rawalpindi district, ~~his~~ his father is Dr. Ratan Chander Rawley, a former Director of Industries of the Punjab Government and Kashmir. Lt. Col. Rawley had his early education in the Bishop Cotton School, Simla.

" My happiest days were when we were on the banks of the Chindwin", he told me. " I was then leading my company in patrols ^{to} 30 miles behind the forward posts of the Japs across the river".

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 5 August '44
Signallers

47

Two Madras signallers operating with a battalion of Mahrattas displayed a high standard of personal courage and devotion to duty when their position came under very heavy fire from the enemy recently in the thick jungles to the east of the Taza Road. ^{MSC on}

Sig. P. Mathew of Naidupalayam, Helleore district, and Sig. C. Yakub of Thirikattiyeri, South Malabar, both of the Indian Signal Corps, were working with this battalion on the 26th. July when the Japs put in an attack on our position. Their wireless equipment came under very heavy direct machine-gun fire from the Japs and some parts of it were damaged too. With characteristic coolness both the Signallers maintained communication with the brigade HQ for the entire five hours during which the attack lasted.

"They have shown similar courage and outstanding efficiency on previous occasions too", said the C.O. of the Mahratta battalion to me.

ends

ni: Indian Army Observer
Date: 5 August '44
Subject: Sapper

48

Jemadar Uday Prakash Misra of ~~Hasangunj~~ Hasangunj, Lucknow, and of the Bengal Sappers and Miners displayed ~~with~~ complete indifference to enemy fire and with great coolness and calm carried out his task of laying a road-block with mines and tar barrels on the Jap LOC on Tazari Road.

On 26 July at M.S. 61 Jemadar Misra's Indian Field Company were engaged in the task of establishing a road-block with mines and tar barrels when they came under enemy fire. Though wounded twice this Jemadar would not go back ~~without finishing his job~~ without finishing his job.

When he had gone a little to the rear and turned back to have a look, he was completely satisfied ~~as~~ as he saw his mines blowing up ^{two} ~~the~~ enemy vehicles.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 5 August '44
Pathans

49

Rallying his men when his company commander as well as the company officer were killed, Subedar Kagir Khan, ~~of~~ a Pathan Khatak Sagai of village Girdi, district Campbellpore, bayoneted his way through the enemy and recovered the crest of a hill overlooking Jap positions at Chepu to the west of the 28 M.S. on the Ukhrul Road.

On 8th. July a battalion of the 12th. Frontier Force Regiment were holding this crest when they were heavily attacked by a superior force of the enemy. When his company commander as well as the other officer were killed, knowing it was essential to recover the crest, this V.C.O. rallying his company led them in a bayonet charge up the slopes of the hill which lasted for 20 minutes. Shouting "Pathanonki Bachho" and yelling the Pathan's war cry: "Maro Nara Haideri Yah Ali- Nara Takhvir", he made a spectacular pierce through the enemy which ~~was~~ so completely astounded them that they dispersed after heavy losses leaving the crest to ~~the~~ Subedar Kagir Khan.

The whole battle lasted nearly 36 hours in which this battalion proved itself much superior to the enemy.

ends

Thrice wounded and with only six men left in his platoon, a young Pathan officer ~~will~~^{would} not allow himself to be evacuated till he had captured the objective.

Lt. Amir Mohd. Khan, 12th. Frontier Force Regiment, of village Teri, district Kohat, was ^a platoon commander in a company ~~of the battalion~~ which was asked to attack an important village occupied by the enemy near Burri Bazaar. It was during the last week of May when the enemy was very near to the heart of Imphal. This enemy village overlooked our LOC.

Early in the attack owing to very heavy enemy fire, his company was held up and the company commander was wounded. He took over and was wounded immediately. As the rest of the company was held up he took forward one platoon which suffered heavily and reached his objective with only six men by which time he was wounded twice again. He would not allow himself to be evacuated till he had established the position and allowed more of our troops to pass ahead of the position.

Earlier he had laid ~~two~~ successful ambushes on the enemy LOC near Phalbung to the east of the Tamu Road. Taking a platoon of Pathans, on the first occasion he damaged two enemy MTs and inflicted ~~large~~ casualties without loss to themselves and on the second occasion, which was a week later, he killed two Jap officers and 27 others also with no loss to themselves this time also.

ends

From: Indian Army Observer
To: 5th. August '44
Athens

51

Sepoy Gharibullah, 12th. Frontier Force Regiment, ~~at village~~
an Yusuf Zai of village Lahore, district Mardan, held a two-section front
himself during the heavy fighting at Chopta when all the rest were either ~~killed~~
killed or wounded. Firing from the hip with his Bren, he was standing in the
tall grass in full view of the enemy and maintained fire even though he was
wounded wounded. By his action he ^{had} held the left flank of our advance.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 7 Aug '44
Jairang

MESSAGE FORM

Carrying out a daring daylight reconce right in the heart
~~of enemy positions~~
of enemy positions, a naik of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment brought
back valuable information regarding enemy dispositions which enabled
us to capture the village of Simdchong in the Iril Valley in the middle
of June.

Naik Dilbarar Singh, a Jat Sikh of village Kaleke, Patiala
State, sent forward to reconce the village in daytime ~~and~~ and seeing
that he could not take the whole of his section, crept forward alone
past the enemy sentries and forward posts. On reaching a chamber with
stealthy steps, he slowly opened a window and found inside a party
of about 30 Japs gossiping over their cups of tea. The famished Japs
could not see the fresh light ~~entering~~ entering their room but they certainly
saw the two grenades coming for them which Naik Dilbarar Singh had
quietly dropped in their midst.

The Sikh N.C.O. ~~had~~ did not wait to see the result but ran
back unobserved with ~~very useful information regarding enemy~~
dispositions which proved valuable in the successful attack
that followed immediately. *ends*

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Bughal: 7 th Aug '44
Duty

53

With a high sense of duty, a Dogra Rajput sepoy though wounded seriously would not go to the RAP ~~to get more ammunition~~ ~~but~~ ^{till he had} ~~but~~ ^{when} ~~under heavy fire~~ carried ~~to and fire~~ ammunition to the frontline troops ~~till~~ he was evacuated owing to the loss of blood. As soon as he had recovered he made hot tea and carrying it ^{also} under fire to the forward troops ~~separately~~ moved in the area serving the tea.

Sepoy Dhinaram, a Dogra Rajput of village Ladha, district Udhampur, Punjab, when his platoon of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment was heavily attacked by the enemy at Chepu early in July, noticing a Jap I.M.G. causing heavy casualties and holding our advance, ~~the sepoy~~ rushed at it and from a distance of 20 yards charged with his own I.M.G. which killed the crew of the enemy I.M.G. and silenced it. While coming back he saw an enemy sniper on a tree and gave him a burst which killed him but at the same time the sepoy was also wounded seriously by the sniper's bullet.

On coming back he found that the platoon had run short of ammunition and ~~he~~ made three trips under very heavy enemy fire carryi

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Duty-page 2

ammunition to his platoon. Then he was forced to go the RAP for attention owing to loss of blood.

This restless sepoy when he had recovered a bit set about making tea for the whole platoon and under heavy fire from the enemy took forward hot tea to his comrades in the frontline.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer

Imphal: 7 Aug '44. (delayed for security addresses)

Rout

55

Expediting the Jap withdrawal from the ^{TENGA NOUPAL} ~~Tenganoopal~~ Ridge and converting his retreat into a rout, the capture of a prominent hill to the east of Sibong, known as Battle Hill, by a battalion of the 6th. Rajputana Rifles enabled ~~us~~ us to have a grand-stand view of the retreating Japs on their LOC. The Rajputs singing and shouting made merry here as they sent MMG bursts on the Jap LOC. In this battle and from the attack on Lone Tree Hill near Shenam, the Rajrifs have been commanded by Lt.Col. Dinesh Chandra Misra of Agra and a graduate of the Indian Military Academy.

The 28th of July was a rainy day and very misty too. The ~~52~~ Japs, fresh troops, about two companies strong, were entrenched on the forward slopes of the knife-edged ridge up which the Rajputs had to make a frontal attack. Air support could not be had owing ~~to~~ to the heavy mist and due to the near proximity of our own troops. Jap LMGs and MMGs ~~along~~ along the ridge formed a formidable bastion. The Japs here were the lay-back of the main enemy forces who were retreating ^{as} as fast as they could on discovering that their line of withdrawal was threatened by the troops of the 23rd. Indian Division.

In front of the main objective was a small pimple which it was necessary to get first and which could be used as a base for an attack up the hill. At midday with artillery support a company of Rajrifs under Major John Maclean, originally of the Argyll Southern Highlanders and a grandson of the Chief of the Maclean Clan (the Major was formerly at Ballechin House, Ballinluig, Perthshire, Scotland) led the attack. Immediately there was heavy unexpected MMG fire from the Japs in the pimple and all the machine guns on the hill also were firing at this company. Realising that the only means of securing the pimple was to rush it, Major Maclean at the head of his company made a dash for the position with bayonets, grenades and light automatics. Fighting across the thick bamboo jungle, merely by dash and courage ~~and~~ Major Maclean captured the pimple. The Japs on this pimple dispersed leaving behind their ammunition, LMGs and and MMGs. 11 Japs were killed besides many more wounded. Consolidating the crest of the pimple, this Highland Major held it against very heavy counter-attacks. The Japs were only 30 yards away on the

Mani: Indian Army Observer
 Imphal: 7 Aug '44
 Sacrifice

Sacrificing his life in a ~~successful~~
~~successful~~ spirited bayonet charge
 on the enemy strong position at Lone Tree Hill, Subedar Sardar Khan
 of the 6th Rajputana Rifles set the pace for our advance on the road
 to Tamu.

The Japs about two companies in strength coming ~~right~~ right
 behind our positions at Shenam had established themselves on this hill
 about four miles to the west which was overlooking our LOC from Palel.
 For our advance up the road it was imperative that the Japs should be
 ousted from this hill and "Scraggy". This hill was the Rajputs' cake
 and the other one the Gurkhas'.

At dusk on the 23rd July the Rajputs put in their attack on
 this densely covered hill with two platoons. The Japs were on the
 crest of the hill and its further slopes. As usual the enemy had en-
 trenced himself strongly and our troops had to ascend the hill while
 fighting. Hill-climbing is not easy in these parts as the whole earth
 becomes slippery owing to the incessant rains. But our men fight with
 one great determination and a high sense of duty. Owing to the ascent
 the battle always starts by our making a dashing rush at the enemy
 positions.

At this tense moment the same feeling creeps into one's mind
 as that of a youth learning to swim when he looks at a deep well into
 which he is asked to jump without thinking. It is at this moment that
 the great traditional valour and honour of an Indian soldier ~~comes~~
 gets mastery over his mind and he makes a gallant dash. I have often
 seen an Indian soldier at this tense moment and every one of them
 crossed the Rubicon leaving everything except his duty in the hands of
 Fate and that is what accounts for his bravery. I cannot but admire
 their philosophy which ~~is~~ is most suited to the battlefield and is
 a very essential element in the winning of any war. Hesitation has no
 play on his mind and if everyone of his countrymen should only watch
 an Indian soldier going into action, he will no doubt cherish the
 ideals which an Indian soldier symbolises in the war of today.

Subedar Sardar Khan, whom I saw making the attack, was ~~xxx~~ a typical Indian soldier. Throwing grenades in front, he led his men in a bayonet charge against the enemy who was only 30 yards ahead. I saw the grenades bursting among the Japs who replied with heavy small arms fire, grenades and cup dischargers. But nothing would stop this undaunting V.C.O. He had climbed the crest and was proceeding to the slopes shouting the ~~xxx~~ battle cry of the Rajputs when an enemy grenade struck him and killed him. By his courageous and brave action he had paved the way for our advance and had enabled the platoons ~~xxx~~ to drive the Japs out of this hill and the entire feature. The Jap dead that could be traced amounted to more than 150 and many more of the enemy were wounded. Large ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ quantities of valuable equipment were captured. Since its capture the hill has been known as the Rajput Hill.

Subedar Sardar Khan ^{was} ~~is~~ a Punjabi Mussalman Chib Rajput of village Bharot, district Gujrat, Punjab.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 10 Aug '44
Governor

57

In honour of the visit of His Excellency Sir Andrew Clow, Governor of Assam and ~~His Excellency~~ Lady Clow, His ~~Highness~~ Highness the Maharajah of Manipur gave a dance-party in the Durbar Hall at his palace in Imphal, ^{in the evening of Aug 10.} Officers from both the services, the Army and the Air Force were present in addition to State officials and members of the Durbar.

This was His Excellency's first visit to Manipur seen ^{since} after the historic battles fought on its soil by Indian and British troops.

Manipur the home of a great dance tradition though battle-scarred ~~still~~ retains its festive atmosphere and its people have borne cheerfully the conditions brought about by the fighting on their soil. Our troops have always been friendly to them and they in turn have not only been admiring the gallantry of the Indian Army but have endeavoured with the means at their disposal to make the troops comfortable during their stay here. They have willingly vacated their homes for us to stay in,

Mei: Indian Army Observer
Governor -page two

have kept us supplied with ~~fresh~~^{fresh} milk for use in our hospitals and have grown the maximum produce of vegetables and poultry for our consumption. This war-effort on ~~his~~^{their} part has not been without a certain amount of sacrifice of ~~his~~^{their} own needs and comforts.

Though I have not seen a single beggar in the whole of this State, ^{Curiously} the dance programme commenced with a beggar's dance followed by a slow

a slow moving Naga dance and several others including one by a youth with a plate of fire in each hand. ^{Pishak} ~~Besak~~ and little Binla were the dancing girls both of whom did ample justice to the tradition. Binla, very young yet, may soon be an art-ambassador to the world from Manipur.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
 Imphal: 12. Aug. '44
 Scraggy

Butting monsoon clouds and mist surround the 5000 feet high "Scraggy" which has been the bone of contention for several months till July 24 when a battalion of the 10th. Gurkha Regiment captured it after a heavy grenade battle lasting for nearly four hours. This opened our line of communication to ~~the~~ ^{the} forward troops of the 23rd. Indian Division who had reached Tengmuopal and Sibong encircling the forward troops of the enemy.

"Scraggy" along with "Gibraltar" and "Malta" are hills in a bee-line ^{to the east of} ~~from~~ the mountain-village of Shenam on the Palel-Tamu Road which meet the Tengmuopal ridge at right angles. Shenam is the crowning glory of an ascent over mountains and the road to it twines in hair-pin bends every 200 yards and one false turn will send one's ^{vehicle} down the deep valleys below. The country is beautiful and abounds in deer and gibbons. With an annual rainfall of nearly 200 inches, these regions are converted in the monsoon into slow-moving rivers of ankle-deep slimy mud. The clouds and mist appear intermittently

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Scraggy-page two

and a thin rain beats sharply down your face, when the cascades of rains ^{cease} ~~stop~~ for a rest.

The Japs were entrenched on the farther side of Scraggy from whose top one could command a complete view of the entire topography to the east. Till this attack our troops were carrying out raids and offensive patrols on the Jap positions. Our object was to kill as many Japs and secure information regarding their positions. On one such patrols by a section of ~~the~~ a battalion of the 5th Gurkha Regiment, bursting with grenades into a party of 40 Japs they Gurkhas killed nearly ten of the enemy and returned with useful information about enemy defences and no casualties. Naik Narbahadur Gurung and Naik Mahbhir Pun leaving an LMG behind to attract enemy fire, on a dark night crept upto the skyline and behind the Jap sentry posts. Moving further they heard snores from a bunker and slowly making a hole on the bunker, they dropped two grenades through it. As cries of pain and terror rent the air, one Jap who ran out of the bunker

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Scaggy-page three

MESSAGE FORM

Form 10-1 (Rev. 1-15-44)

was hit by a grenade. In the confusion more Japs came out and they were all hit as they ran into the slit trenches where the Nails had thrown two more grenades. Having hit two bunkers by now and flinging the last grenade at the enemy, they collected the rest of the patrol and returned to the west side of Scraggy(our side).

Right~~fox~~ from the middle of May ~~was~~ not a day passed without a raid from either side. Exchange of grenades broke the lull between raids and patrols and the wiring had to be done during the short intervals between grenading.

Early dawn on July 24, the 10th. Gurkhas put in their attack with artillery support and Scraggy was held by nearly a company of the enemy who had only been reinforced with fresh troops only the previous night. Grenading their way through, the Gurkhas used nearly 4000 grenades. The enemy gave tough opposition and had mined his entire surroundings. Each Gurkha was carrying nearly ten to 20 grenades with him. In pouring rain and slushy mud the battle swayed to and fro/ for nearly four hours at the end of which the Japs withdrew leaving 48 dead.

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Scaggy-page four

and two ~~prisoners~~ alive who were made prisoners. ~~Another~~ Many of the fleeing Japs were trapped and killed by a battalion of the 5th Gurkhas who caught them between two of their companies down the road.

Indicative of the last fierce battle on Scraggy are the actions of Naik Ajirath Rai and Rfn. Shyamdal Rai both of the 10th Gurkhas and of East Nepal. Nk. Ajirath Rai, section commander of a platoon attacking the hill from one side, when his section was held up by fire from a large bunker taking one man with him went forward and leaning over the top of the bunker threw into ~~it~~ three grenades. As he could still hear the enemy inside, he swung into the entrance and was met by a Jap with an LMG. Seizing ~~the~~ the LMG with one hand he shot the Jap ^{away} with the other ~~hand~~. His platoon suffered heavy casualties and ^{along} with another were the only NCOs left. Taking command of the platoon, he charged to the crest of the hill and were fired on from a bunker they had passed. ^{Gang} ~~ging~~ upto the bunker alone with a home-made flame thrower ~~and inserted~~ ^{he}

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Scraggy-page five

and inserted ^{it} into the entrance. Three Japs who ran out were dealt with.

Rfn. Shyam dal Rai finding his platoon held up crawled forward with his haversack full of grenades. With complete disregard to his own safety, he in turn stalked five different enemy bunkers and throwing grenades into them enabled his platoon to attack and capture the objective. "It was like distributing fruits from a basket" remarked one of his officers to me. Perhaps selling pea-nuts to the Japs!

What remained on Scraggy after the battle were stinking dead bodies of the enemy, large quantities of ammunition and weapons, rations and equipment and records, containing valuable information. ~~Scraggy~~ Scraggy itself was bald most of its trees having been razed to the ground and big bomb-craters and pot-holes yawned out ⁱⁿ to the pouring rain.

ends

Mani; Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 8 Aug '44
Pathan Cook

56

Deserting the kitchen-fire, a young Pathan cook in a battalion of the 6th Rajputana Rifles would not rest with the fighting blood in his veins ~~was~~ ^{to check up} and went to have a crack at the Japs in the battle on Lone Tree Hill.

Mohamed Sharif, a Pathan of Dheri Kehal, district Hazara, NWFP, was restless while this attack was on and left the bread burning on the fire. "His C.O. whom he asked for permission to go and fight ~~was~~ declined. On the sly he and another orderly securing rifles and ammunition went to the crest of the hill and joined the fighting. Meanwhile their absence was noticed at the HQ and they were given up for missing but to everyone's surprise he returned a few hours later and alone ^(one other having been killed) carrying a Jap ammunition pouch. Next morning also he whipped off without permission when the whole area was infested with enemy snipers and brought back a 11 inches long Jap bayonet which proudly displaying to me he remarked: "After all I am a born fighter. I am

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Pathan Cook-page two

always restless when my battal~~ion~~ is fighting and I would like to fight instead of cooking". His C.O. quickly replied: "We cannot afford to lose a good cook like you". I also concurred with half a morsel of chappati and curry in my mouth and now Mohamed Sharif has compromised between cooking and fighting.

This battalion is proud of its fighting followers. Two office runners, and two of the O.C.'s bodyguard ~~xxxx~~ --- all Rajputs--- had also drifted away armed to fight.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 16 Aug '44
Ba. Jerry

THIS LINE FOR SIGNATURE USE ONLY

Punjabi gunners on the Palel front ~~ascended~~ ^{carrying} across 15 miles of difficult terrain their battery of 25-pounders were in time on top of the 5600 feet high "Embone" on D-day to fire on the reverse slopes of Shenam where the enemy had entrenched himself. This feat earned for them commendation from their Divisional Commander.

With a load ^{equal to} of that of nearly 250 jeeps they had to climb nearly six ~~xxx~~ steep hills in pouring rain. In some places the slush was so deep that even jeeps would not move and had to be pulled in batches of four with winches fixed on Dodges manhandled into positions. After the first five miles even this became impossible and two bulldozers had to be harnessed. At one incline the two bulldozers ~~required~~ required 60 more men to pull one gun up.

Firing nearly 300 rounds on the enemy, the Punjabi gunners softened the ground for our Gurkhas to advance and capture the position.

Artificer Staff Sergeant Digby whose home is in Karachi rescued a gun which had fallen into the mud down an incline of nearly 90 degrees. ~~Then~~ With the shingle under his feet giving way he went down the slope ^{in pouring rain} nearly 20 feet and working for nearly five hours/stripped the gun completely. It was then brought up and refitted again.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer

Imphal: 16 Aug '44

Mahrattas

(605)

Illustrative of the quick perception, hardiness and cheerfulness of a Mahratta soldier are ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the exploits of/a battalion of the 5th. Mahratta Rifles on the Imphal front.

After capturing a feature near Palel in a bayonet-charge, Subedar Maruti Sawant of village Natal, district Ratnagiri, was injured seriously. While he was being carried in a stretcher, one of the bearers was killed and the other leaving him there went to seek for help. He lost his way in the dense jungle and four patrols after 48 hours found the Subedar in a cheerful mood inspite of profuse bleeding from his injuries and having had no food during the time.

~~XXXXXX~~ Sepoy Bhima Bhui of Chikodi, district Belgama, after being in Jap custody for 10 days escaped with a Jap rifle noticing that the sentry was asleep. Marching across nearly 12 miles of virgin jungle, to his surprise he found that his battalion had moved away. Beating about this enemy infested forest, he finally reached his battalion with scanty clothes and/though quite famished yet cheerful.

Naik Shankar Yerunkar of village Kawle, district Kolaba, leading his section against Jap bunkers at Kudel Kunou, showed leadership and courage of a high order. He was commanding a section of the leading platoon whose advance was held up by ~~xxxxxx~~ MMG fire from the flank and from two bunkers in front. Running forward under heavy fire and firing at point-blank range with his tommy-gun through the slit of one bunker he silenced it. Throwing two grenades into it, without hesitation he led his section ~~xxxxxx~~ straight into the next bunker and destroyed it. ~~xxxxxx~~

Sepoy Kashiram Chawan of village Sirgaon, district Ratnagiri, was platoon-runner of the leading platoon when the Mahrattas attacked Jap bunker-positions near Sibong. The forward elements came under fire and one wounded Mahratta lying close to a bunker could not be ~~xxxxxxxx~~ recovered owing to heavy MMG fire/From the bunker. On his own initiative this sepoy organising a party of three, led them forward and killed three Japs lying in positions near the bunker. Then under covering fire from ~~xxxxxxxx~~ his party, Kashiram went forward alone under fire and recovered the wounded man --- quite calm at the end of it and greeting the RAP with a cheerful smile.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Pioneers

(61)

Unimpeded by rain and storm men of the Indian Pioneer Corps have kept our forward troops moving on the Imphal front. Though their work may not be spectacular, their promptness has in no small measure contributed to the quickness of our operations.

Working under extreme conditions of weather and geography, the Pioneers have carried on their job in pouring rain and floods, in four feet deep slush and at heights of nearly 5000 feet.

Besides work that may be forced on them in an emergency, they normally carry rations, water, ammunition and wireless sets to the forward troops. They also build bunkers, trenches and defensive areas. In the evacuation of casualties they ~~xxx~~^{assist} as stretcher-bearers. Working under the supervision of army engineers, they lay the metal and tar on the roads in addition to helping the bulldozers to level the roads. And they have had a share in the creation of most of the airstrips on this front.

The Pioneers get little respite; yet they carry on cheerfully. On one occasion they had arrived back from their daily duties at five in the evening and were again recalled within three hours to unload a ~~convoy~~ supply convoy. 73 of them were at it till midnight and cheerfully reported for duty early next morning.

Their work is quick and smart. During~~ix~~ the time that Imphal was fed by air, on urgent summons from an RIASC unit the Pioneers were rushed to a forward airstrip over ~~the~~ which the Dacotas were already hovering. The Japs started intense shelling and after half an hour when there was a lull in the shelling nearly 100 planes dropped their precious cargo. Before the enemy guns ~~started~~^{commenced} again the Pioneers had collected all the stuff safely.

Very often they may be found with the most forward troops. A company of Pioneers had to carry rations, mortars and small arms ammunition to our infantry who had infiltrated behind the Japs in the Naga village at Kohima. They had to evacuate the wounded while returning. These Pioneers had just then returned from their day's work and as soon as it was dark they crept with their ~~xxx~~ load to our infantry position and delivered the goods safely. The next evening they completely evacu-

ated the casualties and came back to their lines suffering no casualties.

Their work is not without amusement. One of their companies carrying ammunition accompanied a bunker-bursting party south of the Silchar track. As they were moving with their heavy loads on ~~the~~ slushy paths in the pouring rain, all of a sudden a grenade exploded right behind one of the porters. A splinter went straight for his water-bottle and piercing through it burst the water out. It was so amusing that the Pioneers burst into laughter.

Pioneers are an essential part of long-range penetration groups. They collect the rations dropped from the air. One of their platoons recently accompanied a brigade for 40 days when they collected nearly ~~98~~ 98 per cent of the dropping ^{spread} over an area of three square miles across hills and cuds. During this time they also carried the wounded for more than 100 miles across dense jungles and steep hills to the west of Ukhrul.

Frequently they come under fire. A company carrying reserve rations and ammunition to our forward troops in the dense jungles south-east of Tiddim Road, while crossing a nullah ~~crossed~~ came under heavy fire. They carried ~~through~~ the load in time and without any loss. On another occasion they had to collect ^{air-dropped} rations which ~~were~~ were lying between us and the enemy. While collecting it they were caught between the fire from both sides but went on calmly collecting the entire lot for 45 minutes.

In spite of the adverse conditions due to the monsoon the Pioneers are quite cheerful. With stretchers resting on their heads and moving in waist-deep mud and water, south of the Silchar track they evacuated more than 100 casualties over a distance of three miles in less than two hours. Some of the ^{casualties} casualties needed urgent attention. When they reached the RAP they greeted the M.O. with a smile and a song.

ends

Though less spectacular yet playing an equally vital role as the frontline troops are the Indian and British troops manning the line of communication. Their prompt and quick work has in no small measure contributed to the winning of the Battle of Manipur.

'Movement Control' who transport troops personnel and stores working all hours of the day and night have kept our forward troops moving without a hitch. On a small railway mostly used formerly to carry tea from the estates and with few coaches available, daily they move thousands of troops and nearly 4,000 tons of goods. Their job requires great patience and tact as they have to please one and all.

In their routine life they occasionally have scope ~~for~~ for adventure. Quarter-Master Havildar Khadim Hussain of village Angu, district Kohat, NWFP, a movement control N.C.O. on board a steamer transshipping troops and stores across the Brahmaputra, on a moonless night when his vessel ~~struck a rock in midstream~~ was wrecked by a rock in midstream took a country-boat across the swelling ~~river~~ river to the nearest shore and ran nearly 20 miles before he could get a relief steamer. The vessel had cut a leak and water was flooding the engine room. This occurred at nine o'clock in the night and at seven in the morning Havildar Khadim Hussain was there with the relief-vessel to save and tranship to their destination the 500 troops on board with the goods.

These river-steamers are run by chartered companies but their movements are controlled by the army who provide a medical officer and a Havildar in charge of stores and rations. Deck-games are provided for the troops and a new addition will be a ~~mk~~ radio with loudspeakers.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Gollaghat: 19 Sep '44
Refugee

202/2

With the advance of the Allied troops into Burma more and more refugees flow into our lines and the Army in close cooperation with the Commonwealth Relations department of the Government of India have elaborate arrangements for their reception.

Large numbers of the refugees have escaped from the Jap-occupied territories under the most trying circumstances—their only anxiety being to get to our lines at any cost. Some of them have been rescued by our troops as they captured village after village and town after town.

On assembly at Mytikina the Civil Affairs Service of the army takes charge of them. They are fed (augmented by U.S. Army rations) and they are transported by air to ^{an} Indian airport. From there army vehicles carry them to a transit camp run by the army where the army supplies them with blankets, mosquito-nets and clothing ^{and} whose cost is paid by the Burma Refugee Organisation of the Commonwealth Relations department.

From the transit camp they travel to a dispersal camp under military escort where after interrogation by army officers the Burma Refugee Organisation takes charge of them and sends them to their relatives or friends in India if they have any. Otherwise they stay in these camps spread over the whole of Assam.

At one such camp on the banks of the Brahmaputra that I visited I was struck by the one-community life led by people of various nationalities. Burman, Anglo-Burman, Chinese, European, Gurkhas, Chins, Kachins and Indians-- all live together and I watched all their children playing together transcending the limits of language. ~~They have their~~ Each camp has a radio, games, ~~and school~~ school and hospital. The army provides petrol, rations and hospital comforts. "Once they come in they do not like to leave the camp", said an officer in the camp to me.

ends

ani: Indian Army Observer
Jollaghat: 19 Sep '44
Dairy

202/4

(65)

Travelling more than a thousand miles by rail, two years ago a thousand buffaloes came to one of our forward bases in Assam to supply milk, butter and cream for use in our forward hospitals. ~~Everyday~~ Everyday they now give 4,000 pounds of milk and nearly 170 pounds of butter. Their milk contains a high percentage of fat and it is strained and standardised before issue.

They came from a military farm in India and it took them nearly two weeks to get settled to their new pasture.

These grade buffaloes are taken good care of. Branded on the horns each has a name and a history sheet where ^{its} service record, calving record, lactation, veterinary, ~~movements~~ ^{details} and weight are all kept. Frained personnel look after them.

Some of the hospital patients have seen ^{a few} ~~some~~ of the animals and quite naturally ^{each has his own} ~~they have a~~ preference for "Nida"'s milk or "Khosa"'s milk.

ends

1

ni: Indian Army Observer
ollaghat: 19 Sep '44
State Labour

(65)
202/5

Working at most forward points on our line of communication are white-clothed ~~civilians~~. ~~These are the~~ men from the Travancore and Cochin ~~and~~ State Labour Units. Their work has been invaluable and *has* quickened the driving out of the Japs from Manipur and Indian soil.

Their work has earned commendation from their area commander. ~~He has written to their~~ ~~Parents~~ "I should very much like them to know that ^{their} ~~their~~ efforts are being appreciated. In this way they may feel that they as well as the serving soldier- who perhaps gets rather more glory- are doing their part in the ~~the~~ present struggle and that when it is over they may feel it is a victory in which they have taken a considerable and honourable part", he says writing to their organisations.

Working for more than eight hours a day even at the height of the monsoon, they have contributed by their labour to projects of the highest importance and priority. They have worked on roads, ~~and~~ airfields, depots, railway construction, brickfields and antimalarial drainings. Sometimes conditions were difficult and uncongenial but ungrudgingly and cheerfully they have ^{given their best} ~~worked~~ and the results of their efforts have materially assisted the war-effort of this front.

They draw rations and pay as the troops. They are supplied with blankets, mosquito-nets and anti-malarial clothing. Only they do not wear any uniform. Their organisation is as in the army and they are under military discipline.

Describing them as "excellent units", General Slim, 14th. Army Commander has written to their Maharajas expressing his gratitude for supplying these units. "The men have worked very well indeed and during recent difficulties stood firm and behaved as soldiers should"

ends



ADPR 14 ARMY FOR IAPRELO

MANI

Begins in the high thickly wooded mountains of assam that divide india from burma hums one of the best and busiest transport systems in the world stop it is the army transport organisation on our line of communication to the imphal front and its quickness and efficiency have stood the test well during the battle of manipur stop their vehicles are on the road all the twentyfour hours and on all days in the year stop working with five tonners ten tonners three tonners and other miscellaneous vehicles they transport rations ordnance and other stores and troops to the frontline stop on the return they remove salvage and carry leave troops to the railhead stop altogether running about four and a half million miles per month their average lift is about sixty thousand tons per month stop each vehicle in the fleet averages about hundred miles per day stop the movement of vehicles is so well organised that their exact location at any given moment is known both to the headquarters and the company concerned stop their own police man the traffic control posts at every ten miles on the road stop road patrols ply stretches of the road looking for casualties and recovery units are distributed at various points stop the entire organisation is linked up by telephone which ensures its smooth and quick working stop workshops scattered at convenient intervals and marshalling yards at either end add to its efficiency stop traversing the winding mountain belt known as the manipur road is not without difficulties stop most of the road is in good



page two condition but sappers and pioneers are ~~work~~ incessantly fighting the monsoon to keep the road in good condition stop there are landslides both large and small ~~over~~ hundred in a month and bulldozers keep constant vigil to go into action stop the hairpin bends are not easy of negotiation for heavily loaded vehicles and when it rains skidding is not uncommon stop steep slopes and equally steep climbs with the bends in between literally convert the movement of vehicles into the rocking motion of ships stop but the transport vehicles have always been on time and never once failed our forward troops stop to obtain the maximum efficiency out of them the vehicles are maintained with great care stop each has its history sheet including the drivers stop a loaded vehicle prior to its ~~start~~ journey undergoes a twenty minute check up at the company station stop bolts and nuts are tested tyres are checked and oil and grease seen to stop on return a longer test is conducted and adjustments made stop once a week they are sent to naga service stations where naga youths clad in waterproofs wash vehicles with high pressure water obtained by harnessing a mountain torrent stop they also check tyres oil and plugs and they are enthusiastic stop co says quote prove excellent mechanics and very reliable unquote stop their sisters who do the gardening in the service station are already jealous and it may not be long before they learn to weld the hose and the grease gun stop working in pairs the indian riasd drivers exchange the wheel every hundred miles and have a twelve hour break after



page three every thirtyfive hours stop each vehicle carries sufficient quantities of rations stop their job is not always without glory stop a party of them fought in the battle at Kanglatongbi stop a pathan driver who erringly drove his vehicle into the jap lines was bayoneted in the shoulder but made good his escape after hiding in a nullah for several days stop in the battle of kohima they often unloaded under fire and within observation of the enemy stop when the last road block on the manipur road was being cleared they were immediately behind the tanks ferrying our infantry and sometimes only a couple of yards from the scene of battle stop there was keen competition among them as to who should go first stop their ~~EM~~ commanding officer says quote i say unhesitatingly that they are the finest lot of men i have ever worked with stop twenty four hours per day three hundred sixtyfive days per year they have given the best that is in them worked extremely hard and never complained stop i would not hesitate to operate ~~motor~~ motor transport with these men in competition with the best in the allied armies unquote stop note insertion in seac will enthuse elofsee troops ends



Page three
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501014936

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Shillong: 23 Sep '44
P.O.L.

(68)
202-7

Fifty thousand gallons of petrol per day ~~xxxxxx~~ for one full week after the opening of the Manipur Road helped to beat the Japs and push them out of Manipur.

Behind the ~~issue~~ and movemnt of ~~this~~ enormous quantity of motor spirit lies the hard work of the R.I.A.S.C. personnel and the day and night vigil of those who man the P.O.Ls. (Petrol, Oil and Lubricants filling stations) all along our line of communication to the Indo-Burma front.

Millions of gallons of petrol ~~xxxxxx~~ every day are carefully tested ~~xxxxxx~~, ^{their} the barrels ~~containers~~ are cleaned under air-pressure and ~~examined~~ for leaks and tightly ^{sealed} ~~sealed~~ in order to avoid the ^{water of the} ~~xxxxxx~~ monsoon rains ~~getting in~~.

ends

Cattle story 2.

(69)
202-8

While speeding along our line of communication to the Indo-Burma front if you are suddenly held up by hundreds of ducks ^{front} marching in twos across the road and wondering to which/they were proceeding as reinforcements, if you follow them they will certainly lead to the farm where a young British major and the son of Lionel Edwards, the famous artist, would be ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{ploughing} the field in his overalls ^{with a tractor} ~~xxxx on a motor-vehicle~~ ^{from} constructed out of a bren-gun carrier.

Unassuming Major Edwards besides supplying thousands of pounds of meat to our forward troops is ~~xxxxxx~~ also rearing a large number of ducks and geese with the hope of issuing their hundreds of eggs by Christmas to the troops.

The farm grows its own fodder and silage and the cattle are given the best fattening ration available from local resources.

Farming by day ^{by} ~~at~~ night he has to keep the wild animals away. A couple of tigers, a few leapords and several hyenas are the ^{visits} menace and periodic ~~visits~~ from elephants and bears are not uncommon.

ends

In a remote workshop on the Indo-Burma front, cheerful Italians from all parts of Italy are helping to beat the Japs. This mobile workshop is ^{mostly} ~~completely~~ Italian. They have their own N.C.O.s and C.S.M. besides two Italian officers and they are assisted by British and Indian mechanics and staff.

Some of them have been tank mechanics in the Italian Army and some have been at the Fiat motor works. In addition to tackling every ~~variety~~ ^{type} of motor ~~trucks~~ ^{mechanics} they are experts at welding, electrical and instrument-making jobs.

The quickness and the thoroughness of these Italian mechanics stood the test ~~well~~ during the battle of Manipur when they put thousands of injured vehicles on the road again within a few days -- most of them came in with smashed-up engines.

A feature of this camp is the comraderie between Indian, Italian and British other ranks who all work, play and eat together-- the Indians ~~love~~ relish the macaroni and want them often.

The Italian football team is the champion one in the area. They receive and send mail to their ^{families} ~~people~~ at home.

Like other ranks they ^{draw} ~~receive~~ rations and receive uniform and pay besides trade pay. They are quite happy and their C.O., a British Captain, told me that they are the finest lot he has ever worked with.

ends

From ~~xxxxxxxx~~ tiny washers, springs, nuts, bolts and pins to a 75mm shell, stocking and issuing them in thousands and thousands the Indian Army Ordnance Corps with its several dumps all ^{along} ~~along~~ our line of communication plays a vital role in the defeat of the Japs as they equip a sepoy from his rifle to his bootlace and the army formations with their tanks, motor transport, wireless equipment and hospital beds.

Most of the articles other than ^{scientific} ~~scientific~~ instruments and motor spare parts are manufactured from Indian factories.

"White hot"- operational- demands are met forthwith and despatched either by their own transport or rail depending on the circumstances.

During the battle of Manipur, besides large quantities of ammunition, boots, gum-boots, trousers and socks in large ^{proportions} ~~quantities~~ were flown into Imphal where our troops had to fight both the Japs and the monsoon.

Nothing is wasted by the I.A.O.C. They have a 'return stores' system by which partly serviceable stores are returned and they are sent back to the stock after the necessary repairs and mending. They run their own workshops for this purpose and in one depot that I ~~visited~~ visited, their C.O., an Indian Colonel, proudly displayed to me his desk which was made out of the wood of unserviceable motor lorries. Plane-blades, jack and smoothing, have been made out of the springs of motor transport. Even chisels and screw-drivers have been produced here and their whole camp which is about two square miles ^{in area} appeared to be "ersatz" to me.—

These depots employ hundreds of civilians as clerks, tradesmen and labour.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 1 Oct '44
Sixteenth

72
Winning one I.O.M. (2nd. Class), seven M.C.s, one I.D.S.M., and four M.M.s during the battle of Manipur, a battalion of the 16th. Punjab Regiment fighting with the 23rd. Indian Division has played a notable part in ^{the fighting on the Imphal plain} pushing the Japs out of India.

They took part in the wide-flanking movement against the HQ of the Jap 15th. Division which was then conducting operations to the east of Imphal. Moving by night only for four days they completely surprised the enemy and killed 30 of the enemy in this clash. Pursuing the enemy further, this battalion surprised him again at Shonphel. ~~Moving only by night.~~ Sometimes they had to climb through virgin jungle at the rate of 100 feet an hour before they overran the enemy positions, killing at least 30 of the ^{enemy} and injuring an equal number. Part of the booty captured was a medium machine gun.

Their next action was the capture of the ~~the~~ strong enemy position of Khudei Khonou. In an attack at dusk when the ~~the~~ leading company of this battalion was held up by heavy MMG fire, another company under the command of Capt. Uberoi of Chakwal, district Jhelum, took up the attack and stormed the position with great skill and determination just as darkness fell. Capt. Uberoi has been awarded the M.C. for his gallantry while leading his company in this attack.

In a daylight attack against heavy machine-gun fire they captured another enemy ^{strong} stronghold--- a 5000 feet high hill known as "Ben Nevis". Reaching the objective by a concealed route they attacked the main Jap position from the rear and killed nearly 40 of the enemy besides wounding many more. For the next two weeks they had to hold this position against repeated counter-attacks supported by heavy artillery. The monsoon aggravated the conditions. The men ate, lived and slept in their weapon-pits day after day and at nights ^{stood} experienced the heaviest enemy shelling experienced on this front-- from 75mm shells to 150mm ones.

In the wide flanking movement of the 23rd. Indian Division in the last week of July to cut the Jap rear, this battalion

captured three successive Jap hills by frontal attacks. They had to fight under appalling weather conditions and had to march along steep and dangerous tracks. In addition to capturing lots of enemy equipment they captured a 150mm gun which had been shelling them while they were at "Ben Nevis".

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 1 Oct '44
Doctor

73

Display of the utmost coolness and courage in tending the wounded under fire is the story of a young Madrasi doctor, Captain S. Gopalakrishnan, I.A.M.C., of Calicut, Malabar.

As medical officer to a battalion of the 5th Gurkha Rifles when they came under heavy fire at M.S. 98 on the Tiddim Road in the third week of March 1944, Capt. Gopalakrishnan never relaxed night and day for four and a half days under extremely difficult and adverse conditions.

His improvised aid-post under a culvert and his "ward" under a line of trucks were being constantly subjected to gunfire, small arms and sniping. The large casualties could not be evacuated owing to the enemy road-block. Water was scanty till it was dropped from the air on the fourth day.

Undoubtedly due ~~to his efforts~~ to his unrelenting and devoted efforts serious cases that could not be evacuated survived. Speaking fluent Gurkhali he is loved by the Gurkhas for whom he has a word of praise: "They are very quiet and never moan or cry even with the most serious wounds".

Captain Gopalakrishnan has now been awarded the M.C. Once previously, during the Indo-Burma frontier operations of 1942-43, he has been mentioned in despatches.

The doctor graduated from the Madras Medical College in 1941.

ends

Mani; Indian Army Observer
Comilla; 3 Oct '44
Madrasis : For Madras papers

MADRASIS IN MANIPUR

Madrasis in Manipur-- they were everywhere. Right in the frontline and all along the line of communication for many miles they were there.

With their clothes dripping wet signallers from the south could be seen standing on ladders and repairing their wiring masts. Only two or three feet of the mast and the ^{top} last few steps of the ladder were visible, the rest being under water. Very often the roads along which they were working were being shelled but calm and unperturbed were these Madrasis till I called out to them in Tamil and you should have seen the cheerful grin on their faces on being accosted in their own tongue by a stranger. Typical of the hospitality of the south, they opened their haversacks and served me delicious rice and "sambhar" which I had not tasted for months. Enquiries regarding villages and districts were exchanged and I parted from them promising to meet them again. They told me they were all quite happy and proud of the part that troops from their province were playing on this front.

There are many of them as drivers and mechanics in the RIASC, in the ordnance and supply depots, in the hospitals, in the Pioneers and in the Indian Air Force not to mention the companies of the Madras Sappers and Miners and a battalion of the 3rd Madras Regiment which was defending Imphal to the north. I visited the Madras battalion and found them in good cheer. So new to modern warfare and yet with the earliest and ^{an} equally worthy tradition in the Indian Army, these Madrasi infantrymen besides killing a large number of Japs have patrolled far behind the enemy lines and brought back highly useful information. Madrasis have distinguished themselves in the Indian Artillery too. Quite a large number of Madrasi officers ^{there} were serving in the various arms of the army. Madrasi nurses did not lag behind their menfolk and they were there tending the sick and wounded with the care that is typical of them.

Madras must be proud of ~~these~~ ^{and women} these men they have sent in khaki and the part they have played in the winning of the battle of Manipur.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Comilla: 5 Oct. '44
YMCA

For Madras papers

75

West Africans singing Kali N. Ratnam's Tamil hit: "Ennadi
Summa" (Why are you dumb, my bonnie lassie?) floats ^{at dusk} over/from a hill
in rural Bengal.

Surprised at hearing a melody in my mother-tongue in a
distant province, when I went there I was accosted by a stocky young
^{Madrasi} Tamilian, Mr. J. D. Martin from Madura who is running this Y. M. C. A.
centre for West Africans, ^{also} assisted by Mr. D. S. Vedanayagam from Madura

The Africans like Indian music with a quick tempo and
they are interested in Indian life and history. Besides music ~~parties~~
parties, Mr. Martin arranges ~~for their benefit~~ lectures and discus-
sions, for their benefit. In addition to a radio and a library
the Africans have plenty of recreation in the form of outdoor and
indoor games.

Not many miles away is a similar Y. M. C. A. centre for
Indian troops which is also run by another Madrasi, Mr. G. Eddy
from Nagercoil. A feature of ~~this~~ ^{its} centre is the international
dinner every fortnight when charming ~~cheerful~~ ^{and smiling} Indian nurses serve
at dinner.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Gollaghat: 19 Sep '44
Refugee

20273

(64)

Poignant sagas of the war in South-East Asia are the stories of the flight of refugees from Jap occupied Burma. Escaping from the Bushido and his fire and facing our own fire their one anxiety is to come over to our lines.

With many an unknown hero or heroine among them, their deeds are equally heroic as that of any frontline soldier. Unarmed, shelled, machine-gunned and bombed, ~~their mothers~~ leaving behind their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and friends who are falling dead or wounded next to them either from a direct hit or from a shattering splinter, their one ^{determination} ~~determination~~ has been to reach our lines alive or dead. Aged, infirm, pregnant mothers, little children-- all joined in this flight from the heels of an oppressor. With their indomitable courage nothing could stop them except death from reaching our lines.

Typical of them is the ^{charming} story related, to me by a 20-year old ~~Mytikina~~ girl from Burma. Her escape from the Japs under the most trying circumstances is one of high courage and great determination but she has to remain unknown during the war. With her four younger sisters she left the Jap lines at Mytikina at midday telling the sentries that they were going to gather vegetables in the sacks they were carrying. Once the Japs saw they were escaping they shot at them and machine-gunned them. Crouching and lying flat on the ground alternately they advanced a little when the shells from our lines came bursting on them. Once more lying flat during a lull they reached ^{within a few yards of} the Chinese lines who started shooting ^{at} them. Crouching near a wall they sisters quickly decided ~~that~~ that the only expedient was to pinch the baby they were carrying ^{with them}. The baby cried and the Chinese stopped shooting. ~~Next~~ They were taken care of and fed by ^{the Chinese} ~~them~~ till they were flown to India.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 16 Oct '44
Farm: For UK

Farming with the Fourteenth, Major Derrick Edwards, RIASC, of Buckholt, West Tytherley, Salisbury, Wilts., and son of the famous artist Lionel Edwards, is supplying hundreds of pounds of meat to the forward troops and by Christmas hopes to send a ~~vast number~~ ^{more} of eggs to them for which he is rearing a large number of ducks and geese.

If hundreds of ducks marching in twos across the road hold you up along the line of communication and if you follow them they will lead you to Major Edwards/ploughing a field on a tractor constructed from a bren-gun carrier.
(himself a farmer in peacetime)

The farm grows its own fodder and silage and the cattle are fed on the best fattening ration available from local resources.

Farming by day by night he has to keep the wild animals away. A tigress and her two cubs are paying nightly visits to his camp, so far her haul being 27 cows. "All personnel are on duty with tommy-guns and rifles but no luck as yet", he told me.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 17 Oct '44
Diwali

Diwali was celebrated with great ~~xxx~~ eclat by Indian troops in Manipur. Coloured smoke-bombs took the place of crackers and the din of artillery practice rendered the necessary background. Multicoloured festoons and bulbs adorned most of the camps and glittering boards: "Diwali Welcome" attracted ~~many~~ the eye all along the roads.

Feast and fun were had in plenty. 'Pilav', 'kurma', 'kheer' with a rich variety of sweets catered to the palate of the jawans who were singing ~~xxx~~ merrily-- songs reminiscent of their homes, villages and towns. In one hospital, officers, men and patients sat together at lunch and celebrated the occasion with dances and songs. Colourfully costumed Manipuri dancing-girls entertained the troops where encores and boisterous laughter kept the girls on their feet till early dawn.

ends

Mani: Indian Army Observer
Imphal: 24 Oct '44
Nurses

Story 1 (Pix. RIK 447)

Nursing Indian and British troops at a half-way house near Kohima are two charming Naga cousins, Miss Kesovole Angami (22 years) and Miss Vikole Angami (18 years).

They do the dressings and dispense the medicines besides helping the medical officer in the operations. The elder is a trained nurse while the ^{younger} ~~elder~~ is an enthusiastic beginner. They both speak fluent Hindustani.

Coming from the village of Jakhoma, only a few miles from there, their presence attracts a large number of Nagas seeking medical relief for whose treatment the army has provided special facilities.

ends

Story 2

B.O.Rs: For U.K.

(Pix. RIK 448)

Assisting an Indian medical officer's four British servicemen kept a whole night's vigil at the bedside of a 12-year old Naga girl who was on the verge of death owing to acute kidney trouble and thereby helped to save her life. As a token of their gratitude, the Nagas from the girl's village have invited the officer and the servicemen to a party.

The invitees are: Lt Chandra Mohan Patnaik, IAMC, RSM George Todd RA, of Landseer Road, Ipswich, Suffolk; Sub-conductor Herbert Haywood of 23, Laurel Rd Dudley, Worcestershire; BSM Victor Peel of 25, Grange Rd, Southall, Middlesex; Sgt. Walter Graves of 17, Drake Rd, ~~Kayshank~~ ~~Fayaherley~~, Liverpool.


Showing symptoms of an acute stage of nephritis, the girl was brought ^{in one evening} by the villagers to a hospital near Kohima where the army has provided sufficient facilities for rendering medical relief to the friendly Nagas. The doctor knew it was a battle against death from the patient's condition but ~~the~~ with the encouragement of the servicemen he thought he might yet save her life. Every hour of the night was marked with an injection. The BORs stayed on at their post till early dawn when the girl was safe on the way to recovery.

ends



PUBLIC RELATIONS . . *what they do*



The Issue and Distribution of Information and Publicity . . . The issuing of material for the Press and arranging of Press Conferences . . . Conducting of Official War Correspondents . . . Broadcasting Programmes . . . Establishment of friendly relations between the public and the Army . . . "Speakers' Panel" constituting a list of lecturers who speak on a variety of subjects . . . Internal Publicity to British and Indian Units . . . Recording of Messages to soldiers' families . . . Production of films. These are a few of the many activities carried out by the Directorate of Public Relations.




ALL INDIAN SOLDIERS *should know this—*

When a soldier goes on Field Service in India he receives the higher scale of rations and batta at the rate of Rs. 5, so that a soldier on Field Service with 12 months' service earns Rs. 31-8. If he goes on service overseas he gets a further Rs. 7 per month expatriation allowance. Thus, an Indian soldier on Field Service Overseas who has been in the army for 12 months or more earns a total of Rs. 38-8. Overseas, in hard cash, the Sepoy receives Rs. 33-8, the L/Naik Rs. 35-8, the Naik Rs. 46 to Rs. 48, and the Havildar Rs. 49 to Rs. 53.

In addition to this he is fed, clothed and accommodated free, receives free medical attention and lighting, free travel when granted furlough, and travel concessions when granted leave. At a conservative estimate these concessions represent in kind at least Rs. 21 per month to the man not on Field Service and a correspondingly larger amount to the man on Field or Overseas Service.





your

ARMY COMMANDER

says

"A few days ago I read in a daily paper a quotation which struck me as so appropriate to our position and so powerful an approach to our task that I have adopted it as a motto for my Headquarters and it is posted in all my Staff Offices.

I recommend it to you. Remember it for the spirit of determination it exudes. This is what it says:—

"The difficult is that which can be done immediately. The impossible will take a little longer"

In that spirit of getting on with the job, whatever the obstacle or opposition, lies the road to an earlier victory and peace, and towards that goal the men of the Eastern Army will play a leading, perhaps decisive part".

*Lieut. General N. M. S. IRWIN,
C.B., D.S.O., M.C.,*

*G. O. C.-in-chief, Eastern Army
— in a recent broadcast. —*

