

Broadcast from Calcutta  
on 2 Sep '44.

Mani: Indian Army Observer.

Script for Broadcast: With the Indian troops in Manipur.

Early in June I was flown into besieged Imphal. Flying over high mountains and dense forests and piercing thick monsoon clouds we reached Imphal. On landing I expected to see grave and stern faces; instead, I found a cheerful atmosphere.

Imphal as I saw it from the air was a picturesque green valley surrounded by several ranges of hills whose tops were covered with heavy monsoon clouds. Within a few hours of my arrival, I had a taste of the Manipur monsoon. All roads except the few metalled ones became rivers of mud and pools of water collected everywhere. The ground became so slippery that some of us who were living on hill-slopes had literally to skate down. Leeches started crawling up my boots and after sunset swarms of mosquitoes began to make their irritating injections.

Having told you about the monsoon in this valley I should tell you about the conditions under which our troops have been fighting here. You must have heard of the island-hopping strategy in the South West Pacific. In Manipur we have been hill hopping. Capturing hill top after hill top we have driven the Japs from Indian soil. Usually the Japs were on the crests of these steep hills and our infantry had to charge with bayonets up almost perpendicular slopes after our artillery had "softened up." In such attacks our troops often had to climb more than 3,000 feet. On either side were deep yawning valleys with dense forests. If a human being fell into them and survived his injuries, his chances of escape would be rare. While fighting in the plains our troops had to walk knee-deep through slimy slow-moving rivers of mud and had to cross thick jungles of steep ravines and swift-flowing nullahs.

Frequently they had to cross rivers in spite to keep in touch with the fast retreating enemy. The rain beats down constantly and thick mists envelop the countryside. Landslides are frequent and cause great inconvenience when we are moving swiftly in spite of the monsoon. For days together our troops have had no rest and when they had a little respite they used to close their eyes for a short nap as they were standing in the knee-deep slush because to sit down or lie was to drown oneself in the mud. If you had been there you would have been surprised at their good cheer and light-heartedness in spite of such extreme hardship. You would have certainly grown proud of these tough and resourceful Indian troops who making light of this arduous life, smilingly crack with you a few jokes in Hindustani. You would have found them quite confident of their superiority over the Japs, a superiority which events during the last few months have amply proved.

You are proud of the name that the Indian Army has established for itself in the Middle East and in Italy. You ought equally to be proud of the part Indian troops have played in the battle for Manipur, fighting on their own soil and defending their own country against the invader. If you had been there with me to see the gradual wiping of the enemy from all the four roads leading out of Imphal, you will certainly cherish the fame of the Indian Army with the realisation that India possesses such fine types of fighting men.

On the Manipur Road, with a British Division; the 7th Indian Division and the 5th Indian Division took equal shares in driving out the Japs. Jats, Dogrs, Sikhs and Punjabis ~~NA~~ distinguished themselves. Within another three weeks the road to ~~U~~khurul in the north-east was also cleared. The honours were due to Sikhs, two Frontier regiments, Gurkhas and two British regiments. This was

closely followed by the clearing of the 130 mile-long Silchar track running west from Imphal. The worst conditions of the monsoon were experienced here but Rajputs, Dogras and Punjabis came off in flying colours in spite of it. Men from the Frontier took a leading share in the fight along the Tiddim Road to the South-West along with Gurkhas and British troops. The climax to the entire fighting was reached when the Japs ran back to Burma in a hurry on the road to Tamu, chased by troops of the 23rd Indian Division. Patiala Sikhs, Rajputs and Mahrattas were close at their heels and converted the Jap retreat into a rout.

I must mention the Madras Regiment which had to defend Imphal in the north. Probing with patrols in the Iril Valley, they brought back useful information regarding the enemy in addition to killing a large number of them. Indian Signallers could be seen carrying on both in bad and fair weather and their clothes were never dry. They had always to wade across water before they could get to their wiring masts. Even along shelled roads they could be seen calmly repairing their lines. Indian Artillery had to haul their heavy guns up steep slopes as high as 5,000 feet but they were always there in time to have a good crack at the Japs. Indian manned tanks successfully supported our infantry and always adhered to their highest code of honour - never-to lose their tanks. Indian Sappers, Pioneers, transport personnel and muleteers - all carried out their tasks in perfect time unmindful of the severe conditions and some of them marched with our infantry into the interior of dense forests when their only contact with the rear was by wireless and they were fed by supplies dropped from the air.

I should now tell you about the completeness with which the Jap has been beaten. He was in most cases

starving and everywhere short of food. Men from the Frontier told me one day that they had found him eating grass from his mess tin; such instances can be multiplied. He was short of ammunition. In one encounter he had to throw stones at the attacking Punjabis. His morale was completely shaken. He ran to save his skin. The remnants of his army left behind in their retreat ammunition, rations, trucks, pack-saddles. I have seen the paddy growing on the rice-bags that they left behind. He could not even take his guns with him-so great was his hurry. He even left behind some tanks. He discarded his wireless equipments and telephones. His dead were scattered all over the battle areas.

On the other hand the morale of our troops is very high. He now knows he can fight under the most rigorous conditions. The Indian soldier has become tough and resourceful. "Our men are in good fighting spirit and the enemy is no match for them", said a V.C.O. from Kohat to me. I have watched the superiority of our troops over the enemy. In ambushes our men have proved much cleverer, in reconnaissance patrols they have successfully brought back useful information without the enemy's knowledge, in raids our handfuls of men have inflicted large casualties on numerically superior forces and in frontal attacks our companies have swept to victory with bayonet charges showing a dash and daring that has terrified the enemy. Even in the element of surprise the enemy has been outwitted. Here is how a Sikh battalion captured a hill near Palel. One company went in to make a fake attack and another was sent to cut the enemy's line of communication. Meanwhile, a section crept into the heart of the enemy position and at a given signal shouted 'Sat Sri Akhal', the battle-cry of the Sikhs. Simultaneously the same cry rent the air from the fake attack company. The enemy was so completely taken aback

that he thought we had surrounded him and fled from the hill abandoning some of his dead.

You must be interested in the kind of life our troops lead in the frontline. I can tell you it is not always / grim and very often they amuse themselves in a nautch-party. Punjabi jawans dressed as dancing girls used to entertain them with dance, song, and kisses. Now and then the nautch girls of Manipur whose dance is famous visit the troops and entertain them. The troops also have their own cinema and games. Our troops have a good sense of humour even in the frontline. I was accompanying an Indian Air Force Officer who was driving his jeep at nearly fifty miles an hour. We were held up by a naik of the Military Police, who told my friend in Hindustani: Sir, you are not driving a Spitfire now!"

The relationship between our troops and the Manipuris have been cordial. The Manipuris have willingly vacated their bashas for our troops to stay in, have supplied vegetables, fish, eggs and chicken to them and also fresh milk for use in our hospitals. More often the token of friendship is a cigarette of which the Manipuris - both men and women - are equally fond.

As I was returning from Manipur with some of our leave-going troops, I saw the children of Assam by the road-side lustily cheering them. I realised immediately that you have not forgotten the Indian Army that fought in Manipur and kept the invader <sup>away</sup> / from your home? ©

ENDS.

Mani: Indian Army Observer  
Comilla: 2 Oct. '44  
Talk for BBC---1

In India the word "frontier" has been commonly understood till now as the north-west frontier that divides India from Afghanistan. Now the futile attempt of the Japs to invade India has brought into prominence an equally important frontier--~~the~~ ~~ranges~~ of high mountains and dense forests to the east of the province of Assam that separate India from Burma.

The peaks of these mountains vary in height from 3,000 to 6,000 feet <sup>are</sup> and ~~xxx~~ mostly steep knife-edged ridges difficult of ascent. Often on either side of the narrow ascent are deep yawning valleys so thickly wooded that if one fell into them his chances of escape would be rare. Mountain torrents pour down in great force and flow across as swift nullahs and small rivers. Interspersed with the high hills are green picturesque valleys and the biggest of them is the Imphal plain which is the main portion of the Indian State of Manipur. In the hills dwell the friendly Nagas, Kachins and Kukis.

The monsoon is a real menace to <sup>e</sup> these parts and is probably the heaviest in this part of the world. All roads except the few metalled ones become rivers of mud and pools of water collect everywhere. The ground becomes slippery making it extremely difficult to climb hills. Leeches abound and after sunset swarms of mosquitoes make their irritating injections.

This is the country-- its condition accentuated by the monsoon-- in which Indian troops have been fighting. Hill-hopping, they have been capturing the hill-tops from the enemy by frontal attacks, mostly with bayonets, after our artillery had softened up. Walking through knee-deep slimy slow moving rivers of mud, crossing thick jungles of steep ravines and swift-flowing rivers, they have pursued the fast retreating enemy. Mists envelop <sup>our troops</sup> the countryside and landslides are frequent. Some of ~~them~~ used to close their eyes for a short nap as they were standing in the slush because to sit down or lie was to drown oneself in the mud. In spite of such extreme hardship, these tough and resourceful men from all parts of India have been cheerful and lighthearted.

In the push towards Tamu on looking at the paddy growing on the rice bags left behind by the fleeing Japs, a Sikh jawan ~~exclaimed~~ exclaimed: " Poor rats, they have not had enough time to reap their harvest! "

The Indian sepoy is confident of his superiority over the Japs. In ambushes he has proved cleverer, in reconnaissance patrols he has brought back useful information without the enemy's knowledge, in raids his handful of men have inflicted large casualties on numerically superior forces and in frontal attacks, his companies have swept to victory with bayonet charges showing a dash and daring that has terrified the enemy. Even in the element of surprise the Indian has outwitted the Jap. This is how ~~the~~ the Patiala Sikhs captured a hill near Palel. One company went in to make a fake attack and another was sent to cut the enemy's line of communication. Meanwhile a section crept into the heart of the enemy and at a given signal shouted 'Sat Sri Akhal', the battle-cry of the Sikhs. Simultaneously the same cry rent the air from the fake attack company. The enemy was so completely taken aback that he thought we had surrounded him and fled from the hill abandoning some of his dead. The Sikhs won the hill for no loss.

Life is not always grim for the Indian soldier. In between battles he entertains himself. At one place a few Punjabi jawans dressed as dancing-girls were singing rural Punjabi songs of love and dancing to the rythm of an improvised tabla. At another place Madrasi sepoys were enacting pieces from the Ramayana in Tamil in an open-air theatre. They seemed to be carrying make-up articles with them wherever they went-- so fond are they of their stage.

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Mani: Indian Army Observer  
Comilla, 8 Oct '44  
Talk for BBC---2

Manipur is doubly precious to Indian history. For the first time since several hundreds of years Indian troops have fought on their own soil resisting a ruthless foreign invader. Secondly the heroism, valour and courage of the Indian troops, true to their tradition, rose to an epic form here and men from all parts of India-- from distant Nepal to the remotest corner of the Madras province-- took their share in this great effort.

Unfortunately, owing to the attention of the world ~~be~~ being focussed on events elsewhere the importance and true magnitude of the Battle of Manipur has not been appreciated. On a front extending to nearly three hundred miles ~~and~~ three Jap divisions have been beaten and thrown out, the Japs suffering nearly 50,000 casualties. General Slim's 14th. Army troops, British and Indian, who fought there know how they had to fight both a maleficent monsoon as well as a powerful foe. When the lotus blooms in the ponds of Manipur and the coy maidens ~~all~~ along the roads ~~xxxxxx~~ smile <sup>as they</sup> and throw their fishing nets into the lakes from <sup>where</sup> ~~when~~ the enemy is now far removed, our troops understand it to be an expression of <sup>their</sup> ~~their~~ gratitude. <sup>And gratitude <sup>even</sup> more than popularity, fills the hearts of troops with joy.</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~.

To understand the Indian soldier one has to know his military tradition both in the Indian Army and in Indian history. He is proud of his noble past and heritage. Coupled with his high sense of duty and his philosophy of life, this is what makes him valiant and has contributed to his success in Eritrea, El Alamein, Benghazi, Tobruk, Italy and Manipur. Destiny rules him and to die as a warrior is ~~xxxxxx~~ the greatest honour to him.

Not only the men but young Indian officers have also played a gallant part in the Manipur fighting. Lt. Daljitsingh Randhawa, 6th Rajputana Rifles, led a bayonet attack on a Jap strong position on the Palel-Tamu Road and for his courage and initiative he has been awarded the M.C. The enemy was entrenched on a knife-edged ridge and had their machine-gun posts on the higher slopes of the ridge. Daljit and his men had to climb as



they were attacking. Covered by fire from the rear, the young Sikh officer led his men undauntedly even though they suffered early casualties. While within a few yards of an enemy machine gun post <sup>he knew two</sup> ~~threw~~ grenades into it and killed two. Very far ahead of his men, he advanced further and met face to face a Jap with whom he had a dramatic interlude. Only a few yards between them, they were gleaming at each other and for a few moments were measuring each other from top to toe. But ~~the~~ the Indian officer had nothing but contempt for the Jap; for, as a child years back has he not learnt that a Jap toy breaks more easily than others and since then he had considered the Japs as of inferior quality. "It was a tense moment for me", he said describing the incident to an Indian Army Observer. "The Jap beckoned to me with his finger but I said: 'Tairo!'. The next thing I did instinctively was to throw my remaining two 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 his wounds were being dressed, he was restless and wanted to have one more crack at the enemy but he was not allowed. However his men cleared the position and held it.

Now and then the Japs have provided our troops with some amusement. Throwing both his hands up in the air, one unarmed Jap approached one of our posts near Bishenpore. Losing his nerve at the last moment, probably seeing the Gurkhas there, he turned back and tried to run away. But a well-aimed shot from a Gurkha rifle made him fall dead to the earth.

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Mani: Indian Army Observer  
Imphal: 31 Oct '44  
Script for BBC---4

On a dusty evening when the red clouds in the sky were indicative of the bloody battle that a battalion of the 13th Frontier Force Rifles had just ~~with few~~ then fought with the Japs on the Ukhrul Road in the <sup>fourth</sup> last week of June last, Subedar Abdul Rauf of village Shadi Khel, district Kohat, with his dusty clothes and tired yet stern face exclaimed to an Indian Army Observer: "Our men are in good fighting spirit and the enemy is no match for them". Behind these words lie the words of a class of officers in the Indian Army who are known as the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers and who are <sup>in</sup> intimate contact with their ~~men,~~ <sup>men</sup> living and fighting alongside them as they do.

Their contribution to the successes of the Indian Army has been very great and to the winning of the battle of Manipur still greater. Their rich experience-some of them with more than 25 years service-combined with their able leadership attained by ~~an~~ intimate contact with their troops has proved invaluable to battalion commanders especially in the dense jungles. It is well-known in the frontline that the V.C.O. is the key-man. Even among ancillary troops he is very essential to the quick and efficient working of our logistics.

Always at the head of their men, these officers have set the example in courage and complete disregard for personal safety. Jemadar Sattar Khan of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment and of village Shakradara, district Kohat, is an illustrious example but there are many like him. Ahead of his men in a bayonet-charge on a strongly held position, he engaged a Jap officer in a hand-to-hand scuffle and while on the point of vanquishing him he was mortally wounded by a grenade with which the Jap officer killed himself. This happened months ago near Bishenpore but every week brings in a fresh story of equal heroism on the frontline.

Jemadar Uday Prakah Misra of Hasangunj, Lucknow, and of the Bengal Sappers and Miners, doing a less spectacular job dis-

played courage to an equal degree. Engaged in the task of establishing a road-block with mines and tar-barrels behind the Japs on the Tamu Road, he and his men came under heavy fire. Wounded twice, he would not go back till he had finished his job and completely satisfied that his mines were blowing up enemy vehicles.

Even less spectacular may be the deeds of the V.C.O.s in the Indian Engineers, Indian Signals, Indian Pioneers and in the R.I.A.S.C. But if one should only watch them at work one would realise their great importance and the contribution they have made in saving their country from being invaded by a ruthless enemy. They may come from different parts of India and from different religions and castes but the defeat of the enemy has been their one aim and to this end the V.C.O.s of the Indian Army have played a worthy and glorious part.

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TIME OF ORIGIN

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Time	Receiver	System	Time	Sender

Many of you may have seen a caravan on the move but I ~~would~~  
wonder if any of us have seen that most colourful caravan that left the Indian soil near the Assam-Burma border on a February evening in 1943 and entered dense jungles on its mysterious and adventurous 1,000 mile journey into the heart of Burma. A light blinked for the last time on the farther shore of the black Chindwin before the men moving in single file with all noise suppressed—even the horses and mules were trained not to neigh—disappeared. They vanished into enemy territory with radio sets on the backs of mules and oxen as their only contact with their bases in India. At their head was a leader who with his long hair and dreamy looks appeared more like a prophet than an adventurer.

That was one of the most daring expeditions of this war, known as the Wingate Expedition and their leader was the 38 year old India born Brigadier Orde Charles Wingate from Aberdeenshire, Scotland. To many of us in this country (S. Africa) it recalls to our minds the story of our adventurous pioneer, David Livingstone.

While Livingstone came to a dark continent to explore and carry the torch of civilization, the Wingate expedition went deep into enemy country during a war of great calamitous magnitude and caused ~~great~~ <sup>immense</sup> havoc to the enemy. In the three months they were there they raised bands of Burmese to fight with our forces, have blown up railway lines, sabotaged Jap military stores and dislocated the enemy's road transport.

These brave men christening themselves "Chindits" after the fabulous griffins who guard the Burmese temples, are a fearless band recruited from the stilted houses of Burma, from the hill villages of Nepal, and from the grimy streets of Lancashire industrial towns.

The Burma Rifles contributed largely to the success of the expedition. Consisting of Chins, Kachins, Karens and Burmese, they were the eyes and ears of Wingate's columns. You must remember that the jungles on this frontier of India are as dense as our own jungles, where mass penetration is difficult while infiltration can go almost unchecked. These seasoned troops of the Burma Rifles had served in their homeland before the

and knew the customs of their peoples, their jungles, tracks and rivers and how to live on the country.

Wingate gave the sturdy mountain bred Gurkhas and the city bred tall British troops intensive training in jungle warfare, river crossing and forced marches with heavy packs till they were moulded into tough and determined shock troops. Thousands of troops became muleteers and stayed with their animals day and night. Others learned to look after elephants. The rest were used as infantry.

Divided into several columns able to operate separately, the force moved with aircraft cooperation. Radios kept them in touch with army headquarters and radio messages told planes where to drop supplies, which targets to bomb and the latest news of enemy movements. Loudspeakers were used to talk to the villagers and leaflets were issued to them.

Proceeding eastward by jungle tracks and over mountain ranges, certain columns penetrated over 200 miles into Burma. Early in their march putting out of action a main railway link, they destroyed the track and bridges at seventy five places. The enemy tried to encircle them and after sharp encounters our men proceeded eastward and crossed the river Irrawady. Operating there for a considerable period and engaging large numbers of the enemy, when they had done as much damage as they could, the force made its way out in spite of a Jap attempt to trap them.

The R.A.F. played a magnificent role in this expedition doing over 50,000 miles of night and day flying, transporting and delivering by parachute over half a million pounds of supplies to constantly moving troops and sometimes evacuating the wounded.

Wingate went with the British Premier to Quebec and there plans were formulated for the recent airborne invasion of Burma, landing troops 200 miles behind the enemy lines. It is indeed very unfortunate that when his forces were once again making history that their leader should have lost his life in an air crash over our own territory.

Wingate lived and died a hero. His men embody in concrete form his ideal of the "combination of the oldest with the newest". They think of the Japs in the same terms: "a dull, ferocious, poverty-stricken little enemy". The spirit that he has instilled into them and the training they have received befit them for one of the most arduous yet grandest jobs of the war in the East-- the driving of Japs back to their homeland.