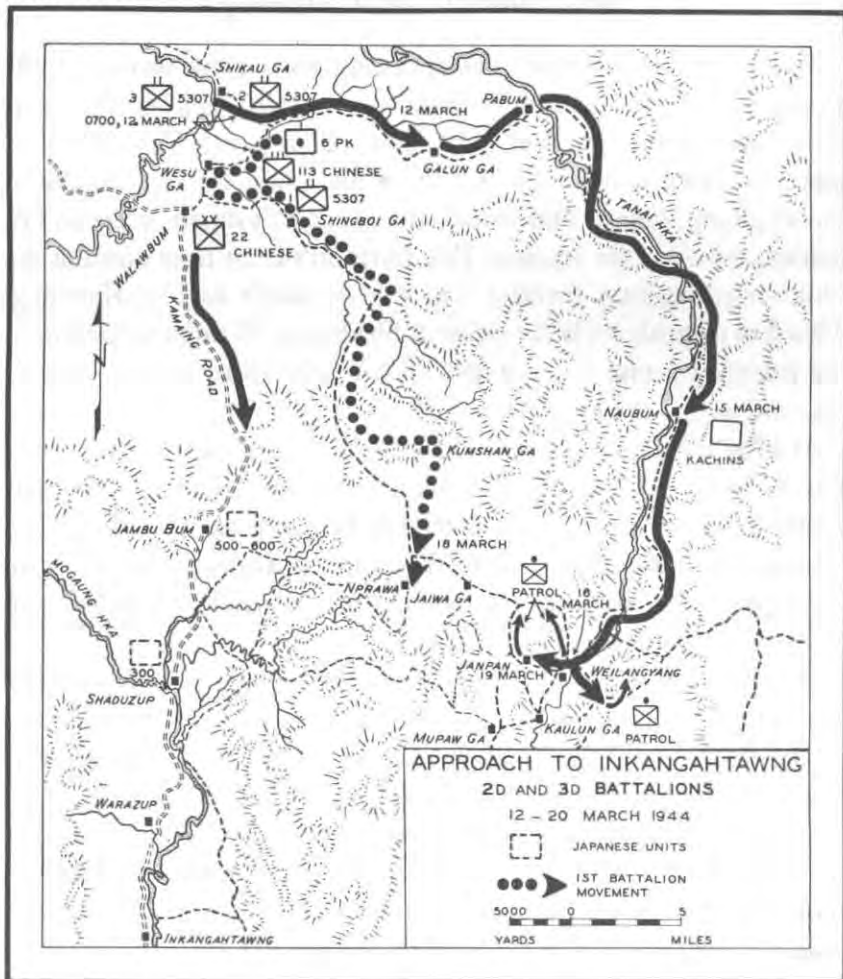


On 16 March the 2d and 3d Battalions crossed about 15 miles of rough, muddy trail to Weilangyang. The Kachins warned the Americans that the Japanese were now near, so patrols were sent out along all routes in the vicinity, and blocks and ambushes were established to the northwest and south.

At Weilangyang General Merrill stopped the 2d and 3d Battalions to wait for definite instructions covering their movement toward Inkangahtawng and to receive a food drop. During their 2-day halt the men rested, washed their clothes, and fished and swam in the river. They cleared a field where supply planes dropped the large quantity of food scheduled to arrive. Elephants, which Captain Curl

MAP NO. 12





NATIVE BRIDGE ACROSS THE TANAI RIVER south of Naubum is used by men of the 2d and 3d Battalions en route to Inkangahtawng. Horses and mules ford the four-foot deep stream.

had "borrowed" from the Japanese, who in turn had "borrowed" them from the Kachins, carried the packages to a distributing area. Capt. James W. Parker, the unit dental officer, came in by plane and started work on all those whose teeth urgently needed attention. With him he brought dispatches which gave General Merrill last-minute reports on enemy activity and an account of what was happening to the 1st Battalion, then north of Nprawa.

Just at dusk on 18 March a liaison plane dropped a message from General Stilwell, instructing the 2d and 3d Battalions to protect the flank of the Chinese advance by blocking approaches along the Tanai River from the south. General Merrill had expected this order and decided to move southward to Kaulun Ga and Mupaw Ga. At Kaulun Ga he would command the trails on both banks of the river, and at Mupaw Ga, on the highest hill in the area, he would have observation along the trail 2 miles west of the river.

At 1300 on 19 March the 2d Battalion, together with the command group, moved out to Janpan on the way to Kaulun Ga and Mupaw Ga, leaving the 3d Battalion to follow shortly. Captain Curl and his Kachin guerrillas went along with the 2d Battalion.

At 1030 on the following day, General Merrill received radio orders from General Stilwell directing the 2d and 3d Battalions to accomplish their original mission as well as to block any Japanese movement along the Tanai River. He estimated that an enemy force of about 2,000 was south and west of Kamaing.

General Merrill's orders dividing the Marauders' efforts included the following provisions for movement (Map No. 13, page 64):

"The 2d Battalion and the Khaki Combat Team of the 3d Battalion under command of Col. Charles N. Hunter will move south on the [trail to] Warong . . . , reconnoiter the trails south toward Kamaing, and move rapidly to seize and hold . . . a block on the main road between Warazup and Malakawng in the general vicinity of Inkangahtawng.

"Orange Combat Team will remain in the vicinity of Janpan, prepared to move on short notice. Two reinforced platoons will be kept ready to polish off any Japs filtering into this area. Extensive patrolling of the trails to the north, south, and west will be maintained.

"Capt. Curl's guerrillas will also aid in the patrolling of this area and will furnish guides to go with Col. Hunter's force.

"Communications will be maintained by radio, runner, and liaison plane with command post which will be at Janpan temporarily."

The 3d Battalion Headquarters with Orange Combat Team was to support Colonel Hunter and to block the trail below Auche leading to Warong and the trails south of Manpin. They were to prevent a flanking Japanese move from the Kamaing area against the Chinese near Shaduzup or against the Marauders near Inkangahtawng.

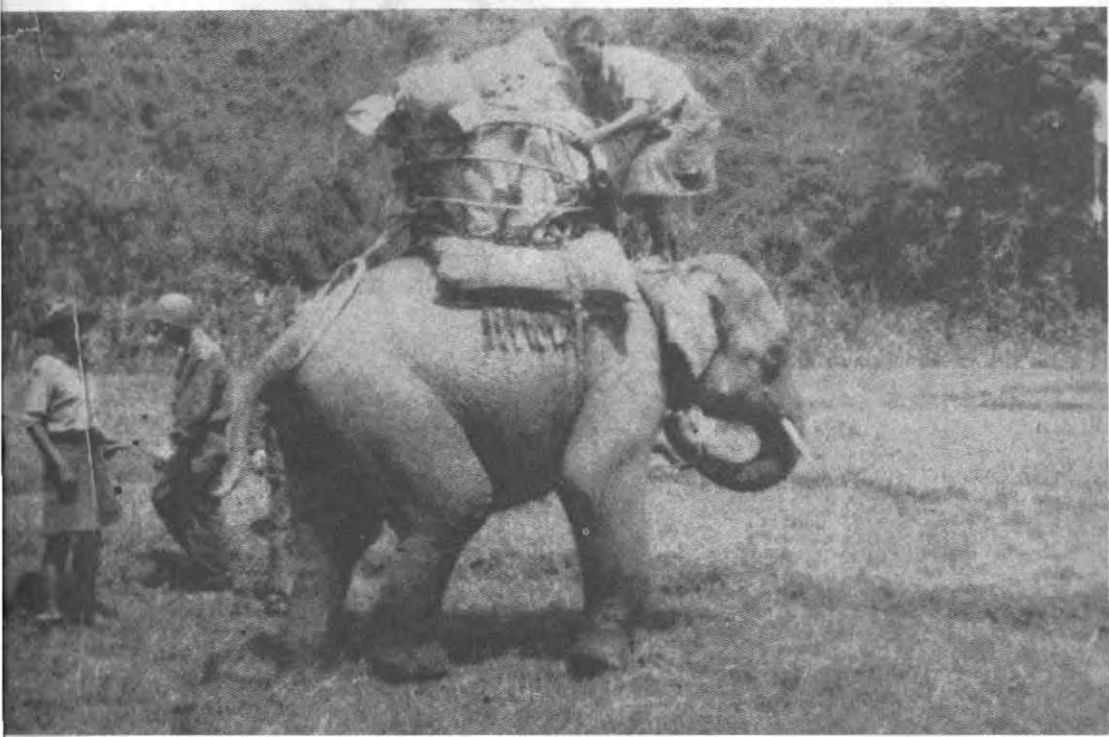
Inkangahtawng Block

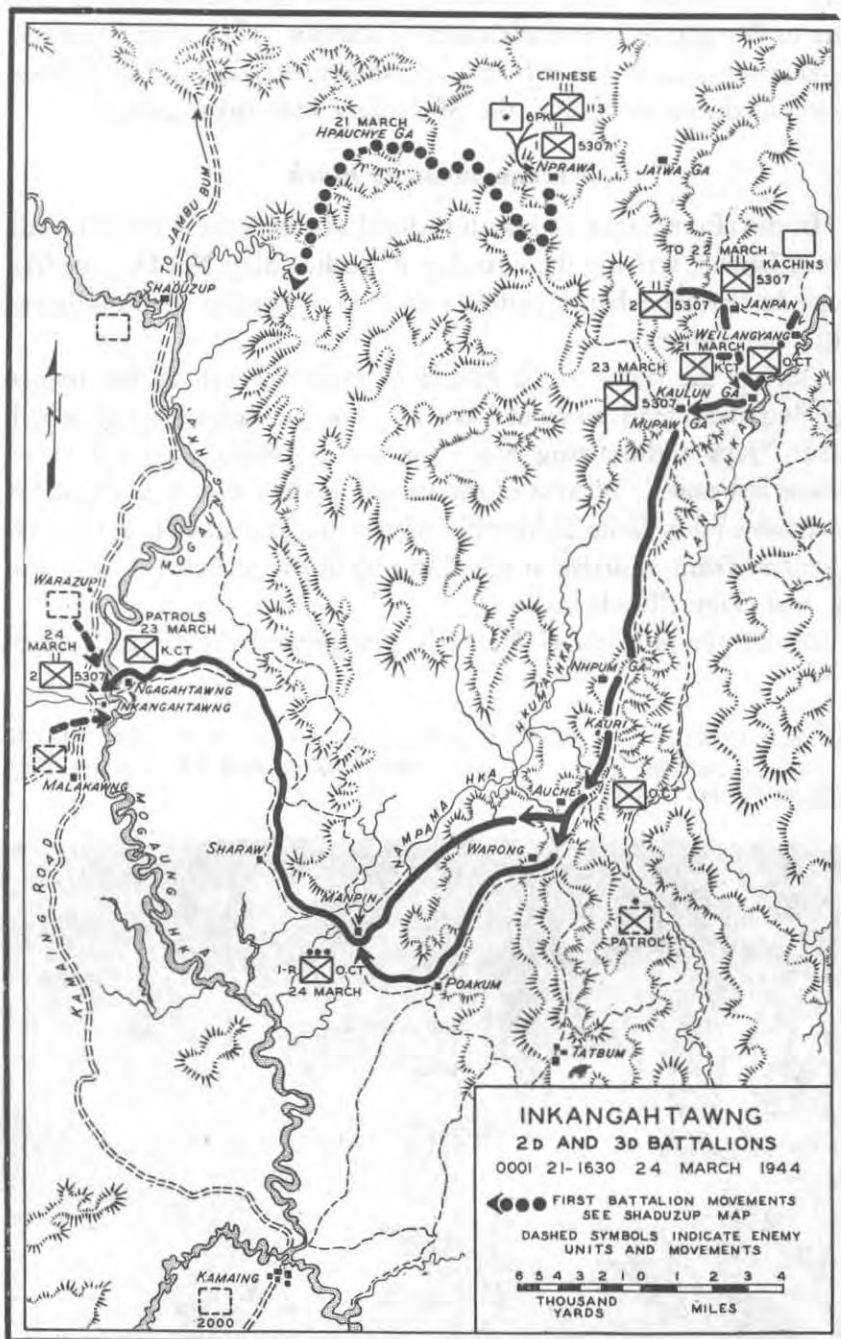
In the afternoon of 21 March Colonel Hunter's force headed south from Janpan, arriving the next day at Auche (Map No. 13, page 64). The 3d Battalion Headquarters and Orange Combat Team followed the main column.

During the night of 22 March General Merrill, at his Janpan headquarters, received from General Stilwell a radio message which said: "Japs withdrawing down the road. Jambu Bum fell today. Come fast now." Because of the success of the Chinese 22d Division at Jambu Bum, General Merrill ordered the 2d Battalion and Khaki Combat Team to arrive at the Kamaing Road 36 hours earlier than he had originally planned.

On 23 March, Colonel Hunter's men pressed rapidly forward to

A "BORROWED" ELEPHANT EQUIPPED WITH A NATIVE RACK carries the packages which Marauders and Kachins pick up from the drop field at Kaulun Ga.





maintain their new schedule. In order to avoid possible enemy patrols on main routes, they left the trail at Auché to follow the Nampama River as far as Manpin. From there they took up the trail leading through Sharaw into the flat Mogaung Valley.

Patrols from the 2d Battalion clashed with Japanese near Inkangahtawng, and scouts reported a company of enemy dug in near the village, apparently alerted and being reinforced. The 2d Battalion waded the Mogaung River, pushed forward as far as it could, and in the face of increasing opposition dug in about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north of Inkangahtawng and 300 yards east of the Kamaing Road, between the road and the river. Khaki Combat Team moved to a position on the east bank of the river where it could protect the rear of the 2d Battalion, assist the battalion with mortar fire, and patrol eastward.

Colonel Hunter planned that the 2d Battalion would throw up a road block at Inkangahtawng, would send patrols north to contact troops from the Chinese 113th Regiment which should be working down from Shaduzup, and would cut the road again south of Inkangahtawng toward Kamaing. Khaki Combat Team would be held in reserve. He had expected this whole operation to tie in with the thrust which the 1st Battalion was making near Shaduzup. According to the original plans, the two simultaneous attacks on the Japanese-held road would support each other by dividing the enemy's attention. Word that the 1st Battalion was delayed and would be unable to carry out its mission on schedule came too late to modify the over-all plan.

Shortly after daylight on 24 March, Colonel McGee sent two reinforced platoons of his 2d Battalion to envelope the village of Inkangahtawng. These platoons struck heavily fortified positions too strong for them to handle, and McGee ordered them to withdraw before they became inextricably involved.

At 0700 the 2d Battalion's left flank was attacked heavily from the road. Kunai grass, 6 to 8 feet high, offered the Japanese excellent cover within which to assemble small groups for a charge. For 15 minutes heavy mortar fire fell on the Marauder position, then, as the mortar fire slackened, the enemy charged from the kunai grass. At a range of 20 yards the whole Marauder perimeter opened fire. Only a few of the Japanese ever reached the defending line: one was killed by a Marauder in his fox hole after a brief wrestling match;

the head of a lieutenant, blown completely off, rolled into another fox hole. Met by this deadly fire, the attack wilted and collapsed.

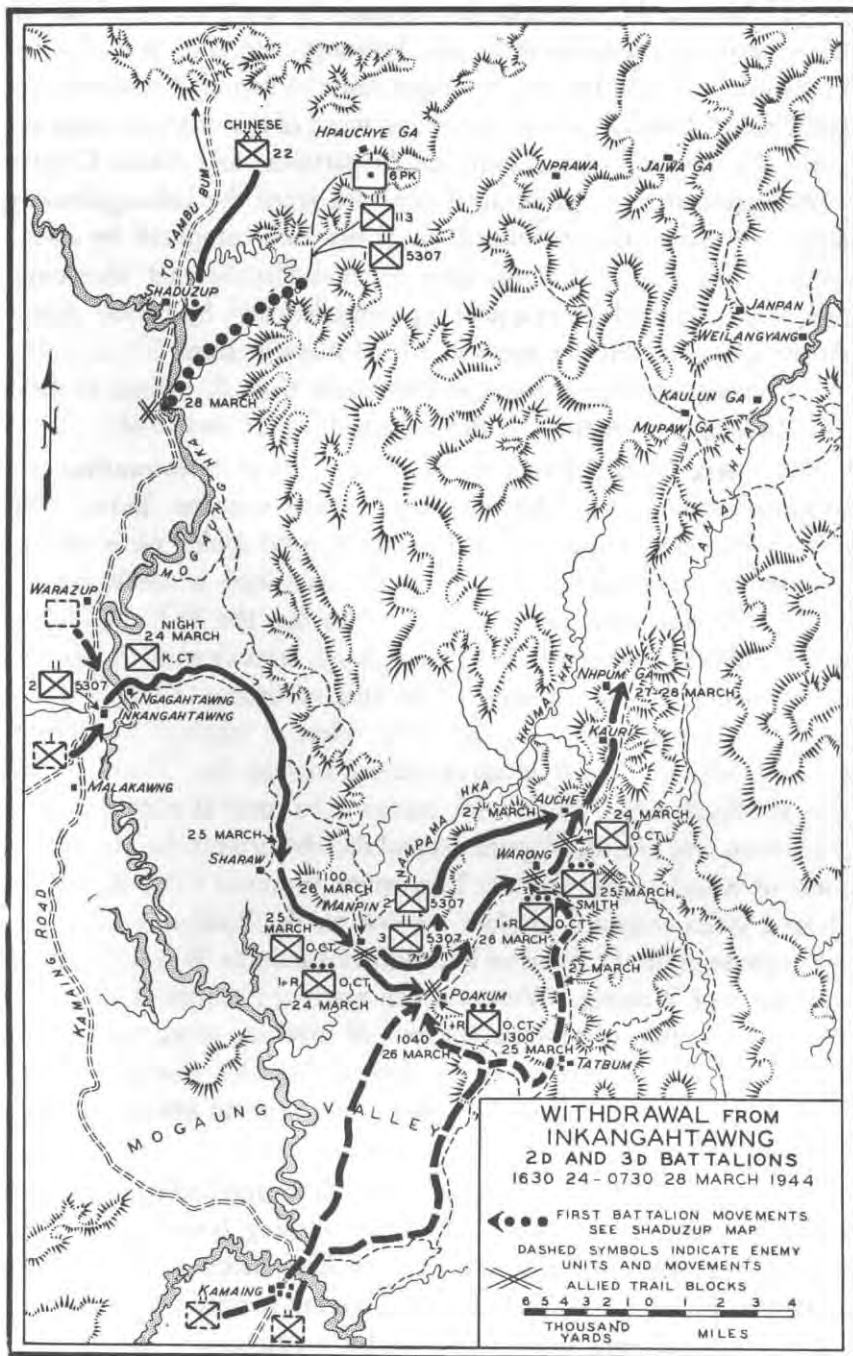
During the next 3 hours the Japanese repeatedly attacked from the north. Sgt. Norman H. Willey's Pioneer and Demolition Platoon bore the brunt of these attacks and repulsed them all. In the afternoon the Japanese, slipping in close to the river, assaulted the perimeter from the south, using mortar, machine-gun, and artillery preparation.

The men of the 2d Battalion were running low in ammunition and were in danger of being cut off from the rear. Movement of enemy trucks could be heard, bringing up reinforcements thought to be from Kamaing. The Japanese attacking from the north had artillery. A radio message was intercepted from the 1st Battalion to General Merrill, indicating that the 1st Battalion had not yet arrived at Shaduzup; the enemy was therefore free to concentrate against the Marauders at Inkangahtawng. McGee's orders had been to hold the block for 24 hours, but not to stay longer if this would endanger his force. In view of the situation, he decided at 1630 to withdraw toward Manpin. Khaki Combat Team held a bridgehead and kept its mortars hot until the 2d Battalion crossed to the east bank of the Mogaung River (Map No. 14, page 67). Then both units withdrew to Ngagahtawng, where they bivouacked. Four platoons, which McGee had sent in advance of the main force, had blocked all trails to the east and placed booby traps around the circumference of the bivouac. Colonel Hunter, engaged in keeping the line of communications open, was at Sharaw and did not know of the retirement.

Establishing and holding their perimeter for 24 hours to block the Kamaing Road had cost the Marauders 2 killed and 12 wounded. Known enemy dead numbered more than 200.

The Japanese Strike Toward the Tanai Valley

Even apart from the check at Inkangahtawng, the operations planned for Colonel Hunter's forces were disrupted by intelligence which had reached Unit headquarters (Map No. 14, page 67). From a captured Japanese map General Merrill had learned that a strong Japanese force, possibly two battalions, was expected to move from Kamaing to the Tanai Valley, advance north in that area, and then turn westward to attack the flank of the Chinese 22d Division near Shaduzup. General Stilwell ordered General Merrill to block this



move and to prevent any Japanese advance beyond Nhpum Ga. During 25 March, this information reached the units scattered on the trails between Ngagahtawng and Warong. Because of difficulties in communications, the first messages came to battalion commanders, and Colonel Hunter was late in getting word of the changed situation.

On the morning of the 25th, the 2d Battalion and Khaki Combat Team resumed their withdrawal eastward from the Inkangahtawng area. Carrying their wounded on litters and hampered by rough country and torrential rains, they reached Sharaw that afternoon; there they were able to evacuate the wounded men by liaison planes. At noon Colonel McGee received a brief message from General Merrill, warning him that a Japanese movement from Kamaing, in more than battalion strength, was threatening his rear and flank.

Meanwhile Colonel Beach, unaware of the new developments, was moving west toward Manpin with Orange Combat Team. His mission had been to protect the rear of the units which were advancing on Inkangahtawng, and he had established a block on the Warong-Auche trail. Hearing on the 24th that the 2d Battalion had reached the Kamaing Road, Colonel Beach started west to join the main force at Inkangahtawng. The bulk of Orange Combat Team reached Manpin at 1030 on the 25th. Here it received word from General Merrill of the Japanese threat toward the Tanai Valley. Colonel Beach immediately took measures to cover the trails leading from Kamaing toward Nhpum Ga and thereby protect the Marauders' route of withdrawal. He sent Lieutenant Weston's I and R Platoon about 2 miles eastward to place a block on the Poakum trail, and a rifle platoon under Lt. Warren R. Smith to watch the Warong-Tatbum trail south of Warong. Weston's men reached Poakum at 1300, sent back for a section of mortars and one of machine guns, and by evening were dug in and ready for action. Smith's platoon reached Poakum at dark, spent the night there, and went on toward Warong early next morning.

When an officer from Orange Combat Team reached him, Colonel Hunter learned for the first time of the warning from higher headquarters. Its meaning was not clear to him; from Kachin patrols toward Kamaing he knew that no movement toward the Tanai had started. On radioing General Merrill for permission to stay at Manpin, Colonel Hunter was directed to proceed to Nhpum Ga.

On 26 March, with the platoons of Weston and Smith covering the southern flank, the 2d and 3d Battalions started their march toward Auche.¹⁶ The 2d Battalion reached Manpin before noon, received a much needed drop of rations and ammunition, and went on nearly 5 miles. The 3d Battalion followed from Manpin next morning. The trail through Poakum and Warong would expose the flank of the withdrawal to the expected enemy attack, so the battalions again used the difficult route up the gorge of the Nampama River, which involved some 40 river crossings and was exhausting for the troops.

Before the 2d Battalion left Manpin, word was received that the enemy move was under way toward the Tanai Valley. Colonel Hunter learned at 1615 from scouts that the Japanese were starting north from Kamaing in motor trucks, which could use the wide trails for some distance. He called for an air attack by a fighter mission on patrol in the area, and their action helped to delay the enemy's move. However, forward elements of the Japanese force had already reached Poakum and were hotly engaged there with Lieutenant Weston's I and R Platoon.

Lieutenant Weston's fight began at 1040, when a weak advance party of Japanese approached Poakum on the Kamaing trail and was easily turned back. At 1130 an attack in company strength, made both on the trail and to the west of the village, was finally broken up by mortar fire. At 1400 a still heavier assault was made from three sides. Though it was held off, Lieutenant Weston estimated that the enemy force was now so large that he might be outflanked and encircled. After putting a heavy concentration of mortar fire on enemy assembly areas, the platoon pulled out of Poakum at 1520 and withdrew successfully toward Warong. Arriving there at 1800, the I and R Platoon joined Lieutenant Smith's rifle platoon and organized for a further delaying action. The combined forces numbered about 90 men. They had no radio communications, the only radio having been knocked out by enemy mortar fire at Poakum.

No enemy approached Warong until next morning, 27 March. Between 1000 and 1100 the Marauders' defenses were tested not only on the trail from Poakum but on the Tatbun trail. Strong enemy forces were converging on Warong by both routes. It took several hours for the Japanese to feel out the Marauder positions, and the first attacks were repulsed. By 1500 it appeared that the enemy was

¹⁶ Colonel Hunter's force was now dissolved; Khaki Combat Team rejoined the 3d Battalion.

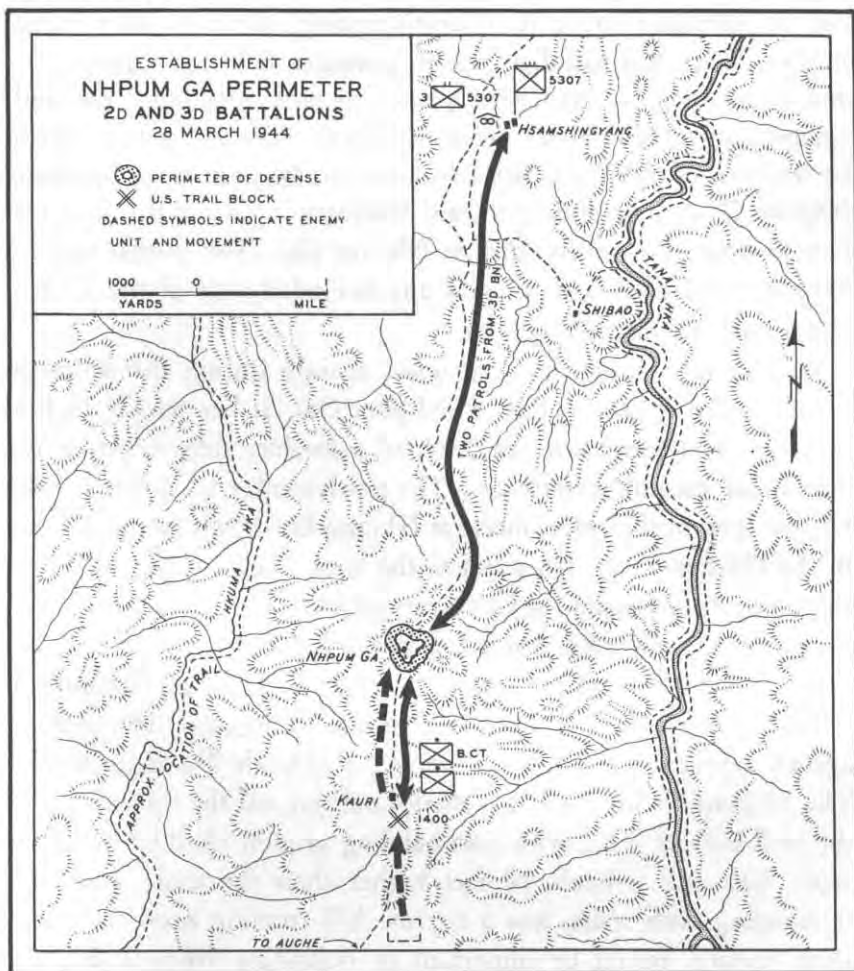
not only ready for an assault in strength but had shifted a force estimated at company strength west around Warong near the trail leading toward Auche. This threatened the escape route of the Marauder platoons, and a withdrawal was decided on. A messenger mounted on their only mule was sent back to notify General Merrill. The force was organized in two teams and about 1630 began to displace northward by successive bounds, one team holding while the other organized a stand further in the rear. These tactics held off the enemy and allowed the tired platoons to reach Auche by dark. Despite 2 days of fighting against an enemy much greater in numbers, the Marauder platoons had suffered no casualties.

Their action had been effective in covering the withdrawal of the main Marauder forces. On the 27th the 2d Battalion had reached Auche at 0930 and stayed there while the 3d Battalion went through and on toward the north. The troops at Auche set up defensive perimeters for the night and took precautions against possible infiltration from the direction of Warong.

28 March saw the last and hardest stage of the Marauders' withdrawal toward the Tanai Valley. At 0600 Khaki Combat Team started for Nhpum Ga, with Blue Combat Team a short distance behind. At 0630 the 2d Battalion headquarters and Green Combat Team were just pulling out of Auche when two enemy shells landed at the edge of the village. A moment later two more shells landed uncomfortably close to them.

The prospect facing the Marauders was extremely unsatisfactory. Between Auche and Nhpum Ga the trail was along the crest of a narrow ridge. Its precipitous sides, covered with rank growth, gave no room for dispersal, and it soon became evident that the enemy, from the vicinity of Warong, was using observed fire.

As the tail of the Marauders' column cleared Auche, a third pair of shells came whistling over. The Japanese had found the range; one man and several animals were hit. A steady stream of artillery fire then poured into the area and searched the trail. Nhpum Ga lay $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles ahead, and most of the trail was uphill. Mud was ankle-deep. Frequently the animals fell. They had to be unloaded before they could regain their feet, and then repacked. Word to "move faster" ran up and down the column, which already was moving at an awkward run. Medics were ordered to the rear where



they were kept busy. An hour and a half after leaving Auche, the 2d Battalion reached Nhpum Ga.

The exertion of the last few days had told heavily on the unit. The round trip from Nhpum Ga to Inkangahtawng was approximately 70 miles, and had included a hard fight at the Kamaing Road followed by forced marches. The last uphill dash from Auche through mud and bursting shells was particularly exhausting.

Nhpum Ga

General Merrill ordered the 2d Battalion to establish and hold a defensive perimeter at Nhpum Ga to stop the Japanese from advancing.

ing beyond that point (Map No. 15, above). He directed that the 3d Battalion move to Hsamshingyang, about 5 miles to the north. There this battalion was to protect a field for supply drops and an air strip for evacuation planes, as well as to block the trails against any surprise attack from the north. Combat patrols would be sent east of the Tanai River to keep the Japanese from bypassing Nhpum Ga and continuing toward Shaduzup. The 3d Battalion was also to send two patrols daily to Nhpum Ga. The patrols were to keep the trail open and to carry any wounded men of the 2d Battalion back to Hsamshingyang.

Four or five native huts, occupied mainly during the monsoon period, make up the village of Nhpum Ga. It lies on the highest ground, 2,800 feet above sea level, of a knobby ridge between the Tanai and Hkuma watersheds. The north-south trail, following the narrow crest of the ridge, meets at Nhpum Ga a path running down to the Hkuma River, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the west. East of the village the ridge has abrupt slopes cut by ravines which lead to the Tanai River, 2 miles away and 1,400 feet below the village. In both side valleys were trails which might be used by the Japanese to bypass Nhpum Ga.

The 2d Battalion took hurried measures to organize their defense against expected pursuit from the south (Sketch No. 2, page 73). The Nhpum Ga huts lay on a small knoll just off the intersection of the trail leading west, with commanding ground close by on either side. East was a knob, 50 feet higher than the trail; westward, dominating both trails, was a narrow hill running north to south. Both features would be important in defending Nhpum Ga, but the 2d Battalion's first concern was with the approaches from the south. Here, the trail came up toward the village along a gently sloping nose of ground, with a steep-sided draw to the west, covered with heavy jungle. Blue Combat Team set up positions to include this nose and defend its eastern flank. A machine gun was placed 100 yards down the western trail, and outposts were put on the key high ground near the village, to watch the flanks and rear. For the start, the south was the threatened area.

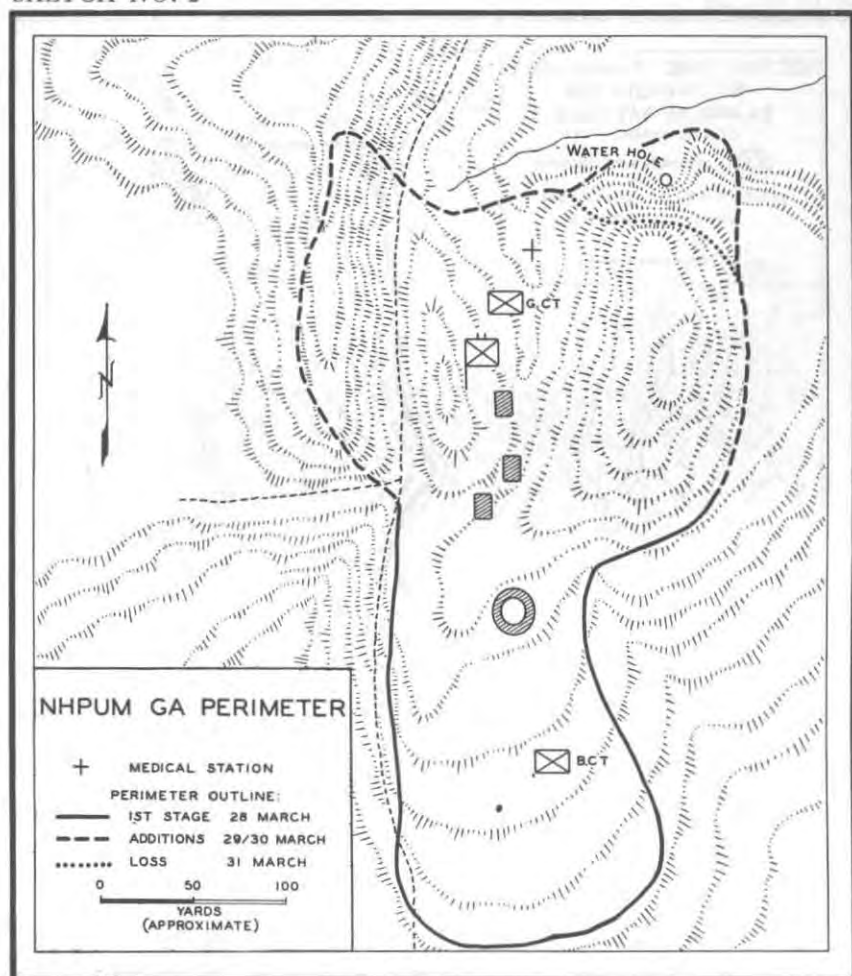
Colonel McGee was not given long to set up defenses. Two platoons, one at Kauri and one further north, had been left to put up delaying fights along the trail. They were forced back earlier

than had been expected, and by 1400 were in the perimeter with the Japanese following close behind.

At 1605 Japanese artillery and mortar fire began searching out the southern tip of the 2d Battalion's perimeter. A few minutes later came an infantry assault. This attack, easily repulsed, was obviously a feeling-out operation, and the Marauders held their automatic fire in order not to disclose their strength. It was believed that a heavy shock attack was imminent, and the men of the 2d Battalion utilized every moment to strengthen and improve their positions.

During the night of 28/29 March, occasional mortar and artillery fire fell into the perimeter. Doubtless intended to harass the defenders and keep them awake, the fire failed to accomplish this result. The

SKETCH NO. 2

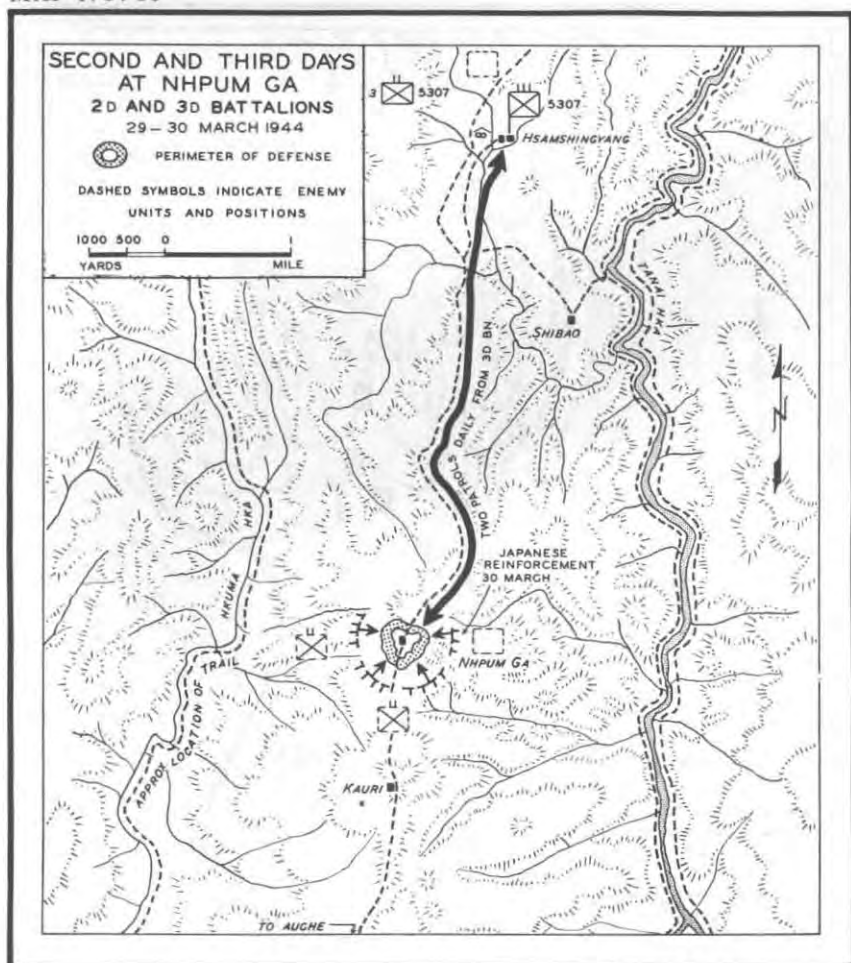


majority of the 2d Battalion men were so exhausted that nothing short of a direct hit could have aroused those not actually required to guard the two-man fox holes in the perimeter. In these one man slept while the other remained alert. An infiltrating night attack was greatly feared and would have been especially dangerous in view of the Marauders' condition, but the enemy failed to seize this opportunity.

On 29 March Colonel Hunter assumed command of the 5307th; General Merrill had become seriously ill and was awaiting evacuation from Hsamshingyang.

At daylight the Japanese again opened up with artillery and mortars (Map No. 16, below and Sketch No. 2, page 73). A

MAP NO. 16



machine-gun barrage preceded an attack at 0600 from the southeast. This thrust accomplished nothing for the enemy; neither did one from the southwest at 1000, nor a third at 1500 from almost due south. All three attacks followed the same pattern.

At 1515 and again at 1750 McGee, concerned about the trail to the north of the perimeter, radioed to unit headquarters at Hsamshingyang to see if the 3d Battalion could help at Nhpum Ga. No help was then available at Hsamshingyang. The 3d Battalion was needed at Hsamshingyang to defend the air strip and to stop any Japanese movement along the Tanai north of Nhpum Ga. Colonel Hunter told McGee that the 3d Battalion would continue to keep the trail open by sending a platoon combat patrol twice daily from the air strip to Nhpum Ga.

By nightfall it was evident that the Japanese were digging in for a siege. At 1750 light artillery fire commenced. Then the enemy's mortars and machine guns opened up, and his infantry struck at the perimeter's southwest corner. Again the attack failed.

The 2d Battalion expected more determined assaults and was beginning to worry about its flanks. Throughout the day the men in the perimeter had heard sounds indicating that the Japanese were moving west of Nhpum Ga near the side trail. During the evening Colonel McGee learned from Colonel Hunter that the enemy was moving down the Tanai Valley in large numbers and that probably at least a battalion was making the attack along the Nhpum Ga trail.¹⁷ Measures were taken to meet the flanking threats, and the perimeter was enlarged to include the high ground on both sides of the village. In improving and extending the positions, the digging was done at night and cautiously, for the Japanese had a trick of worming their way close to the perimeter to hurl grenades at any spot where they heard voices or sounds of activity.

Back at Hsamshingyang the 3d Battalion spent the night patrolling all avenues of approach to the air strip. One group of Japanese that tried to circle northward to the rear of the field was hit hard and turned back. Kachin guerrillas, busy scouting around the strip, frequently ambushed small enemy parties. The Kachins were probably of more assistance than anyone realized, by creating in the minds

¹⁷ This force was later identified by papers taken from Japanese bodies as a reinforced battalion of the 114th Regiment and elements of the 55th Regiment.

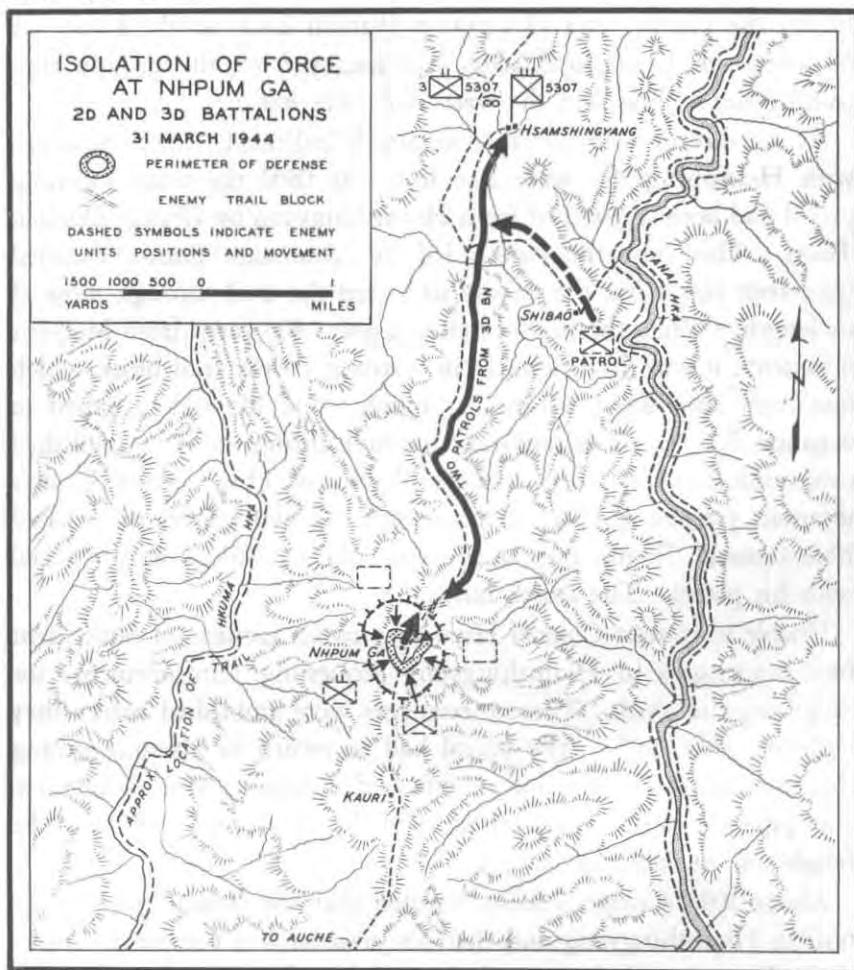
of the Japanese an exaggerated idea of the size of the area held by the Marauders and of their strength.

At Nhpum Ga Japanese artillery, machine-gun, and mortar fire opened with the dawn of 30 March. This time the eastern side of the perimeter was attacked in greater force than in any previous engagement, and the attack persisted despite the Marauders' heavy defensive fires. When this effort finally slackened, the Japanese closed in again a little later from farther north. Again they failed, and once more, after an attack had been repelled, the spirits of the defenders rose. During the day the Japanese located the position of the Marauders' mortars, and the enemy artillery began systematically to blast the rise which masked the mortars.

Developed progressively to meet the extending enemy attacks, the perimeter had now assumed an elongated shape, about 400 yards long and broadening in the northern half to include the key high ground on both sides of the trail. Green Combat Team held the western and northern side. The battalion's aid station had been placed just north of the village, on a slope partly protected from enemy shells by the small knoll. Fox holes were prepared large enough to accommodate litters and permit medical attention for the wounded. The trail to Hsamshingyang was still open; Sgt. John Keslik's patrol arrived from the 3d Battalion and stayed within the perimeter for the night. All litter cases had been carried to the airfield for evacuation. Within the perimeter living conditions were becoming extremely unpleasant. Since the first day enemy artillery had played havoc with the Marauders' animals, which could not be dug in. They had been put into the area between the knoll and the hill just west of the trail, and north of the knoll, but the ground gave no protection against the effects of tree bursts. Of 200 horses and mules, about 75 had been killed, and their carcasses after lying for 2 days on the ground had begun to putrefy. From beyond the perimeter the wind brought the smell of Japanese corpses which were already decomposing. The stench was almost insufferable.

Beginning of the Siege

31 March saw a full test of the Nhpum Ga defenses. The enemy barrage which started the day was not exceptionally heavy, but the attack that followed came from three points at once: south, east, and northwest of the perimeter (Map No. 17, page 77). On the west,



an enemy attack overran the machine-gun outpost on the side trail; Green Combat Team strengthened its perimeter along the hill protecting the village on that flank. The strongest enemy effort came from the north. Here a wide draw, followed by a sluggish brook, led up toward the rear of the Marauders' position. Even using everybody available, including mule skinnners and headquarters personnel, the battalion had not had enough men to extend the perimeter to the far side of the draw. Using this approach, the enemy thrust at the knob which formed the northeast buttress of the perimeter. The knob sloped very steeply down to the draw; in a little hollow, just under these slopes, lay the water hole supplying the

entire Marauder force. In an hour of hot fighting, the Japanese forced the Pioneer and Demolition Platoon back up the knob. A counterattack failed to dislodge the enemy from the ground controlling the hollow, and the water hole was lost.

As the direction of the Japanese attack indicated, communications with Hsamshingyang were also lost. At 0800 the usual morning patrol had been dispatched from Hsamshingyang by Orange Combat Team. This time the patrol, led by Lieutenant Smith, detected numerous signs that the enemy had used the trail through most of its length. When the party reached a point 400 yards from McGee's perimeter, it was fired upon from a strong enemy trail block which had been established during the night. The Marauders halted to organize for a break-through attempt and during the halt established communications by radio with the leader of Blue Combat Team's weapons platoon within the perimeter. Lieutenant Smith directed Blue Combat Team's mortar fire upon the trail block and attacked with his patrol. The attack failed.

Unable to contact Colonel Hunter by radio, Lieutenant Smith sent two messengers to Hsamshingyang requesting reinforcements for assaulting the block. These messengers were ambushed before they had gone 300 yards. The patrol had to return to Hsamshingyang through the jungle and along the bed of a stream running due west. The Japanese pursued on both sides of the stream-bed and had to be fought off in delaying actions.

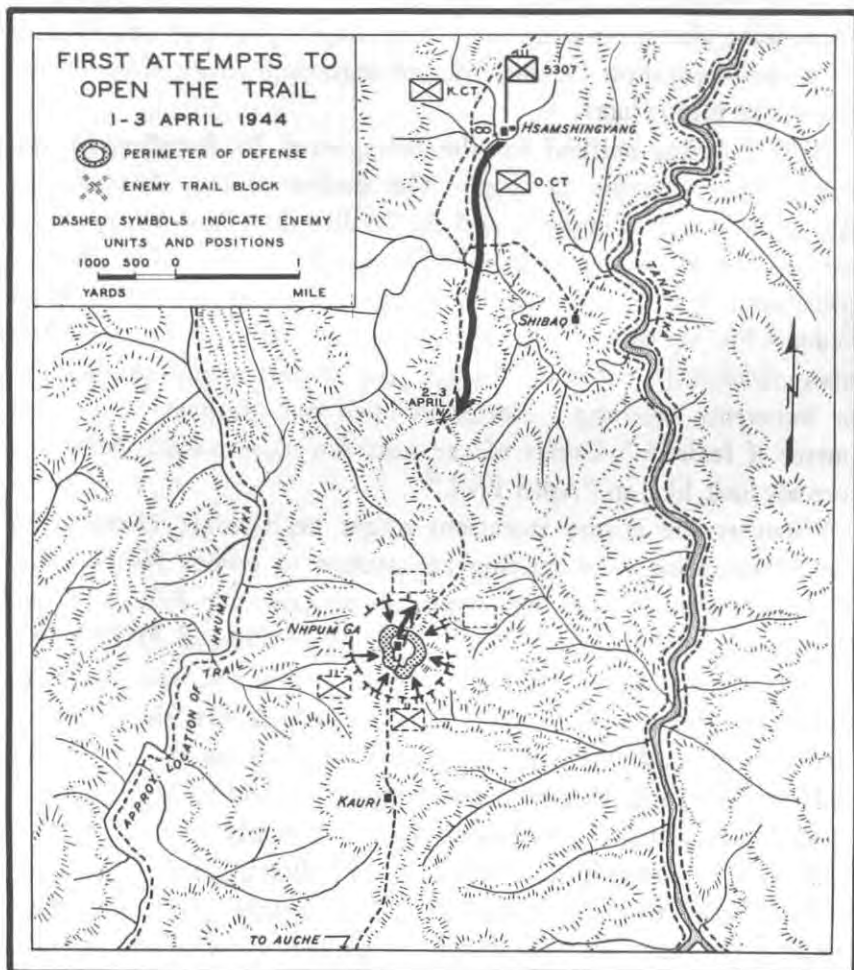
About 1000, Colonel McGee learned that the enemy had cut the trail to Hsamshingyang and that his position was completely encircled. He was told that patrols from the 3d Battalion hoped to dislodge the block by noon; but he soon heard that this effort had failed to get through. Colonel McGee then decided to attempt breaking the Japanese block from his end of the trail. Carefully he thinned out his entire line and organized a task force approximating a reinforced platoon in strength. Supported by mortar and machine-gun fire, this force struck hard, but within 200 yards of the perimeter it ran into prepared enemy positions. After suffering several casualties it had to withdraw. At 1600 McGee radioed Colonel Hunter that his rear was blocked and that he would like "something" to relieve the enemy pressure isolating his force at Nhpum Ga.

An air drop furnished the 2d Battalion with plenty of food and

ammunition, but the water shortage quickly became serious. Cut off from the water hole, the Marauders could still get into the draw just north of the perimeter, where small swampy pools had been used for the animals. Dead mules lay in the draw, adding the taste of decomposed flesh to the water. Nevertheless, the Marauders dug a shallow pit to conserve the nauseous liquid.

During this same day, 31 March, a strong Japanese patrol pressed from the southeast toward the air strip at Hsamshingyang, vital for supply and evacuation of the two battalions. When this group ran into one of the patrols from Orange Combat Team, the sound of shots quickly brought reinforcements from the team and the enemy

MAP NO. 18



group was pushed back after a sharp fight in which several Marauders were killed and 12 wounded.

The Japanese omitted their customary artillery salute to dawn on 1 April (Map No. 18, below). The respite for the Marauders was short: when they laid a mortar concentration on the enemy near the water hole, enemy artillery answered at 0900, and this time from positions near Kauri, within a range of 1,000 yards. After a relatively light barrage enemy units attacked simultaneously from the east and northeast. Both attacks failed to gain any more ground.

The Japanese could not penetrate the perimeter from the northeast, but they still held the water hole very strongly. The 2d Battalion had no immediate hope of getting it back, and the shortage of water within the perimeter was so grave that the doctors had none for making plaster casts and were forced to give patients sulphadiazine dry. In desperation Colonel McGee requested an air drop of 500 gallons in plastic bags.

This day was marked for the beleaguered 2d Battalion by the receipt of a cheering message. The success of the Marauders at Shaduzup was now known, and the 2d Battalion was congratulated for contributing to this by its road block at Inkangahtawng. But the conclusion drawn from the Shaduzup action, in a message from Colonel Hunter, was: "Nips running like hell from Shaduzup. Too many dead to be counted. Expect your friends to pull out tonight or tomorrow morning. Mortar the hell out of them. Lew will pursue if feasible." Events of the next few days would make this forecast look like an "April Fool."

Whatever the enemy intentions might be, Colonel Hunter and the 3d Battalion were making an attempt to relieve Nhpum Ga. Though his entire force was none too adequate for defense of the Hsamshingyang area and the vital air strip, Colonel Hunter had decided to use Orange Combat Team to reopen the trail to the 2d Battalion. The attempt began on 1 April and at first showed good progress. Though the Japanese had now sifted up the trail close to Hsamshingyang, they were not present in strength. Orange Combat Team fought past two blocks and made nearly 2 miles.

On 2 April the going became harder. Following along the ridge crest, the trail from Hsamshingyang rises nearly 1,000 feet before reaching Nhpum Ga. The height is gained unevenly, in a series

of sharp rises between which the ridge line runs level. Orange Combat Team, after making a good start against light resistance, came to one of the steep sections on the trail and found the Japanese dug in, ready to hold. In the initial encounter, two lead scouts were killed and Cpl. Frank L. Graham was wounded after he had killed some of the crew of an enemy machine gun. Platoon attacks by Orange knocked out several machine guns but found others in higher positions, well sited to cover all approaches near the trail. The ridge crest at this point was only 75 yards wide, and the steep slopes on either side of the ridge were covered with heavy jungle, making it difficult to use flanking maneuvers. For the moment the Marauders were stopped, halfway to their goal. Reopening the trail would require a major effort.

In one respect the day saw a considerable improvement in the Marauders' situation. Subjected for several days to the harassing fire of the enemy guns, the 2d and 3d Battalions had keenly felt the need for artillery of their own. When General Merrill was evacuated to Ledo, he had ordered two 75-mm howitzers dispatched at once to the 3d Battalion at Hsamshingyang. The Marauders' rear echelon outdid itself in carrying out his instructions with all possible speed. At 0930 on 2 April the two field pieces, in bulky chunks dangling from double parachutes, dropped to the Hsamshingyang air strip.

ONE OF THE MARAUDERS' TWO 75-MM HOWITZERS *goes into action.*



The men of the hard-pressed 2d Battalion at Nhpum Ga could plainly see this air drop 4 miles away and were cheered by the sight.

Colonel Hunter, meanwhile, had assembled two gun crews, composed of men who had been with the 98th Pack Artillery in New Guinea. S/Sgt. John A. Acker acted as battery commander. He had formed the two crews and had put them through intensive refresher practice so that they were well-drilled when the howitzers came floating down to them. Two hours after the planes had dropped the artillery pieces, the first round sailed out over the 2d Battalion's perimeter. Soon both guns were registering on enemy positions.

The main effort on 3 April was made by the beleaguered 2d Battalion. Colonel Hunter instructed it to make a strong attack north from the Nhpum Ga hill in an attempt to contact Orange Combat Team. An artillery barrage and air support would aid the attack. McGee's men did their best, but the net result was no gain. After 7 days of battle and siege, the situation at Nhpum Ga was unchanged. Some of the wounded, who could not be evacuated, had died: six men were buried next morning within the perimeter. A large proportion of the men now had dysentery and stomach disorders. The 500 gallons of water, requested on 1 April, had come by air drop, and this relieved the most desperate aspect of the battalion's position. Rations and ammunition were dropped regularly by transports. Some of these supplies drifted over to the Japanese lines, but no large amount was lost.

The 3d Battalion Increases its Effort

At 1500 on 3 April Colonel Hunter called a staff meeting to go over the situation. The 2d Battalion had now been surrounded for 4 days. By infiltrating the enemy lines in small groups, most of the able-bodied men could probably have got through to Hsamshingyang; this had been demonstrated when Sergeant Keslik's patrol, after staying 2 days in the perimeter (page 76), had succeeded in rejoining Orange Combat Team. However, this procedure would have involved sacrificing the wounded men and losing all animals and heavy weapons. McGee's force was receiving supplies regularly and was judged to be in fair shape except for means of evacuating the wounded and protecting its animals.

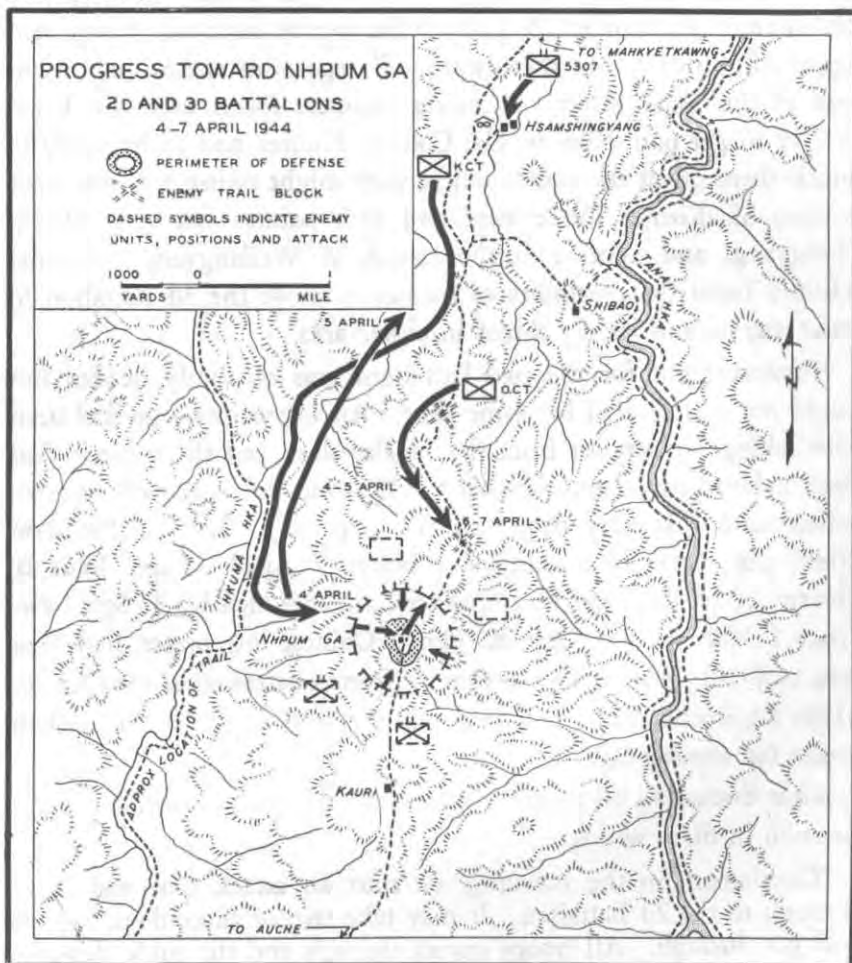
Colonel Hunter had to consider not only the situation of the 2d Battalion but the execution of his mission, which was to prevent the

Japanese advance from striking west from the Tanai Valley toward Shaduzup. A considerable part of the enemy force was being held up at Nhpum Ga, but there were still reports of enemy movement east of the Tanai River. If strong Japanese forces used the Tanai Valley to get past Nhpum Ga, Colonel Hunter had to be ready to block them off at the points where they might swing west on trails toward Shaduzup. There were two such points: one near Hsamshingyang, and another further north at Weilangyang. Colonel Hunter faced the possibility of having to move the 3d Battalion to meet any serious enemy threat in either area.

Reinforcement for the two battalions was obviously needed but could not be expected for some time. An urgent message had been sent asking for support from the 1st Battalion, but the message had been delayed by communication troubles and did not reach the battalion until that very day, 3 April (page 59). The 1st Battalion could not reach Hsamshingyang before 7 April. Capt. John B. George of 3d Battalion Headquarters, accompanied by T/Sgt. Lawrence J. Hill and Sgt. Lum K. Pun, a Chinese interpreter, had been sent to Weilangyang to ask assistance from a battalion of the Chinese 112th Regiment. However, this unit also could not be expected to arrive for several days.

After discussing all aspects of the situation, Col. Hunter made his decision in these words:

"Gentlemen, in the morning we start an attack that will drive through to the 2d Battalion. It may take two or three days, but we *will* get through. All troops except the sick and the mule skinnners will be withdrawn from the air strip. [All] large patrols will be called in, and Kachins substituted wherever possible. Tomorrow, as soon as we can get ready, Orange Combat Team will attack due south along the trail. [The men of] Khaki Combat Team will leave their heavy equipment here, march due south behind Orange Combat Team until they are 400 yards from Jap position, then turn west down the mountain and attack the Japs on their west flank. The artillery will be moved up to where it can fire point blank into the Jap bunkers and pill boxes. Every man of the gun crews volunteered . . . this afternoon. This attack will be tentatively set for 1200 tomorrow. Ruses, feints, and anything else you can do to fool the Japs are in order. A fake message will be dropped from a plane so as to fall in the Jap lines. This message will be to the 2d Battalion and will say that a battalion of parachutists will be dropped between



Kauri and Auché at 1700 hours tomorrow (4 April). If possible we will have a dummy drop [of supplies] in that area to fool them."

The morning of 4 April was taken up with preparations for the new attack (Map No. 19, page 84). Because the air strip was to be left virtually undefended when the 3d Battalion started its drive toward Nhpum Ga, Colonel Hunter moved his command headquarters 2 miles further north to Mahkyetkawng. There the headquarters group met a platoon of Chinese, the advance element of the battalion which Captain George had contacted at Weilangyang. These Chinese were directed to dig in and to hold the trail junction at Mahkyetkawng.

Colonel Hunter himself joined Orange Combat Team for the new push against the trail block. Overhead, planes were dive-bombing and strafing wherever they could find a target. They were also directed by ground radios to targets that could not be seen from the air. At 1100 it became evident that, because of the difficulties Khaki Combat Team was having in cutting through the jungle, the attack could not jump off at noon as scheduled. Colonel Hunter postponed it to 1600. He was extremely anxious not to attack until he had organized all the strength under his command.

At 1530 the Pioneer and Demolition Platoon, carrying out Colonel Hunter's plans, began a fake fight west of the point where Orange Combat Team would make the main attack. The Japanese obligingly shifted their mortars to throw fire in that direction. American planes appeared at 1545, and at 1605 the Marauders' artillery and mortars opened up. Enemy resistance was overcome by these preparatory fires; when Orange Combat Team advanced on the narrow front across the ridge top, its attack carried up the steep knob and several hundred yards on the level stretch beyond. No casualties were suffered until the advance was stopped toward dark by fire from a new enemy block. Here Major Lew, commanding Orange Combat Team, was severely wounded.

The gain was encouraging, but it soon became evident the enemy

AN ORANGE COMBAT TEAM MORTAR CREW, dug in between *Nhpum Ga* and *Hsamshingyang*, fires on the Japanese trail-block positions.



was still prepared to fight on successive delaying positions. He held the Marauders to no gain on 5 April. Despite several attacks, Orange was unable to advance against fire from commanding positions on a small side hill, which flanked the trail to the left of the main ridge.

In the attack of 4 April, Khaki Combat Team had met with no success on its wide flanking maneuver. Major Briggs had equipped two platoons with all the light machine guns and mortars that could be spared. He led them along the trail toward Nhpum Ga, then veered west, cutting a path along the jungle-covered mountain slopes to a point west of the 2d Battalion's defenses. The men were badly slowed by being forced to cross a succession of rough spurs running west toward the Hkuma Valley. When the platoons tried to drive up toward the perimeter they were stopped by bands of fire from well dug-in enemy positions. Patrols were sent to feel out the enemy flanks, but strong resistance and the difficult terrain combined to foil the effort. The two platoons bivouacked where they were for the night. The next day they found themselves threatened in the rear, and to escape had to cut a new trail back to the air strip at Hsamshingyang.

Two days of strenuous effort by the 3d Battalion had not yet lifted the siege, but the effects were beginning to be felt at Nhpum Ga. On 4 April, while the relief attack was in progress, the Japanese made a heavy assault on the hill top from the west and penetrated the 2d Battalion's perimeter for a short distance. At one point a few of the enemy actually reached fox holes behind the defense line. Two Marauders quickly wiped out the Japanese inside the perimeter with hand grenades. The defenders were heartened by their success and took a new grip on themselves.

The following night at 0200 and again at 0430 enemy assaults were made on the western boundary of the perimeter. Both of these were anticipated by Colonel McGee. Probably in order to excite "attack spirit," the Japanese indulged in a great deal of preliminary yelling. Tec. 4 Matsumoto, the man who had tapped the enemy telephone wires at Walawbum, was on the northwest hill and could overhear the orders for the attack in time to inform battalion headquarters. The Marauders were ready for the enemy charges and stopped them with heavy losses.

The enemy made no further attacks on 5 April, although Japanese

shells fell intermittently within the perimeter. It appeared that the 3d Battalion's push had considerably relieved the pressure against Nhpum Ga. However, Colonel McGee was unable to spare any men from the 2d Battalion's defenses to assist the efforts of Orange and Khaki Combat Teams. Although the men encircled at Nhpum Ga had a welcome respite from the assaults on their position, they had no assurance that this respite would be long. The trail to Hsamshingyang had now been blocked for 6 days. In that time the 2d Battalion had accumulated casualties of 17 men dead, 97 wounded, and 4 missing. Enemy artillery fire had been particularly troublesome since 1 April, when their guns were moved near Kauri. The Japanese weapons, probably the T-41 75-mm mountain gun, had a flat trajectory and high muzzle velocity; at 1,000-yard range, the shells arrived almost simultaneously with the sound of the gun's fire, and the Marauders had no warning in time to seek cover.

The Relief Force Wins Through

On 6 April Orange Combat Team was only a mile from Nhpum Ga, but this last mile was to be the hardest (Map No. 19, page 84). The trail still led along the narrow ridge top, affording a front wide enough for only one or two platoons to operate. Enemy resistance showed no signs of cracking.

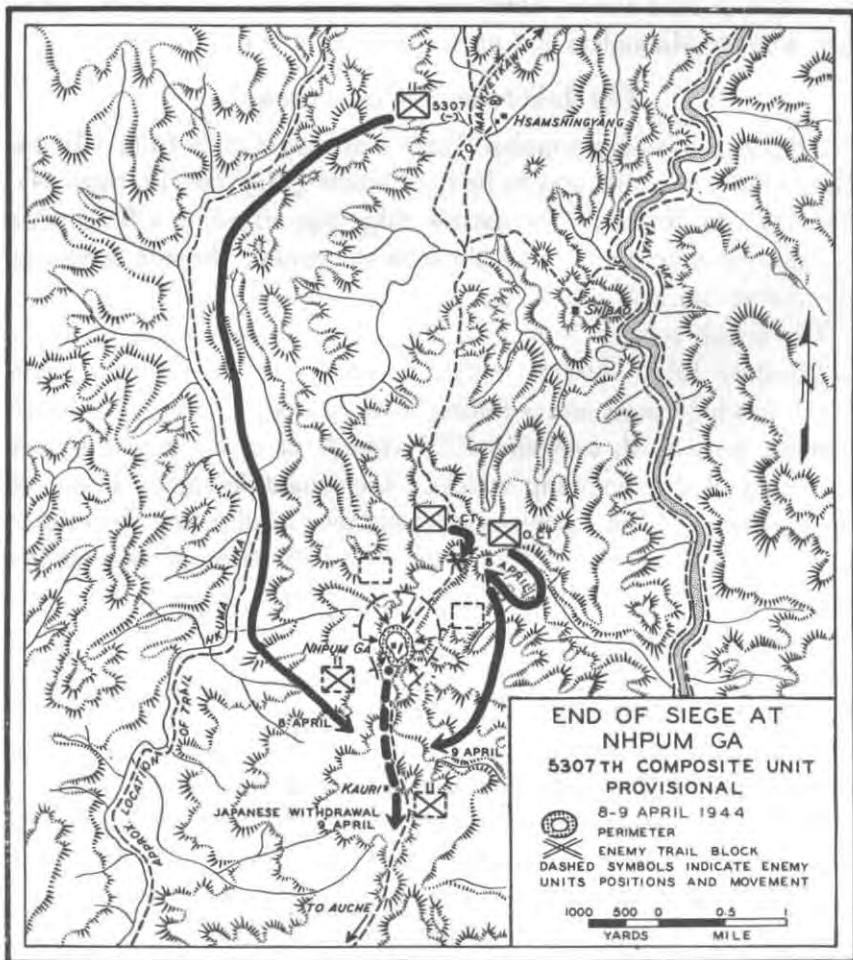
The attack opened well on 6 April, mainly as a result of heavy preparatory fires. Several thousand rounds of overhead fire from heavy machine guns and a rolling barrage from 60-mm and 81-mm mortars were used, as well as 200 rounds of artillery and several strafing and dive-bombing attacks. Lieutenant Woomer, leader of the weapons platoon, gave notable assistance in directing the mortar fire. He had worked his way to within 25 yards of two enemy machine guns which were holding up the attack. From this position he directed the mortars by an SCR 300 until the shells were landing just beyond the target. His next order was: "Deflection correct. Bring it in 25 yards, and if you don't hear from me, you'll know you came this way too far. Then shift it back just a little and you'll be right on it." The next rounds knocked out the enemy guns.

During the preparatory fires, the Japanese had left their positions and sought refuge in the jungle at the side of the ridge. When the fires lifted, there was a spectacular race between the Marauders and the Japanese for the vacated fox holes, and the Marauders won. The

success netted 500 yards; then came another check. Once again, the ridge line steepened sharply and the trail led up over a knob which gave the enemy excellent firing positions to the front and the west flank. East of the trail there was a cliff.

Facing the last main rise in their path, the Marauders switched combat teams for the next effort. The I and R Platoon of Orange had been spearheading the advance since 3 April and was left in line for one more day; except for that unit, Khaki Combat Team replaced Orange for the trail fight on 7 April. The efforts of that day, Good Friday, were unsuccessful. Close-in fighting on the knob cost three killed and eight wounded, and the few yards gained had to be given up when positions were consolidated for the night. At Nhpum Ga,

MAP NO. 20



McGee's men sustained two enemy attacks in the early morning hours, but the assaults lacked the ferocity and vigor of the earlier enemy efforts. Colonel McGee decided to risk a counterattack north toward the relieving force and scraped together two combat patrols for the attempt. The men were quickly pinned down by fire from the enemy emplacements.

The main event of the 7th was the arrival of the 1st Battalion. Colonel Osborne had received orders on 3 April to press his march to Hsamshingyang, and the 1st Battalion had done its best (Map No. 11, page 48). They made 7 miles on 4 April and did as well on the 5th, when they reached Sintawngkawng. On 6 April, while waiting for an air drop in the late afternoon the battalion picked up another message: the 2d Battalion was engaged in heavy fighting at Nhpum Ga; the 3d Battalion was attempting to reach the 2d Battalion in order to extricate it; and both were in desperate need of support. Spurred by the urgency, the 1st Battalion pushed on again at 1845, covering 5½ miles over the highest hills yet encountered.

At 1700 on 7 April, the 1st Battalion reached Hsamshingyang after a forced march of nearly 4 days. The men were weary and 30 percent were temporarily knocked out by dysentery. Nevertheless, their arrival greatly heartened the exhausted Marauders trying to break the Japanese grip on Nhpum Ga. Capt. Tom P. Senff, now commanding Red Combat Team, was ordered to select those men of the 1st Battalion capable of continued exertion and prepare them for joining the attack on 8 April. He was able to get together 250 men.

Colonel Hunter planned to use his whole force on 8 April (Map No. 20, page 88). Khaki Combat Team would attack the enemy along the trail; Orange Combat Team was to make a flanking effort east of Nhpum Ga along the mountain slopes; Captain Senff's force from the 1st Battalion had the mission of circling Nhpum Ga on the west and creating a diversion at the enemy's rear, south of the perimeter.

Khaki Combat Team had a heartbreaking day of fighting at the knob, with the main burden falling on its I and R Platoon and the 2d Platoon of Company I. The terrain forced the units to make frontal attacks up very steep slopes through thick-growing bamboo, against enemy machine-gun fire and grenades. Five times the platoons tried it, after laying down heavy mortar fire. Four hundred



JAPANESE LIGHT MACHINE GUN, captured at Nhpum Ga, is examined by the Marauders after the siege. (Left to right the men are: Cpl. Wilbur Thorpe, M/Sgt. Joseph Doyer, 1st Sgt. Henry J. Recke, and S/Sgt. S. F. Rapisarda.)

rounds of motor shells and something under one hundred of artillery were used during the day. None of the attacks carried more than a few yards. The Marauders suffered about 25 casualties, the I and R Platoon losing 9 men, wounded, out of 22. East of the trail, Orange Combat Team had heavy going in the jungle and was unable to reach the enemy positions.

Captain Senff's force made its wide flanking move as scheduled, passing west of Nhpum Ga and meeting only occasional fire from enemy patrols. At 1800 they were $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of the perimeter and they bivouacked near the trail connecting Kauri and Nhpum Ga. On their way, the force put blocks along the paths used to supply

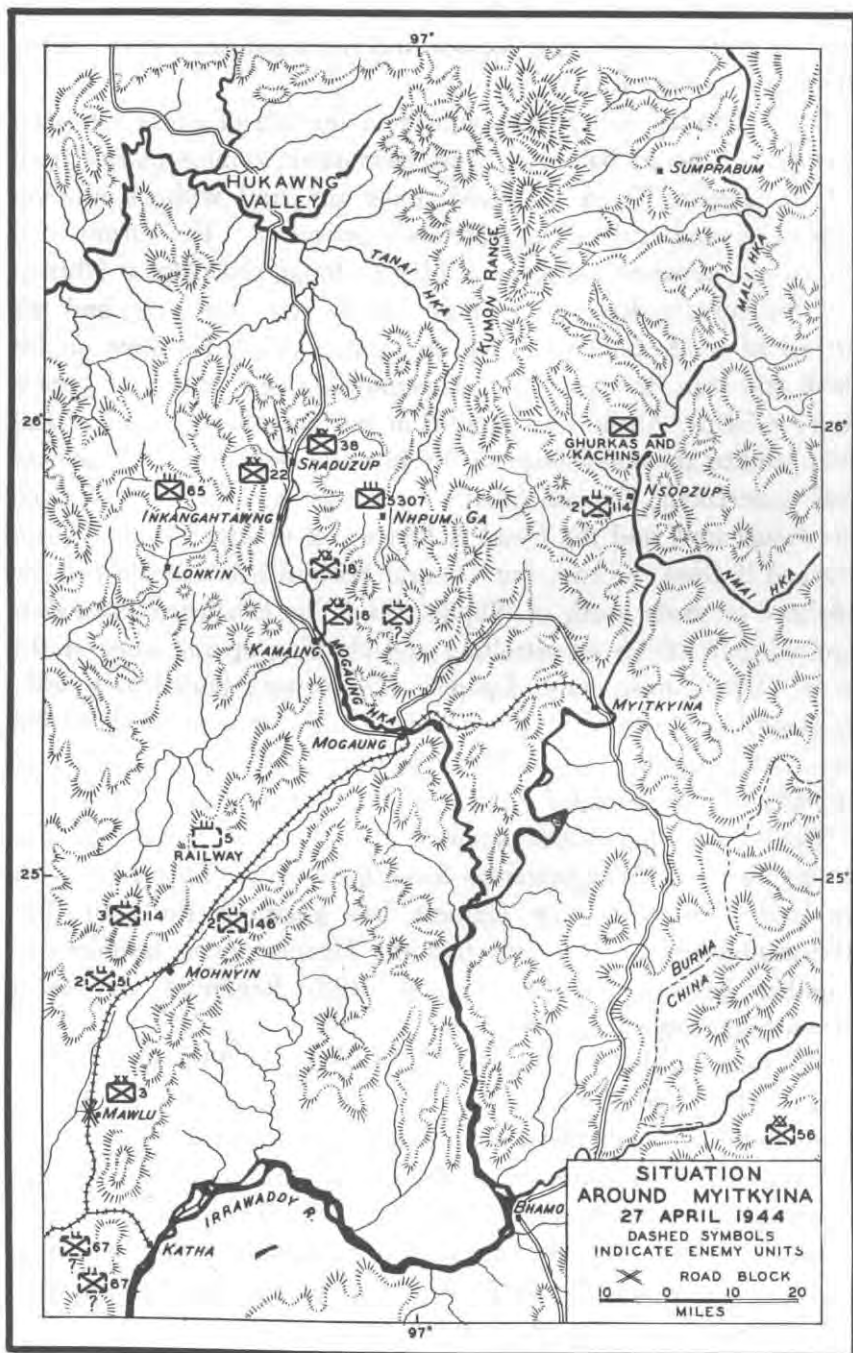
the Japanese troops west of the perimeter. Two enemy patrols or supply parties stumbled on the bivouac during the night, and early next morning Senff's men located and mortared heavily an enemy bivouac area near Kauri.

Easter Sunday will be memorable in the life of every surviving member of the 2d Battalion. Just after dawn, combat patrols from Khaki Combat Team advanced down the trail without meeting opposition and walked into McGee's perimeter. The enemy had pulled out, apparently discouraged by the tough resistance at Nhpum Ga, the equally determined efforts of the relieving force, and the arrival of reinforcements. The appearance of Senff's force on his flank and rear, disorganizing his communications, may have been a decisive factor. Abandoned equipment and rice still cooking on small fires attested the suddenness of the Japanese departure. No pursuit was undertaken; Captain Senff's force was in position to threaten the Kauri trail, and the I and R Platoon of Orange Combat Team reached it from the east, but General Stilwell had ordered that no advance be made south of Nhpum Ga. The exhausted Marauders limited their efforts to patrolling and cleaning up the scene of the siege. Dead animals and Japanese corpses were buried as quickly as possible; hundreds of pounds of chloride of lime were needed in disinfecting the area. Flamethrowers, used on the bodies of animals, did much to rid the area of the swarms of flies.

The 2d Battalion moved about 20 miles north of Nhpum Ga and set up Battalion Headquarters at Samlulgahtawng. They were ready to lend a hand to the Chinese left guarding the trail near Hsamshingyang in the event that the Japanese grew troublesome. Another battalion of the Chinese 112th Regiment arrived at Hsamshingyang on 22 April.

The total number of Marauder casualties in the Nhpum Ga action was 57 killed and 302 wounded. All those earlier reported missing were found, either killed or wounded. The number evacuated to hospitals by air because of wounds or illness caused by amoebic dysentery and malaria reached a total of 379. The figure of known enemy dead exceeded 400, excluding any estimate of the number of Japanese buried during the 10 days the enemy controlled the area surrounding the 2d Battalion's perimeter.

MAP NO. 21



Third Mission: Myitkyina

BY LATE APRIL, the Allied offensive in north Burma was putting heavy pressure on the Japanese (Map No. 21, page 92). General Stilwell's column had gained 35 miles and was fighting just north of Inkangahtawng, 20 miles from Kamaing. In the Irrawaddy Valley, 45 miles north of Myitkyina, British-led Kachin and Gurkha forces were fighting south toward a large supply base at Nsopzup, having captured the enemy forward base at Sumprabum. To the southeast of Myitkyina, in the Yunnan province of China, Marshal Wei Li-lung was massing Chinese divisions for an offensive in May across the Salween River.

With the enemy's salient in north Burma threatened by attacks from three directions, his communications were imperiled by a blow from the rear. General Wingate's¹⁸ 3 Indian Division had cut the main enemy supply route well south of the Kamaing-Myitkyina battle area. Four of his brigades had been flown into Burma from Manipur; a fifth had made it overland from Ledo to Mohnyin. Operating in 26 columns of 400 men each, the division had set up a block on 16 March at Mawlu, 80 miles south of Myitkyina on the single railroad into north Burma. This left the Japanese with water transport up the Irrawaddy as their principal means of supply.

Taking advantage of these developments, General Stilwell planned to continue his drive down the Mogaung corridor toward Kamaing, with the Chinese 65th Regiment protecting the right flank of the

¹⁸ General Wingate was killed in a plane crash on 25 March, and Maj. Gen. W. D. A. Lentaigne became commander of the 3 Indian Division.

Chinese 22d Division as before. For the third time, the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) was to take part in a wide flanking move to the east of the main effort. This was to be the most difficult of the Marauders' missions; they were to strike at Myitkyina itself, the chief objective of the campaign. Myitkyina was the principal Japanese base for defense of Burma from the north. Situated 170 air miles southeast of Ledo, it was the northernmost point of a railroad from Rangoon and was also the head of navigation on the Irrawaddy River. It lay in the proposed path of the Ledo Road, some 170 air miles north of the Burma Road junction with the railway at Lashio. The Marauders' surprise thrust deep into enemy-held territory would, if successful, effectually dispose of the principal air base from which Japanese aircraft had menaced American transport planes flying supplies to China. It would also deprive the enemy of an important stronghold, center of an extensive military framework, and would quickly paralyze all Japanese operations radiating from Myitkyina.

The Force and the Mission

The strike at Myitkyina would test the limits of the Marauders' staying powers. Since 9 February they had marched and fought through 500 miles of exceedingly difficult country. After Nhpum Ga the troops were physically worn out. During most of the 80-day period they had lived on "K" rations. Leeches had caused many so-called "Naga sores," and nearly all of the men had suffered to some extent from dysentery and fevers. However, Myitkyina, where an all-weather airfield would greatly aid in the supply of the troops under General Stilwell's command and hasten the success of his campaign, was worth every effort.

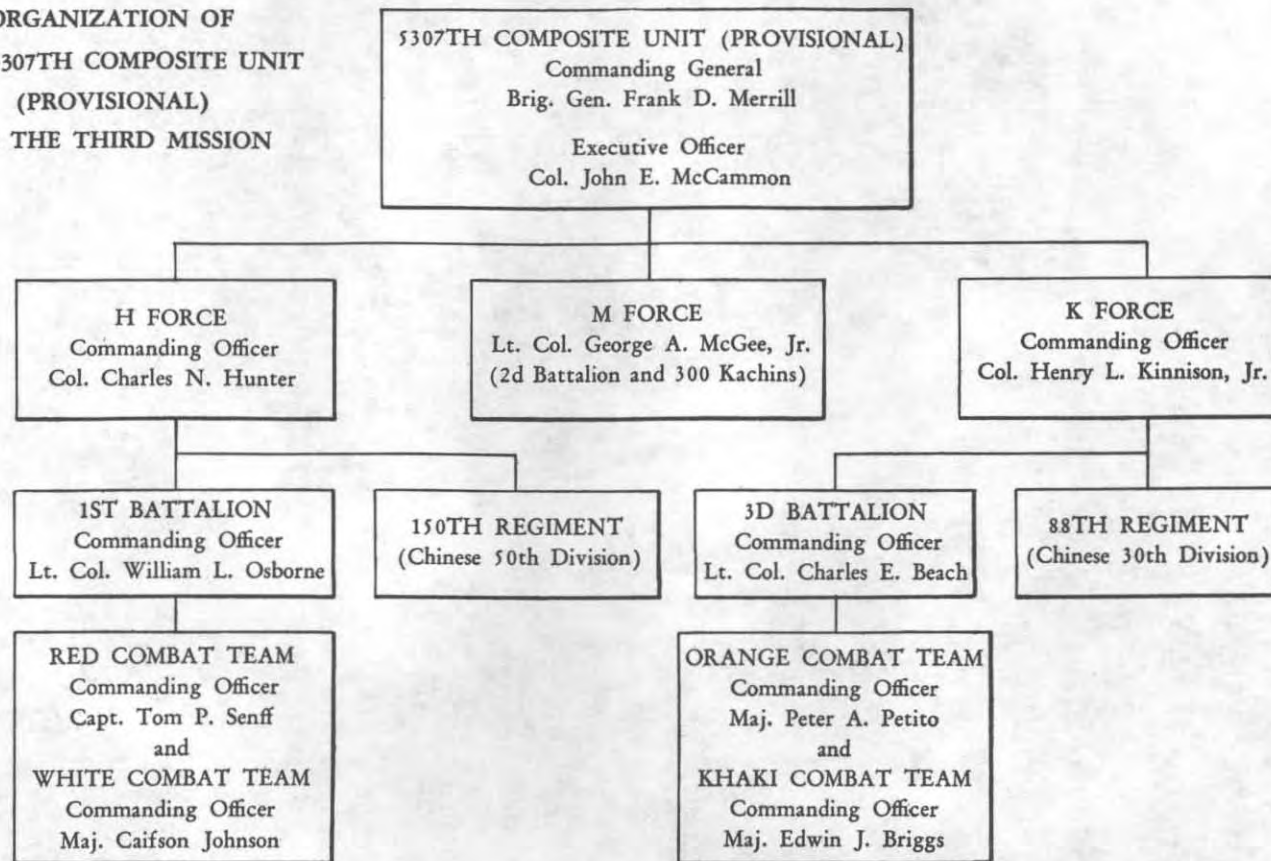
The 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) had lost about 700 men killed, wounded, or sick. Of this number the 2d Battalion alone had lost about 460, and there were no American replacements in the theater to fill out the Marauder ranks. To provide strength enough for the third mission, General Stilwell decided to reinforce General Merrill with Kachin and Chinese troops, giving his command a total strength of about 7,000 for the Myitkyina operation.

A complete reshuffling of personnel in the 2d Battalion was necessary, for the casualties which it had sustained, especially at Nhpum



K FORCE MEN *exchange cigarettes for Japanese money.*

ORGANIZATION OF
THE 5307TH COMPOSITE UNIT
(PROVISIONAL)
FOR THE THIRD MISSION



Ga, seriously disrupted its combat-team organization. The remaining men, about one-half the original number, were formed into two rifle companies, one heavy weapons company, and a battalion headquarters company, which included an intelligence and reconnaissance platoon, a pioneer and demolition platoon, and a communications platoon. Three hundred Kachin guerrillas were attached to the battalion, and the group, commanded by Colonel McGee, was designated as M Force (Chart, page 96).

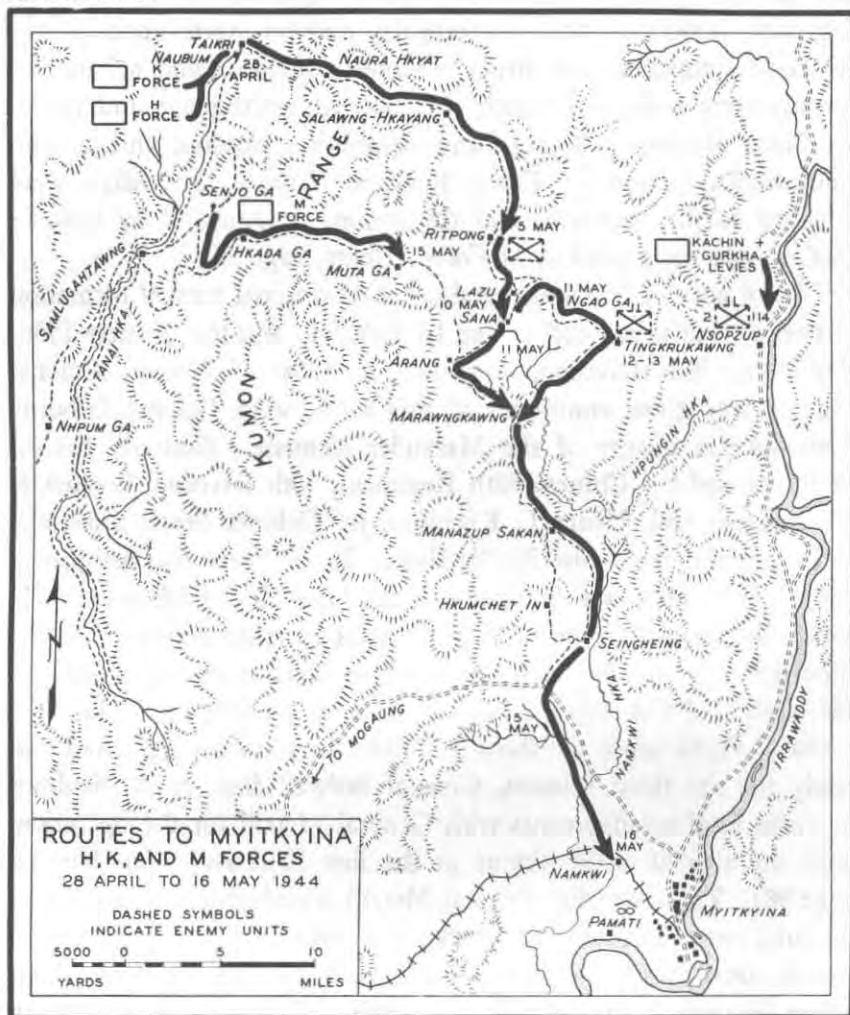
The 1st and 3d Battalions retained their original tactical formation of two combat teams each. The 1st Battalion and the Chinese 150th Regiment, 50th Division, combined to form H Force. Colonel Hunter was given command of this force, with Colonel Osborne remaining in charge of the Marauder element. Similarly the 3d Battalion and the Chinese 88th Regiment, 30th Division, became K Force under Col. Henry L. Kinnison, Jr. Colonel Beach continued to be commander of the 3d Battalion. To H Force was assigned a battery of 75-mm pack howitzers of the Chinese 22d Division; to K Force, the battery of the 5307th. General Merrill, recovered for the time being from his illness, returned to headquarters at Naubum. He appointed Col. John E. McCammon as his executive officer.

On 27 April when the three Marauder forces were organized and ready for the third mission, General Stilwell flew in to Naubum to make final arrangements with General Merrill for the operation, with the airfield at Myitkyina as the first objective (Map No. 22, page 98). The same day General Merrill issued orders to the forces for their movement toward Myitkyina. Both H Force and K Force would move northward from Naubum to Taikri, then head east across the main Kumon Range and south to Ritpong. From Ritpong they would continue south through foothills to Seingheing at the edge of the Myitkyina plain.

General Merrill instructed M Force, still operating near Samlugah-tawng, to patrol the Senjo Ga—Hkada Ga area and to block any attempted Japanese advance along the Tanai from the south. This would screen the southern flank during the first stage of the advance.

From the Tanai to the Hpungin Valley

On 28 April K Force moved north to Taikri and turned eastward from the Tanai Valley into the mountains (Map No. 22, page 98).



H Force followed 2 days later. About one-fifth of the 65-mile trip to Myitkyina was over the Kumon Range, rising in this area to over 6,000 feet. The trail across the hills had not been used in 10 years and was reported to be impassable. Capt. William A. Laffin together with 2d Lt. Paul A. Dunlap had started off ahead of K Force. With them went 30 Kachin soldiers and 30 coolies to repair the worst places on the route.

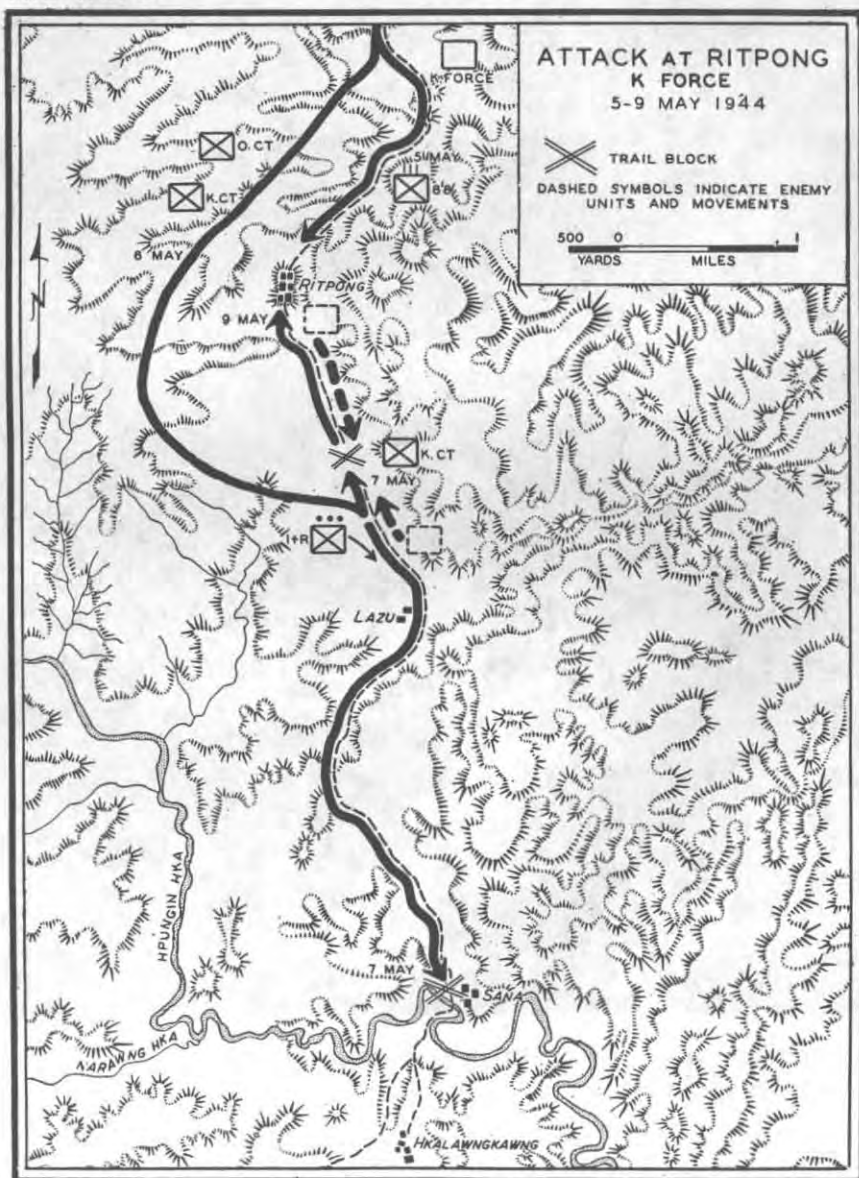
The monsoon season was commencing. The sky was so cloudy that air drops became very difficult. Rain fell every day, and the damp heat was stifling. In some places the trail was so steep that



STARTING ACROSS THE KUMON RANGE, *the Marauders break their climb over the steep trail.*

footholds had to be cut for the pack animals; in others the animals had to be unloaded and their burdens manhandled up precipitous inclines. Occasionally no path of any sort could be found, despite the work of Captain Laffin's advance group. Even the mules slipped on the uncertain footing of the hillsides and plunged to their death in valleys far below. Khaki Combat Team, which was in the lead, lost

MAP NO. 23



15 of its pack animals and their loads of ammunition and weapons; Orange Combat Team, next in the column, lost 5.

For 5 or 6 days the two forces toiled up and down through the Kumon ridges. Upon reaching Naura Hkyat, they received a report that enemy soldiers were in the vicinity. The I and R Platoon of Khaki Combat Team went forward to block the trails at Salawng-Hkayang. No Japanese were encountered there, but a patrol from the 1st Battalion of the Chinese 88th Regiment, heading southward toward Ritpong, brushed with the enemy on the east flank of the marching column. The Japanese were believed to be holding Ritpong in considerable strength.

Ritpong

On 5 May the leading elements of K Force reached a trail junction just over a mile north of Ritpong (Map No. 23, page 100). Colonel Kinnison decided on an enveloping attack and sent a strong patrol from Khaki Combat Team to prepare an approach to the village from the rear. According to information received, there was a trail which encircled Ritpong to the west and joined another trail south of the village. No such trail was found, so the patrol was forced to start cutting a path through the jungle. The main units of Khaki Combat Team took over the task of chopping trail at daybreak on 6 May, and, after working all day, they emerged on the track south of the village. Orange Combat Team was following close behind. Meanwhile, the Chinese 88th Regiment had unsuccessfully attacked Ritpong from the north.

At 0530 on 7 May, while Orange Combat Team remained at the point where it had bivouacked the previous night, Khaki Combat Team began to close in on Ritpong from the south. At a trail fork only a short distance from the start, a Japanese scout went by without seeing the American advance elements. Khaki Combat Team placed a block at the fork and reconnoitered. A combat patrol, investigating a group of huts within 300 or 400 yards, discovered an enemy outpost engaged in cooking a meal, but the enemy got away as the result of a premature shot. A squad of Japanese coming south from Ritpong was wiped out at the trail block. However, when Khaki Combat Team attempted to push on toward Ritpong it was checked by an enemy machine-gun position that dominated the trail.

Since the Chinese 88th Regiment was making progress north of Ritpong, Colonel Kinnison was content to have the Marauders do no more than block the village from the south. To avoid any surprise attack at the rear of the Marauder teams, he sent an I and R Platoon southward to establish a block at Sana. North of Lazu this platoon ran into a well-protected Japanese supply train which was moving up toward Ritpong. A hot fight ensued. The platoon scattered the Japanese, who fled eastward; they dropped supplies that were later retrieved by K Force.

During the night of 7/8 May, the Japanese tried to break out of Ritpong and twice attacked south against Khaki Combat Team. Coming down the trail, the Japanese made good targets for waiting Marauder machine guns and suffered heavily during both attacks. The enemy used smoke grenades in this effort.

On 8 May the 88th Regiment again attacked the north edge of Ritpong. Orange and Khaki Combat Teams, from their positions south of the town, laid down a barrage of mortar fire to support the drive, but it failed. The following day the village was finally entered. Leaving the Chinese to mop up, the Marauders marched south to Lazu where they established a protective trail block and bivouacked.

Diversion at Tingkrukawng

During the delay at Ritpong, H Force had caught up with K Force, and on 10 May both were at Lazu, about 35 miles northwest of Myitkyina (Map No. 22, page 98). Less than 20 miles to the east, the Japanese in considerable strength were resisting British-led Kachin and Gurkha levies in their drive toward the enemy supply base at Nsopzup. As a result of the engagement at Ritpong, the enemy had learned of the presence of an American unit in the Hpungin Valley, and the Marauders would therefore need to screen their eastern flank. To this end, K Force was to feint toward Nsopzup, occupy the attention of the enemy troops in that vicinity, and thus protect the rear of H Force in its advance for a surprise assault on the Myitkyina air strip.

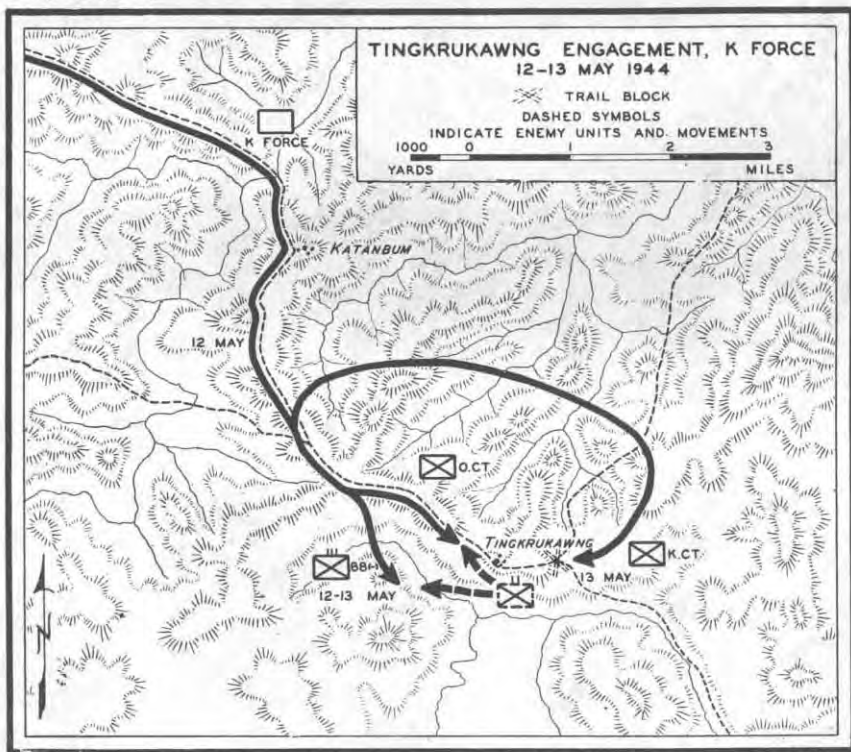
Early on the morning of 11 May, K Force struck out toward Ngao Ga. The trail ran up and down steep inclines, and the day was the hottest the Marauders had known. Many of the men collapsed from weakness and exhaustion. At 0950 the next day, K Force ran into Japanese, estimated to be a platoon in strength, about 400 yards north-

west of the village of Tingkrukawng (Map No. 24, below). Orange Combat Team attacked without delay. As the attack developed, the enemy strength was revealed to be approximately a reinforced battalion, and the Marauders were soon pinned to the ground. Khaki Combat Team, to the rear of Orange Combat Team, supplied mortar support. Orange built up its line, but the going was hard.

A company from the Chinese 88th Regiment was dispatched to cut a trail around to the right, find the Japanese position, and attack the enemy left flank. This attempt failed, for the Chinese ran into heavy opposition and suffered many casualties. Orange Combat Team worked its way to high ground on both sides of the trail. The men found that the Japanese held commanding ground on the opposite side of the village, with dug-in gun positions dominating the approaches.

That night Colonel Kinnison conferred with his commanders. He ordered Khaki Combat Team under Major Briggs to make a circling movement east of the village to hit the enemy from the rear, as Orange

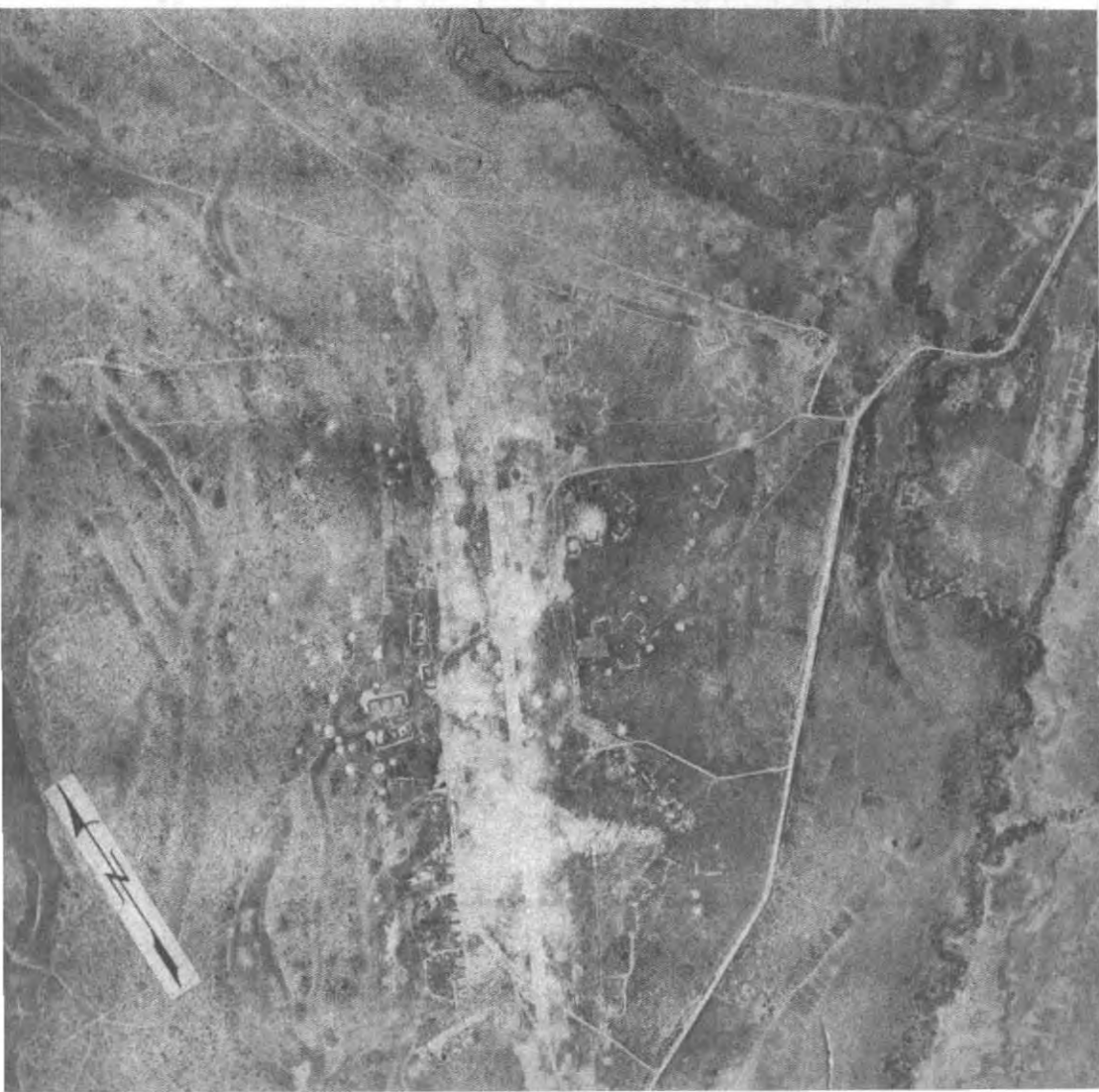
MAP NO. 24



Combat Team pushed straight down the trail. To effect this maneuver, Khaki Combat Team had to cut a trail through the jungle.

At 0615 on 13 May the members of Khaki Combat Team began their task. By noon they had cut their way to a point where precipitous slopes stretched up toward their objective east of the village. The country was so rough that the Marauders could take along neither their animals nor their heavy weapons. With great difficulty the outfit managed to inch its way up the incline. Reaching the crest, the men discovered that the Japanese had constructed a heavy block along the trail. A Japanese patrol from the block tried to work around the

THE MYITKYINA AIR STRIP *was peppered with bomb craters when H Force captured it. (Aerial photograph was taken from 9,300 feet.)*



Marauders' right flank and attack their rear, but was checked by two of the combat team's platoons.

Khaki Combat Team was unable to bypass the trail block and get closer to Tingkrukawng. The maneuver yielded one advantage: from a rise in the ground Major Briggs could see Japanese positions in the village and directed Orange Combat Team's mortar fire on them. By 1645 the troops of Khaki Combat Team had used all their ammunition. They had been without food all that day. Since dropping supplies to them was impossible, Colonel Kinnison ordered Major Briggs to withdraw. The evacuation of wounded slowed the withdrawal, which was already made very difficult by darkness.

A Chinese battalion, sent around to the southwest of Tingkrukawng to replace the company which had failed in its attack on the Japanese left flank, achieved no better results. Orange Combat Team's frontal attack was not making any progress.

The Japanese were now receiving reinforcements from the east; furthermore, the operation had provided sufficient diversion to allow H Force to get well under way in its march south. The Marauders had little to gain by continuing the attack, and Colonel Kinnison decided to break off the engagement. He withdrew his troops under the protection of an artillery barrage fired by K Force's guns from Katanbum. Turning southwest on the trail to Marawngkawng, Kinnison's command pushed toward the route already taken by H Force. Marauder casualties in the engagement at Tinkrukawng were 8 killed and 21 wounded. Chinese casualties were heavier.

H Force's Attack on Myitkyina Air Strip

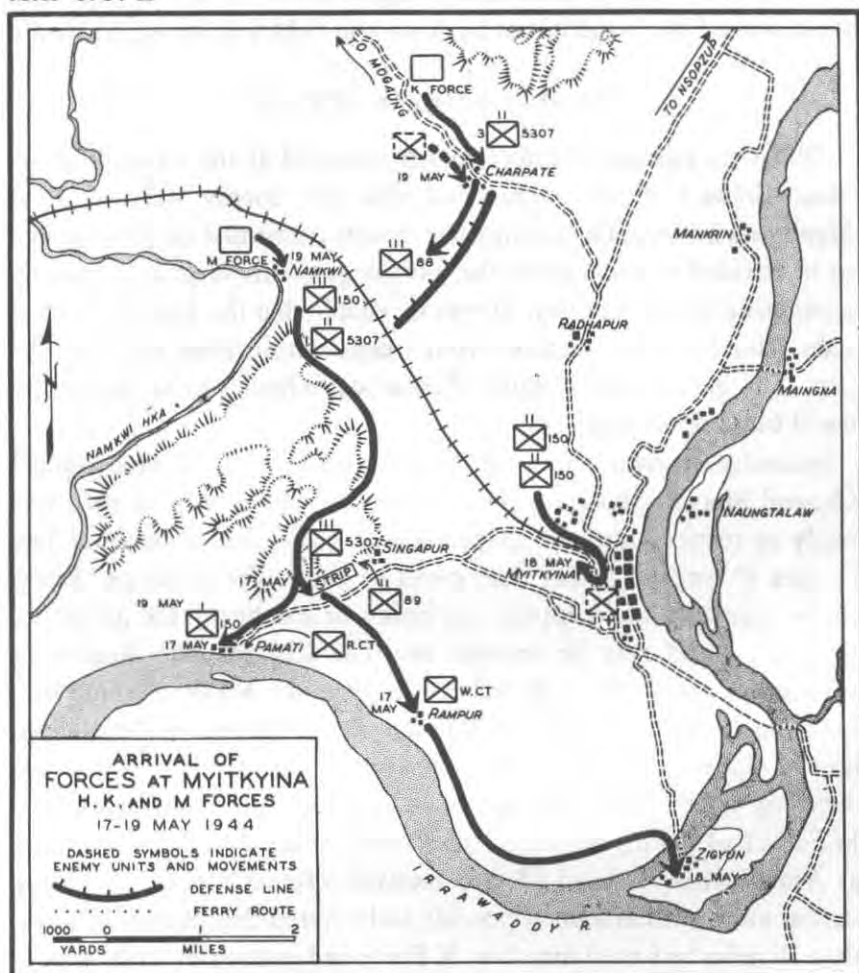
After 11 May, during the time K Force was engaged at Tingkrukawng, H Force was on its way toward Myitkyina (Map No. 22, page 98). From Lazu Colonel Hunter and his men proceeded southward along the trail through Marawngkawng, Manazup Sakan, and Seingheing. After crossing the motor road southwest of Seingheing the force was guided by a Kachin trained by OSS Detachment 101. He led them on a devious course through paddy fields and jungle in order to reach Myitkyina without being seen by either Japanese or natives. At 2030 on 15 May, just as the force reached the upper Namkwi River about 15 miles from the objective, the guide, Nauiyang Nau, was bitten by a poisonous snake. He tried to go on,

but within a short time his foot was badly swollen, and he was too sick to move. Without his guidance, the Marauders would have had difficulty finding their way in the dark through the intricate maze of paths. Captain Laffin and Lieutenant Dunlap slashed the spot where the fangs had penetrated Nau's foot and for 2 hours sucked poison from the incision. By 0230 the Kachin was able to mount Colonel Hunter's horse and continue leading until the column reached its destination for the night.

After a brief rest, H Force resumed its march at noon on 16 May and again crossed the Namkwi River, south of the village of Namkwi. So far only two natives had seen the column, and they had been taken along with the force in order to prevent their alerting the enemy. Only 4 miles now from the Myitkyina air strip, Colonel Hunter took more precautions to keep the movement of his force unknown. With the help of the Kachin guerrillas, his men rounded up all the inhabitants of Namkwi, some of whom were known to be of doubtful loyalty, and confined them within H Force's lines until the next morning. The force at this time cut neither the railroad nor the telegraph line, wishing to maintain secrecy about its arrival so close to the airfield.

Colonel Hunter set the time for the attack on the airfield at 1000, 17 May (Map No. 25, page 107). His plan was for the 1st Battalion of the 5307th, under Colonel Osborne, to lead the Chinese 150th Regiment to the southwest end of the field and leave the regiment to attack the strip at that point. Osborne and his men were then to push southwest to the ferry terminal at Pamati. By taking this terminal, the Marauders would control the nearest crossing of the Irrawaddy River. Colonel Hunter's plan for the attack on the air strip was based on the knowledge that because of recent strafing of the field, the Japanese habitually withdrew during daylight to positions in the thick scrub and bamboo clumps at some distance from the strip. In addition, from intelligence brought back by a six-man patrol under Sgt. Clarence E. Branscomb of White Combat Team, Colonel Hunter knew how many Japanese troops and Burmese workmen were about the strip on 16 May.

The attack came off exactly as scheduled. Colonel Osborne left the Chinese 150th Regiment to carry out its part of the mission and, with his Marauders, hastened to Pamati. By 1100 he had taken the village



and ferry. Red Combat Team was instructed to hold the ferry site, and White Combat Team was sent back to the air strip, where it received orders from Colonel Hunter to seize Zigyun, main ferry point for Myitkyina. At 1700 Osborne and White Combat Team left the air strip and moved southeast to the Irrawaddy River in close proximity to Rampur. There they bivouacked for the night in position to move on Zigyun next morning.

Meanwhile the attack on the airfield by the 150th Regiment had made good progress. The strip was not strongly defended, and the Chinese thrust had come as a complete surprise to the enemy.

Throughout the day sporadic fighting went on in widely separated spots around the airfield, but by noon the field was in Allied hands.

Reinforcements for H Force

When no Japanese reinforcements appeared at the air strip on 17 May, Colonel Hunter concluded that the enemy did not hold Myitkyina in strength. Intelligence reports confirmed his assumption, so he decided to press home the advantage of his surprise assault by attempting to take the city. It was inevitable that the Japanese would soon reinforce their garrison from troops within close reach of the city. The question for Colonel Hunter was whether he or the enemy could build up strength the quicker.

Immediately after capturing the air strip Colonel Hunter radioed General Merrill asking for more troops and supplies. The strip was ready to receive transport planes, which could deliver without loss cargoes 30 percent greater than could be loaded for air drops. Light motor transport and supplies too bulky or too heavy for parachute dropping could now be brought in. The Chinese 89th Regiment, waiting on rear fields, was ordered to leave for Myitkyina, and one battalion arrived by air from Ledo late in the afternoon. Simultaneously Colonel Hunter sent an urgent request to M and K Forces for their assistance. Each force was about a 2 days' trip from Myitkyina. M Force had already moved eastward over the Kumon Range and was at Arang when Colonel McGee received Hunter's call. The force started southward as soon as possible and covered the distance of more than 30 miles by forced marches. K Force had just reached Hkumchet In, about 20 miles north of Myitkyina, when Colonel Hunter's message came over the radio. Colonel Kinnison also ordered his column to continue without delay to assist H Force.

Preliminary Assault on Myitkyina

Immediately on learning of the success at the airfield, General Merrill flew in and established his headquarters (Map No. 25, page 107). His second-in-command, Colonel McCammon, ordered Colonel Hunter to attack the city with the disengaged portion of H Force. One battalion of the Chinese 89th Regiment, which had arrived from Ledo, would defend the air strip while two battalions of the 150th

Regiment attacked Myitkyina. The other battalion of the 150th Regiment would be in reserve at the strip. White Combat Team, near Rampur, would continue toward Zigyun to secure the ferry crossing south of the city. If Red Combat Team held the ferry crossing at Pamati, two of the three approaches to Myitkyina from the south would be under the control of H Force.

Early on the morning of 18 May, White Combat Team troops took possession of Rampur where they found several warehouses filled with clothing and other supplies. Colonel Osborne then moved on to Zigyun. His team occupied the town without any opposition by 1000 and took several Burmese prisoners. Defensive positions were being prepared when Osborne radioed to Colonel Hunter for further instructions. Hunter informed him that a company of Chinese was on the way to relieve White Combat Team, which was to report back to the airfield the moment the Chinese arrived. However, the relief of White Combat Team was considerably delayed as the Chinese unit engaged several groups of Japanese stragglers en route and did not reach Zigyun until 48 hours later. The Chinese dug in nine times in 5 miles.

The two battalions of the Chinese 150th Regiment attacked Myitkyina during the 18th from the north. After taking the railroad station, they became involved in confused fighting and had to retire to a line about 800 yards west of the town. There they dug in.

Meanwhile, K Force was closing in on Myitkyina from the north. About 8 miles from the city the guides leading Kinnison and his men lost their way in the darkness, and K Force bivouacked where they were for the night. Daylight on the 19th disclosed the Myitkyina-Mogaung motor road within 50 yards of their perimeter, and they pushed on along it. When General Merrill learned that K Force was coming in on the road, he radioed Colonel Kinnison to attack and secure Charpate. The village was taken during the morning without appreciable Japanese resistance. The 3d Battalion dug in around the village while the Chinese 88th Regiment moved to the southwest on a line extending roughly from the vicinity of Charpate to the railroad. Kinnison ordered the 3d Battalion to block the Mogaung road and send patrols to block all trails converging on Charpate.

The village stood in the midst of a flat area surrounded by rice paddies. Four or five hundred yards to the northwest the ground rose slightly and was covered with a dense growth of scrub and vines.

In preparing its defensive position, the 3d Battalion overlooked the importance of this high ground. On 19 May the battalion was hit from the northwest by small bands of Japanese who were trying to get into Myitkyina via the Mogaung road. However, none of these engagements was serious.

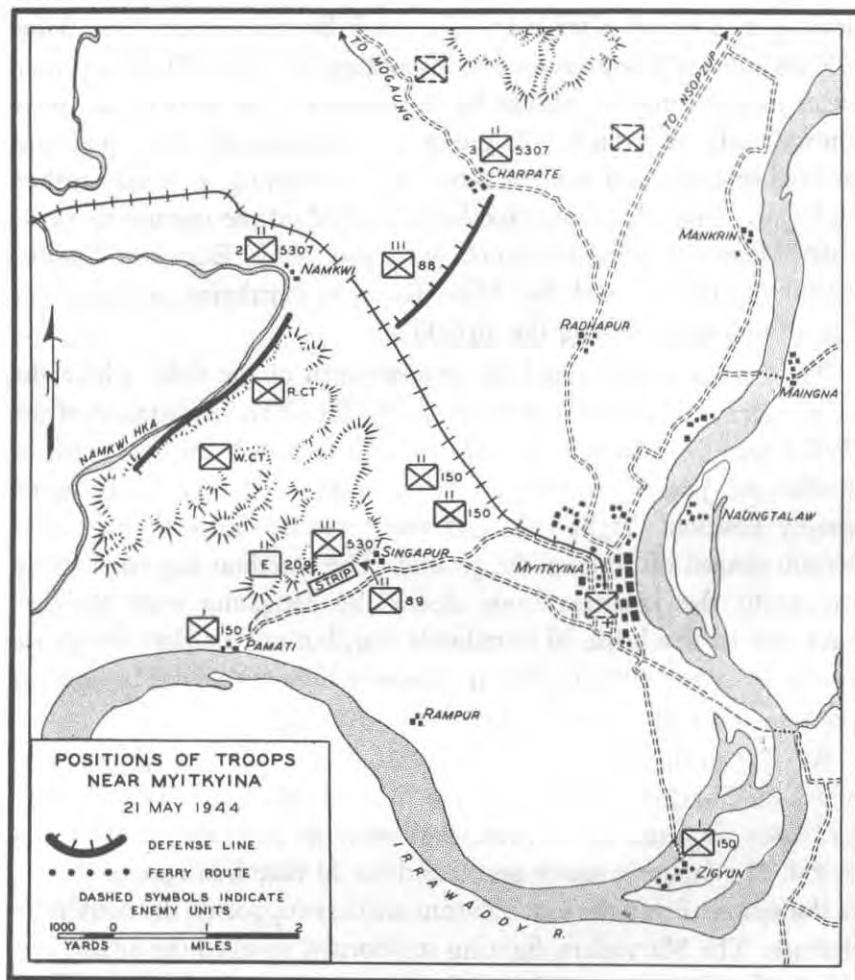
To the southwest of Charpate, General Merrill was building up a force along the Namkwi River. On 19 May Red Combat Team was relieved at the Pamati ferry by a company of the Chinese 150th Regiment, and the team took up a position on the Namkwi River south of the town. During the evening M Force reached Namkwi. McGee and his men were weak and ill from hunger, for the supplies of food which they had anticipated during the trip south from Arang had not been dropped. After getting food from H Force, McGee's unit was able to outpost Namkwi and patrol to the west and southwest.

General Merrill's forces were now so placed that Japanese reinforcements could reach Myitkyina only from across the Irrawaddy River to the east or along the Myitkyina-Mankrin or Myitkyina-Radhapur roads from the north. The Allied troops were disposed in a semicircle covering all approaches from the northwest, west, southwest, and south. So far, enemy activity was slight in this area. Even at the airfield the continual sniping did not prevent the planes from landing with an ever increasing amount of supplies. If General Merrill retained these positions, he could make a coordinated attack on Myitkyina.

For this purpose he was forming a Myitkyina Task Force, which involved reshuffling of all the units under his command. H and K Forces were dissolved; the Marauder battalions were once more combined under Colonel Hunter; and the Chinese regiments operated as separate units. After this reorganization General Merrill, again ill, had to be evacuated, and Colonel McCammon took over command.

Checkmate

The Myitkyina Task Force was not able to undertake its mission. Instead, a sudden reversal of fortune saw the Allied forces, during the last 10 days of May, thrown back on a defensive struggle to hold the air strip (Map No. 26, page 111). Despite the Marauders' effort to cover main approaches to Myitkyina, the Japanese had been able to reinforce the garrison: an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 enemy had come in from the Nsozup, Mogaung, and even the Bhamo areas. The



Japanese had built up more strength at Myitkyina than the Allies and by 23 May were passing over to the offensive.

The tired Allied forces seemed pitifully inadequate to deal with a strong enemy counterattack. If the Japanese could recapture the airfield, the American and Chinese troops in the Myitkyina area would be left with no way of escape except the jungle trail over which they had come, and they were in no condition for such an ordeal. The fruits of the brilliant campaign were at stake. The most drastic measures were justifiably taken to collect a force adequate to defend the airfield. Reluctantly the higher command directed that evacuation of sick and exhausted Marauders be held to an absolute minimum.

Requests were sent to the camp at Dinjan for Marauders convalescing in hospitals after evacuation from Burma as casualties. Some 200 convalescents were rushed to Myitkyina, but about 50 of these men were judged unfit for combat by the doctors at the airfield and were immediately sent back. A group of replacements who had just arrived in India and were at Ramgarh for training were also rushed in by air. These desperate expedients warded off the immediate peril; then Marauder reinforcements, with the 209th Engineer Combat Battalion, strengthened the Allied forces at Myitkyina and kept the Japanese from attacking the airfield.

The enemy concentrated his attacks north of the field, where the first evidence of difficulty showed on 21 May. The 3d Battalion of the 5307th had left Charpate at 1000 to reach the road junction north of Radhapur. Just short of the junction, Beach encountered a prepared enemy position. Tight bands of automatic fire directed over level terrain pinned his force to the ground. The battalion dug in. During the night the Japanese came down the Mogaung road through Charpate to attack the 3d Battalion's rear, but our artillery fire drove them off. In the morning Beach withdrew his battalion to the original position at Charpate and resumed his patrolling.

At 2200 on the night of 23 May a battalion of Japanese launched an attack on Charpate from the rise northeast of the town. Beach's force had been depleted by sickness, and some of his men were out on patrol. The Japanese attack penetrated the 3d Battalion's position early in the action. From the south 75-mm artillery supported the battalion's defense. The Marauders, fighting stubbornly, repelled the attack, but they suffered severe casualties. On the morning of 24 May at 0935, the 3d Battalion had to face still another attack. The fight was going badly when Hunter ordered Beach to break contact with the enemy and move to the railroad, 2½ miles to the south. The Japanese occupied Charpate and held it in force as soon as the 3d Battalion withdrew.

Two days later the Japanese, supported by mortar fire, attacked Namkwi heavily, and the 2d Battalion pulled back to a ridge about halfway to Myitkyina. The Japanese then occupied Namkwi and fortified it strongly. They had now taken over two of the towns on the main approaches to Myitkyina.

On 27 May Company C of the 209th Engineer Combat Battalion

was attached to the 2d Battalion. McGee was ordered to reconnoiter the Charpate area and to attempt reaching Radhapur once again. Just south of Charpate, McGee's forces were attacked. The Japanese were not present in great strength, but the 2d Battalion was so wasted by fatigue, dysentery, malaria, and malnutrition that the unit was not effective for combat. During the engagement several men went to sleep from exhaustion. Colonel McGee himself lost consciousness three times and between relapses directed the battalion from an aid station. Although the attack was beaten off, McGee became convinced that his troops were unfit for further employment and asked to have them relieved as soon as possible.

* * *

For most of the Marauders, this was the last action at Myitkyina. Both the 1st and the 3d Battalions were back near the air strip, and neither one had enough men fit for combat to be a fighting force.

When Myitkyina itself did not fall on 18 May, it was apparent that a larger force was required to besiege the city, a task for which the Marauder unit had not been trained and which it was not strong enough to accomplish. By June the unit was expended. Only 1,310 men had reached Myitkyina, and of this number 679 were evacuated to rear hospitals between 17 May and 1 June. Allied reinforcements arrived to carry on the fight, and about 200 men of the 1st Battalion remained in the area until the fall of Myitkyina on 3 August. The remnants of this force took part in the final attack on the town.

The Distinguished Unit Citation awarded to the unit summarized its campaign:

"After a series of successful engagements in the Hukawng and Mogaung Valleys of North Burma, in March and April 1944, the unit was called on to lead a march over jungle trails through extremely difficult mountain terrain against stubborn resistance in a surprise attack on Myitkyina. The unit proved equal to its task and after a brilliant operation on 17 May 1944 seized the airfield at Myitkyina, an objective of great tactical importance in the campaign, and assisted in the capture of the town of Myitkyina on 3 August 1944."

Annex No. 1: Casualties

CASUALTIES FOR THE 5307TH COMPOSITE UNIT (PROVISIONAL) February to June, 1944

	Casualties	Percent of casualties	
		Actual	Estimated before operation
BATTLE CASUALTIES:			
Battle deaths	93		
Nonbattle deaths	30		
Wounded in action	¹⁹ 293		
Missing in action	8		
SUBTOTAL	424	14	35
DISEASE CASUALTIES:			
Amoebic dysentery	503		
Typhus fever	149		
Malaria	²⁰ 296		
Psychoneurosis	72		
Miscellaneous fevers (approx.)	950		
SUBTOTAL	1970	66	50
TOTAL	2394	80	85

¹⁹ These are the official figures of The Adjutant General's battle casualty roster for hospitalized wounded. Many cases of light battle casualties were not evacuated but treated by unit surgeons and consequently not reported in hospital returns. Therefore, complete statistics are not obtainable. The actual number of wounded at Nhpum Ga alone exceed the official total for the entire campaign.

²⁰ 296 is the number of malaria cases evacuated. Nearly every member of the force had it in more or less severe form.

Annex No. 2: Decorations

THE FOLLOWING LIST of decorations is based on the best records available to date but is not necessarily complete. It does not include the Purple Heart. Posthumous awards are indicated by an asterisk (*).

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1st Lt. Melvin R. Blair	Pfc. Herman Manuel
Pfc. Marvin H. Dean	Pvt. Howard T. Smith
Pfc. Willard J. D. Lilly	Tec. 5 Russell G. Wellman

LEGION OF MERIT

S/Sgt. John A. Acker	S/Sgt. Roy H. Matsumoto
Capt. Charles E. Darlington (British Army)	Maj. Melvin A. Schudmak
	T/Sgt. Francis Wonsowicz

SILVER STAR

T/Sgt. Edward C. Ammon	1st Lt. William Lepore
Pfc. Marvin H. Anderson	S/Sgt. Earl Little
1st Lt. Paul E. Armstrong	S/Sgt. James L. Marsh
M/Sgt. James C. Ballard	Lt. Col. George A. McGee, Jr.
Pfc. Earnest C. Banks	Pvt. Paul V. Michael
Lt. Col. Charles E. Beach	*Tec. 4 William H. Miles
Pfc. Paul R. Bicknell	1st Lt. Robert C. Newman

Capt. George G. Bonnyman
 1st Sgt. Clarence E. Branscomb
 Maj. Edwin J. Briggs
 *Pfc. Daniel V. Carrigan
 S/Sgt. Ellsworth Dalmus
 Tec. 4 Lewis Day, Jr.
 Pfc. Harold E. Dibble
 M/Sgt. Ralph E. Duston
 Capt. John R. Fair
 Tec. 5 Joseph N. Gomez
 Pfc. Everett E. Hudson
 Col. Charles N. Hunter
 Tec. 5 Emory Jones
 Col. Henry L. Kinnison, Jr.

*Pfc. Lambert L. Olson
 Pfc. Leonard G. Porath
 S/Sgt. Salvadore F. Rapisarda
 1st Sgt. Worth E. Rector
 S/Sgt. Ernest W. Reid
 Sgt. Harold Shoemaker
 2d Lt. Winslow B. Stevens
 *Tec. 5 Luther E. Sutterfield
 2d Lt. John W. Travis
 Pvt. Clayton A. Vantol
 1st Lt. Victor J. Weingartner
 2d Lt. Philip S. Weld
 1st Lt. Samuel V. Wilson

SOLDIER'S MEDAL

Capt. John M. Jones, III

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Capt. John H. Ahrens
 Sgt. Clifford Allen
 Tec. 5 George J. Anderson
 Tec. 5 Eugene F. Arnold
 Tec. 5 Louis F. Barberi
 Capt. Thomas E. Bogardus
 Capt. George G. Bonnyman
 S/Sgt. Charles H. Branton
 Maj. Edwin J. Briggs
 Tec. 4 Robert L. Carr
 1st Sgt. Linwood C. Clements
 CWO Thomas J. Dalton
 Pfc. Claude L. Davis
 Maj. Raymond L. Derraux
 S/Sgt. John F. Doran
 T/Sgt. Woodrow H. Gelandier
 1st Lt. William C. Grissom
 Tec. 5 Koore Hanson

1st Lt. Lawrence V. Lindgren
 S/Sgt. Francis K. Luke
 S/Sgt. Roy H. Matsumoto
 Sgt. Jack V. Mayer
 1st Lt. Maurice Metcalf
 1st Lt. Edward A. McLogan
 Lt. Col. William L. Osborne
 S/Sgt. Allen H. Overby
 Pfc. Wayne M. Price
 Pvt. Paul L. Rogers
 Maj. Bernard Rogoff
 T/Sgt. Frank Russell
 2d Lt. Warren R. Smith
 S/Sgt. Charles R. Stewart
 Pfc. Milton Susnjer
 Pfc. Joseph P. Sweeney
 Sgt. Perlee W. Tintary
 Pfc. Darrel M. Tomlinson

Maj. Richard W. Healy
 2d Lt. George S. Hearn
 Maj. George H. Hestad
 Capt. James E. T. Hopkins
 1st Lt. Theodore Hughes, Jr.
 Maj. Caifson Johnson
 Sgt. Edward C. Kohler
 S/Sgt. Robert B. Kroy
 Capt. Kenneth S. Laney
 Pfc. Adam J. Lang

Tec. 5 Harland Vadnais
 Sgt. Arthur A. Werner, Jr.
 1st Lt. Logan E. Weston
 1st Lt. Samuel V. Wilson
 2d Lt. William E. Woomer
 Pfc. Leonard S. Wray
 Pfc. Willard F. Yardley
 Sgt. Osiride O. Zanardelli
 S/Sgt. Jack E. Zosel

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO SILVER STAR

Lt. Col. Charles E. Beach
 S/Sgt. Ellsworth Dalmus

1st Lt. Samuel V. Wilson



INSIGNIA of the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional).

