

2Aug43 Birth of Pararescue Jump Mission

Photos by Frank Cancellare cameraman for the Associated Press ACME/war pool. All photos passed by Army censor.



9/28/1943. India: – Sgt. Richard Passey (left), Provo, Utah; LtCol Donald D. Flickinger flight surgeon (center) and Cpl. William G. McKenzie, Detroit, Mich (right)., parachuted from a rescue plane to aid the survivors of the Air Transport Command plane crash in Northern Burma. The party faced no land before reaching safety again. Credit (photo by Frank Cancellare, War Pool photographer, from ACME);





SOMEWHERE IN INDIA – Twenty survivors of an Air Transport Command plane crash in northern Burma, who participated in a dramatic mass parachute jump to safety, are shown after air and land rescue parties had brought them safely of the jungle land. The plane was enroute from India to China when engine trouble developed, August 2. Co-pilot Chamlew, Felix, 21, of Compton, Calif, died in the crash.

Out of the Jungle, 9/28/1943. India: – The twenty survivors of an ATC plane which crashed in Northern Burma, who participated in a dramatic mass parachute jump to safety when the ship developed engine trouble, August 2, while enroute to China from India, are shown with members of a parachuting rescue party upon reaching the safety of India once again. The complement marched 26 days through dense jungle growth in an area laden with head-hunters. Left to right, back row: Philip Adams, British sub divisional officer, of ground rescue party; Sgt. E. Wilder, Levelland, Tex.; Col. Wang Pao Chao, Chinese officer; Eric Severeid, CBS news commentator; William T. Stanton, of Board of Economic Warfare; Sgt. Joseph E. Clay, Monticello, Ia.; Cpl. Basil M. Lemon, Tulsa, Okla.; Sgt. Glen A. Kittleson, Ballantine, Mont.; Sgt. Francis W. Signor, Yonkers, N.Y., and Cpl. Lloyd J. Sherrill, Burlington, Ia. Middle row:- Lt. Roland K. Lee, Hicksville, Long Island, N.Y.; Lt. Col. Kweh Li, Chinese Army; John Davies, of State Department; Sgt. Ned C. Miller (crew chief), Ottumwa, Ia.; Flight officer Harry K. Neveu, pilot of the ship, Cudahy, Wisc.; Sgt. Joseph J. Gigore, Auburn, Mich., (first name etc is illegible) Schrandt, Philadelphia, Pa.; Cpl. Edward Holland, Cleveland, Ohio; Cpt. S. Waterbury, Blue Hill, Nebr.; Capt. D.C.

Lee, Haddon, Ia., of adjutant General's office. Kneeling, Sgt. Richard Passey, Provo, Utah, Lt. Col. Don D. Flickinger, ATC flight surgeon, and Cpl. William G. McKenzie, Detroit, Mich., the trio who jumped from rescue plane to aid crash victims. In front on stretcher is Sgt. Walter R. Oswalt (radio operator), of Ansonia, Ohio, who broke a leg when he parachuted from stricken plane. He was carried for 26 days by natives before reaching civilization. Credit (photo by Frank Cancellare, War Pool photographer, from ACME/war pool).



Plane Crash Party Cracks Jungle, 9/28/1943. India: – Almost a month had passed before survivor of an ATC plane crash in Northern Burma broke out of the jungle to a post in India. Sgt. Walter R. Oswalt, Ansonia, Ohio, who was radio operator on ill-fated plane, is carried by natives on a primitive stretcher since he broke his leg while parachuting to Earth. Other members of the planes complement bring up the rear with rescuers, who came both by air and over land. Only the plane's co-pilot died in the accident, all others parachuting safely to Earth when the ship developed engine trouble on a flight from China to India. Credit (photo by Frank Cancellare, photographer for the War Pool from ACME)

Photo by Cancellare taken in India

historicalimages.com



ref00571

A695 245

408- THREE MEDICAL MEN WHO PARACHUTED FROM PLANE
TO AID CRASH PASSENGERS. LEFT TO RIGHT: COL.
WILLIAM L. MOKE, LT. COL. JON. FLICKINGER,
AND SGT. RICHARD PASSET.

POOL PICTURES BY FRANK CANCELLARE. AGE CANCELLARE
JAN FOR THE BAR POOL. ALL PHOTOS PASSED BY
ARMY CENSOR.

STATEMENT IN INDIA: - TWENTY SURVIVORS OF AN A1C
PLANE CRASH IN NORTHERN BURMA, WHO PARTICIPATED
IN A DRAMATIC MASS PARACHUT JUMP TO SAFETY, ARE
SHOWN AFTER AIR AND LAND RESCUE PARTIES HAD
BROUGHT THEM SAFELY OUT OF THE JUNGLELAND.
THE PLANE WAS EN ROUTE FROM INDIA TO CHINA
WHEN ENGINE TROUBLE DEVELOPED, AUGUST 2.
CO-PILOT CHARLES W. FELIX, 21, OF COMPTON,
CALIF., DIED IN THE CRASH



In the Beginning When Men Were Men

First Pararescue Jump into Burma August 1943 to rescue the crew and passengers of crashed C-46. Only Lt Col Flickinger had one jump the other two none

Lt Col Flickinger, Sgt Passey, Cpl Mackenzie

The 2 August 1943 crash of C-46 # 41-12420 and
significant of the rescue of its crew and passengers

Although Army Air Forces search and rescue units had accomplished numerous impromptu parachute rescues of survivors of crashed aircraft in remote wilderness areas of North America since December 1940 none of these parachute rescue operations were conducted in an area inhabited by warlike indigenous peoples and visited by patrolling and raiding enemy forces. Despite this rescue operations being considered the origin of USAF Pararescue Teams and the USAF Pararescue enlisted specialty the constant informing simplistic reference to this mission is dismissing how and why this mission conclusively demonstrated if the risk is accepted a parachute rescue team can be dropped anywhere to aid and assist survivors of an aircraft crash or bailout.

Military operations in China-Burma-India (CBI) relied and depended on parachute/glider assaults and airdrop resupply capabilities immensely more than in any other combat theater. This air support mission need encouraged more acceptance of risk to develop and utilize a wide variety of solutions in the whole field of air support of ground operations. The August 2, 1943 crash of C-46 #2420 in the CBI Theater during WWII resulted in the first rescue of survivors from enemy patrolled and raided territory by use of a self-sufficient parachute-rescue team supported with airdrop resupply techniques, methods, procedures and tactics.

Not only is this mission credited in official military histories as being the first into such a populated with potentially belligerent peoples area it is also considered to be the dominant successful of the numerous parachute rescues accomplished in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater during WWII. By the time of the May 3, 1945 when a C-47 crashed at a location 47 in the dubbed Hidden (renamed Shangri-La) Valley, Dutch New Guinea such long range parachute rescues needing airdrop resupply were no longer a rarity. The lost in Shangri La Valley parachute rescue team operations is comparison mentioned as it has garnered much more public interest following at the time and a current times following as it involved a female WAC Corporal lost in the jungle with "savages".

To gain appreciation of the significance of the August 2 thru September 1, 1943 parachute rescue team activities some awareness of the geopolitics and asymmetrical combat nature of the CBI Theater is necessary.

When WWII began the China-Burma-India region was predominantly an unexplored and not an accurately mapped region. Most of the region lacked roads and established marked trading foot trails. The indigenous populations in the remote mountainous isolated areas were tribal and intratribal conflict was likely particularly in the hill country along the border of far eastern India and northwestern Burma where C-46 # 41-12420 crashed on August 2, 1943.

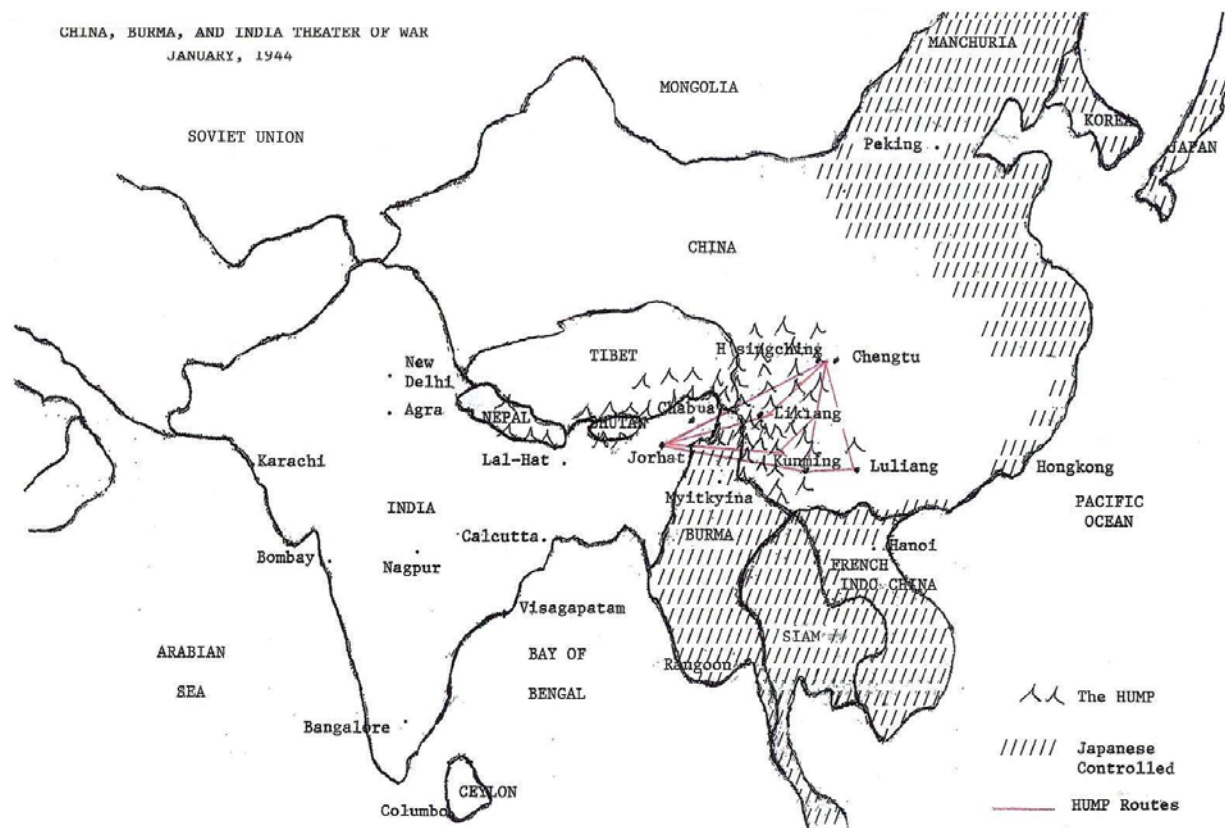
This area is known as Nagaland which is largely a mountainous region. The Naga Hills rise from the Brahmaputra Valley in Assam to about 2,000 feet (610 m) and rise further to the southeast, as high as 6,000 feet (1,800 m). Mount Saramati at an elevation of 12,552 feet (3,826 m) is the regions highest peak; this is where the Naga Hills merge with the Patkai Range in

Burma. Rivers such as the Doyang and Diphu to the north, the Barak river in the southwest and the Chindwin river of Burma in the southeast, dissect the entire region. The terrain is rich in flora and fauna with areas of wooded evergreen tropical and subtropical forest.

The indigenous population had a headhunting reputation and such savagery is known to have happened in Naga Hills during November 1943 when a combined force from Chingmei, Nokluk, Pangsha, Tsaplaw, Tswalaw and possibly some other small villages had attacked and destroyed Law Nawkum taking between 250 and 300 heads. American and British forces took no action as the headhunting intratribal conflict did not threaten the Ledo Road or its construction. Naga tribesmen were normally shy and smiling but they were ferocious when provoked and these peoples built secure and self-sufficient villages on hilltops to protect the village from surprise attack from other villages.

The Japanese Army was active in the area too.

The Japanese occupation of Burma began during the spring 1942 with the included the military objective to gain control of the Burma Road (completed in 1938) to cut resupply links from the port of Rangoon with the Chinese province of Yunnan. By 1943 the Japanese Army controlled the territory of Burma to the Border with India and China and with the British lacking the resources and organization to recapture Burma. Although the Japanese Army's March 1944 invasion of India failed, Allied transport aircraft flying air routes between India and China along the Brumes India China border were subject to attack from where Japanese fighter aircraft

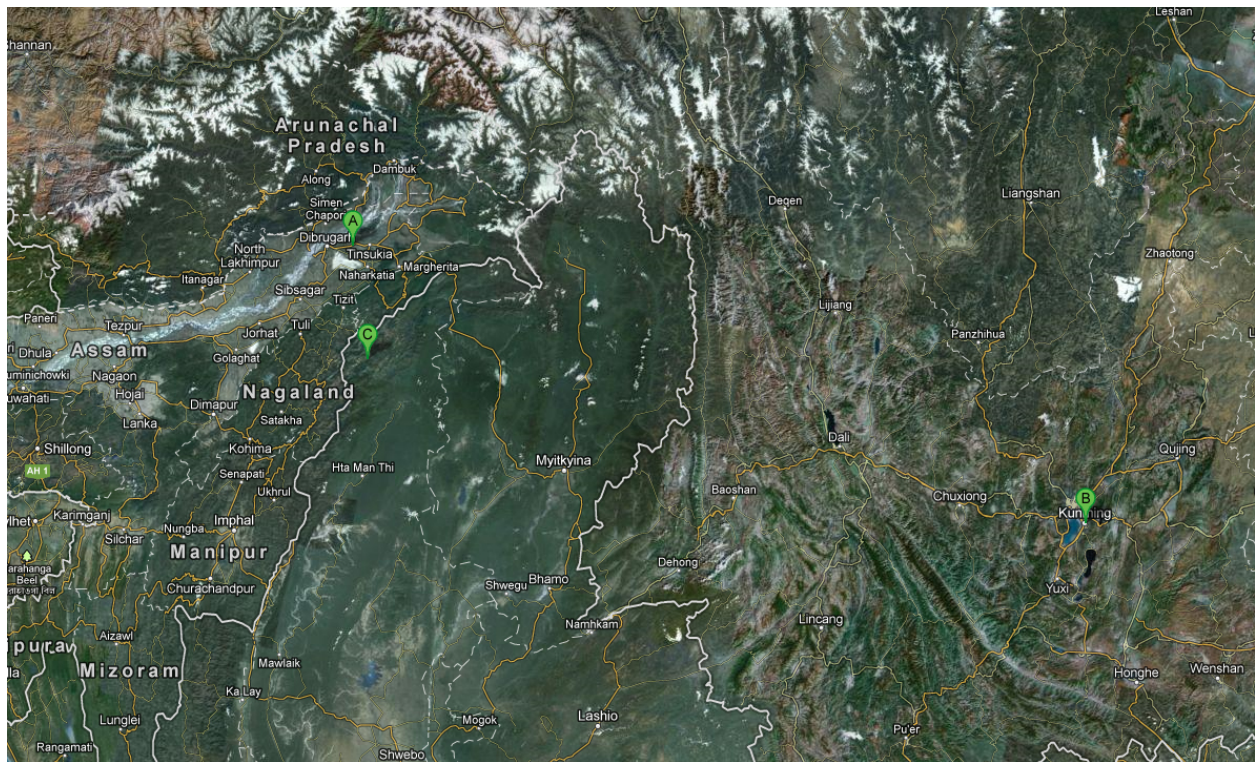


operating out of the Burmese city of Myitkyina. However the aircraft loss risks came less from enemy air action than from a combination of rugged terrain, extreme altitude, unpredictable weather and severe shortages of spare parts and experienced, properly trained crews.

Thus during 1943 the inhospitality of the remote isolated wilderness, the warlike character of the Naga tribes and potential presence of the Japanese army patrols made traveling alone or even in small groups a venture little a short of suicide.

During 1943, the transport aircraft flying hump routes were crashing at rate of nearly one a day. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) realized that Naga aid could prove critical in rescuing downed aircrew and passengers who would otherwise perish before trekking out of the jungle. To get this help OSS Detachment 101 sent agents to several Naga villages, to inform tribesmen that any and all help would be handsomely rewarded with trinkets, coin, and opium. This outreach effort is credited with the well-armed tribesmen finding the 23 survivors of August 2nd crash being predisposed to be friendly.

This rescue event begins with C-46 tail number 41-12420 taking off at about 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 2, 1943 to fly a route from Chabua, India (A) to Kunming, China (B). Crash location (C).



Onboard were four crewmembers (Pilot Flight Office Harry Neveu, co-pilot 2nd Lieutenant Charles Felix, Radio Operator Sgt Walter K. Oswalt, and fight engineer Staff Sergeant Ned C. Miller), seventeen passengers and roughly seven thousand pounds of cargo and baggage.

The seventeen passengers: Mr. William T. Stanton, Board of Economic Warfare; Mr. John Davies, State Department-General Stillwell's office; Mr. Eric Sevaried, War Correspondent-CBS; Col Wong Pae Chae, Chinese Army; S/Sgt Joseph Giguere, HQ ATC; Cpl Edward Holland, HQ ATC; Joseph Clay, HQ ATC; Sgt Francis Signer, JHQ ATC; Cpl Basil Lemon, HQ ATC; Sgt Glen Kittleson, HQ ATC; Cpl Lloyd Sherrill, HQ ATC; Cpl S. M. Waterbury; HQ ATC; Pvt William Schrendt, HQ Delhi SOS; T/Sgt E. Wilder, HQ 12th AF; 2ndLt Roland K. Lee, HQ ATC; Captain D. C. Lee, War Department, Adjutant General Department.

About an hour and thirty minutes into the flight, approximately 200 miles flown, while the plane was over the Patkai Mountains, the left engine lost oil pressure and was shut down and aircraft is turned around and headed back to Chabua. Although jettisoning cargo reduced weight and bought some time the overworked right engine caught fire and emergency bailout became the only option.

Point C is the Burma crash/bailout location in relation to Chabua, India (point A). The crash site was in close proximity of the village Pangsha (point C above) and the survivor and the parachute rescue team stayed there until August 18. Severeid gives the location as 26°25'N, 95°20'E.



All crew and passengers bailout but it took a few hours before they all met up in a Naga village to discover the copilot, 2Lt Felix and a passenger, Cpl Lemmon, were unaccounted for.

Naga tribesmen found Corporal Lemmon three days later after he spent those three days hiding from them, thinking they were Japanese soldiers. He was found in real bad shape suffering from insect and leech bites from head to foot that practically consumed much of his blood, he was hypothermic from lack of shelter and warmth, his shoeless feet (lost shoes during bailout) were cut up and bleeding and he was half-hysterical.

The only fatality, co-pilot 2nd Lieutenant Charles Felix, was found a few more days later under the tail of the C-46 with his chute fouled up in the tail assembly. Most likely, the C-46 was in a roll and he prematurely deployed his parachute as he was exiting causing his canopy hit and entangle on the stabilizer as it was deploying.

Fortuitously the radio operator had been transmitting distress calls before bailing out which resulted in a search and rescue C-47 arriving overhead within an hour or two that airdropped them weapons and other supplies that included signal panels.

The survivors used signal panels to communicate they had injured personnel and later that afternoon Lt. Col. Don S. Flickinger, Sgt. Richard S. Passey and Cpl. William MacKenzie parachuted into the jungle, met up with the survivors and began treating the wounded.

After seeing to the needs of the injured survivors, Flickinger and the two enlisted medics set up a clinic for the villagers, earning the gratitude and cementing friendly relations with the villagers. Flickinger also thought the survivors and the parachute rescue team might be safer from attack should the villagers become hostile, so he paid some of them to construct three huts, one for the civilians and Chinese passengers, one for the officers, and one for the enlisted men.

The survivors and parachute rescue team remained at Pangsha as they were advised by dropped note a ground team is on its way to escort them out. There was concern other tribes might be hostile and ambush them as they trekked out. The survivors and parachute rescue team left Pangsha on August 18, escorted by a party of armed natives led by the British deputy commissioner of the Naga Hills, Philip Adams. The survivors and rescue party struggled through a brutal six-day trek that taxed everyone to the limit.

Although this rescue is credited as the origin heritage for USAF Pararescue, there is much collateral mission implications emerging from this first in a combat area parachute rescue team operations.

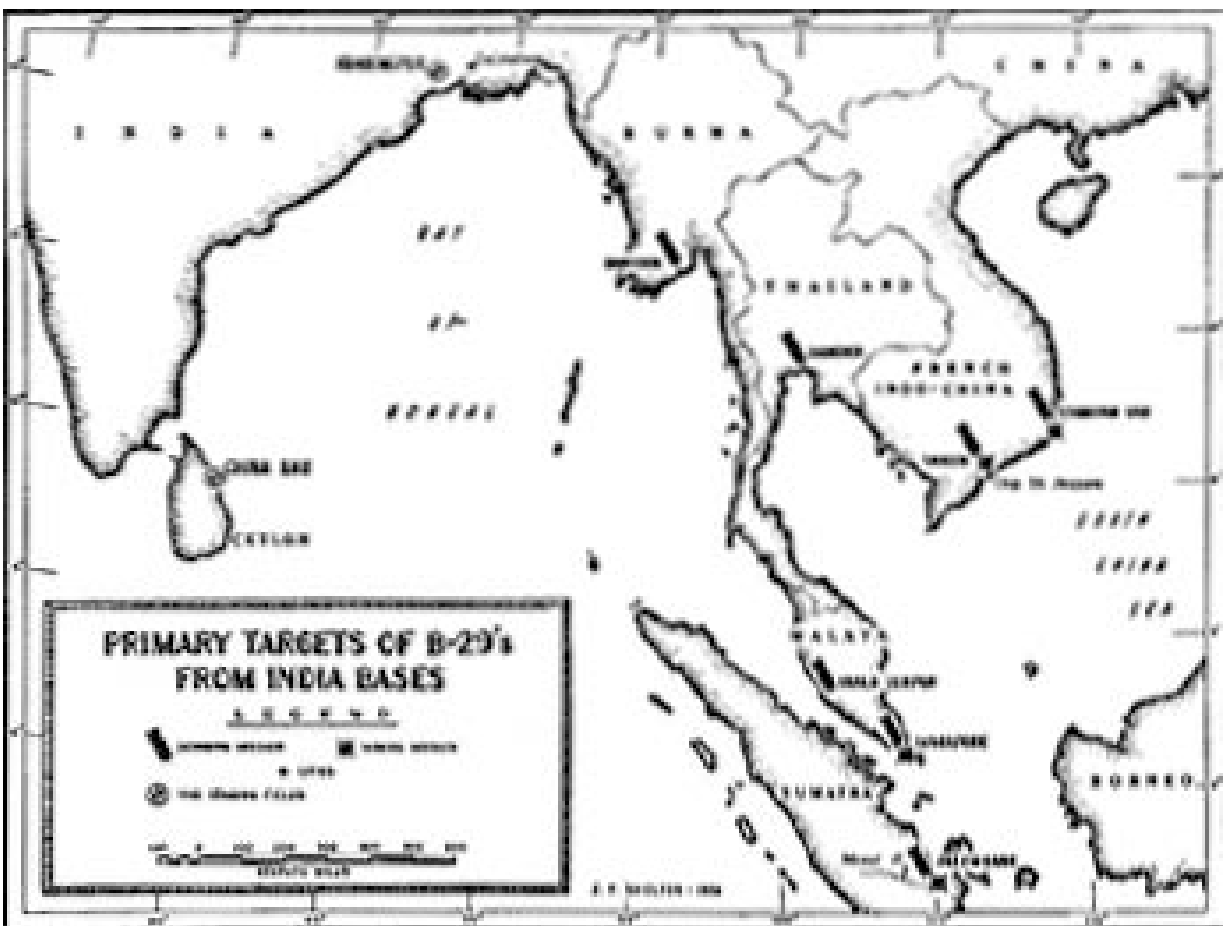
Perhaps the significance of establishing a medical clinic to provide healthcare of indigenous population by Lt. Col. Don S. Flickinger, Sgt. Richard S. Passey and Cpl. William MacKenzie in the immediate bailout/crash location to gain safety by establishing goodwill relations the most overlooked detail of this mission. The Commander of the Air Rescue Service clearly and concisely reflects upon this importance to his subordinate commanders in June 1951.

The Pararescue teams have, inherent with their design, the facility of establishing communication with the native populace of remote wilderness areas. Should such areas be-present within your area of responsibility, then you are well aware of the complete disregard such natives usually have of aircraft incidents. Oftentimes this is due to superstitions of the natives while in other cases the only interest the natives may have is in sacking the wreckage. Proper coordination with the natives in the past has resulted in the saving of many aircrew lives. Such operations could well prove valuable again when maximum rescue effort is taxed by a war time workload. However, now is the time to establish this native

coordination, not after the balloon goes up. The training the team member receive in native psychology and rescue operations permit them to do this mission for you. The establishment of advanced teams and assistance in maintaining them when all base facilities are nonexistent is another faculty a Pararescue team member provides you, if called upon to do so. In summation, a well trained Pararescue team can be a very valuable asset to your command if exploited to the maximum.

This mission this mission that contribute to the developing of putting small team capability working in isolation in far forward positions it prompted much rethinking on incorporating parachuting and unconventional efforts to rescue prisoners of war from Japanese prison camps in Southeast Asia, the Philippines and other Japanese occupied areas in the Pacific Theater.

This mission also prompted the availability of (no mission jump utilization evidence found) parachute rescue teams to support rescue of bomber crews based in India that were bombing Japanese war effort targets in Burma, Thailand, French Indo-China (Vietnam) and Malaya.



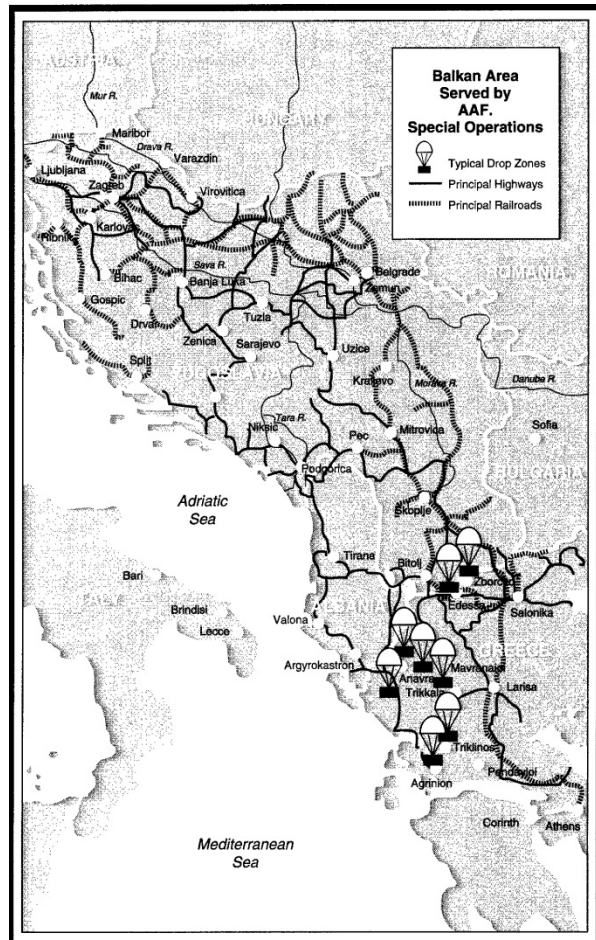
Direct traceable linkage or influences of this mission to military operations in other combat theaters is lacking other than the common OSS involvement presence with doing aircrew rescue, evacuating downed aircrew from contested areas and attempts to rescue of prisoners of war from prison camps.

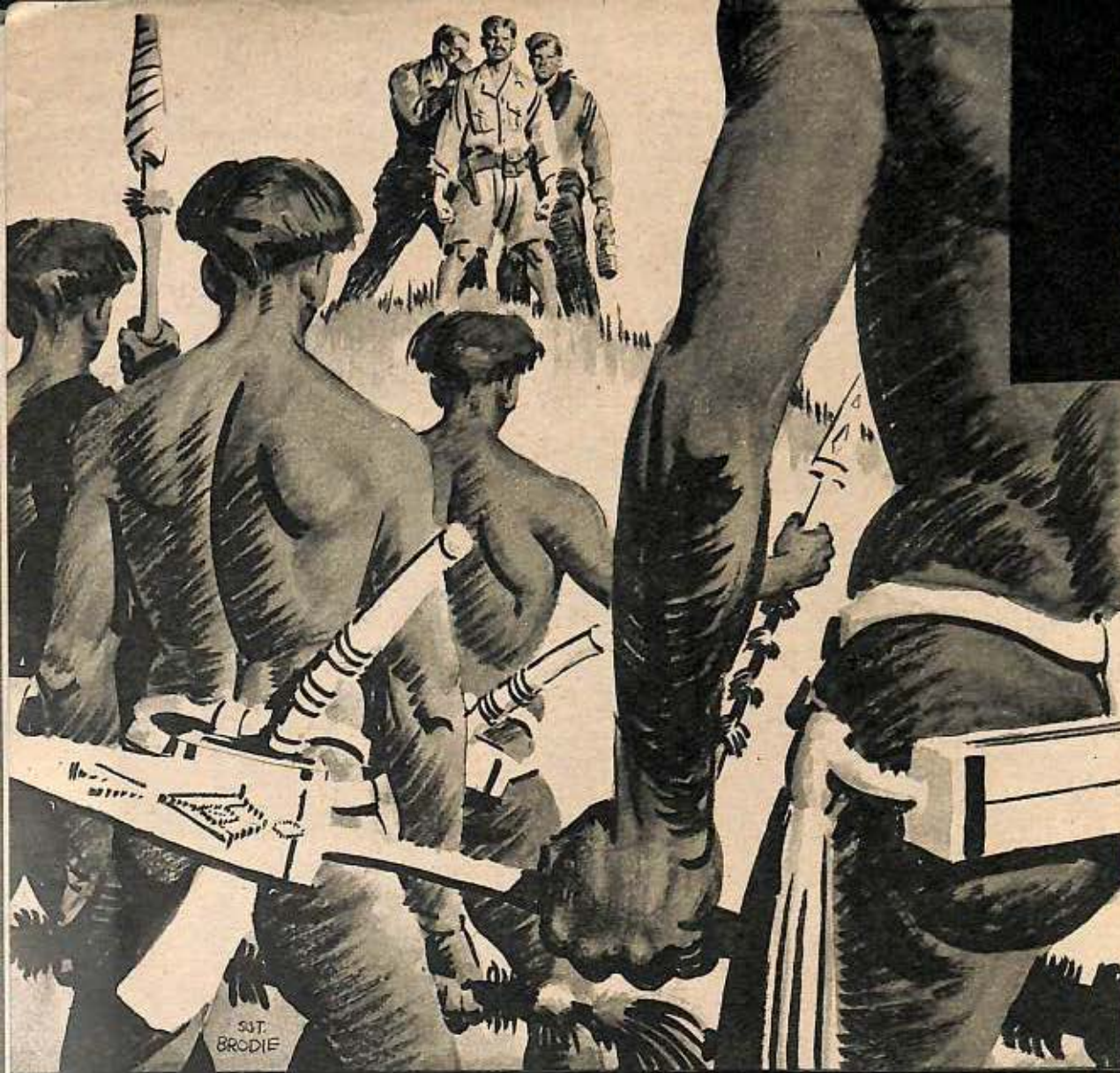
Techniques, methods and procedures used in CBI to insert the parachute rescue teams and then recovery evacuate the rescue team and survivors likely influenced the July 1944 establishing of OSS/15th Air Force's Aircrew Rescue Unit 1 (known to the OSS as the Halyard Mission).

This unit was specifically devoted to rescue and evacuation in the Balkans (Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia). During the night of August 2/3, 1944 in a mission typical of many flown until war's end, the unit dropped a field party fifty-five miles south of Belgrade, where roughly one hundred airmen had assembled. The rescuers immediately set to work on a landing strip. Six days later, C-47s evacuated nearly three hundred men there.

OSS influence persisted after WWII with many officer having WWII OSS service history were involved in establishing both the Air Rescue Service and USAF Pararescue teams and the USAF Pararescue specialty training programs and requirements.

Although the WWII CBI Theater is considered minor and unimportant in comparison to the other WWII combat theaters and major combat campaigns the capabilities, methods, procedures and tactics developed in this theater contributed to significantly to future force structure being ready and available to accomplish isolated personnel recovery, and ensured future operational capability was adequately trained, equipped and organized. More importantly this mission allows U.S. military planners to incorporate this capability into operational objectives and regional plans.





"Four natives appeared 100 feet away. The two little groups faced each other nervously."

And one of the 21 men who bailed out near the Burma border was an official from the State Department. His capture would have been worth plenty to the Japs.

utes later a C-47 was taking off from the base.

Davies, Wilder and Capt. Lee landed on a hillside hundreds of yards apart but within sight of each other. It was low bush, once cultivated by the natives but now waist-high in grass and shrub. They headed for a path lower down on the hillside, joining forces in about 10 minutes.

Barely a moment later, four natives appeared 100 feet away, each holding a spear. The two little groups faced each other nervously. Then the natives plunked their spears into the ground and picked up branches, a sign of peace. The Americans made friendly gestures and walked forward to meet them.

The natives pointed to a stream in the middle of the valley below and motioned to the Americans to accompany them there. In sign language they told Davies that three other parachutists had dropped from the skies, and soon afterward two of them, Col. Kuo and Sgt. Gigure, came into sight with some other natives.

At the river bank the natives paused, evidently waiting for someone. About 30 more natives emerged from the underbrush, and then a wrinkled little man about 80 years old, apparently the native chieftain, appeared on the scene. A kind of musette bag, containing silver Indian rupees, was slung over his shoulder, and by his side he wore a British sword. He gave a coin to each of the survivors in token of friendship.

Then the chief and his warriors led them on an hour-long, exhausting climb up to his village,

LOST IN HEAD-HUNTER COUNTRY

By Sgt. BOB GHIO
YANK Staff Correspondent

SOMEWHERE IN INDIA—Like stunt flyers in the finale of the Cleveland Air Show, 21 men bailed out from a twin-engined Army transport plane, their parachutes billowing in the bright clear sky. But this wasn't Cleveland; it was the Burma-India border, and the only human beings within hundreds of miles were head-hunting natives and Japanese troops.

Two of the parachutists were government officials, whose capture would be worth thousands of dollars to the Japs. Another one was a foreign correspondent, and the remaining 18 were American and Chinese Army officers and men. Only one had ever jumped from a plane before.

When I met them in the jungle almost a month later, 20 of the men were still alive. Their story involved an encounter with the head hunters, preparation against a Japanese attack, the arrival of medical aid and supplies by air, rescue by a ground force and then a long march back to civilization. They also told of the quick thinking of an enlisted man whose radio signals when the plane was falling saved their lives.

The assorted planeload of 21 had taken off on the morning of Aug. 2 from an airfield in India, bound for China. The trip's normal flying time for the C-46 Curtiss Commando was 2½ hours, and the transport had covered an hour's part of the journey when one motor went out at 0900.

Flight Officer Harry K. Nevue of Cudahy, Wis., pilot of the ship, circled desperately in a struggle to climb over the mountains that were looming ahead. According to his calculations, the transport was over Burma. Even if they survived a crash, they'd probably be captured by the Japs. And Nevue knew that one of his passengers was the political adviser to Lt. Gen.

Joseph Stilwell, John Davies Jr. of the State Department, who could not afford to be captured.

Nevue realized he could never clear the mountains in front of him. He turned the transport toward the valleys and plains lying southwest.

Fifteen minutes later Nevue ordered the passengers to throw out all the baggage. When even that failed to provide more altitude, he gave the order to bail out. They were approaching the Burma-India border, formed at this point by a ridge between two valleys. As the transport was still making considerable speed, the men were scattered over a 10-mile area.

Davies, who had been the first to jump, landed on the Burma side of the ridge with Lt. Col. Kuo Li of the Chinese Army; Capt. Duncan C. Lee of Chatham, Va.; S/Sgt. Joseph J. Gigure of Auburn, Maine; Sgt. E. Wilder of Levelland, Tex., and Cpl. Basil M. Lemon of Tulsa, Okla.

The others, who hit the India side of the ridge, were William T. Stanton of the Board of Economic Warfare; Eric Sevareid, CBS correspondent; Col. Wang Pao Chao of the Chinese Army; Lt. Roland K. Lee of Hicksville, N. Y.; S/Sgt. Joseph E. Clay of Monticello, Iowa; Sgt. Glen A. Kittleson of Ballantine, Mont.; Sgt. Francis W. Signor of Yonkers, N. Y.; Cpl. Edward Holland of East Cleveland, Ohio; Cpl. J. Sherrill of Burlington, Iowa; Cpl. S. M. Waterbury of Blue Hill, Neb.; Pvt. William Schrandt of Philadelphia, Pa.; S/Sgt. Ned C. Miller of Ottumwa, Iowa, the transport's crew chief; Sgt. Walter R. Oswalt of Ansonia, Ohio, radio operator; 2d Lt. Charles W. Felix of Compton, Calif., co-pilot, and Nevue.

As the first of the parachutes opened under the faltering transport, Sgt. Oswalt calmly notified the nearest base that the plane would crash in a few minutes. He left the radio circuit open, instructing the base to take a bearing on his position and to send out a rescue mission. Min-

built on a hilltop as a defense against attack. They rested and tried to quench their thirst with zu, a native beer made from rice. Then the chief gave Sgt. Wilder a knife and motioned to him to behead a goat. The head was passed around so that the chief and his guests could drink the blood from the jugular vein, a great delicacy.

Late in the afternoon, a native runner reported to the chief that a plane had crashed in the valley on the other side of the ridge. Davies and Capt. Lee sent a message by another runner to the valley, signed with only their first names, suggesting that survivors return with the guide.

The runner came back 2½ hours later with a note from Eric Sevareid, urging the Davies party to join him instead. Sevareid wrote that one of his companions was injured and added that a friendly plane had sighted them.

Davies and the others set out that same night with native guides to cross the mountain ridge separating them from the native village where Sevareid was apparently situated. It was raining, and the men groped their way along the trail with torches. They were wet and miserable when they reached the village around 2300.

They found Sevareid and 13 others in a native communal hut, some sleeping and some sitting around a fire. The newcomers were told how the transport had crashed and exploded in a geyser of orange flames after Nevue, last of the 21 to jump, left the pilot's seat. Several of them were still in the air when the explosion came, and Sevareid narrowly avoided being blown into the blaze. Sgt. Oswalt, the 210-pound radio operator, broke his ankle when he landed.

Two hours later the C-47, summoned by Sgt. Oswalt's final radio message, flew overhead and sighted the parachutes the survivors had spread out on the ground. A radio receiver, a Gibson girl transmitter, two Springfield rifles and a sig-

nal panel set were dropped from the C-47, but the transmitter broke when it landed.

As soon as they set up the radio receiver, the pilot of the C-47 warned the group that there were unfriendly natives nearby and that it would take 12 days for a rescue mission to reach them from the nearest British base. There was no place to land a plane here safely, he said, but it would be easy to drop them any supplies they needed.

Assembling the white cloth signal panels into a message-pattern, Severeid asked for medical assistance for Sgt. Oswalt. Around 1700 the C-47 returned with medical supplies and three medics, who parachuted down to join the survivors—Lt. Col. Donald D. Flickinger, a Regular Army flight surgeon from Long Beach, Calif., who holds the DFC; Sgt. Richard Passey of Provo, Utah, and Cpl. William G. McKenzie of Detroit, Mich.

Meanwhile the party had found that the natives of the nearby village were not hostile. When Lt. Col. Flickinger arrived and took command, however, he decided to keep the survivors away from the native village as much as possible. It was already overcrowded and he didn't want to take the risk of provoking bad feelings during the time they'd have to wait for a rescue mission.

After some dickering, the natives agreed to build a special hut out of palmetto leaves and bamboo for Lt. Col. Flickinger's men and the survivors, in an uncultivated area some distance from the village, where supplies could be dropped without damaging the native cornfields. From then on two C-47s, piloted by Capt. Hugh E. Wild of Milwaukee, Wis., and Capt. George E. Katzman of Louisville, Ky., flew over the encampment daily to drop medicine, carbines, clothing, food and even Calcutta newspapers.

They read a story in the newspapers about their missing plane, listing Davies among the passengers and saying that news of the mishap had been broadcast by radio. Realizing that Jap agents could read the papers, too, and hear the radio, and that enemy forces would probably be searching the area for the State Department official, Lt. Col. Flickinger assigned his own men to battle stations and they dug a special slit trench for the injured Sgt. Oswalt to occupy in case the camp was strafed.

As a matter of fact, Jap planes passed near the camp twice. Once an enemy observation plane flew overhead, too high to spot the survivors. Another time a flight of Zeros zoomed just beyond the hill where the village was located.

After organizing battle stations, Lt. Col. Flickinger assigned each man to a special job. Davies, a professional diplomat, was put in charge of relations with the natives. Sgt. Gigure, a mess sergeant, directed the cooking with Cpl. Sherrill as KP-pusher and the two Chinese colonels as "rice cooks."

Stanton was named signal officer and Sgt. Kittleson and Cpl. Holland as his assistants. Capt. Lee served as adjutant and supply officer, Sgt. Clay as supply sergeant and Lt. Lee and Sgt. Signor as quartermasters, bringing in the supplies as they were dropped on the hillside.

Severeid became camp historian and chaplain. He conducted Sunday religious services and a memorial service for Lt. Felix, the co-pilot, whose body had been found under the tail of the wrecked plane, where his parachute had evidently caught when he jumped.

The lieutenant colonel and his two medics established a daily sick call, treating natives as well as the Americans and Chinese for sores resulting from leech bites. This free medical attention helped to keep the natives friendly.

To get the men in shape for the coming long march out of the jungle, Lt. Col. Flickinger also conducted a daily calisthenics session. The natives nearly knocked themselves out laughing.

Davies carried on a brisk trade with the natives, exchanging tin cans, cotton cloth and salt—all dropped by the C-47s—for firewood, labor on construction projects, spears, knives and, oddly enough, trinkets. The natives also provided corn, rice, beans, chickens, pigs and cattle.

The salt was reserved as a reward for major services. The natives who constructed the hut and those who found an important packet of papers, which Davies had dropped during his parachute jump, were paid off that way. The biggest payment went to Cpl. Lemon's rescuers.

Lemon had jumped on the Burma side of the ridge, but he landed a long distance from the others. For three days and nights he hid out in the mountainous jungles, avoiding the native searchers because he was afraid they would take his head. At night he drank water from a river that ran near his hiding place, but he had nothing to eat except his cigarettes.

On the fourth day after the crash, Lemon was picked up by the natives, his feet badly blistered. He said afterward that he was so weak then that he didn't care who they were. "I was looking for them, head hunters or not," he said.

The day after Lemon was brought to the camp, the chief ordered a friendship ceremony. A mithon, a kind of Indian water buffalo, was sacrificed. The ceremonies concluded with the Americans singing "I've Been Working on the Railroad" while the head hunters gaped.

One other ritual helped to pass the time while the men waited for the rescue mission. Schrandt, the only private in the group, was solemnly and formally promoted to acting sergeant so that he could sleep with the rest of the noncoms.

At last, on the sixteenth day after the mass parachute jump, a ground rescue mission reached the village. Headed by P. F. Adams, a young British political officer, the mission included a British Army officer and Capt. J. J. Dwyer of Chicago, Ill.; Lt. Andrew S. LaBonte of Lawrence, Mass.; T/Sgt. Joe L. Merritt of Rosboro, Ark.; T/Sgt. Kenneth E. Coleman of Meridian, Ohio; Cpl. Anthony Gioia of Denver, Colo., and Pfc. Frank Oropeza of Los Angeles, Calif.

Accompanying them were about 50 native porters and 40 of the district's most efficient head hunters. They have no loyalty except to their own villages, and the British maintain order by hiring the fiercest natives as a police force.



Doctoring leech bites—a popular pastime.



Natives carry Sgt. Walter Oswalt on stretcher.

Adams told Lt. Col. Flickinger and the others that the natives of both villages visited by the survivors were active head hunters. More than 100 heads had been taken in one village since January. The other village had twice been burned by British expeditions as punishment for excessive head hunting. The memory of these burnings was still fresh when the survivors landed. That's why they weren't molested. The supernatural appearance of their descent, and the prospect of a 500-rupee reward (paid in salt) for each parachutist brought in alive to the British authorities, also helped, Adams said.

For two days Adams and his men rested after their journey. Then, on Aug. 18, he led the party, now swollen to a good-sized caravan of Americans, Chinese and natives, on the first lap of a five-day march to his India base. It was tough walking all the way, but they averaged more than 10 miles a day over mountain peaks that sometimes rose to 8,000 feet and along a path sometimes only 10 inches wide.

Adams ordered a halt at one historic ambush point and sent the guerrilla militia ahead to comb the pass. They found no signs of hostile natives and the caravan passed on quietly. A little farther along, all drank beer dropped by plane, the only stimulants they had had since the first night when Capt. Lee handed around a bottle of gin he had hugged tight during his descent.

When the party reached Adams' headquarters, a plane dropped containers of hot chicken and gravy, mashed potatoes, ice cream and chocolate cake, and everyone feasted during a one-day stop-over. From this base it is a 2½-day march to the place where the road widens enough to permit the passage of jeeps. I met them one day's march from the head of the jeep trail.

Oswalt was still being carried by eight natives in a bamboo stretcher-chair fashioned by the two Chinese colonels. He told me that at one very bad place in the mountain road a native of half his weight had carried him piggy-back for nearly 50 yards. Oswalt was the only man to gain weight during the 26 days in the jungle.

After reaching the wide trail, the party covered the remaining 40 to 50 miles to the nearest airfield in two hours, making the journey in jeeps, command cars, carry-alls and a couple of trucks. From the airfield, the survivors were flown in two large planes to the station where they had taken off almost a month before.



You would look like this, too, if you had just walked back a hundred miles after making a forced parachute landing deep in Jap-held, disease-ridden, head-hunter-infested jungle.