

12033

EXTRACT FROM STATEMENT

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I FEEL SURE THE ENGINES WERE FUNCTIONING WELL, FOR I DID NOT NOTICE ANY DIFFERENCE IN THEIR SOUND. SUDDENLY THERE WAS A VIOLENT SHIFTING OF BAGGAGE FROM FRONT TO REAR. THE PLANE SEEMED TO MUSH, NOSE UP - TAIL DOWN. I HAD A MOMENTARY FLASH OF THOUGHT THAT THE PILOT WAS TRYING TO AVOID SOME OBSTRUCTION. THE NEXT THING I RECALL IS THAT I BECAME CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT I WAS LYING IN A BAMBOO THICKET, ON VERY STEEP GROUND. THE TERRAIN WAS SO STEEP I HAD TO WRAP MY ARMS AROUND THE BAMBOO TO KEEP FROM SLIPPING. THIS MUST HAVE BEEN WITHIN A FEW HRS FOLLOWING THE CRASH. I HAD APPARENTLY BEEN CATAPULTED FROM 600 TO 1000 YARDS FROM THE SIDE OF ONE RIDGE, OVER A VALLEY, AND ONTO THE NEXT RIDGE. WITH THE DAWN I HEARD NOISES OF CHOPPING SO I LET OUT A YELL. NATIVES CUT A PATH THROUGH THE THICK BAMBOO. THE NATIVES SEEMED AMAZED TO SEE ME, A WHITE MAN. LOOKING FORWARD FOR A RETURN VISIT OF THE NATIVES, I AWAKENED AT DAYBREAK. I DIDN'T MOVE AT ALL, BECAUSE OF MY BROKEN ANKLE, AND BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO MISS THE NATIVES. THE NATIVES, THE SAME ONES WHO FOUND ME, SHOWED UP AT MIDMORNING. THEY DIDN'T BRING ANYTHING. THEY WANTED ME TO GET UP. I DID SO. I WRAPPED MY ARMS AROUND THE SHOULDERS OF TWO MALE NATIVES AND WITH THEIR AID I WALKED---UP A VERY STEEP HILLSIDE, THEN DOWN INTO A VALLEY AND UP ANOTHER STEEPER HILLSIDE, APPROX 600 OR MORE YDS TO THE WRECK. MOST OF THIS ALONG A STEEP NATIVE TRAIL. I FOUND BODIES, PARTS OF THE AIRPLANE, MAIL AND DEBRIS AS I WENT ALONG. I RECOGNIZED THE BODY OF MY TAIL GNR, S/SGT HARLAN G. CASPER. I ALSO RECOGNIZED THE BODY OF T/SGT LAWRENCE C. JACOBS. I GOT UP TO THE SCENE OF THE WRECKAGE WHERE TREES WERE STILL SMOULDERING. THERE WERE BODIES NEAR THE PLANE. BEFORE I REACHED THIS, I FOUND THE NAVIGATION KIT, UNOPENED (ZIPPER CLOSED), BUT THE LEATHER WAS TORN. I LOOKED IN IT, REMOVED PHOTOS OF AN OFFICER (2ND LT) AND OTHER PHOTOS. LATER, I GOT DISCOURAGED AND DESTROYED THEM. (FLIER IS THEN FOUND BY SEARCHING PARTY OF 3) SGT BRENNER TOOK OFF THAT DAY WITH A COUPLE OF NATIVES TO GO TO THE WRECK AND INVESTIGATE AND RECOVER WHAT HE COULD. HE PLANNED TO BE BACK IN TWO DAYS. LT DIEBOLD WAS INFORMED BY THE PILOT OF THE RESCUE PLANE THAT THEY COULD NOT OBTAIN A HELICOPTER TO FLY ME OUT AND THEY HAD SPOTTED TERRAIN THAT LOOKED AS IF IT MIGHT BE SUITABLE FOR THE BUILDING OF AN AIR STRIP. OTHERWISE, THEY SAID, THEY WOULD HAVE TO CARRY ME OUT. SGT BRENNER RETURNED HE SAID HE HAD NOT FOUND ANY SIGN OF MY LUGGAGE. HE COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING OF MINE AT ALL. HE DID FIND 19 BODIES LYING THERE. WE TRIED TO BURY THEM AND HE GAVE THEM A GUN SALUTE AFTERWARDS. BRENNER INFORMED US THAT THE NATIVES HAD STRIPPED THE BODIES AND HE COULD NOT EVEN FIND DOG TAGS ON THE ONES HE INVESTIGATED. ON SOME THEY HAD CUT THE FINGERS OF THE CRASH VICTIM'S HANDS IN ORDER TO GET THEIR RINGS. HE FILLED THREE MAIL BAGS WITH MATERIAL HE FOUND LYING AROUND, SUCH AS ORDERS AND OUTGOING MAIL WHICH HAD BEEN SCATTERED THROUGH OUT THE WRECKAGE. WE ALSO DISPATCHED TWO NATIVES TO THE WRECK AND AMONG THE NATIVES TO SEE WHAT THEY COULD SALVAGE--IDENTIFICATION TAGS, JEWELRY, MONEY AND PERSONAL ARTICLES. THE TWO NATIVES THAT HAD BEEN SENT TO THE WRECK HAD RETURNED AND MATERIAL THEY BROUGHT BACK INCLUDED TWO JAP PISTOLS. I WAS ABLE TO IDENTIFY ONE AS BEING MY OWN AND I GAVE IT TO SGT BRENNER AS A GIFT. THERE WAS ALSO THE BARREL OF A JAP RIFLE BELONGING TO ONE OF THE MEN ABOARD THE SHIP AND WHICH HE HAD SHOWN TO ME BEFORE TAKING OFF. THEY BROUGHT BACK A RING OF S/SGT ERNEST B SCHENK, A FRIEND OF MINE. IT WAS HIS HIGH SCHOOL RING. THEY ALSO BROUGHT A CIGARETTE LIGHTER BELONGING TO ANOTHER FRIEND OF MINE, S/SGT F. F. SMITH, PLUS SOME ODDS AND ENDS WHICH I CANNOT REMEMBER. EVERYONE WAS HAPPY THAT NITE BECAUSE

12033

EXTRACT FROM STATEMENT (CONT'D)

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THE STRIP WAS COMPLETED. THE L-5 WAS FLOWN IN. THEN THEY LOADED ME INTO THE AIRPLANE ON THE SAME STRETCHER. ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES LATER WE LANDED AT DUFLAGAR TEA ESTATE. THEY TRANSFERRED ME DIRECTLY FROM THE L-5 TO THE TRANSPORT, AND FLOWN TO APO 490. FROM THE PLANE I WAS PUT RIGHT INTO THE AMBULANCE AND CAPT DAVIS CLIMBED IN WITH ME AND WE WENT TO THE GENERAL HOSPITAL AT APO 629.

MARVIN H JACOBS
T SGT, SOLE SURVIVOR FROM
CRASHED C-46 #7386

HEADQUARTERS
1352nd AAF BASE UNIT
INDIA CHINA DIVISION AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND
Office of the Director of Intelligence

WFD/wr

APC 490
18 March 1945

SUBJECT: Rescue of MARVIN H JACOBS, T/Sgt, ASN 32833249, as told
by LT. W F DIEBOLD.

TO : Commanding Officer, Military Intelligence Service, Branch "X".

1. At 0130 on the morning of 15 February, T/Sgt Harry NMI Brenner, ASN 6730505, my new assistant, and myself were awakened by Major Pricer, Commanding Officer, 1352nd AAF Base Unit. At the time, Sgt Brenner and myself were at the Mohanbari Jungle School where we had spent the day trying to help them set up their course of instructions. Major Pricer had driven out for us as there was an urgent call for assistance from the jungle. We were told that we would, in all probability, be requested to jump that morning. The Sgt and I were driven back to the Base where we spent practically the remainder of that morning preparing our kits and equipment.

2. At 0700 the morning of the 15th, the Jungle Rescue crew took off in a C-47 piloted by Captain Davis, Operations Officer, 1352nd AAF Base Unit, and Captain Knight, Chief Pilot. The Rescue Crew consisted of Captain Austin E Lamberts, Flight Surgeon of the 1352nd AAF Base Unit, and a paratrooper; T/Sgt Harry Brenner, who has seen combat in the Burma jungle; and myself. The information we had at our disposal at that point was meager. ATC Tezpur Intelligence had called our unit the night of 14 February and told us that a native runner had arrived at the Duflagar Tea Plantation with the information that north of Duflagar, which in turn is north of Tezpur, there was an American airman in a village with a broken leg.

3. We landed at Tezpur and were met by the Base Commander, the Base Intelligence Officer, and a Major Jones who had been the recipient of the information at that time available. Major Jones had received the word from two ASC men who had been visiting the Duflagar Tea Estate when the runner arrived. The native had told them that the American was two and one-half days by trail north of Duflagar. This put the flier one-half day north of a native village which was known as Belenka. Since Major Jones had once been on a ground party for burial purposes to the village of Belenka, he felt that he could recognize it from the air. With this in mind, he was included, as an observer, in our crew. We left Tezpur and flew to Duflagar. Duflagar is, in round figures, sixty miles northwest of Tezpur and about five miles south or southeast of the first range of mountains which make up the North Indian Frontier Tract, the border line between India and Tibet. We flew over those mountains while Major Jones tried to ascertain which village was the village of Belenka. It was the most rugged piece of terrain I had ever seen or, I'm sure, ever will see again. It was thick forest everywhere with mountains whose average height was about one mile, but with many whose height were seventy-five hundred and nine thousand feet. On the map I had with me it showed a mountain north of us which went up

to twenty-three thousand five hundred. On the map, most of the rivers were dotted lines indicating that they were unsurveyed and unknown. As I looked down from the plane I observed that my map and the terrain did not agree. There were ranges on the map where there were no ranges on the ground, and vice versa.

4. We flew to a village about ten miles northwest of the village Major Jones picked as being Relenka. Captain Davis, Captain Knight and I decided that Sgt Brenner and myself would jump into this village as from all the information we had, it should be the right one. As I stood in the door of the "Doug" and looked down, my heart fell. Below there wasn't a level piece of ground to be seen. The trees were tremendous things. If a limb of any one of them caught the canopy of the chute and collapsed it a fall of from one to several hundred feet would be the result. If ever a man wanted to quit his job for another it was Lt Diebold at that minute, but the mere thought of that poor devil down there, helpless and sick, gave the needed stimulus and when the jump bell rang, out I went. When the chute opened the heavy mountain wind currents picked me up. Instead of going down in a straight line I began to gyrate back and forth. The swings were so terrific that half of the chute would collapse on each swing and to top it off I was sailing through the air like a leaf in an autumn breeze; if I hit the trees swinging like that, I would be finished. The wind blew me so far that I landed on another mountain than the one for which we had aimed. Luckily I crashed through the outer branches of a tree and landed on the almost verticle side of the mountain. I rolled a little distance and was caught and held by the underbrush. When I jumped I had carried a small-handle-talkie radio with me. At this point, I took it out and called Captain Davis in the ship and told him I was unhurt and asked him to go ahead and jump Sgt. Brenner. The Sgt had the same difficulty that I had and the wind blew him over to another mountain on the side facing me. When I saw him land, I began to make my way to him. There was no trail so for an hour or so I slid down the side of the mountain to the valley below. In the valley was a stream and a trail. I continued to make my way to the Sgt and in about two hours we were together and we returned to the valley and started west on the trail, hoping it would lead us to the village. At this point the plane contacted us again by radio and asked us if we wanted our packs dropped. Here I made a great mistake: I told them "yes" with the thought in mind that they couldn't possibly fly around up there until we reached the village and the thought of a long cold night without any blankets was none too comforting. Naturally the winds took the packs miles away to another mountain where we could not reach them, and rather than try we continued to make our way to the village. On the trail we eventually came upon a native. He was a sight to see. It was our first introduction to a Dufla as they are called. They are small, thick-set people, copper colored with a definite Mongolian face. At all times they wear bamboo armor for they are very war-like. Around their waists they wear circlettes of bamboo, perhaps fifty or so. Their backs are covered with a tightly woven bamboo helmet decorated with everything from jungle chicken heads to vulture feathers. They have body length, straight black hair which they roll into an elongated ball jutting out from their forehead. Through this roll they put foot long bamboo or metal sticks. These I learned are to parry any frontal knife blows by an enemy. The lobes of their ears are extended and

the hole is filled by a huge wooden ring from which they hang ear-rings (1). The native we met seemed friendly enough and guided us the remainder of the distance to a one-shack village on the crown of the mountain. Not the village we had jumped to, but a village. We immediately started interrogating them by sign language about the American flyer. We could get nowhere with them. The more we gestured and pointed, the more they would laugh. They thought we were crazy, I guess, and they made to attempt at first to try and understand us. As the evening grew so did the number of natives. With each we tried to find out about the flier or now, even a village which they might recognize. No one seemed to have heard of Belenka or even of Tezpur. I began to wonder if we would be able to get out of this country ourselves.

5. We slept that night on the bamboo floor of the one hut. We had no covering and it was bitter cold. One native ~~man~~ man and two children stayed with us. For warmth we all huddled together. The man had been drinking rice wine and his breath was very, very bad; too, he snored. It was a most uncomfortable night. In the morning the natives again came and we continued our efforts with no success. The plane came and dropped us packs and rupees and rice. With the rupees we were able to gather in the packs dropped the day before. This job was handed over to Sgt Brenner. When he arrived at the packs he found them to be cut open and the contents missing. The Sgt's method of retrieval was most effective. He pointed his forty-five at the head of the native who seemed to be the boss and said "Bang". The natives caught on and in an hour or so we had our packs, complete. The "Doug" flew the course from us to Belenka and I took a compass bearing. I was in hopes that at that village we might meet with more success. Since none of the natives seemed to want to help us we packed our packs with as much of the equipment as we could carry and the Sgt and I started down the trail alone. The trail headed in the right direction, but soon we were joined by an old man who guided us all that day to a stream where we prepared to spend the night.

6. The wonders of the Orient will never cease to amaze me and this is why after struggling for twenty-four hours to try to make the native understand us to no avail we left them flat. That night there camped by the river every native from miles around including the ones we had left joined us and brought with them the equipment we had left ~~at~~ behind. It was truly exasperating. That night in camp I found one man whom I later named the "Chief" who knew of an American with a big foot north of us. It was the right American for the chief told me he had been in an airplane accident. He agreed to guide us and supply bearers at two rupees per day—an exorbitant price but there was nothing else to do but pay it, and gladly. The journey would take, we were told, two days. In the morning we were off, not the whole village this time, but the chief and six warriors carrying packs. All day we trudged up and down mountains. We had been able to get across to the chief the need for haste. When the plane came that day and I was able to tell them the glad tidings that we were on the scent. The very act of my talking to the plane with the little phone was enough to awe the chief into hasty action. The pace those warriors set going up those hills was terrific. The altitude was high and the air thin. The natives had tremendous chests; for them, breathing was no difficulty. As a matter of fact, one or another of them was smoking a pipe at all times as we climbed. With Sgt Brenner

and myself it was quite different. Our hearts pounded from the effort. Our breath came in gasps; sweat rolled freely down our bodies until even our shorts were soaked. Haste was the very essence of the job and hasten was no word for what we were doing. As an example, on this trip Sgt Brenner lost over twenty pounds and he was a solid man to begin with.

7. That night we slept near a stream again, rolled up in a shelter-half and two blankets. Again it was cold, but we were too tired to notice. The natives set fish traps that night so as a result we had fresh fish at 0430 the next morning, cooked native style, heads on and entrails intact. Better fish I have eaten, but none earlier in the morning. We were on the trail at the first crack of dawn or may be even before, at 0530. That day we crossed another range of mountains. At about 1500 as we were staggering down the side of a mountain we could hear the plane flying around behind us on the other side of the mountain. I tried to contact it, but to no avail. Eventually it flew over the range and contact was established. The pilots expressed amazement at the distances covered and that is the reason they were looking for us behind us. I told them after questioning the chief whose language we were beginning to pick up, that we would be in the village in one hour. What an hour! We ran, practically, down the side of the mountain we were on, panting from exhaustion and pulling off ticks at every step. Falls were frequent but we made the village in an hour. We found Sgt Jacobs lying in the lean-to and he was rather happy at seeing us, to say the least. He had had no word that help was on the way until I stepped into the opening of his lean-to. I had my shorts on and he told me I had the nicest pair of legs he had ever seen, for they were all he could see of me at first. I took a look at him and he looked slightly on the hungry side. Both of ~~his~~ his feet were swollen and smelled pretty awful. All in all, he looked a little too far gone for just first-aid which would be all that I could give him, so I called the plane. Also, if I hadn't asked that Captain Lambert be jumped in to treat our patient, I'm sure I would have lost a friend as I knew Captain Lambert was eager to get a crack at some of this type work that he had trained so long and hard to do. The "Doug" circled lazily over the village and on one of its turns we saw the flaps go down and we held our panting breath. The plane seemed so low. In actuality it was only seven hundred feet, but Captain Lambert saw what had happened to us three days before and wanted no part of those wind currents. Personally I'll take the currents. Out the door of the "Doug" hurled the Captain and a split second later the parachute blossomed out above him. It was a happy sight to behold. Sgt Jacobs was going out of his mind. Ten minutes before all was quiet and serene and he could lay and suffer in peace—now all hell had broken loose. A B-25 was buzzing by, dropping parapacks full of the needed food, clothes and medical supplies, Captain Lambert was on his way down into a tree, I was screaming at the chief to send someone for him. Sgt Brenner was screaming at the natives to go get the parapacks. All in all it looked like Broadway on New Years Eve. It was too much for Jacobs; he fainted.

8. The Captain arrived, smiled, nodded, and started examining the patient. I had fires started for hot water and for food. Sgt Brenner got the natives to building us a lean-to for the night. We unpacked the packs to the awe of the natives. They had never seen a blanket before or, if they had, not in such great quantities. They watched "Doc" give Jacobs, now quickly named "Jake", blood plasma. Organization was swift and in an hour the camp was built, a rope fence put up to keep out the curios natives most of whom had never seen a white man

before. Supper was cooked and served, the fire burned to coals, and Sgt Brenner played softly on his mouth-organ. The stars came out and all was peaceful. Jake listened happily with an inner contentment to our voices, to the low organ music if one can call it that, and drifted off to sleep, the first peaceful sleep in two solid weeks.

T/SGT MARVIN H JACOBS ASN 32833249 - THE STORY OF.

C-46 #386 from Chabua to Karachi via Agra. Departed Chabua on 4 February 1945 at 1900 IST, weather CAVU, T/Sgt Jacobs being a radio operator from the Twenty-second Squadron, 341st Bomb Group, Fourteenth Air Force, he went forward after takeoff and picked up a pair of ear-phones which he took back to the rear (passenger area) and plugged them in. He set the jack-box on liaison and found the ship was flying on the beam. He was not certain on which beam, was unknown to him and is now forgotten. A Lt Cook from the subject's squadron mentioned to him that he too thought they were flying on the beam. Lt Cook was a navigator and subject is certain that he would not be mistaken. Since the radio failed to pick up any music, subject took off head-set and lay down on the floor in the rear of the luggage. After an indefinite length of time, perhaps an hour or two, the subject had the feeling that all was not going too well. It was as if the plane was mushing along although the engines sounded normal. Suddenly there was a violent shift of luggage and that is all the subject remembers.

The next thing the subject remembers is lying on the ground calling for someone to come help him. Subject found himself on an eighty-degree slope in a niche in the ground at the foot of a dead stump. He was surrounded by bamboo. It was at night so subject continued to call for help. At dawn natives could be heard hacking their way to him down the slope. When the natives arrived they wanted to immediately move him, but subject knowing that he had a broken leg would not permit them to do so. The natives built a fire, a lean-to, as it was now pouring rain and very cold. After two days the subject felt he had better move so with his arms around two natives he started up the mountain slope. It took all of one day for him to go from where he had landed to the plane, a distance of about six hundred yards. That night he slept by the tail of the wrecked craft. Throughout the night the natives brought him things found around the wreck to see if any of them could help him. They finally brought him a first-aid kit and a food-aid kit in a water bottle. These two items were a life-saver as he had nothing to eat other than that until then. All the subject could see of the aircraft was the tail, but he believes the craft burned as all bodies looked charred or burned and the canteens the natives brought him were banged up and burned. What the subject didn't want, the natives kept or threw away. US mail was strewn all about the place. He could see only one mail bag and that had the APO #210 on it. Subject remained at the plane for four days.

Subject tried to walk again with the aid of the natives, but after thirty minutes the pain was so terrific that it became unbearable. The natives then built a litter and they forged ahead, some of the natives cutting and some carrying him. There were ten natives in all. For four hours they travelled the rugged mountain trails until they came to a village. In the village the natives gave the subject a small mail bag for a blanket and laid him under an empty storehouse. Subject stayed in "that miserable hole" for eight days. On the eighth day the natives built subject a lean-to in the village street. It was on the eighth day that the Search and Rescue Unit's ground party arrived at

the village.

9. The next morning the rescue ship appeared and I began talking to Captain Davis. I told him that from Captain Lamberts' reports it would be many weeks before Jake could be moved any distance over trail by litter and requested that he contact Air Jungle Rescue for their helicopter. At the same time I told the Captain that the natives had come to me for a reward for taking care of Jake. I told him they wanted twenty rupees per man for each of the ten men. I requested that he get authorization from the British and if so authorized, to drop me the money. Captain Davis told me then that he doubted that we would be able to get the Helicopter and to look around and see if I could find any place where the grass might be cut to allow an L-5 to land. The remainder of that day the Chief, sometimes Captain Lamberts or Sgt Brenner and I would climb up and down the hills in the immediate vicinity of the camp in an attempt to find such a spot. We were unsuccessful as no spot could be found that was level enough for a landing. That night when I looked at Jake he looked greatly improved. He was clean-shaven and washed, and his spirits were on the up-swing. Captain Lamberts was doing a good job. The next morning Captain Davis flew over, dropped the rupees to pay the reward and told me, as he thought, the helicopter was not available to us, but he went further to say that over the mountain west of us was a fairly level piece of land. So that day Sgt Brenner set out for the wrecked aircraft to get the mail and bury the dead while I set out in a different direction for that level piece of land. The Chief and five men went with me and amazingly enough they understood what I was looking for. It took a lot of sign language and patience, but the idea eventually was put across; by this time we were quite well along the road to speaking their language. I had written up a dictionary to which I constantly referred and through constant reference the words began to stay with me. At about 1430 we arrived on a hill overlooking the level field. At first glance the job seemed impossible to perform. The field was long enough but at both ends it was hemmed in by high trees. Some of these trees were as much as twelve feet in diameter at the roots. The field itself was literally covered with stumps and fallen trees up to ten feet in diameter. At no place on the field could one walk five steps in any direction without coming to a stump or a tree. It looked like too big a job for an untrained American with ignorant, unskilled natives whose language which he could not speak. The alternative would definitely be a great risk for Jake's life as well as about sixty days' work and thousands of dollars of War Bonds eaten up. The nut was hard to crack, but it was worth the old try anyway. When the plane flew over about half an hour later I told them we could do it. I ordered six picks, six axes, six shovels and plenty of dynamite and rupees. I sent the chief and his men to scour the country-side for labour. In an hour they were back with hundreds of men, women and children. Mostly those people were curious; some, a few, wanted to work. I then sent the chief back to Lungpung where the Doc and Jake were, with instructions to bring them to this spot. It would get them out of that dirty village and they could be near the construction job. The chief left and I started all the people to work cutting and burning the grass whether they liked it or not. I didn't tell them that I had nothing with which to pay them at that point, I figured I'd tell them when they were through. At 1730 they all came over for their money. I told them I would pay the women and children one rupee per day and the men two rupees; this was agreeable to them but "how about the money already earned that day"! Well, I went into a long discourse about how in the

morning the plane would drop the money and I would pay them off then. With all my heart I hoped that this would be agreeable to them for, at that point, I was all alone—not even my questionable pal the chief to fall back on. I had rice with me so I passed that out and all started to cook and seemed to forget about the money due. I had thought that they would go home at the end of the day but, no, they had brought their families and were there to stay. The American were starting a new village. That night I slept under a deserted bamboo storehouse. The fleas were pretty awful. I ate fish and rice with the natives. They gave me some of their evil tasting wine and I sang "Old MacDonald Had A Farm". This they enjoyed greatly as I would use the names in their language of the various animals and the animal sounds are the same the world over. They caught the idea and it wasn't long until they would chime in on the "ec-i-ee-i-o" part.

10. The next morning bright and early I was out on my patch of ground looking for my workers. It was 0700 and I was due for a disappointment for they were just beginning breakfast. Trying to get them to understand that they were expected to work eight hours per day was nearly impossible. I kept going from fire to fire urging them to come to work. They would look at me as I was out of my mind; I began to think I was! It wasn't until after 1000 that they all came to work. Every time a grass fire was built I could count on finding at least twenty of them sitting around it, smoking their pipes. Then and there I decided to reduce the number of workers the next day as two hundred and fifty or so were too many for me to watch. The women and children cut the grass on their hands and knees. It seemed amusing to see little, four-year-old children lugging piles of grass off the "to be" runway, smoking silver pipes and very serious about the whole thing. The men I had hard at work, when I could catch them horse-ing the heavy fallen timbers to the sides of the runway. It was hard labour and they didn't like it a bit. At 1500 they quit. The rescue ship had been over that day with two hundred rupees and I was prepared to pay off. They stood in sullen groups around me refusing to work longer. I pointed to the sun and then pointed to where it would be when I would pay off. If they didn't work until then, they didn't get paid. They went reluctantly back to work, with much spurring. At 1700 I called them all in. I placed them in groups. One group would be the group to whom I owed one rupee a day for two days, another was the group I owed two rupees a day for two days, another was the group to whom I owed one rupee a day for one day, and so on. It was hard to tell who was cheating and there was much shifting from one group to the other. The high pitched voices of the women and the mumbling guttural words of the men all mingled together and it was all I could do to keep order and not turn the whole thing into a bedlam of chaos. I had counted the people the day before to whom I owed rupees and had a pretty fair check on things. Into all this arrived the party from Lungpung. During the day I had the natives build a lean-to slightly on the fancy side for Jake so we lodged him there and he looked pretty comfortable. I was really glad to see the Doc and Sgt Brenner and the chief as all these workers were almost too much for one man to handle, but the runway was taking shape in a rough way. I called the Chief aside and gave him twenty slips of paper on which I had written "I.O.U.R/2". The next morning I wanted only twenty men plus our regular men who had been with us from the start, thirty in all. I figured that with that many men I could better do the job right than with so many, and we could get more work out of them. For the next five days it was feverish work. Setting up to fifteen pounds of dynamite at a crack to blow up stumps. The ground was of a sandy nature and the best we could do was to

blow the earth out from around the roots and let the natives go down in the hole and chop them off. Then we would blow the stump into sections so that it could be carried away. The smaller stumps were a pleasure to watch flying through the air. At one time or another, all of us were hit by flying wood and rock, but no one seriously. The natives really became angry when a stump flew about a hundred feet away and landed in a circle of them cooking food over their fire. It smashed the bamboo tubes and gave them quite a scare. For every laborer we had, thirty onlookers constantly got in the way and I feared for their lives at times, but there was little we could do. For plain unmitigated guts, the Doc and the Sgt are unbeatable. In some cases where we would blow the earth away from the bottom of a stump leaving a hole too small for either the Sgt or I to get into; lean, lithe Doc would crawl down into that hole while we tossed him dynamite. One slip of the finger or a too hot sun on the cap and piff, the saga would end then and there. The Sgt would stand and watch stumps and wood chips and rock fall around him and turn to me laughing and say, "God-damn it, almost like combat, isn't it!" How can a guy fail with a crew like that?

Finally the strip was almost completed. We lined the laborers up in a skirmish line and down on their knees they went the entire length of the field, smoothing the ground with their hands. Search and Rescue had been unable to get us shovels so we did the best we could. Trees had been chopped off up to a mile from either end of the runway. A tower had been built complete with radio, elevation, and the usual ATC sign, "Tibetan Division". We were ready six days from the start. The next morning would tell the tale as to how successful our efforts had been. I notified Captain Davis to bring them on in, that we were set.

11. In the morning it looked like an aerial invasion. Two L-5s, a couple of B-25s, and a couple of C-47s flew over. The patient was excited. We brought him out of his lean-to to see the action. The natives stood in groups watching this aerial armada with great awe. It was impossible for them to realize that those great iron birds actually had humans in them. The L-5 that was to land made a couple of trial passes to see if he liked the approaches. I was sure that the field was long enough, but without shovels it was rough as the devil. Finally he disappeared around the rear of a mountain, cut back through a valley, over a saddle, and started to land. We held our breath. The responsibility of an accident would be ours. The burden was almost too much for one group of humans to bear. The little L-5 settled quickly and the pilot was excellent; he put the little ship down on the very first inch of runway and had the ship stopped in the first third of the strip. Sgt Brenner had a sign all printed up just like a real airport with "Follow me" on it and he lead the plane to a parking place. The pilot who was so excellent was a liaison pilot from Air Jungle Rescue, name Nelson. We loaded Jake aboard in a stretcher, for it was an ambulance ship. Nelson started ~~xx~~ his engine, taxied down to the end of the runway, gunned it and started up the strip. The ship bounced crazily over the rough surface and half way down the runway Nelson out his throttle and applied brakes. Our hearts sank in despair; had he decided he couldn't make it? Was the field too short or too rough? The job of taking out an L-5 over those mountains as well as the patient stared us in the face. But the answer was "no". Sgt Nelson stuck his head out the cockpit window as he taxied past us and said that he was only trying it for size and he thought he could make it. Atlas had moved the world back onto his shoulders! For a minute we felt relief, but not for long for Nelson started down the runway again. As he bounced, the length of the strip, it seemed to us he would never, never pull her off. I closed my eyes. I didn't want

to see it. Cold sweat broke out and tears pushed a lump into my throat. It was more than should ever happen to one guy. I waited for the sound of the crash and then I heard Sgt Brenner scream "He made it". The little ship was airborne—and, best of all, safe. It flew lazily down the valley dodging this way and that between the trees, but it was safe, thank God—and we really did, with all our hearts.

The climax had passed and peace settled down on our little air base. We went back to our fire a little lonesome with Jake gone, and lit cigarettes with shaky hands and talked the whole thing over. An our later another L-5 flew over, and just like at LaGuardia Field, called our tower and asked for landing instructions. We gave them to him and down he came. This time it was Lt Dock Hudson from our own outfit. We were really glad to see him. He had lunch with us, but during lunch the weather settled down and he was R.O.N. A storm was brewing. He spent the night in Jake's old bed and we sat up the latest yet, just talking; it was ten o'clock before we went to bed.

In the morning Dock Hudson and Doc Lambert, as passenger, started their take-off. The field was wet and the wheels clung to the surface. The little plane just managed to get off the end of the strip. Its wing hit a bamboo tree and ripped a hole in the fabric; from there on it was touch and go. The little plane with our two good friends flew at grass-top level down the valley. We watched it, hardly breathing, afraid to look, yet with eyes glued to its diminishing outline as it dodged and twisted its way trying with all the skill of a fighting eagle to gain altitude. Lt Dock Hudson was flying as he never flew before. Eventually they disappeared down the valley. The Sgt and I stood there, not saying anything, too afraid to speak, and waited. We couldn't hear the sound of the engine. The only sounds were the call of a bird or the cry of a beast. Finally over the ridge appeared the L-5. It was the most beautiful sight we had ever seen. It circled the field, waggled its wings, and left us. The Sgt and I wanted no part of risking the lives of any more pilots as well as our own. We called the chief and told him to get the men ready, that we were leaving in the morning. The chief was happy for he had been afraid that we, too, would fly away. That night the natives sat about the fire and talked great iron bird for hours. They asked us so many questions that were impossible to answer. Try sometime to explain the principal of the internal combustion engine to a Dufla warrior whose greatest piece of engineering is the cros bow. It is a rather difficult subject.

12. The next day we began our long trek out. Over high peaks and down beautiful valleys seen only be natives before this time. It was exhausting work, but it was interesting and beautiful. We saw many wild animals, ranging from tigers to black panthers. Finally after five days hard walking we reached Duflagar Tea Estate where we were met by the Search and Rescue Unit's "Doug", and, bidding a farewell to our native friends, we presented them with five and ten cent store jewelry and rice. They were overjoyed at these gifts and in turn presented us with the best they had—a little dog, bows and arrows, and wild boar's teeth. It had been a successful trip in every way.

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