

WAR DEPARTMENT
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MARS TASK FORCE, BURMA.

A new aggregation of tough jungle-fighting marauding men are whipping themselves into shape to rush to the assistance of American trained Chinese forces engaged with the Jap at Bhamo, Burma. Many of these troops are veterans of this difficult type of war and their knowledge helps to bolster the spirit of the new men who refresh their ranks. Lt. General Sir Oliver Leese of Great Britain, the General Officer commanding the 11th Army Group, and Lt. General Dan I. Sultan, Commanding General of the India-Burma Theater arrive at Myitkyina. Brig. General John M. Wiley leads a tour of the area and inspection of the Mars Task Force.

The Mars Task Force on the March!!!!

This airview gives a graphic picture of the Mars Task Force leaving Myitkyina and crossing the Irrawaddy River, the first of many obstacles to be encountered. Equipment is loaded on the backs and flanks of horses and mules and then the men, mules, horses and equipment are floated across the Irrawaddy by "putt-putt and current ferry". War dogs are part of the cargo and travel with these jungle fighters.

Across the river, the Mars Task Force strides out to assist the Chinese at Bhamo. Marching over jungle trails and crossing tropical streams the force breaks for a rest period and the men light up cigarettes and relax while Lt. Colonel Caifson Johnson and Colonel Ernest F. Easterbrook, discuss the march order.

Once again the force marches towards the Jap and Bhamo. More streams to cross, this time a native bamboo bridge takes the load. Twilight approaches and the marauding Mars Task Force plods into the setting sun.

A break for a night rest at the bivouac area. The men pitch shelters consisting of a blanket and a pauncho, and with the aid of "heat tabs" they prepare hot coffee to drink with their "K" ration dinner.

Services are conducted in the field by Chaplain Captain Winton H. Holstead, of Rochester, N.Y.

C-47's air drop supplies to advanced elements of the force and no time is wasted in collecting the supplies, and now - a jungle Feast U.S. Style.

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The Task Force continues toward Bhamo, $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles away. This is enemy territory and the troops are ever alert for the Japs and snipers. Natives watch as these troops move forward. The Japs isn't the only enemy here the jungle and the streams are constant obstacles that must be surmounted. One mule has a little difficulty crossing this stream but by skilful handling he makes it, and the advance continues.

The war dogs frisk and frolic at the head of the marching column. They too, welcome a drink of cool water and a carefully prepared meal. These members of the K-6 Corps are ever vigilant.....ever alert.

Lt. Colonel Johnson holds a briefing with the officers of the force near Tali on the road to Bhamo. Word has just come through that the Chinese have taken Bhamo, and the route of the march is changed toward Shwegu.

They march through the village of Shwegu and past Buddhist Shrines and native huts.

Near Tonkwa, the enemy attacks and the troops dig in for battle. Mortar positions are made ready and the officers plan the attack. Orders are issued and 75mm Pack Howitzers open fire. The captured Japanese knee mortar is used to good effect. 61mm and 81mm mortar shells are loosed into an isolated Basha holding the Jap enemy. Japs are seen running in an open field, and this is for what the men of Mars have trained. Rifles, BAR'S and machine guns send forth a hail of death-dealing lead into the infiltrating Jap. Bazookas blast at Temples that have been affording the enemy shelter. The result of one night's attack is twelve Japs dead. But there are losses on both sides. Medics care for our wounded. This soldier who has fought for you is given life because you went to the blood bank.
