

THE 14th ARMY in the ARAKAN

In the tangled Burmese hill country of Arakan, the 14th Army fights against the forces of Japan and the forces of a cruel country endowed with a killing climate. Never in the history of warfare has supply presented so difficult a problem as here. In a country not fit to live in, several hundred thousand ordinary men from Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, London, Australia and India (who have become known among themselves as "The Forgotten Army") do the seemingly impossible: Campaigning that would break the hearts of lesser men. Here in pictures is what Frank Owen styles "that marvellous sense of duty and loyalty to their Comrades allied to a feeling that they will not let the Army down."

Here's another angle of the Burma front.... the sheer perverse geography of the place; observation posts look out on a confusing hallow of hills, each tree and clearing of which has got to be covered. If it's difficult to watch, it's hell to foot-peg through. It's trackless Jungle, dripping with disease. The hot steamy air soaks into the men's bodies — they gasp for breath in the rarified air at these Alpine altitudes — Khaki tunics change colour, they become black with sweat.

Then there's the grim fight to keep body and soul together. Shelter for the night is a few flimsy tents perched on a hillside. Every box of supplies must be hauled up the long weary climb from the foot of the hill. Water must be passed from hand to hand from the only available spring. Somehow, men ready to drop from exhaustion, get their food.

And the most insidious enemy of all is the rain. At long last someone is putting a foot down on the SEAC Publicity accelerator. Chances are brighter of our getting bigger and better film and press reports from South East Asia. The prodigious feats being performed by the Imperial 14th Army will live for all time.
