

45-1571

OVER THE HUMP

Royal Air Force history has been made in the supplying of China's armies by the long and hazardous route, "Over the Hump." From airfields in India, heavily laden Dakotas make their pioneering treks over uncharted territory across the Eastern ranges of the Himalayas. The awesome majesty of mountains rising often to 20,000 feet and more, is a challenge to the courage of men and the perfection of their machines.

The heavy Monsoon cloud, which reduces visibility to a minimum during the heat of the day, adds to the dangers of flying. Below here air-strips are unknown, and to seek for a flat surface to land would be a hopeless task.

Field Marshal Wavell once said, "Supply is the greatest of all the problems of the war against Japan." Here, not only distance, but climate and a mountain mass which the Ancients named "The Backbone of the World," are the enemy. By bridging this barrier, air supply routes help to unshackle the virtually untapped manpower of China's millions.

Tyres, petrol, oil, ammunition (and, perhaps the greatest need of all) medical supplies, flew into Kuning by a British life-line.

Allied victories in Burma will not only open the road to Mandalay; they are also making possible easier air routes to China. With the swelling flood of war-supplies, Chinese armies will, for once, meet the Japanese on equal terms. British and American airmen of Transport-Command are the pioneers of this "Burma road in the sky."
