

MALAYAN PATROL

At Kempang Norton, a village forty miles north of Kuala Lumpur, "A" Company, the first battalion the Worcestershire Regiment get ready for a patrol. Their job: to hunt down Red terrorists from the jungle nearby. Twenty-year-old Private Sid Latham from Altrincham loads up - the patrol is ready to move.

Each day such patrols set out to strike at the Communist guerillas whose campaign of violence has terrorised all Malaya. Somewhere in the jungle a party of bandits is believed to be hiding. "A" Company's patrol moves in. The hunt is on.

It's nearly noon and the temperature's about 90 degrees. Private Keith Shrigley, a national serviceman, is from Macclesfield. Checking up their position is Second Lieutenant James Marshall - he's from Pershore in Worcestershire. Their target is still further ahead. The patrol moves cautiously, for somewhere in the bush the bandits may be waiting. The air is damp and alive with mosquitoes.

Second Lieutenant Marshall gives the order to halt for a break and posts a guard. They've been on their feet for a long time now, and it's no joke footslogging through country like this with heavy arms and equipment. But you've got to watch where you rest in the jungle. The undergrowth is swarming with leeches.

Joe Spittle and Joe Candy get ready for tea. James Marshall and George Phillips (who used to be a farmer in Leicestershire) have the same idea. The "Tommy Cocker's" lit up - won't be long before char's ready.

There's no "one for the pot" out here. That's precious stuff, particularly if they can't get back to base before nightfall. Sid Latham and Harry Hodgkinson have both been in Malaya for over a year so they know all the ropes. Tunstall, Stoke on Trent, is Harry's home town. Another chap from Stoke is Private Derek Jones. He used to work in an iron foundry, but he's been out in the bush for the last fifteen months.

Harry Smith and Frank Allsop are both nineteen-years-old. Pathe News cameraman Bill Jordan tries some hot tea as the rain starts. The patrol turns back to base as the weather gets worse. It'll soon be dark, and the rain will cover the bandits' tracks. That's the way it goes out here.

Back to camp, just before nightfall, comes the patrol. It's been a long day. Not much to report either - nothing to make headlines in the newspapers - just another patrol. They probably won't even mention it in their letters home. Yet the British troops in Malaya, slowly but steadily, are smashing the Reds' reign of terror. And they'll keep at it, till the job's done.