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[[Vol 4, p001](#)]

**Sumprabum. Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

La Doi arrived from Kajihthu this morning, with the news that a big python had been caught alive for me, and was being preserved in the village. He said it was well over 20' long and must have recently fed, because it was very sluggish when captured. The two men who found it tied it up and carried it in on a doolie, staggering under the weight. He has undertaken not only to find me good servants, but also to get our roof here repaired at a reasonable cost. I had asked one of the local contractors what he wanted for it, and he said Rs 200/-, so I turned him out. La Doi's man will do it certainly for not more than Rs 50/-, which is much nearer the mark. We went up and had drinks with Durrant and Thunder this evening, and stayed to an indifferent meal.

**Sumprabum. Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

Thunder left for Myitkyina this morning on foot, expecting to be caught up by Sayer's car when it goes back; and Sayer came in this afternoon. We went round to the Leydens' for drinks and found him there. I don't like him at all. He's one of those rather superior young men (very common nowadays) who think [[Vol 4, p002](#)] they know everything; and, to make matters worse, he shaves his legs like a damn chorus girl, and looks, with a thin moustache, like an ice-cream merchant. It makes me grieve more than ever that the Leydens are going on leave; but I don't see why I should meet him more often than the barest minimum, and anyway we'll be out most of the rains. I've been doing a certain amount of developing since getting here, including one of Leyden's films this morning. I'm taking on Mischa, the hound (a blend of Cocker and Fox Terrier, with leanings towards the former) when they go.

She's a good little thing, and devoted to Peter, whom she never leaves. I hope she doesn't miss him for too long.

**Sumprabum. Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> 1939**

The troops were not on the range this afternoon, so I went down to join them to try out the .375 which I thought was firing about a foot high at 100 yards. It was quite true (my suspicion) and I have handed it over to the armourer to make a new foresight for it. He will have done it by tomorrow, when I shall be able to test it again.

The usual game of deck tennis this evening, at which Sayer made a damn fool of himself. I can't imagine why so many people persist in the [Vol 4, p003] belief that they are comedians of a high order, when they only succeed in ruining other peoples' pleasure. Leyden can't stand him either, and is furious because he has brought up a Burmese prostitute with him to pass the time with. I sympathise with the Judge, especially as the woman will undoubtedly live in his house. This afternoon I took on Hashu Ha (ex-pyada) as cook, till we can get a proper one when he will be bearer. He doesn't know much about cooking, but is learning from the Leydens' man. He's a good chap, I think.

**Sumprabum. Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> 1939**

More shooting this afternoon. The new foresight was such a success that, from firing a foot high, the old rifle was at least 2 feet low; but that was a good fault, and, with the aid of a file, the armourer got it dead in the end. I fired about 12 shots with it all told, wearing only a shirt, and feel as if my shoulder had been kicked by a lusty mule. The recoil is a good deal heavier than with a .303. I also took down the .256 for centering, and found that was about 3 inches to the left. It too is all right now, and I can rely on them both.

[Vol 4, p004]

**Sumprabum. Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 1939**

More shooting this morning, at 200 yards, but only to see what the sighting was at that range in case I have any long shots next year at takin round the Diphuk Ha. It was a bright sunny day, and I don't know whether that had anything to do with it or not; but I found it needed the 300 yard flap to get the bull – the rifle being the .275. I didn't take out the other. I should like to try it again on a cloudy day.

**Sumprabum. Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No news. Just the usual peaceful life, with deck tennis in the evening, and drinks at the Leydens' afterwards. A wire came in from Putao to say that Lewa is there, and asking whether he is justified in taking some of the boxes out of the Quarter Guard. A marbled cat cub (name of Melchizedek) was sold to me for Rs 2/-. About a month old, I should say, and very fierce. Thank God we can get milk here.

**Sumprabum. Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup> 1939**

The headman of the Gurkha village came in this morning with 2 men from Hkindu to say that the tiger had killed last night not far off, so I left about half past ten with Hkawng Hpung to investigate. [Vol 4, p005] The kill was about 3 miles away, just over the top of the hill that leads down to Machega. It was a good sized buffalo, but it had certainly not been killed last night. I should think on the 6<sup>th</sup> probably, though the tiger had certainly fed again last night. It was in a small narrow ravine, and very high. The hind quarters had been eaten, and the remainder looked as if it had been smitten with leprosy, covered with great patches of white flies' eggs, some of them about 2 square feet in area. There was no good tree for a machan, so the two Hkindu men set to work cutting bamboo and stuff and put one up for me. It was a bit close, as the further we could get with any hope of seeing the kill was only some 20 yards; but it was on the edge of the ravine and so a good 40' up. I had expected

to have been able to get back to the house in the afternoon to change into long trousers and things; but the work wasn't done till 4.30, and very rashly I decided to stay as I was, in shorts and a white shirt. It was stupid, because mosquitoes and sand flies came in their millions as dusk fell, and I had the hell of a time. It was quite impossible for me to sit still, and I think if [Vol 4, p006] the tiger had come back he couldn't have failed to spot me. He didn't, however.

At 7 or so a barking deer began to call loudly some way down the valley, towards where the tiger was said to be lying up, and I thought it had probably crossed the tiger's track of the morning. Half an hour later the tiger woke up, and let off a round dozen hearty roars. He wasn't more than ½ mile off, and I got ready for him with great joy. Nothing happened for some time, and then the barking deer called again, much closer. The next thing I heard was a heavy thud and a crash, two or three hundred yards off, and I knew the worst had happened. The tiger must have walked into that damn gyi and taken it, instead of coming back for a good meal of ripe buffalo. I heard it dragging it for a little, and then there was silence again. More from cursedness than anything else I waited in the machan till half past nine, and then came down and walked home. I can't say I enjoy walking through the jungle at night, when I know there's a tiger somewhere near (even when it's just killed), but there are always compensations; and this time it was the patches of glorious jasmine-like scent which I kept on coming across. They were too lovely for words. I shan't bother [Vol 4, p007] about sitting up again over that buffalo. It's getting too old now, and my one hope is that the tiger will kill again before we leave here.

### **Sumprabum. Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain fell last night after I got in, and all this morning, so the Leydens decided not to wait till tomorrow in case the road got too bad. I went up to see them

this morning, and stayed till they pushed off shortly after 12. I feel quite sad about them going, but it will do the Judge a lot of good. He works too hard and could do with a change. They say they will look up Mother in London, they'll be back in February and I'm looking forward to it already.

I took on Hpisi Nawng (also an ex-serviceman, a lance naik) this morning to act as Bartholomew's boy, and Mischa has now joined the household. She's a good little bitch. I hope a panther doesn't get her in the south.

### **Sumprabum. Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine and very hot day, which made me feel very slack. I sent a cable to William for his birthday, and then took Mischa for a walk to the Gurkha basti to give the headman a tip for bringing me news of the tiger, and to encourage him to go on with the good work. [Vol 4, p008] He wasn't there, but I found one of the villagers working in a field and gave it to him to hand on. I hear the Leydens' car (one of the two) has broken down at Maihtong, and that they may leave their baggage until another can come up and fetch it, and all travel down in the one which is still working. Luckily there's plenty of time before their boat sails from Rangoon.

We de-flead Mischa this afternoon, and got, I should think, about 200 off her. Even now she isn't quite free, but there can't be very many left. Melchizedek is still as fierce as ever, and hard to feed. I must try to get a baby's bottle in the bazaar, because I think that once her feeding becomes a comfortable matter she may settle down and get tame.

### **Sumprabum. Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 1939**

(Bill's birthday)

A fine hot day, during which I didn't do much but write letters until the evening. Then I went down to the Gurkha basti again to make sure that the headman had got

his tip; and after that Mischa and I went up to the signal hill to see if we could see the snow beyond Putao. It was too dark by the time I got there, but I saw a grand exhibition of lightning instead. Some of the flashes looked as if they were going upwards and not down as they usually do; but I can't swear to this. [Vol 4, p009] I must look out again next time there's a storm and make certain.

I dropped in at Durrant's on the way back, about 8 o'clock, and stayed there well after 9, when Hkawng Hpung came to fetch me with a torch. Mischa was with me the whole day, and won't leave me now for more than a few minutes at a time. We were able to get Melchizedek's feeding bottle in the bazaar all right. The only thing is, the cub eats a nipple a day, and I only hope they have a plentiful stock in the shop.

### **Sumprabum. Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day, with practically no wind.

The mail came in this morning, and with it the Primarflex camera, which now seems to be in good order. I took it and Mischa out about midday along the water road to test it; and afterwards came back to write some more letters. I had a whole pile to answer, which, owing to lack of space on the table, I had put on the floor by my chair. A zealous servant had opined that they were waste paper, and they've all been burnt! I can't remember several of the names, and half the addresses.

I went for another walk this evening along the water road and up the stream to the signal hill, where Mischa put up a brace and a half of partridge. There [Vol 4, p010] was a jungle cock calling too, and I think it might be worthwhile taking a gun up some day. I stopped at Durrant's on the way back to hear the news; and brought him here for dinner. We were celebrating Bill's birthday (in place of mine, which is too near Bartholomew's) and the meal, arranged by B, was very good. Both Durrant and

I have gone strictly on the wagon since yesterday, for no particular reason except that we feel like it. Our drink now is lime juice.

### **Sumprabum. Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy clouds most of the day, and some light rain in the afternoon.

Major Stirling turned up on his way back from Nawng Hkai, and was going to stop the night with Durrant. However, he saw that the weather didn't look too good, and so pushed off after lunch in the car which came for him yesterday. He got about 20 fish at Nawng Hkai, none of much over 20 lbs, and almost all by trolling between there and Kankin. He's a good soul. I had lunch with him and Durrant. Just after he went off, the old doctor arrived, leaving on pension, and we all had dinner with Durrant. Altogether I seem to have spent most of the day up there. Mischa is in good form now and very cheerful; and Melchizedek [[Vol 4, p011](#)] is getting on too, though still very fierce. I finally kicked Nyima Töndrup out this evening. He was drunk again, and making the devil of a noise in the back quarters, so I paid him off at once.

### **Sumprabum. Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Nihal Chaud pushed off this morning after a heavy shower which lasted from 6 a.m. till about 11 a.m. The rest of the day was cloudy, but no more rain fell. I spent most of it talking with Durrant in his house, and had some good games of deck tennis in the evening. We have taken on Htingnan Gawng Hka, a young Kachin, as cook; and are now complete for servants. Lhakpa gave notice tonight, knowing that he will be going sometime, and wanting to go with Nyima, I think. That saves trouble.

### **Sumprabum. Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A foully wet day until the late evening, and I think the rains have really come now.

A wire came from Dudrow today to say that Hanan Ha, McGuinness's cook, is free for 7 months; so I sent back that we would have him at Rs 35/- a month and food if that suited him, he to go direct to Kajihitu. In 7 months he ought to be able to teach Htingnan Gawng Hka all he knows, and then we'll have good food for the rest [Vol 4, p012] of the trip.

A muleteer arrived here at 4.30 p.m. with news that a tiger had killed one of his mules last night just below Wasat Hku, about a couple of miles away. I pushed off at once with Hkawng Hpung and the Chinese, and we eventually found the corpse in a dreadful bit of bamboo forest, with not a tree of any size for miles. The rear half of the animal had been eaten completely, and the remains dragged 100 yards from the place of the kill. I ought to have sent back at once for rope to peg it down with; but like a fool I trusted to luck, and we got to work on a machan. By 7 o'clock we had made a tiny erection in a very flimsy tree about 40 yards from the kill, and had cleared just enough bamboo to let me see it; so Hkawng Hpung went back and I sat down to wait. At 8 o'clock there was a sudden crashing and dragging from where the kill had been. The damn tiger had removed it again, part dragging and part carrying, to take it a further 150 yards down the hill. Needless to say I could see nothing, but I had the pleasure of listening to him making a hearty meal. After some minutes of that I went home, getting in just as dinner was being finished. [??] [??] and Baidia were dining with us, so it was just as well. One comfort [Vol 4, p013] about sitting up in vain for a tiger or anything, is that you always learn something; which you don't if you're successful.

### **Sumprabum. Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Solid rain all night and day.



Dudrow says Hanan Ha is willing, and now on his way to Kajihitu. Melchizedek is coming along well, but still intractable.

**Sumprabum. Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Foul as usual now with nearly continual rain.

Lewa and Maran Yong turned up with the baggage from Pangnamdim and Putao this morning, and I broke it to them that they were going. Fortunately, Lewa had been going to ask for 3 months' leave in any case, his wife being very ill, and he took the matter philosophically. I told him I should want him when I next went to Tibet. Lhakpa and N.T. are off to Kajihitu on Friday to collect their goods and bring Kyipa back.

**Sumprabum. Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 1939**

More rain. The Leydens sailed this morning. Otherwise no news.

**Sumprabum. Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup> 1939**

More rain. It appears that Bartholomew has to go to Myitkyina to give evidence about the theft of his goods. [Vol 4, p014] They have been recovered. Word was sent down from Putao that one of the muleteers had been trying to sell an automatic there, and so they searched the convoy at Myitkyina when it arrived and found everything, which is good. It's a damn nuisance he's being called on to give evidence though, especially as he can't give any.

**Sumprabum. Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fairly fine day which is a surprise, with not more than a shower or two.

A wire from the Asst. District Magistrate, Myitkyina to say that "a commission is being prepared for his examination up here", which is ridiculous beyond all words. If they've got to have his evidence Myitkyina is far better than here because it's within easy reach of where we shall be in the South Triangle; while if he's got to give

it here it means stopping at Sumprabum until the "commission" arrives – in a fortnight or so. I am wiring to try and make them see sense.

We took on Penelope the pangolin today, but I don't know whether she will be a success or not. Feeding her is going to be a big difficulty.

[Vol 4, p015]

### **Sumprabum. Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fairly fine day. Our roof is being repaired at last, slowly. Otherwise no news.

### **Sumprabum. Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

Not much sun, but practically no rain; and I'm beginning to wonder whether the rains have really started yet or not.

### **Sumprabum. Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

A fine day. Kyipa arrived from Kajihitu, very distressed to think that he was going; but I told him it was no fault of his, which cheered him, and that I would take him on again when I went to Tibet. He was full of stories about ghosts in the Kajihitu bungalow. He said that on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April he was sleeping in what had been Leyden's bedroom, when, sometime in the middle of the night, a man came in and said, "Get up and dress. We must be off down the hill". Still half-dazed, Kyipa got up, and had half his clothes on when it struck him that it was midnight or thereabouts and the whole thing was very queer. The man was waiting outside the door, and he thought it was a friend of his named Daw Ze. Kyipa said, "This is all rot. I'm not coming", and went back to bed; [Vol 4, p016] and that was the last he saw of the man. In the morning he asked Daw Ze what the hell he was doing coming around at that hour of the night and trying to make him take a walk down the hill. Daw Ze swore he had done nothing of the sort, and proved the matter by reference to his wife and two guests who had been sleeping close to him. The general opinion was

that it had been a ghost. Well, that may or may not have been so; but anyway Kyipa was sure it was. The next night he was sleeping with two coolies in the same room, when he was woken by hearing what he thought were voices just outside the door. This suddenly opened and two old Kachins came in dressed in something like white sheets. One stood by the door and the other came over to his bed. Kyipa has no fear of ghosts (which he says are only men of air and can do no harm), but once again he thought that these were real men. The room was full of moonlight, and he could see quite clearly. He pulled out my big kukri and leapt out of bed saying, "What are you doing here? You must be robbers and I shall kill you!". He took an immense swipe at the old man and only just missed his own leg. Both figures vanished. He woke the two coolies [[Vol 4, p017](#)] who had slept through all this, and they searched the place but found no signs of anyone. In the morning La Doi said that ghosts were frequently seen there. The bungalow is built on some old graves and from time to time the spirits wander about. It would be interesting if we saw any ourselves.

I was stung this evening by a Sum Mat near the top of the signal hill; and have been in torment ever since.

### **Sumprabum. Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day. I got no sleep (or very little) last night owing to that blasted Sum Mat; but this afternoon Hashu Ha went out into the jungle and brought back another specimen. He scraped off the bark and rubbed it on the afflicted spots (my knees) and the result was magical. He says it will need doing again as it was not put on at once, but that after that all should be well.

I dined with Durrant and played Bezique till midnight.

The servants came round to say goodbye today, bringing salaamis of eggs and potatoes and flowers; and Kyipa excelled himself by baking a cake for us. I'm sorry they're gone, but it's better so.

[[Vol 4, p018](#)]

### **Sumprabum. Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day, except for two or three short, heavy showers, most of which took place while large portions of the roof were off!

We took on Martha the Macaque today. She's an attractive little beast, and very affectionate. It may be that she will survive all right.

Bartholomew is going to leave for Myitkyina on Sunday, when I leave also for Kajihtu. I shall meet him at the ferry as near to June 10<sup>th</sup> as I can. I am reckoning on 45 coolies with me and 5 with him.

### **Sumprabum. Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Fine and hot today.

No news of any kind, except that Melchizedek has adopted, and been adopted by, Martha, which is all to the good. I took him out for a walk this afternoon and had the greatest difficulty in getting him to go anywhere at all until Martha appeared. He made a beeline for her, purring loudly. She nibbled his head for him in a pleasant way, and from then on he wouldn't leave her. In fact, we moved in a body for a couple of hundred yards all told and he became so tame (comparatively), that I could pick him up and hold him in my arms without great danger. Penelope still refuses to eat anything, and is getting a bit weak. I shall let her go on the road somewhere. Martha [[Vol 4, p019](#)] is in great form. Hanan Ha arrived this evening as cook for 7 months.

**Sumprabum. Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day.

It's not at all certain that I shall be going tomorrow as Bhudiman Rai (the Bailiff) doesn't know yet whether coolies will be available or not.

Bartholomew will be all right though in any case, and we have both got most of our packing done.

We went up to Durrant's to dine tonight (Sayer was there too) and played Vingt-et-un afterwards till nearly 2 a.m. I won about Rs 1/-, and Bartholomew was up too a bit; but poor old Durrant lost about Rs 25/-. Oh well, *he* suggested the game!

Mail today, but nothing for me except bills!

**Sinan Hka. Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A blistering day, and practically cloudless.

This morning 48 coolies arrived in driblets, while the final total of loads was 53. It looked as if I should have to wait a bit longer, as, by the time we went up to Durrant's for breakfast, there seemed to be no hope of getting any more at least till the evening. Bartholomew (taking Martha, to whom he is greatly attached) pushed off about noon, and I went back to our bungalow to see if anything new had transpired. To my amazement, enough coolies had turned up, and we [[Vol 4, p020](#)] left almost at once. I dropped in on Bonney to say goodbye and quite forgot to give her the remains of the marshmallow and ½ lb Supex chocolates. I'll send them back from here in the morning. The march was sweltering, but nearly all downhill luckily. The bridge of the Sinan Hka had been washed away in the last spell of rain, and there were 3 rafts as a makeshift. I arrived there well ahead of everyone, and picked out the smallest raft as being probably the easiest to manage. Unfortunately, I didn't see that the landing place was a hundred yards or so upstream on the other bank,

but set boldly off straight across. The first shock came when I found the damn thing would only just carry me (and that with a strong tendency to turn turtle); and the next that the pole wouldn't reach the bottom but had to be used as an inefficient paddle. The third was when Mischa swam eagerly after me, going much faster than I, and boarded the vessel, causing it to sink by the stern. Much valuable time was wasted in prodding her off, and before I could get the craft going again we had been swept down to the edge of the rapids and all was up. We struck a rock and instantly capsized. Mischa was also in the rapids but swam them valiantly and reached the shore. At last, with the help of an ancient Kachin, I salvaged the [Vol 4, p021] raft and we pushed it up to where it should have gone in the first place.

The fireflies were lovely tonight. Hundreds and hundreds of them flitting about not more than a yard above the ground like a wispy shawl over the grass.

### **Nbun Daru. Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Fouly hot with hardly a breath of wind.

Owing to a shortage of coolies I didn't get away till nearly 9, and the march was pure hell. About halfway, Hkawng Hpung, Mischa and I stopped by a stream for 40 minutes' rest in the shade; and a mile from the ferry we were melting so fearfully that we stopped again and slept for nearly an hour. Even so we arrived 3 hours in advance of the coolies, and I spent the rest of the afternoon asleep or dozing.

Mischa lay down in every stream or pool we passed.

I let Penelope go this morning, but she wandered into the open again very soon after and was seized by one of the coolies. I fear her end is sure.

### **Dap Gahtawng. Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain from 4 a.m. till 9.30 a.m. and light showers for the rest of the day. The sky covered almost entirely with dense nimbus cloud. Wind SW 2.

There was considerable difficulty about coolies this morning, as 22 were going back and only 2 substitutes could be [Vol 4, p022] found. In the end I left 20 loads behind to be sent on as soon as possible, and actually 8 of them turned up this evening. It was a sweaty march, the path being very muddy and slippery, but not a long one, thank the Lord. La Doi arrived about 6 p.m. on his way to Nbn Daru, and we had a long chat about one thing and another. He will be coming back in about 3 days.

### **Kajihitu. Wednesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> 1939**

Max 79.5°.

Some showers during the day, which was mainly cloudy (nimbus and cumulus). Wind SW 2.

I got a green pigeon on the march, and knocked some feathers out of a second. No less than eleven of my birds, which I left behind here, have been eaten by rats, damn them; and two marten skins. Part of the damage had been done by beetles, and I only hope there are none still lurking in the skins which *look* all right. Anyway, I've given them a tremendous dose of dope, so they ought to be all right.

Hanan Ha is definitely a good cook and my meals are something to look forward to now.

All the remaining loads arrived this evening from Nbn Daru. I see La Doi's hand in this!

### **Kajihitu. Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine morning, but cloudy. Heavy rain most of the [Vol 4, p023] afternoon. Wind SW 2.

I sent off a runner to Myitkyina this morning (with luck he will get there in 4 days unless he's held up at the Tera Hka) with a letter to Bartholomew asking him to

buy a couple of oil stoves for drying; and conjuring him to catch Lewa before he leaves Myitkyina so as to remove the .410 stick gun from him. I gave it to him when I still thought we were going to Tibet, knowing he would either trade it or lose it up there; and then I forgot about it. Of course, if he carries it about in Burma or India he will be arrested at once, and I will get it in the neck too.

I went out with Hkawng Hpung and the rifle this afternoon in hopes of a barking deer. We went to the bottom of the valley but had no luck. The jungle's pretty thick, and all I saw was a brace and a half of partridge, and a few leeches. Not very many though.

### **Kajihthu. Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

Max 75°. Heavy rain at intervals throughout the day, which was cloudy the whole time – dense nimbus. Wind SW 2.

I didn't go out today at all. There didn't seem to be much point in it. Instead I developed a film; repacked the medicine boxes; and wrote to Sara. No specimens of any kind have been brought in since I got here, which is [[Vol 4, p024](#)] odd. I must remind the people that they'll get backsheesh for anything brought in, no matter what it is.

### **Kajihthu. Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

Max 72°.

Heavy showers at frequent intervals except between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and the sky was covered all day with heavy nimbus clouds. Wind SW 2.

I went out this afternoon about 3 p.m. with one of the pyadas to see if we couldn't get a sambhur or a gyi. We went along the ridge to the east and then down into the valley on the south side; but though we were out till 7 we saw nothing to shoot. We found the sambhur's tracks and those of a gyi, but that was all. I was only



bitten by 10 or a dozen leeches all told. The film I developed on the 1<sup>st</sup> morning is not dry yet, and if this weather goes on God knows when it will be.

### **Kajhtu. Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Max 75°.

Heavy showers all day long, and, like every day we've been here so far, a thick mist from down in the valley between about 11 and noon.

I spent the morning working out loads, and reckon we will need 58 not counting what Bartholomew may have with him; so I've ordered 63 coolies (to be on the safe side) for a start on the 6<sup>th</sup>. It means I shall be two days late at the rendezvous at least; but that can't be helped. No, only one day, all being well [[Vol 4, p025](#)] with transport on the road.

I developed another film this morning, and took down the first one (now dry) only to find, to my misery, that the emulsion had melted on nearly all of them. I was only able to keep one out of twelve, and they were all good except for that. I developed it at 75°, which seems to be above the critical point for Agfa film. The second one was done at 70°, and I only hope that that's not gone too.

### **Kajhtu. Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Today was mainly cloudy, and there were some showers; but it was a good deal drier than yesterday.

I spent the morning instructing Hkawng Hpung in bird-skinning; but as the only birds I had were 3 young doves (?) just coming into feather, it wasn't really fair on him to ask him to deal with them. We actually only did 2. I went to kill the third, and when I opened the basket he immediately squeaked loudly and opened his mouth for food; so I hadn't the heart. I fed him instead, with bits of cake soaked in milk, and he

ate enormously. He can come with us tomorrow and stay on till he's big enough to fend for himself.

### **N'gum Ha. Tuesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A sunny and very hot day.

A march of 7½ miles, taking every shortcut. By mule-track the whole way I [Vol 4, p026] should guess about 8½ or 9 miles. We had a fearful business getting off, for only 44 coolies could be mustered (and that after much chivvying on the part of the pyadas); and in the end I had to leave Hpisi Nawng behind to bring on the remainder when, and as, he could. As a result of all this, I didn't get away myself till getting on for 11, and the heat on the road was staggering. The path is pretty well up and down too, by the shortcut.

All the stone and bronze implements are called, quite simply, "Heirlooms" by the locals; and it always delights me when a man drifts into my room, and, after a while, asks glumly: "Do you want to buy any Heirlooms?" Of course, they *are* heirlooms, because they have almost all been found ages ago when digging fields, and have been handed on from father to son as potent talismans in time of war. A good many of these treasures are simply odd-shaped pebbles, but they're all equally treasured. Today, just before we left Kajihntu, even the bystanders giggled when an ancient man asked if I'd like to buy a Kanpa Tanhku, or Heirloom Tortoise. This was a rock which did, in fact, look so like a tortoise that I am not at all sure it wasn't possibly a fossilised one; and I'm sorry now I didn't buy it. [Vol 4, p027]

The young bird survived the march well and ate a large meal at the end, including 2 small grasshoppers and a fly. I gave it these in some trepidation, not knowing whether they would be good for it or not, but so far everything seems all right.

**Tara Hka Camp. Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A grilling day and cloudless. Also windless.

A march of 8½ miles (mostly downhill) using all available shortcuts. By the mule-track I should think about 10½ miles probably. Fearful difficulty over coolies again, as all that came here yesterday (apart from my 'followers' numbering seven) wanted to go back on the grounds (a) that they had no food and it was impossible to buy any in the villages this year; and (b) that the South Triangle where we are going is notoriously unhealthy, and everybody develops goitre there.

In the end, after fearful effort, we found ourselves only two men short, not counting some of the loads which arrived this morning from Kajihtu, and now have to stop here. Hkawng Hpung and Htingnan Gawng Hka took a double load between them (the big collecting box), and that left me with 2 heavy haversacks (about 40 lbs together), 3 guns, field glasses and a [Vol 4, p028] malignant billy goat which was presented to me last night. All this was beyond my powers, so I enrolled three small boys, two of them to take a gun each and the third to conduct the goat. This, however, proved intractable, spending its time between lying down and refusing to budge; pulling with all its might against the rope; and dashing into the undergrowth on each side of the path, to get tied up round trees and bushes. It weighed about as much as the youth did, so I gave him the third gun and dragged the beast myself. After 3 miles, when we came to a village, I was beginning to feel that life was hardly worth the effort. The goat and I were both exhausted, and we all 5 sat down for a much needed rest. An old woman turned up, full of chat, and I pressed the bastard upon her; but just as she was taking it away it assaulted her violently on the backside, and she was so indignant that she gave it back again, on the grounds that it was an evil beast. At this all hope fled, and with aching arms and a heart of lead I

started off with my prisoner once more. Why it never occurred to me to set the thing adrift in the jungle, in the hope that some panther, or other benevolent creature, would speedily finish it off I cannot [Vol 4, p029] imagine. Before long, almost prostrate as I was, I exchanged goat for gun with one of the youths. For ten yards all went suspiciously well, but then the billy made a wild charge on the dompteur, unannounced. It caught him fair and square in the fundament. There was a short and hideous pause (of stupefaction on the one part, and satisfaction on the other) and the pair of them, moved by an equal and opposite impulse, went ricketing down the path, the youth maintaining a precarious lead of a couple of yards in front of his ravening tormentor. To his eternal credit, be it said, he never let go of the rope; and when I came upon them at last, a quarter of a mile on, both were motionless, sitting dead-beat on the path. I took it on again. It passed out completely at the 6<sup>th</sup> mile (just when I began to wonder how much longer I could hold out) and was carried the next mile on a pole to a friendly village where I thankfully left it to be brought on tomorrow. This camp is on the bank of the Tara Hka, which looks good for fishing.

At dinnertime the temperature was still 90°, and no breath of air, sand flies and mosquitoes bad.

### **Tara Hka Camp. Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Min 75°. Max 88°.

Heavy rain early this morning till about 7 a.m.; but from then on the day was fine though cloudy.

Not a [Vol 4, p030] hope of getting away today for lack of coolies. We have struck a bad place for transport it seems, and this morning (all our yesterday's coolies having left – except for the followers, of course) only 5 could be produced. We sent them off, knowing that even they would be missing if we told them to come

back another day, and this afternoon a further 9 came in from over the river, and were also loaded up and sent off. So 14 out of about 60 loads have gone anyway. Hpsi Naw turned up this afternoon with the balance of the stuff – a good piece of work.

The goat was brought down this morning from the village, the man who lugged it complaining bitterly that it had worn him out. As I told him, he had nothing to complain of. He'd only brought it for 1½ miles, while I had born the burden for 7 yesterday. Anyway, I had it killed and divided out between the servants and followers, with a bit for myself. The next march (when we get off) is nearly all uphill, and that would give the goat too much of an advantage. I went along shortly after the execution to see about some boxes, and there was a fearful sight. One of my Yawyins was squatting by the fire with a pair of enormous testicles skewered on a bamboo, toasting. [Vol 4, p031] He said they would be excellent when done, but I hadn't the heart to stop and watch him bite into them.

I went out this evening up a fair sized stream to see what I could see. It was impossible to move in the jungle, so it was the stream or nothing. It was quite fun wading along, but I didn't see a single living creature; apart from a squirrel which chattered abuse at me from a clump of bamboos; and the only track was an old one of a big boar. It gave me exercise though.

### **Tara Hka Camp. Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Min 77°. Max 88°.

A few showers, but fine on the whole, though mainly cloudy.

I sent off Hkawng Hpung and one of the Khanung followers this morning to go down to Weshi and buy 10 sacks of rice to feed the coolies if we ever get any. The idea is for him to park a sack at each camp on the way back and round up men at

the same time. One of the difficulties about getting them at present (apart from the fact that villages are not only scattered but very small) is that they have no easily portable food this year; and if I can provide that it may improve matters. Actually, they've improved anyway, due mainly to [Vol 4, p032] Hpsi Naw who made an immense tour of the neighbourhood in search of transport. About 20 men came in during the day, and were loaded and sent off; and he says he has got 30 or so for tomorrow morning, so we will be off then without fail. How far we will get without further hold-ups is another matter.

I did some doctoring today, and, among other things, successfully had out a large molar which its owner swore was giving him hell. Even when it came out it looked a perfectly good tooth to me; but that was his look-out, and anyway he said that all the pain had gone, very shortly after. I only froze it (ethyl chloride) to pull it out, but I gave it a good doing, and he said it hardly hurt at all.

Mischa is on heat, and I greatly fear will allow herself to be seduced by a foul yellow pye dog which is roaming round. I've driven it off several times without much avail, and I ought really to tie her up; but she's so miserable if I do that I haven't the heart. Sheer weak-mindedness on my part.

### **Shagri Bum. Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day until 5 p.m. when there was a heavy shower lasting some 20 minutes. The day remained heavily overcast after that until 9 p.m. when the sky cleared [Vol 4, p033] completely.

Well, we got off today about half past eight, and made a march of about 6¾ miles, mostly uphill. The first 2½ miles were pretty steep. I was looking forward like anything to a cigarette (they having gone ahead the day before yesterday by mistake), but what was my gloom to find that almost everything had gone on to

Numhkre from here, cigarettes included. It's actually a damn good thing, of course, though it's doubtful even now if we'll get away from here tomorrow with what we've brought along – 35 loads.

The headman here seems a surly sort of bloke. He has not brought any present, and sent a message to the effect that if I wanted him to help in getting coolies I'd better send him some money!

No fireflies up here. Nor there were at Kajihitu or N'gum Ha either, or only very few. They seem to flourish better low down. Looked at closely, they're the most amazing creatures. Small beetles (not flies at all), with the end third of the abdomen white. This is the light, and in effect and appearance it's exactly like one of those white gas-filled electric bulbs. It switches on and off so completely that you can almost swear you heard the click.

Sewed up frogs all the afternoon, and there are still a [\[Vol 4, p034\]](#) good few to do.

Because of the wet weather, both my cameras are packed away in one of my boxes. If it hadn't been for that I could have got a grand picture of the rafts crossing the Tara Hka this morning. A pity, but I shall doubtless see much the same from another good place some other time.

An excellent vegetable is the inside of canepith (called simburi si). It's first class, and I only wish I'd known about it last year at Pangnamdim.

### **Numhkre Camp. Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain all last night, and today it continued steadily and moderately heavily until 1 p.m., after which it was fine with some sun. Wind SW 1-2.

A march of only 6¼ miles taking the shortcut which is only a bad footpath (too bad for coolies) through thick jungle. There were a lot of leeches on it; but most of

the way is downhill or level, and it wasn't unpleasant. By the mule-track it's about 9 miles.

I did the 'headman' an injustice in what I wrote yesterday. In the first place he is not the 'headman' at all, but Tsum Hka San, Duwa over the whole tract from here to N'Changyang with the exception of the bit from Samatu to Mawlayang inclusive; and he seems to be a thoroughly good chap. That business about the money must have been only a 'try on', because he next said that if I [[Vol 4, p035](#)] gave him the order he would come with me and see that coolies were forthcoming. So I did and he is. The result is that we got away this morning without any trouble, and (even though we caught up with all the loads here, and now need 59 men – the onions having gone bad which cuts the loads down by one) we will be off again tomorrow without fail. This is a pleasant little camp, except for a few million sand flies. Bang in the jungle at the bottom of a valley, with jungle fowl calling all day, and frogs croaking all night. Fireflies too, but not very many. There was a report of pig having been seen in the morning not far off, so I went into the jungle this afternoon and hunted from 2.30 to 6.30, but without seeing anything except the track of a big boar and four or five macaques. The jungle is very thick and again leeches were bad.

Mischa behaved extremely well today. I hadn't gone more than a couple of hundred yards from the camp before she came dashing up, full of joy; and I sternly sent her back with the man who had set me on the path. Moving slowly I had got about 2 miles when she appeared again, wagging all over, and this time it went to my heart to send her back. She was very good, though stricken with gloom, [[Vol 4, p036](#)] and turned miserably home again. The pathos of it all struck me even more half an hour later when I met an old man coming from Numhkre. I asked if he'd seen any game on his way, and he replied no, but he had seen a small black dog (here he



made signs how big) trotting through the jungle towards the camp. Anyway, as I say, I saw nothing but the monkeys, and they were too far off to try a shot.

Cigarettes again!

### **Samatu. Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy nimbus clouds all day, with a SW wind, force about 2. It was fine until noon when it began to rain fairly heavily, continuing till 3.30 p.m. The sky continued to be covered with dense nimbus, but no more rain fell until 9 p.m. Light rain began then which has gone on.

A march, by the shortcut, of only 5¾ miles, though the mule-track is said to be 9 miles. The path is rather up and down except for the first 2 miles which is more or less level through thick jungle, and there is a fairly steep climb towards the end.

I was out at 5 a.m. in the jungle again, but there were not even any fresh tracks, and the only thing I saw was a macaque. Just a glimpse and I didn't get a shot. However, there were not nearly so many leeches about as yesterday, and I caught an *Amblycephalus* on a log [[Vol 4, p037](#)] over a very small stream. On the march I also caught a *Japalma* of sorts, so it's been a good day for me, as I don't generally catch much myself. Again on the march I saw 3 macaques; but they had been scared by Mischa running ahead and I didn't get a shot. I spent half an hour in very thick jungle after them, and caught sight of one, but that was all. While I was busy like that, Hpsi Naw saw the fresh tracks of what he took to be a sambhur. He borrowed the 12 bore, and S.G., and went after it. It turned out to be a big boar, but he missed it. Tsum Hka San went back from here. I'm sorry he's gone. He says he is coming down to N'Changyang in 4 or 5 days' time though, so I will see him again.

I must say goitre is becoming very much more prevalent down here; and they say that from Mawlayang on the people are very degenerate through in-breeding;

and very small and weak, so that they cannot carry even a full coolie load. I would not have minded waiting here if necessary, as this village is only about 4 miles from Bumlang Bum where there are bison and sambhur; but coolies will be forthcoming so I must get on to save Willy a further wait.

A lot of frogs came in here, including 2 or 3 I haven't already got.

[[Vol 4, p038](#)]

### **Mawlayang. Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain last night and until 7 a.m. After that the day was very misty, with little or no wind, and occasional light showers.

Owing to a shortage of coolies again, I had to leave 14 loads behind with Hpsi Naw in Samatu and come on with the rest. The path (8 miles with no shortcuts) is up and down nearly all the way, and it was very muddy and slippery, which made it hard for the coolies, two or three of whom have not arrived at all. I was here by 11.30 and had great hopes of being able to get up to date with the frogs I have still outstanding; but as my boxes didn't turn up till nearly 7 p.m., and the lamps till much later, I had nothing to do at all, except play Patience. I might have gone out into the jungle, but the people here swore there was nothing in it, so I didn't. It was just as well, probably, because I've got a rubbed toe on each foot, and it wouldn't have done them much good.

I shot a big hornbill (black and white with golden neck) not far from Samatu. It was a nice shot with the .256, and I was pleased to see that the solid bullet didn't make a staggering hole. I didn't bother to skin it, as I've got plenty of them, but gave it to the servants for their dinner.

Hkawng Hpung arrived here this afternoon with rice. He [[Vol 4, p039](#)] was able to buy 10½ loads in or near Weshi, at Rs 3/2 a load, which isn't bad at all. It's

normally cheaper than that, but the new bit of road between Chyinghkran and Weshi is impassable for carts at present, and prices are high. Willy wasn't at Weshi when he passed through. He says that there is a direct road from Ayeyang to Pali Bum, 1 day, cutting out Ndawyang, so I reckon if the coolies can do it we'll go that way and save a march. As soon as I know for sure I'll send a note to Willy to tell him to make for Pali Bum to meet me there. I don't know whether we'll be able to leave here tomorrow or not. It depends partly on the weather (because if we have much rain not only will the path be bad but the bridge over the Ningchang Hka will be carried away); partly on how early the other loads arrive here; and partly on whether we can raise enough coolies to move those we've got with us. 24 of those from Samatu are coming on, now that I can feed them, and that's a help. My flocks are increasing.

I left Kajihitu with two young billy goats (pleasant creatures) and bought a nanny and two female kids yesterday for Rs 4/- the big one and Rs 2/- each the little ones. That's a total of five and there has been some talk about bringing on a couple more for sale, though [[Vol 4, p040](#)] they haven't materialised so far. And I was forgetting I'm the proud possessor of another female and a kid in Putao.

I gave Mischa a bath this afternoon. As soon as she was finished she rushed onto the muddy path, and not content with rolling in it in a frenzy, she dug a hole and half-buried herself as well. The soil is all heavy clay here, and when she dried she dried pretty well solid, like a brick. However, the bath was mainly to get rid of fleas, and she'd have been filthy in any case after the next march.

### **Mawlayang. Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain last night, and showers throughout the day. The sky covered with a uniform layer of nimbus. Wind apparently SW 1-2.

We couldn't get off today for several reasons: viz last night's rain had made the hill ahead of us impassable for coolies, in any case none of the loads had arrived from Samatu and we hadn't enough men to get on with those that were here. However, the Ningchang Hka bridge is still said to be intact, and that's something. I sent off a youth with a note to Wily to tell him to make for Pali Bum forthwith, and I bought not two but five more goats, so that we now have an imposing flock of ten of all sizes and sexes. To judge by the behaviour of the two largish billies, we will presently have even more!

I got [[Vol 4, p041](#)] all the snakes and frogs done today, and in the afternoon I went out into the jungle with a hunter who had found tracks of sambhur. I don't know what the villagers were thinking of yesterday to say that there was nothing here; because there were plenty of sambhur tracks, pigs had been rooting; we disturbed a gyi, though I didn't see it, and heard jungle fowl. This is the sixth time I've been out since leaving Sumprabum without getting anything, but I'm cheered now. It can't be altogether me because twice I've been out with good hunters and still got nothing. The luck will change presently and I'm learning all the time. The jungle is very thick here and there are a good few leeches.

All but one load turned up from Samatu this evening, and I think we'll be off tomorrow.

### **Ayeyang Camp. Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Moderate rain last night and heavy showers at intervals throughout the day. The sky entirely covered with dense nimbus. Wind SW 3.

A march of 9 miles over quite a good mule-track, though very muddy and difficult for coolies. The Ningchang Hka was high but the bridge was still standing or we should have been stuck there. At the last moment, strange to say, more coolies

turned up than we needed; and I only hope we don't find after [[Vol 4, p042](#)] that that we are stuck for reliefs here tomorrow. This is a very small hut compared with most of Leyden's, but even so, with a bedroom and a dining room, it's better than those north of Putao. Soon after I got here a chit arrived from Willy to say that he will be at Pali Bum on the 17<sup>th</sup>. I'd forgotten that he had no cooking pots, table or chair with him. He'll be pretty uncomfortable tomorrow at Ndawyang I'm afraid.

The only excitement on the march was that we came across more of those blasted hornets (Hkatsang) with their nest in a tree by the path, just this side of the Ningchang Hka. The first warning we had was when they stung a small boy (carrying rice) on the head, causing him much grief. I was just behind and took warning. We cut a path through the jungle as a by-pass, but even so several of the coolies were stung. Those hornets are devils. I was stung by one in 1933, and there is still a deep circular scar on my leg. I went out into the jungle this evening with Hpsi Naw, and we (or rather he) found the tracks of a couple of sambhur and a gyi, but that was all. Leeches were bad. This is the seventh fruitless hunt I've had.

### **Pali Bum. Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain in the night and until about 5.30 a.m. From then till noon there were frequent moderate showers, but the [[Vol 4, p043](#)] clouds were thin, coming over fairly fast on a SW wind, force 3. After noon there were one or two patches of blue sky in stratus cloud, and no more rain fell.

A march of only 6 miles, climbing fairly steadily for the first 4. The path would be good in dry weather but it was very muddy today and not too easy for the coolies, of whom 3 have not arrived yet. One of the coolies was a real dwarf not more than about 4' 6" high, with very short legs, but he arrived first of all, and carrying a heavy load at that. It is a pleasant march running along the crest of a ridge with a grand

view over the N'Changyang plain, which is said to be stiff with game. It certainly looks good enough, and I think it will be fun being there. A tiger was shot there yesterday. I went out this afternoon with the headman's son, but, for the eighth time, came back with nothing but leech bites. We saw sambhur and gyi tracks in plenty, and we did put up a young sambhur; but by mischance at that moment I was 5 or 6 yards behind, owing to a stony stream bed which I had had to cross very slowly because of the nails in my chaplis, and I didn't see it. Mischa disgraced herself by following me again, and refusing to go back. To do her justice she kept well to heel, [Vol 4, p044] and didn't make a noise, but she picks up so many leeches – that's the main snag. There are bison near here, and unless the weather is quite impossible I shall go out again tomorrow. I've got to wait here anyway for Willy to turn up.

### **Pali Bum. Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain last night and until 6 a.m. this morning, after which the day remained almost entirely overcast with light nimbus clouds, and there were frequent showers. Wind S 2-3.

Willy arrived this morning in good heart but very wet; and Martha shortly after with one of his coolies. She actually remembered me and was delighted, leaping on to my lap with a fiendish grin and lying there comfortably. She even remembered Mischa, after one spasm of fright; but the joy at that meeting was one-sided. Mischa doesn't reckon much to Martha, who pulls her nose and her hair. It was good to see Willy again, and he'd done all the jobs in Myitkyina (such as sheets for me, a stove for drying, a brush for Mischa, and bringing out a good deal of the stores from Barnett's) except the matter of Lewa and the gun stick. He didn't get to Myitkyina till the 6<sup>th</sup>, and by that time Lewa had gone. I can only hope that he doesn't display the damn thing either here or in India, or there will be [Vol 4, p045] trouble.

In the afternoon I went out after bison with a hunter, but we only saw sambhur and gyi tracks. We tracked one sambhur for 3 hours and another for rather more than two, but the jungle is so thick that we didn't really have a chance. We couldn't move fast enough for one thing, and we saw nothing. I was exhausted by the time I got back, and in need of stimulants, so I had some whiskey in my tea, which did me good. Leeches were plentiful and I was bitten a lot. This is the ninth failure to date.

### **Labu Ga. Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain last night, and the day was showery and very cloudy.

A march of 5 miles downhill, so that in dry weather it would be ridiculous to halt here at all. Today, though, the path was very slippery in patches and not too easy for coolies. This bungalow is smaller than usual, and in a bad way owing to beetle, so that one has to walk warily, and it's difficult to find a spot to put the chairs on without danger of instant collapse. We now have twelve goats, so that even if hunting is a failure there should be no shortage of meat in the camp. I felt very slack today and did absolutely nothing after we got in; but Willy has done wonders in putting new arms on to the light folding chairs, so that they [[Vol 4, p046](#)] are now as good as new.

### **N'Changyang. Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain during the night; but the day, though cloudy until about 3 p.m., was fine and hot. There was a glorious sunset of deep pink fleecy clouds on a background of solid smoke-blue, so with any luck tomorrow will be a good day.

A march of 6¼ miles, very level, fording the N'Chang Hka twice, not much more than knee deep. The camp is a couple of hundred yards east of the village, in which the houses are much smaller than in the Kachin villages, and each one fenced round with bamboo. It is quite strange to see Shans here (as far as I can make out

this is the only Shan village in the district), and especially the women with their tall dark blue cylindrical turbans. It sounds good for hunting, unless the jungle is impossibly thick, as they say there are sambhur, gyi, pig and ga woi always to be found (the latter in the hills surrounding this plain), and frequently tiger and leopard. Furthermore, it's a good camp on the bank of a stream, with a decent bungalow and lots of other huts, all of which will no doubt be useful. The people are all very cheery, and I think will be of great help in bringing news of game and in [Vol 4, p047] collecting.

Mischa's tonics and biscuits came along with Willy, and she seems to be looking infinitely better already. She has one Spratt's Puppy biscuit every evening; a dose of Benbow's Alternative mixture once a week; a daily dusting with vermin powder (Pulvex); she will have an occasional Bob Martin's condition powder; and there are worm powders in case of need.

### **N'Changyang. Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A gloriously fine sunny day with some light stratus clouds coming over in the late afternoon on a SW wind, force 2.

I went out into the jungle about 5 a.m. with Hpsi Naw, and found it most terribly thick. We had heard that sambhur were raiding a field not far off, but we were too late for them and crept about in the jungle for some time in hopes of picking something up. However, there didn't seem to be much chance, and I sounded the signal for retreat. We were wandering back, without great care, when suddenly Hpsi Naw, who was leading, heard something and we froze. A boar came rooting along, and stopped perhaps 5 yards off to scratch himself against a tree. The jungle was so thick that I could see nothing except a lengthways view of his back (not even knowing which end was which), and I only had [Vol 4, p048] the .256 with me; but I



was afraid to wait, as it was so near that the slightest change of wind would have carried our scent to him. I aimed at the backbone then, and fired. As I found later, the bullet hit a branch about an inch thick which was just in the line of fire but out of focus to me, and was deflected so that it went in sideways in the region of the kidney. The boar charged, and I've never seen such leaps as we made! The jungle was all cane there, but we plunged into it as if it had been a feather bed! It was lucky that the pig didn't turn and come back, as I doubt if I could have stopped it in time at that very short range; but it had the hell of a wound and wasn't feeling too good, so it rushed straight on for another 50 yards and lay up in some very dense stuff. I wasn't exactly hankering to plunge in after it, so after a little interval (which it employed in furious grunts and clattering its tusks together) I sent Hpsi Naw over to a tree some yards to the right, to climb up and see if he could get a view. He had just started up it when the boar rushed past the foot (I didn't see it) and made off. It had gone through some fearful stuff, so we didn't try to track it, but made a detour and tried to cut its line further along. In this we were highly successful as we [\[Vol 4, p049\]](#) found its track about 5 yards from where it was lying in a bush. It shot out at speed and gave us a fright, but it wasn't feeling like charging and ran off in the other direction. Neither of us saw it this time, and as it hadn't gone very far I told Hpsi Naw (who only had a knife) to stay behind, and stole along after it myself. Presently I heard it grunting, and soon after that I caught a glimpse of some part of it, but I couldn't see what part and decided to creep closer to make sure of it. All of a sudden it was up and away, and I then discovered that I had seen it from 5 yards. Peering through chinks in the undergrowth, I found it impossible to judge distance. However, it didn't go far, and I set off after it again and soon found it. I lay in a bush while it tore up the earth in front; occasionally getting a glimpse but never enough for a sure shot, and preferring

to wait this time rather than start it off again. Besides, I couldn't help thinking that if it did take it into its head to charge if it saw me, I was in a poor position, hemmed in by branches all round. I thought I was about 20 yards off. Suddenly, there came a great kicking in the bushes and then silence. I reckoned it had died. I waited a little more, and then emerged. It was dead all right, but I wasn't more than 7 yards [[Vol 4, p050](#)] from it. My 20 was a myth. Not a very big boar, it stood about 3 feet at the shoulder and weighed about 200 lbs. We cut a path through the jungle and presently brought along coolies to carry it in. I gave most of the meat to them, as it would only have gone bad in our hands. It was simply covered with hundreds of ticks, all over. I wouldn't be a jungle animal for a lot!

In the afternoon Willy went out fishing and came back with a catch of 6 of between ½ and 2 lbs, so that it's been a good day altogether. The goats have increased to 15, owing to 3 brought in as presents by various headmen.

### **N'Changyang. Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine day on the whole, though cloudy, and with some showers in the evening.

I got up at 3.30 a.m. and went back along the road and over the N'Chang Hka with Hpsi Naw to try for a sambhur. The jungle is much lighter down there, and it was quite easy going as soon as it became light; but though we disturbed a small sambhur we didn't see it. We came back about 9 and I shot a macaque. When we got to the ford again there were four sets of sambhur tracks, made since we had first crossed this morning; and going downstream a little further to investigate I put up another sambhur, [[Vol 4, p051](#)] which was lying up near the bank, but didn't get a shot. There is plenty of game about. Later in the day a sambhur was brought in, shot by a small boy of about 12! I bought it for Rs 6/-. It was a young male three-quarters

grown about. Willy had another successful day's fishing, I'm glad to say, getting about 6 lbs. I shan't get up early tomorrow. I gave a leg of sambhur to the school here; kept one for ourselves; and handed the rest of the meat out to the locals.

### **N'Changyang. Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

The day was entirely cloudy, with heavy nimbus, and a SW wind, force 2. During the night and until 9.30 a.m., there was moderately heavy rain; and for the rest of the day frequent heavy showers.

Snakes and frogs are coming in quite well now, and I had a certain amount of work on them today. I got on too, with the place names from the last trip, and in the evening I went out fishing with Willy. Or, rather, he went downstream and I up; but we set out together. Casting the fly spoon, I was in such bad form that I got the line all knotted up about once in four times, and I didn't deserve to get anything; but in the event I landed one redbfish of about 1¾ lbs. Willy got about 6, including a grand 3-pounder. He says he found [\[Vol 4, p052\]](#) it just as difficult as I to cast with the fly spoon for the first 2 or 3 days, so there's hope yet. What with fish, pork and sambhur, eggs and chicken, there's no lack of food in the camp, even if we had not brought stores along. It's going to be difficult to eat them, as far as I can see, but we must do our best. I don't want to have to carry them back again.

### **N'Changyang. Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day (with plenty of cloud) till 3 p.m., after which there were heavy showers.

I didn't go out at all today, but got on with reptiles and saw to the building of shelves in my room. By taking both doors off and fitting them all round the wall I shall have room enough to put things out – especially things like insect collecting stuff.

A man brought news today of 2 or 3 tigers on the ridge immediately to the north of this place. He said they were not in the least afraid of men and was so sure of getting one that he said if I'd lend him a gun he'd bring one in. However, I'd rather we got them ourselves. I thought of going out tomorrow to try my luck, but then considered that I'd already got one on this trip while Willy hadn't; so he's going instead. If he doesn't find one by day (and assuming they really are there) he'll spend the night over one of [Vol 4, p053] the "Sharaw lai ai lam". I'll probably go out the day after if he has no luck.

Vague news of the Mashang Juwai too. One was seen near here 20 years ago, and two 10 years ago, and a woman swears she saw one last year, though I don't think she did. I've offered a reward of Rs 20/- for definite news of any which leads to my seeing or shooting one myself.

Willy is quite keen on the flowers, but I haven't yet started insects again.

I'm feeling very slack these days, I don't know why; and I'm worried by a crop of warts which is coming out on me. There was a big one on my left arm which I got Willy to burn out with the soldering iron on the 19<sup>th</sup>, and now I've got little ones on my right thigh (1), my nose (1), and my back (4). I hate anything like that.

### **N'Changyang. Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain during the night, and until 6 a.m. Then light rain till about 9.30 a.m., after which the day was fine, though cloudy.

Willy pushed off about 11 a.m. after that tiger, with Hpsi Naw and a local guide, and I did frogs all the morning. Then I got down to place names again, till about 3 p.m. I was invited to a communal fishing just below the school. It was real fun this time, much more than at Chatihka, and we collected about 120 lbs of fish all told. [Vol 4, p054] There were some good big ones of about 3½ lbs, and even I

caught quite a few, and several by diving. They didn't use walnut leaves for poison, but a reddish bark from a tree which looks rather like a big mountain ash.

In the morning I sent off one of my followers to Myitkyina with mail and orders for various supplies including tinned beer. Hpsi Naw came back this evening to say that they had found no fresh tiger tracks, but plenty of leopard, and that Willy was sitting up for that. I hope he gets it. If he doesn't I shall go out tomorrow and try my luck.

### **N'Changyang. Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain in the night and until 5.30 a.m. From then till noon frequent moderate showers. The afternoon and evening fine with some sun. A cloudless night. Wind SW, 1-2.

I thought sympathetically of Willy in the machan during last night's rain, and hoped that he had some shelter besides his cycling cape.

In the early morning (about 6 a.m.) I went out with Hpsi Naw into the jungle beyond the right bank of the N'Chang Hka. We had taken due notice of the wind and hunted up the valley, going carefully. All of a sudden the wind dropped completely (there was never very much) and then started to blow in the opposite direction; and immediately a sambhur got up from [[Vol 4, p055](#)] about 20 yards in front of us and dashed away. We didn't get a sight of it. A pity, as we should probably have got it if it hadn't been for the breeze. As it was, since it was obviously useless to go on up the valley, we spent a little time hunting across wind, on the track of a pig, and then came back. Willy was here on our return, having been awake all night and seen nothing; so about 1 p.m. I took a goat, and with Hpsi Naw and one of the locals, set off to sit up myself. There were no fresh tracks of panther on the ridge that we could find, and the only hope was that the goat would make enough noise to attract it. My

conscience pricked me a lot about tying up the wretched creature, which screamed all the way from the camp; but in the event, once it was fastened, it was perfectly calm and lay down chewing the end all night like any old cow, without uttering a bleat. The machan was very small and high up in a tree. Willy had got up to it by swarming the trunk, but that was beyond me, and I had notches cut – even then not finding it too easy. Mosquitoes were very bad indeed, and otherwise there was no sign of life.

### **N'Changyang. Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain from 2 a.m. till 6 a.m.; and light rain from [Vol 4, p056] then till 8 a.m. There were frequent showers for the rest of the day which was uniformly cloudy.

Nothing turned up last night at all, and the goat has been retrieved for good after a courageous performance. I dozed most of the time with my head in a balaclava turned back to front to discourage the mosquitoes; and even when the rain came I was damp but not uncomfortable, my top half being in Willy's invaluable cycling cape. I heard this morning that the panther had moved to the next village, a couple of miles off, where it had killed a dog at midday yesterday. If I'd known that before, I wouldn't have sat up. I shall wait for more news before trying again.

In the evening Willy and I went fishing, but the fish weren't moving and we caught nothing. In fact, the only thing that happened was that he got the hook embedded in his finger, over the barb, while freeing it from a snag. I cut it out later, having first frozen it with ethyl chloride.

A sambhur was shot in thick bamboo forest above the school at 5 p.m., and brought in alive but paralysed, one of the shots having hit its spine. It must have been a good bit of stalking, as the hunter came up with it while it was still lying up. It

didn't arrived here till about 7.30 p.m., so I shan't kill it till the morning, as it doesn't seem to be in pain.

[[Vol 4, p057](#)] Willy cut my hair this evening. A great event, because, since 1933, I have never dared let my companion do such a thing, for fear of being moth-eaten. Actually he made a damn good job of it!

### **N'Changyang. Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain last night until about 6 a.m., the remainder of the day being showery.

I shot the sambhur this morning, and gave the hunter Rs 8/- for it. It then appeared that we were out of alum and saltpetre. I ought to have been told before, and worse than that I ought to have made certain that it wasn't at Sumprabum (where I think it is) before leaving there. The only thing now is to send another man into Myitkyina with a wire to de Songa's for a further stock. Anyway, he can bring out some lemon squash as well.

I spent some time sewing up snakes and frogs, and did a good deal of the place names, and in the evening I tried my luck at fishing. I got a small one ( $\frac{1}{4}$  lb) almost at once, and then lost my only spoon in a big fellow. They seemed to be taking so I hurried back for another spoon, and Willy came out too. However, after that I got nothing at all, though he caught a couple.

### **N'Changyang. Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Rain during the night, and heavy showers most of the [[Vol 4, p058](#)] morning; but the afternoon was pretty fine until 6.30 p.m. when there were showers again.

I was working indoors all day till after tea when I went fishing. Fishing upstream I didn't get anything till about 7. Then, having missed a couple of small ones, I saw that the point had gone and also that my trace was too short. I remedied

this and caught a ¼ pounder, a ½ pounder and one of 1½ pounds in about five minutes.

### **N'Changyang. Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain during the night and until about 4.30 a.m. From 10 a.m. on there were frequent heavy showers. Wind SW 2-3.

About 5.30 a.m. Hpsi Naw and I went down the valley after sambhur. We couldn't ford the N'Chang Hka to get to our usual hunting ground, so we separated and moved down to the left bank. There were some very fresh tracks about and I followed one up. Carelessly, I popped over a bank crowned with a clump of bamboos, and at once a sambhur 'titted' and dashed out of them. 'Tit' is really a very poor name for the call, which is more like a long-drawn 'peek' on a high note. I continued on its tracks, through very thick jungle with lots of leeches and some ticks, partly to see how far it would go, and partly because that was as good a way as any other. It only ran about half a mile, and then waited in the game path in the [Vol 4, p059] shelter of a thicket. I came upon it unawares, it 'titted' again, and was off. Next time I shan't be so careless, but will expect it to stop in a fairly short distance. That 'peek' is the most irritating sound. it always means you've been spotted first! I followed up various tracks after that, but they didn't lead to anything (I think they were all of the same animal wandering around in the night) and all I got were leeches and three powerful stings from Sum Mat Lap. I hadn't a watch with me and the time went fast. It was 11.30 a.m. before I got back. I thought of going out again this evening, but finally decided not to as I want to go back to today's place about 4 a.m. tomorrow, so it's early to bed tonight. No hope of fishing, of course, the river is far too high. I feel we ought to be getting a mail soon, unless the Ningchang Hka's



impassable. I gather the N'baw Hka must be as our coolie hasn't got back yet from Myitkyina.

There's a terrible shortage of snakes here. So far I've only got Natrix pircator, Trimeresurus albolabris and Dendrophes pictus.

### **N'Changyang. Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Very heavy rain during the night, and heavy showers throughout the day until about 4 p.m., when the sky half cleared. Wind SW 2-3.

I had been going out [[Vol 4, p060](#)] early this morning after sambhur, but when Hpsi Naw called me at 3.30 a.m. the rain was coming down in buckets and he said the path was entirely flooded. I reckoned I'd never get over the rice fields at that rate so I didn't get up and slept till 6 a.m. After that failure I didn't go out at all, but spent a large part of the day in sewing snakes in their shrouds. By the mercy of Allah, Willy had a yard or two of the stockinette which made the job easy; but I finished it all by dinner time and will have to go on with the ghastly calico tomorrow.

I sent Htingnan Gawng Hka off to Weshi today to meet our goods from Myitkyina, which ought to get there tomorrow unless the road is very bad. Whether *he'll* get there tomorrow or not is another matter, since our first Myitkyina jane wallah has still not arrived. I feel a bit livery as the result of no exercise.

### **N'Changyang. Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain during the night until about 2 a.m. At 3.30 a.m. light rain began again, increasing to heavy by 5 a.m., and continuing until 9 a.m. The remainder of the day was comparatively fine with a few light showers. Wind SW 2.

I was up at 3.30 a.m. and off, with Hpsi Naw, by 3.45 down to the N'Chang Hka ford. There we separated [[Vol 4, p061](#)] and I moved slowly downstream. At about 5 a.m. I came to a good spot on the bank of the river – a kind of glade with

quite decent visibility for about 30 or 40 yards in two directions, so I decided to stop there for a while. I stood behind a tree and waited. All might have been well, and I could have remained there, if it hadn't been for the sand flies, which were very bad and which concentrated on biting my eyelids. I had just about made up my mind to move on, after five minutes' hell, when a sambhur called from some tall bushes about 30 yards off. I'm not at all sure that it had seen me (and the wind was in my favour) as it wasn't the usual piercing 'peek', but a rather broken one (reminiscent, in a way, of a powerful bleat); and if it hadn't been for the sand flies I would have waited on events. As it was I moved down under cover of a bank to take it in the flank, and was seen as I came over the top. There was no mistake about the 'peek' that time. I assumed it had moved off, though I didn't hear it, and after a short chukker round I came home. I believe there is only one sambhur about here now, and that's the one I've been seeing – a wily bird. I shall have another go at it in a day or two.

In the evening I took out the 12 bore to try for jungle fowl. I saw 3 [[Vol 4, p062](#)] not far from the camp, but didn't get a shot. They flew off, and I thought I'd marked the tree they'd gone into, but when I eventually reached it, after an earnest stalk, I could see no signs of them, and came back in the dark. I think we will leave this place before long. There doesn't seem to be anything here either in the game line or reptile.

### **N'Changyang. Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

Light rain during the night and until 9 a.m. The remainder of the day fairly fine with some sun between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and a few light showers during the afternoon. Wind S2.

Beetles have got into the sambhur skin, in the ears, feet and tail, to such an extent that I have had to scrap it. It was odd that we didn't get them at Pangnamdim. There flies were the only bother, and they were easy enough to deal with.

I spent the morning typing out the list of specimens in Tin No. 5; and in the evening I tried the fishing. The water was too high though and the only amusing thing which happened was when I got caught up in a tree overhanging what is usually a good pool. In pulling to free the hook, naturally the branch shook a good deal. The line was invisible to Mischa who was much [Vol 4, p063] exercised in her mind about the squirrel which must be on that branch. At last she could bear it no longer and swam boldly out. In midstream (just under the branch) she could just keep her position against the current by furious effort; and it was a magnificent sight to see how, every few seconds, she strained her head up and peered fixedly into the leaves. By the time I'd got the hook free she was exhausted, and came ashore again; but, still convinced, she only waited till she was rested, and then repeated the performances. I gave up fishing and was coming home when I saw 4 jungle fowl (a cock and 3 hens) and that decided me to take the gun out instead. It was no good coming back after those because Mischa (who received a beating for disobedience) rushed after them and drove them miles away; so I went to where I had seen them yesterday. I only had 6's, and the first thing I saw, of course, was a barking deer, though I doubt if I could have got it even if I'd been carrying the shotgun. I'm rather slow off the mark, I'm afraid. However, now comes the shameful thing. There were 5 or 6 jungle fowl in a tree just at that spot. All flew off except one which remained on a branch about 10 yards from me – and [Vol 4, p064] I only winged it, and slightly at that! I couldn't find it and went after the others, eventually coming back to where they'd started from. There was another, some 15 yards off, perching on another

branch, and I missed that altogether! This business has filled me with so much gloom that I believe it's hardly worth my going into the jungle at all if I'm as incompetent as all that.

The first man we sent to Myitkyina arrived back today, having been delayed on the return journey by fever. I can't remember whether I told Barnett's, in my wire, to send the things passenger or not, but Singh's point out that if I didn't it is unlikely that the stuff will reach Weshi until the 6<sup>th</sup> or so. I had a conference with Makaw Du this morning about another base. He recommends moving up the east road and trying out Sumka [???] for a week or so, where the people aren't so degenerate and useless as they are here, and where there is generally more game. Will go in about a fortnight.

### **N'Changyang. Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

No rain during the night, and no more than a few light showers in the day. All the same the sky was uniformly covered with heavy stratus and moderate nimbus cloud. Wind SW 1-2.

In the early part of the [Vol 4, p065] morning I did snakes, and then took down the 12 bore completely for cleaning. It took me 4 hours to get it down, clean and oil it, and put it together again, and I could not have done it without some of Willy's tools. All things considered (it has spent a whole year out here) it wasn't too bad. I did the two rifles yesterday, so now they're all in a good state. In the evening I took it out to try for jungle fowl, determined to atone for yesterday. I didn't see any (nor the barking deer, for which I was carrying the shotgun) but I got a Kalij cock and missed an owl. Better than yesterday anyway.

A very tiny macaque with a longish tail was brought in, and I have taken him on to balance Martha. His name is Ichabod (or Ikey, for short), and if he lives he'll be

an ornament to his race. He's so young though, with a most depressed expression, that he may easily die. I sent a man off to Kajihitu today to enquire about our mail.

### **N'Changyang. Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Light rain during the night, and a heavy downpour lasting from 9.45 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. After that there were frequent moderate showers and the day was wholly cloudy. Wind SW 2.

I felt pretty rotten all today, [[Vol 4, p066](#)] with a considerable headache behind my eyes; so I stayed in and wrote a few letters. Anyway it wasn't much of a day to go out. In the evening, about 4 p.m., our mail arrived at last, sent by coolie direct from Sumprabum as there was no pyada going to Kajihitu. It was a good mail, with a letter from Mother, one from Joan, from Erik and Elsa, and my shirts from Rangoon (Watsons). Also the new Bensusan from Mammy for my birthday, and a Reader's Digest. Bless her for both.

### **N'Changyang. Wednesday, July 5<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain during the night, but the day was fine and sunny with a SW wind, force 2-3. About 3/10 covered with light stratocumulus.

Not much news today. I went out in the afternoon to try for a pig, but though I found its tracks of early this morning I didn't see anything else. Ichabod died today, of sunstroke. He had to have a bath, owing to general unsavouriness, and was put in the sun to dry. I'm not particularly grieved, as he was becoming a damn nuisance. One monkey is enough for a house I reckon.

### **N'Changyang. Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Moderate rain during the night and this morning until about 9.30 a.m. After that the day was mainly fine, [[Vol 4, p067](#)] with some intervals of sun and a few light showers.

I went out about 10.45 a.m. with a local hunter (name Nban Ga), up the valley and on to the hills to the south of the N'Chang Hka. We were out from then until shortly before 6 p.m., and saw the tracks of a bear, a pig, several sambhur and 3 or 4 barking deer – but only the tracks. We followed the pig for some hours; but it had been travelling and we couldn't catch up. The next fine day that comes, we are going up on to the top of the ridge on that side to try our luck a bit higher. It's got to be a fine day though, because there were plenty of leeches even where we were today, and they're said to be much worse higher up, where they drop off the trees onto you.

Willy was out fishing this evening and caught 5 or 6 pleasant fish, the largest 1¾ pounds. Htingnan Gawng Hka got back this evening, though without the goods from S.P. Singh. The bridge below Chyinghkran has gone and no carts can get through. I'll be sending him the day after tomorrow with 14 coolies to bring the stuff along – from Myitkyina if necessary. Hashu Ha went down with fever yesterday, and Ah Sin has followed suit today. I am injecting them with Atebrin and will follow with a course of Quino [[Vol 4, p068](#)] plasmoquine.

### **N'Changyang. Friday, July 7<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Rain at night and most of the day.

Little news. I did not go out but got on with one or two odd jobs and sent a man to Myitkyina to bring back more Atebrin and Quino plasmoquine. He took a letter to Erik and Elsa as well.

### **N'Changyang. Saturday, July 8<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Light rain last night and this morning until about 9 a.m. After that the day was fine, though the sky was wholly covered with stratus clouds until 5.30 p.m. After that it rapidly cleared until by 6 p.m. it was 6/10 cloudless. Wind SW 1-2.

I went out after a pair of jungle fowl which were cackling close to the camp this morning; but they were both up in trees and I couldn't get within range. They're wary fowls! I got an owl instead, just so as not to come back empty handed. About 10 a.m. the hunter with whom I went out the other day shot a barking deer doe about a mile south of the camp; and in the afternoon I took out the 12 bore and shuffled off in hopes of a jungle fowl or two. I didn't see any, but I got a langur (♂) in a tall tree with the shotgun. That ruined my evening, as a matter of fact, because it didn't fall and I couldn't get up to get it. In the end [[Vol 4, p069](#)] I had to come back a mile and a half (collecting a parakeet on the wing on the way) to fetch Hpsi Naw. We returned together, and even then had a fearful time with the monkey. After sweating blood lugging an immense bamboo about (the theory being that we could prod it down with that; but it was a good 60' up) we found the weapon too heavy, and Hpsi Naw had to do a brilliant bit of swarming up a thin tree to where he could poke it with a lighter stick. He swarmed about 50'. On the way back I heard what I thought was a horrible croaking in a tree not far from the path. I went after it and it turned out to be a ruddy squirrel, of the commonest sort. They have an amazing variety from sounds, from shrill squeaks, through loud chatterings, to these hoarse croaks.

Htingnan Gawng Hka went off this morning to pick up the stuff from Myitkyina. Both Martha and Mischa are off their food, and have eaten nothing today.

### **N'Changyang. Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No rain during the night. A few showers in the morning between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.; but after that the sky was about 5/10 clear, with light stratus clouds and a SW wind, force 2.

Work on snakes and skins till tea, and after that Willy and I went fishing. I had no luck at [[Vol 4, p070](#)] that (beyond foul-hooking a ½ pounder, which got away) so I

came back early to find one of the locals waiting for me with news that 3 sambhur had been eating his rice for the last 2 nights. So I am going out with him to sit up in the field; and I only hope it's moderately comfortable, and not too wet.

**N'Changyang. Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Very heavy rain between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m., followed by drizzle till 5.30 a.m. The remainder of the day fine, though the sky was entirely covered with heavy stratus and some nimbus cloud. Wind SW 2.

The mournful crop-owner stayed with me in a little shelter he had in his field last night. It was about 3 miles up the valley from our camp. We slept at intervals and watched at intervals from 9 p.m. till 5 a.m. without seeing or hearing a thing except the mosquitoes, which were numerous and ferocious. At 5 a.m. we sallied forth to see if anything had been at work which we had missed, and we were peering at the havoc they had wrought yesterday when all of a sudden there was a sudden 'peep' from the jungle 20 yards away! We didn't see anything; and the sambhur made off into the hills at once. It must have been the heavy rain which put them off [[Vol 4, p071](#)] during the night, and they were coming to feed late. I shall go back tonight and hope for better things.

Hanan Ha is complaining of wind, so I went to find the soda bicarbonate to dose him this afternoon. After an immense search I found it had been used on a sambhur skin by accident in place of the alum and saltpetre! That doubtless explains why the said skin went bad! I think the schoolmaster has dysentery, though I'm not quite sure. Anyway, I'm dosing him with bacteriophage to be on the safe side.

**N'Changyang. Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No rain last night or today. Throughout the day the sky was 6/10 covered with light stratocumulus cloud. Wind SW 2.



I slept in comparative comfort in another small shelter in the field last night; but no sambhur turned up at all, and the whole thing was a washout. This morning, however, one of the coolies sent to Myitkyina turned up, with the alum and saltpetre for the skins, so we are all right as far as that's concerned now. I went out this afternoon about 5 p.m. to the south to try for a barking deer or sambhur (or even a monkey – so low am I reduced!) and had an energetic time of it. There were a good many fairly fresh tracks of both sambhur and gyi, and [Vol 4, p072] after wandering around for a while I sat down (much bitten by mosquitoes) in a favourable spot and waited. I'd been there about ten minutes when the breeze must have swung round a bit – there was very little anyway – for a sambhur suddenly started off about 20 yards behind me, and crashed away in a panic. It can't have seen me, because for one thing I was completely screened on that side, and for another, I wasn't moving. It was just beginning to get dark by then, so I started to come back, but a barking deer began to call hard a quarter of a mile away or so, and I started after it in the pious hope that I could make the grade before it was too dark to see. I did get to within some 30 yards of where it was, but it was pitch black by then and I couldn't move quietly enough. Even if I could have done I couldn't have seen to shoot. As it was, the barking deer heard me and moved off. Then came the problem of getting back. The jungle was very thick, and for a good time I had been moving up a small stream, which wound about all over the place, as being easier going. What with this and the dark, my sense of direction had got a bit mixed. However, I thought I knew more or less which way things lay, and climbed down a very steep slope towards what I thought was [Vol 4, p073] the south, so as to reach, in due course, one of the bigger tributaries of the N'Chang Hka which I could follow right down to our camp. At the bottom of the slope I came to a small stream, and waded along that, not finding it

very much easier than if I had been in the jungle away from it, as it was vilely overgrown, and frequently blocked by fallen bamboos. What was more, the current was very slight (so that I could only tell which way it was flowing now and again, when it ran more swiftly for a foot or two) and time after time I found myself wandering up other streams which joined it. Not being able to see anything at all, and having to follow the bank, this was only too easy. Moving at all was a sweaty business, and I would have stopped where I was and slept in the jungle if it hadn't been that the mosquitoes were so bad. Time went on and I didn't seem to be getting any nearer to the tributary I wanted; and it was only then that I realised I must be going wholly in the wrong direction. At first I could hardly believe this and wondered if I hadn't managed to cross the N'Mai divide during my wanderings after the gyi, but further thought soon corrected that idea, as I hadn't climbed more than 1000' at that time, (if as much), and [[Vol 4, p074](#)] I should have had to have gone at least twice as high to have crossed the divide. So that was all right, and at least I knew that wherever I was heading, as long as I followed down my stream I must eventually reach the N'Chang Hka or one of its tributaries. At last, by a process of elimination, I realised that, far from heading south, I was going almost due north, and would probably reach the main path not far above the camp. In the last hour or so of my odyssey, life was complicated by frequent deep holes in the stream into which I vanished unflinching, generally having some difficulty in getting out again as both the sides and the ends of the holes were steep slippery clay. Eventually I did hit the path about 500 yards above the camp, and got in at a few minutes before 11 p.m., pretty hungry and very wet.

**N'Changyang. Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day with some sun until about 6 p.m. when heavy nimbus clouds came over, with some thunder, and there was very heavy rain until 8 p.m., with light rain from then on.

I stayed in today till the evening when we both went out fishing. I got a half-pounder fairly soon, but then a heavy thunderstorm broke and the fish stopped moving, so I came back. Willy got a couple – one of about 1½ lbs. The goods from Barnett's, including our BEER, came this evening! 4 dozen tins of good liquor.

[Vol 4, p075]

**N'Changyang. Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Rain during the night and some showers today, but on the whole it was fine, if very cloudy.

This morning 'my' hunter came along early to say that some sambhur had been feeding in the rice fields beyond the village last night, so we went along to inspect the terrain preparatory to going out tonight. There were two fields, in one of which he said they were accustomed to feed about 9 p.m., and in the other about midnight. It was only at the latter that they had recently fed (the mud was still in suspension in their tracks), but we felt that that was all the more reason for their turning up to the early one tonight. Having inspected we came back for shotguns and then returned to bag some plovers. We did, in the end, get one each out of 4, but I shot vilely and must have used a dozen cartridges. In the afternoon I sat up in a tree near a fruiting fig for a couple of hours in hopes of a barking deer; but it didn't materialise. At 9 p.m. the hunter and I started out, armed to the teeth, my .256 having been fitted with a torch by Willy just before we went. We stole through the flooded rice fields in the dark (no easy task for me at least) to the early feeding [Vol

[4, p076](#)] place; found nothing there except frogs; and went straight round to the midnight spot. There was nothing there either, and back we crept to wait till twelve. Sharp at the hour we started out again, going straight to the later place, but slowly and very quietly. As soon as we got to the edge of the field, my hunter signed to me that they were there (I could neither see nor hear anything myself), and we switched on the torches. There were two of them, a stag about 30 yards away and a hind perhaps 20. The stag started off at once, so I took a shot; missed (it was very hard to see the back sight), took another, and hit it, I think, though I can't be sure. Then I swung on to the hind and brought it down with a shot in the chest, but too high. It got up again and made for the jungle. I hit it once more, rather far back, and we came up with it some minutes later, when I brought it down for good. We couldn't find the stag's tracks, so we are leaving that for tomorrow morning. We were back by 12.30 a.m., and I'm feeling grand after having got my first sambhur – even though it was a hind and got by pure poaching methods. However, I need specimens, and it was destroying crops, so I feel justified on [[Vol 4, p077](#)] both counts.

### **N'Changyang. Friday, July 14<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No rain during the night, but the morning broke with the sky wholly covered with heavy nimbus clouds, and between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. there was heavy rain. Light rain until 2 p.m., after which no more; and by 4 p.m. the sky was 4/10 clear. Wind SW 2.

At 5.30 a.m. I went out with my hunter to see about last night's sambhur. We found the hind, of course, but there was no trace of blood along the tracks of the stag, which had been going at a good pace, so I think I must have missed him both times after all. However, even one is worth having, and actually the effort of skinning two in one day would have been tremendous.

I stayed in after coming back and worked on snakes mainly. I was terribly sleepy for one thing, and the only exercise I took was an hour's application of alum and saltpetre. Then we went out again at 9 p.m. to the early feeding place, but there was nothing there, so we came home and went to bed.

**N'Changyang. Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No rain either last night or today. The sky about 4/10 clear; the remainder being covered with moderate strato- [Vol 4, p078] cumulus cloud. Wind SW 1.

This afternoon my hunter came along to say that a sambhur was lying up in the forest between the main path and the N'Chang Hka, just above the school. We started off at once and had a most enjoyable stalk for about an hour. We found where it had been lying, but it had started to move about 5 minutes before we got there. We followed hard on its track to where it had come to a stream and taken to the water. We decided it had probably gone downstream, and waded along for 50 yards or so till we saw where it had climbed out. We got on to the bank and were just starting off again when it dashed off not 7 yards from us, but the wrong side of a dense clump of bamboos. Then came the tragedy. My hunter said he knew where it would go, and told me to go down to the river and bear right to near the small "gadawng" in the path, while he followed quietly behind the sambhur to keep it on the move. I'd never heard of "gadawng" and thought he said "gahtawng", so off I went. I got to the riverbank and bore right as directed; and when I was in sight of the "gahtawng" (village) I found a hide built at an obvious ford across the river. There I waited, expecting to see the sambhur cross over at any moment. [Vol 4, p079] After an hour my hunter turned up, full of woe, to ask why I hadn't followed his instructions, because if I had I must have shot the beast. He took me with him (continuing the right-handed detour I'd begun) till we came to the main path; along that, still right-

handed, and there were the tracks of the sambhur wandering down it for 30 or 40 yards with the "gadawng" just beyond. "Gadawng" is "steep", and he meant the sudden dip in the path. Why oh why don't I speak Chingpaw better than I do? I'm very disgruntled this evening; but he was most comforting, saying that I'd know another time anyway, and that the sambhur would probably come back again in a day or two, when we could have another go.

Hkawng Hpung has gone down with fever. Injection Atebrin.

### **N'Changyang. Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> 1939**

No rain during the night, and this morning the sky was 6/10 covered with stratocumulus cloud. At noon nimbus began to come over, and by 1 p.m. the sky was wholly covered. Between 1.30 and 1.45 p.m. there was heavy rain, followed by light rain until 2.30 p.m. The day remained cloudy but it was fine after that. Wind SW 2.

Work on snakes all day, and I did another sketch at last – the first since Pangnamdim. I gave Hkawng [[Vol 4, p080](#)] Hpung his second injection today. The skull of my sambhur has been burnt, woe is me. It must have been tied stupidly close to the fire.

### **N'Changyang. Monday, July 17<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Early this morning I went out with my hunter to try for a pig in the jungle up the tributary to the south. It was entirely my fault, but we didn't start out till 7 a.m., and though we found fresh pig tracks in one place under a fruiting fig, and followed them for some distance, we were too late. There were a number of macaques about on the outward journey; but at that time I didn't want to disturb anything else there might be and didn't shoot. A good many leeches. Tonight he and I went out at midnight to the rice fields towards the river to try for a sambhur. There was nothing doing at all

however, and no fresh tracks. I had been going out early tomorrow, but in view of this late night we won't after all.

### **N'Changyang. Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Work in most of the day. In the afternoon a Kachin turned up to say that sambhur had been eating his rice last night in a field halfway up the ridge to the north, so at 10 p.m. he and I started out. [Vol 4, p081] It never struck me that he might be no hunter, and I gave him a torch so that he could act like 'my' hunter and help to illumine the scene at the right moment. We got to the field, when to my horror he dashed off ahead of me flashing the torch about madly. There was at least one sambhur there, which he saw, but that wasn't much good, as I never caught a glimpse of it, though I heard its decisive toot as it made off into the jungle. Altogether a wasted evening. I shall try again tomorrow night; but he won't have any torch and will have to keep well back.

### **N'Changyang. Wednesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1939**

I pushed off early this evening for the scene of last night's fiasco, and was in position behind a large fallen tree by 8 p.m., with my guide. The wind appeared to be very steady, blowing from us straight down the side of the valley, while the sambhur were due to come out of the jungle immediately opposite; and as I didn't expect them till about 11 p.m. we sat down and dozed. About 10.30 p.m. I suddenly came to, hearing a stick snap close by, and just as I reached for my rifle there came a loud snort and a crash, as the sambhur shot off into the jungle again. I never saw [Vol 4, p082] it, and my guide didn't even hear the damn thing. It couldn't possibly have seen me, and though it might have seen him (as he was a little further out) I think it must have been an eddy of wind which brought our scent to him. We waited till midnight, but nothing else showed up; and then I had a look for its tracks. It was only

about 6 yards away when it took fright. Yesterday I had on my ordinary trousers, but never again for hunting. They make a most fearful noise with every step, and nearly drove me mad.

**N'Changyang. Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> 1939**

This was a really fine hot day. I started off at 6 a.m. with my hunter to go on to the west end of the north ridge to look for a panther. It was an interesting day, if unproductive, because we so nearly got one. We got on the crest of the ridge and very soon walked almost on top of a barking deer which was feeding off some fallen figs. It got away without our seeing it though. Then we came to an old village site where there was a jackfruit tree with ripe fruit (Mungtung Si), so we sat down and demolished one between us. Delicious, but messy eating. Not long after that we found a panther scrape, and, probing around, we discovered the regular Sharaw [[Vol 4, p083](#)] lai ai lam, with lots of scrapes along it, running on the top of a very narrow, steep-sided ridge. We followed that and presently picked on a tree as being a good one to use for a machan; and while my hunter went up it to find a good branch, I went a little further along the ridge by myself. Suddenly, from 10 yards off, there came a crash in the bushes, and barking deer dashed off barking wildly and very jerkily, while the screams of a panther followed it up for some distance. At the time I was standing still behind a big tree, and it wasn't me that started the gyi off. What must have happened was that the panther was stalking the deer, and got very close when it was seen. The tragedy was that if only the barking deer had fled in my direction, I couldn't have failed to have seen the panther (even if I had missed it). We hurriedly built the machan, screened it, and sat up there till 6 p.m. in hopes of seeing the panther come back, but we had no luck and came home, eating another jackfruit on the way. I'm going to tie up a goat tomorrow and hope for the best.



**N'Changyang. Friday, July 21<sup>st</sup> 1939**

Another fine hot day without rain.

A mail came in this morning, consisting chiefly of a grand parcel of [Vol 4, p084] delicacies from Mother, as an extra birthday present. Lobster, anchovies, tunny fish, smoked salmon, two tins of cheesy biscuits, a tin of Chicken à la King, and a tin of barley sugar. Couldn't have been better; and there was a surprise connected with it too, because, on the Customs declaration on the parcel, the anchovies were described (rather flatly) as 'sardines', and the smoked salmon just as 'salmon'. When we opened up and found what they really were our joy was great, bless her.

About 1.30 p.m. my hunter and I and Hpsi Naw and Ah Sin set off with the goat for the machan. We were in position by 3.30 p.m. and Hpsi Naw and Ah Sin fulfilled their sole raison d'etre by making off home with much talk and laughter. Once again the goat failed us. Far from yelling and attracting the panther it lay down and went to sleep; and though we sat in various cramped positions until about 9.30 p.m. nothing turned up. The goat failed on the way back through the dark jungle (mainly, I think, because it couldn't see the path) and we took turns to carry it, like the Good Shepherd. Our beer is a great standby, and I had a tin when I got back. We leave here tomorrow en route for Sumka Uma, where I hope hunting will be better.

[Vol 4, p085]

**N'bawn Ga. Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

A fine and very hot day until about 6 p.m., when there was a heavy thunderstorm, lasting about an hour, followed by light rain. Wind SW 2-3.

We left N'Changyang rather late, owing to shortage of coolies (needing 69), and made a march of 6¾ miles to this village on the side of a ridge. The climb up to

the top of the north ridge was very sweaty indeed (done at midday) but after that 1500' effort the path ran gently up and down for the rest of the way, and was only complicated by mud. Beer at the end of the march was wonderful. The old headman here has very bad double cataract and a weak heart. He wanted me to deal with both, but I couldn't, of course, so I have given him a note to Major Lloyd Still, the doctor at Myitkyina, and money for 4 coolies to carry him, so that he can go down there in the cold weather and see if anything can be done. He's not a bad old man, but talks like a house on fire. We both had to move our beds, owing to the roof leaking this evening.

**Sumka Uma. Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

A fierce day without rain, till 6 p.m., when light rain began to fall. Wind SW 2.

A march of about 8 miles [[Vol 4, p086](#)] without any steep climbs to this bungalow on the crest of a ridge, a couple of hundred feet above the village. Now that we've left the plain round N'Changyang, the houses in the villages are no longer the ramshackle sheds of lower down, but the genuine Kachin article; and even though a good many of them are in a poor state of repair, many others are excellent. A fair amount of tea is grown round these villages, and it is a common sight to see a man taking a swig from a gourd flask. There were a lot of green pigeon about this evening, and I shot three. I also caught what may, I think, be a new Ahaetulla this morning on the road. It's very like A. prasina, but is a uniform yellowish on top instead of bright green, with bright yellow on the ventrals, and only one portocular.

Hpsi Naw thinks he is getting fever; but 9 boxes have not yet arrived from N'bawn Ga, including the medicine chests, so he will have to wait. The stream ahead of us is impassable, they say, for the present. Willy has given me a pair of grand

stockings for my birthday. We haven't yet eaten Mother's dainties because they also are on the road somewhere.

[Vol 4, p087]

### **Sumka Uma. Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Light rain and some mist in the morning; and light rain without mist for most of the rest of the day. Wind SW 2.

I went out early this morning with the headman to see what the jungle was like. The leeches are very bad indeed, but apart from them I only saw a jungle cock, and a bamboo partridge, and some old barking deer tracks. Willy did much better, because he (having only a .22 with him) saw a bear on the other side of the ridge, and heard a barking deer. With all these leeches, hunting isn't going to be any fun at all. Later in the day I shot another couple of green pigeon. The baggage has not yet arrived, but 5 men have gone back from here to help.

### **Sumka Uma. Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A wet miserable day, brightened by the arrival of a mail from Sumprabum. A letter from Mother, one from William, and one from the F&P – the latter to say that it will be all right if we cross from Burma into the Sadiya Frontier Tract, provided full details are sent, and an undertaking not to go into Tibet. Still no word from Pelman of Calcutta, so I shall write and cancel the order, on the grounds that if their system, which is supposed to produce such efficiency in [Vol 4, p088] others, cannot produce more in the very Temple of the Faith, it can't be much good.

I went down where Willy saw the boar yesterday, in the morning, but found no signs of it – though there were a few barking deer tracks about. I started bat shooting this evening, and did badly, with only one out of 6 shots; but that one was one of the variegated ones I got at Pangnamdim, so I'm very pleased. We had my birthday

dinner tonight (the baggage having arrived) of lobster salad hors d'oeuvres – the 'salad' was only sliced onion – soup, Chicken à la King (most excellent), haggis (provided by Willy), and greengages and cream, followed by coffee. Ritz standard!

### **Sumka Uma. Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A filthy wet day. I didn't go out in the morning, but Willy did (again with a .22 only) and walked into a barking deer at 8 yards when the rifle was only loaded with dust shot! All the luck is on his side these days. In the evening I shot a green pigeon (which I couldn't find), and a dove, and missed a dove; and I ought to have got a partridge, but at the critical moment my shoe was sucked off by the mud, and that disconcerted me.

That bloody ape Martha, not content with chewing up [Vol 4, p089] my toothpaste yesterday, ate the tail of the good bat today. Blast her, I gave her a tremendous beating. Shooting at bats this evening I was on form, getting four and winging a fifth out of six shots.

### **Sumka Uma. Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Rain most of the day. In the early morning I went down the north side of the ridge through some old fields into the forest at the bottom, taking a small youth of the village with me, as he said he had seen a couple of sambhur down there on Tuesday, and I wanted him to show me where. We didn't see any sambhur tracks fresher than at least two days; but there were new bear tracks, and we followed them up with great difficulty for about half a mile when they vanished completely.

Makaw Du being down with malaria, we will have to wait till he is better before moving on.

### **Sumka Uma. Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain in the morning, but the rest of the day was fairly fine.

I went out in the jungle again early, by myself, and saw nothing whatever except leeches. I am now wearing zip-fastener dungarees as a protection, with ankle puttees – the dungarees having been given me by Willy, very nobly. They are pretty [Vol 4, p090] effective, but they don't altogether abate the nuisance because the leeches, baffled lower down, climb steadfastly upwards till they get onto one's neck. However, you soon notice them there, and they're not hard to pull off. The real drawback is that the dungarees are so hot to walk about in – at least made in this thick khaki or brown drill. They might be very good indeed if we could find some strong yet thin cloth to have them made in. I wonder how balloon fabric would do. Too airtight, I think. Probably the best would be a coarse hand-spun linen, such as afternoon tea cloths are sometimes made of. That would be close enough to defeat the leeches, and yet let ventilation play; and it should stand up to thorns all right in moderation.

We tried a Kachin delicacy tonight in the shape of bee gumbo, boiled with matured (i.e. decayed) bamboo shoots. Very good indeed. I hope we get some more.

### **Sumka Uma. Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day on the whole, but I didn't go out at all except in the evening, when I took the 12 bore out for pigeons and got a brace. Otherwise no news, except that the Primarflex camera has gone wrong again. I've lost heart now, and will send it back to Sinclairs for good, telling them to sell it and the telephoto lens if they can and credit the money to my account. It's been packed in one of my boxes with clothes ever since [Vol 4, p091] Sumprabum too, so it couldn't have been more carefully treated.

### **Sumka Uma. Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day and very hot with little cloud. Wind SW 1-2.

I went down the north side of the ridge again this morning, and pushed right along for about 3 miles, seeing no fresh tracks of anything at all. However, I found where the bear had been sleeping (in a hollow tree on the bank of a stream) and that was something. I felt desperately tired when I got back (about 11 a.m.) and didn't do very much for the rest of the day beyond writing letters. One of our unfortunate nanny goats has been attacked by what I take to be a kind of botfly, and this afternoon Ah Sin brought her to me for treatment with the whole of the posterior portions of the urethra and vagina eaten away by maggots. I syringed the cavity out with corrosive sublimate to try and kill the maggots, but that didn't do any good. Then I tried Flit, which wasn't much better; and finally, (on the advice of the servants, who said that that was what they used themselves when the cattle were afflicted) paraffin. This was highly successful. Maggots came crawling out right and left, and Ah Sin, with the end of a pair of forceps, was able to extract more than 100, close on ½ inch long. This needed two or three syringings and [[Vol 4, p092](#)] much painful probing; and the treatment was so drastic that the goat (poor devil) more or less passed out for a while. After an hour or two it recovered though and was able to walk off and even to eat some grass. I hope we've got them all out, but I have my doubts. The original cavity, exclusive of tunnels, was almost big enough to get an egg into.

**Sumka Uma. Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day with no rain and little cloud. Wind SW 2.

Early this morning I went out down the south side of the ridge, and was away for 6 hours. There were some fairly fresh bear tracks, and fresh tracks of sambhur and barking deer; but the nearest approach I had to anything was when a sambhur was set off by a covey of partridges which I put up. The sambhur was over the crest of a ridge and couldn't have seen me; but as, even if it had stayed put, I equally

could not have seen it, and as there were no tracks on my side of the ridge, it didn't make much difference. I should have missed it anyway. It didn't 'peep' when alarmed, but stamped its feet hard several times before dashing away. I got back to find that a grand Draco had been brought in – nearly 13 inches long. It's [[Vol 4, p093](#)] not unlike blanfordii in general appearance; but the throat is spotted, and on the wings there are 3 concentric deep tomato-red bars. I'm hoping it's a new one.

One of the typical events of our camp these days is a sudden turmoil in the bungalow followed by Martha, the ape, scampering madly into the jungle; with Willy (red and furious), myself, and half the servants in hot pursuit. After 5 to 20 minutes' crashing around in the undergrowth, the procession re-emerges, more slowly, headed by Willy with the captured Martha; and all of us more or less stung by nettles and pricked by thorns. This because of Martha's frequent misdemeanours, for which she has to be smacked – criminal acts such as persistently stealing our bananas or figs.

Tonight I went down to the fields with the headman to try for the bear which has been eating his maize. We got there about 11 p.m. and I went down near to where it normally comes out of the jungle and waited till 12.30 a.m., hideously bitten by mosquitoes and sand flies. It didn't turn up. It was a clear moonlit night (full moon or thereabouts) and perhaps there was too much light. I shot 3 green pigeon and a dove this evening – one of the pigeons with a rather nice shot as it was going high overhead.

[[Vol 4, p094](#)]

### **Sumka Uma. Tuesday, August 1<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A light shower lasting about an hour at midday, but apart from that today was very fine and sunny. Wind SW 1-2.

I didn't go out into the jungle this morning, and was rather weary after last night. Willy did, but saw nothing. I worked indoors most of the time, and went out with the 12 bore in the evening, getting 4 green pigeon. It was a bad show though, because I wounded a partridge (I think very slightly), and 2 other pigeons, none of which we could find.

Mahkaw Tu went off today to collect coolies, and all being well we leave here on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Tonight Willy and I went down to the field to try for that bear again. He sat where I was last night, and I waited about 150 yards to his left, but nothing turned up, and at half past twelve we came back.

### **Sumka Uma. Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day with no rain. I was very sleepy today, with that hot feeling behind my eyes, and I failed completely with pigeons. I couldn't see straight apparently and missed six sitters. Very depressing. I've got several good bronze axes lately round here, and today a [[Vol 4, p095](#)] fine Draco was brought in, which I think is new.

### **Sumka Uma. Thursday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day, after a heavy (though short) shower last night with a high wind.

We didn't get away today after all, but were able to send 12 loads off in advance; and we start ourselves in the morning, without fail. I had a good sleep last night, but still I couldn't hit the birds and there must be something fundamentally wrong with my shooting now. All I succeeded in doing was to wound three which is worse than useless; and I'm getting a bit gloomy. I got a big bat this evening though, and that has cheered me a bit; and another of those Dracos was brought in, with a fine bronze axe.



**Dinghputyang. Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day, though cloudy, and with little sun. Wind SW 2.

A march of 6½ miles over the main mule-track. The path drops fairly steadily from Sumka Uma for about 1000' to the Chingma Hka, which it reaches at 3½ miles, then turning up the left bank for a further ½ mile to the ferry of 2 bamboo rafts, very well-built. The river is about 30 yards wide at this time, 4' or 5' deep and with a fairly strong current. There is then a moderate climb of 2½ miles to this camp, [Vol 4, p096] close to the village, and perhaps a couple of hundred feet lower than Sumka Uma. The jungle round here seems to be very thick indeed, and I don't think it's going to be much good for hunting. I went out this evening to try for green pigeon too. There aren't many. I saw three or four, and had a shot at one which I missed. I shot about a foot to the right, and that looks as if I'm pulling, so it may be that I have found out what's wrong with me.

This is a good little camp in a flat cleared space on the top of a ridge; but I have said we will leave here on the 6<sup>th</sup>, as I don't think we're going to get much out of the place. 8 houses here: 6 Maru and 2 Kachin.

**Dinghputyang. Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some heavy rain last night, and throughout the day there were light showers.

I spent most of the time writing letters. Willy went down to the Chingma Hka, with a ghillie, and came back with an 8½ lb redfish, and one of about 1 lb. In the afternoon I went out after pigeon, getting one. What was much more important was that Hpsi Naw pointed out Captain West's grave. I had promised Leyden to clean it up, and had forgotten all about it. It needed it too, being very much overgrown. It's just below the village, a simple little grave, fenced round with wood and bamboo, and [Vol 4, p097] with a short wooden cross at the head. I had it thoroughly cleaned up

this evening. West was shot in an ambush a few miles away, on the South Triangle column. We leave here tomorrow.

### **Hkandau. Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day, with no rain. Wind SW 2. There were some light stratus clouds during the day, but tonight was cloudless.

A march of 6 miles, with some fairly steep bits up and down, to this good camp on a ridge close to the village. It was pretty hot on the march, and I wrung about half a cupful of sweat out of my shirt at the finish. They say there isn't much game in the jungle (which is thick) until the cold weather, when pig and sambhur turn up; but I heard a gyi barking on the way in, and found some fresh tracks this afternoon further along the ridge. I shot a couple of pigeons this evening, feeding in a fig tree. A good snake was brought in too. I don't know what it is at all, so I'm full of hope that it may be worth having. We are not stopping here. Eight houses here, all Kachin.

### **Sumhpang Mada. Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day until the evening, when there were some light showers. Wind SW 2.

A march of 5¼ miles over a good mule-track. The path starts off running up and down, and [[Vol 4, p098](#)] then drops moderately steeply to the Htiyi Hka, a river about 20 yards wide by 3 feet deep, reaching the left bank after 2¼ miles. It runs down this bank for a further ¼ mile to a ford, a few yards above which a raft had been built to take us and the baggage over. The raft was not poled but was manhandled across by six or seven coolies all wading. From 2½ miles to 3 miles the path climbs very gradually, from 3 to 4¼ miles pretty steeply; and for the remainder of the way quite easily, to this good camping ground on the top of a ridge close to the

village of about 20 houses, all Kachin. It was devilish hot coming up the hill (a climb of about 1800 feet) and I sweated gallons. I started off too fast, for one thing. The bungalow here is uninhabitable owing to a plague of caterpillars, or something, which has eaten away all the roof till it looks about as flimsy as lace, so we are installed in one of the servants' quarters, which isn't very much weatherproof. All depends on whether we have a packet of rain or not.

A barking deer started calling about 1 p.m. quite close to the camp, so I went out after it at once. I got within about 10 yards when it either heard or saw me (I didn't see it) and stamped like a sambhur before moving off. I continued to scour the forest until 4 p.m., finding a good many [[Vol 4, p099](#)] fresh gyi tracks (probably all the same beast) and one of a sambhur hind; but not seeing anything to shoot at. This would be a good jungle to hunt in the cold weather, as there's a watering place quite close, but in the rains the deer get enough moisture from the grass and leaves and don't seem to drink from streams at all, which makes hunting more difficult. The most amazing thing is that I only got one leech, and I'm hoping that we are in a more or less leech-free district now.

In the evening a 3-foot cobra was brought in in a bamboo, and we had some excitement trying to get it out. It wasn't at all pleased, and hissed so furiously that it could be clearly heard 12 yards away. In the end, Willy suggested that I try to poison it in the bamboo. I got the faintest touch of nicotine on to its tongue, and it died in about a minute, to my great surprise. I'm very pleased about it. It's the first cobra I've got.

Sand flies very bad here.

**Mahtum. Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine morning, though without much sun. In the afternoon moderate nimbus clouds came over on a SW wind, force 3, and there were frequent showers.

A march of 4½ miles with no steep climb to this excellent camp on the top of a broad ridge by the village. The bungalow is the best we have met since Kajihutu, and the roof is first [[Vol 4, p0100](#)] class. There is a superb view to the north and west over a deep valley and several ridges, and I feel very cheerful.

Mischa was delivered of twins at midday (both bitches) choosing for her confinement the fireplace in the bungalow. I attended as midwife, but I didn't have to do much beyond open the caul, which was rather tough. She is a devoted mother and hates to leave her offspring even to have her meals.

I hope there's some game round here, because the jungle doesn't look too bad, and if there aren't any more leeches than there were at Sumhpang Mada it will be good fun.

**Mahtum. Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day, with some sun, though the sky was covered most of the time with moderate stratus cloud, 8/10. Wind SW 2-3.

Makan Tu is leaving us tomorrow to go on leave for 4 months, and I spent all morning writing to Mother so that he can take the letter with the rest of our mail to Myitkyina. In the afternoon, about 2.30, I went with the local Duwa about 2000 feet down the hill to the north-west to investigate news of bison there. They certainly are there, including one big bull, but the stuff they're in is simply fearful. Mainly tall reed-like grass, about 5' high and very thick, with plenty of old sticks and things on the ground [[Vol 4, p101](#)] to make a good crackle as you move. I don't think the place is really huntable, but I shall certainly try once or twice more, in hopes of a fluke. There

are leeches there, but not very bad. I only got bitten 42 times, and I was down in all that muck from about 3 p.m. till 6.30 or so. I'm rather weary, because it was heavy going all the time. I gather that the Duwa who came with me is under a charge of manslaughter! Seventeen days ago he went out in the early morning with his Kachin gun to shoot pigeons, going to the next village, some 2 miles up the ridge. On the way he saw a barking deer (he says) and changed the shot in his gun for ball, in case he should see it again. Well, on the very edge of the village, and not more than 10 yards from the path, is a big fruiting tree. The Duwa approached this cautiously to have a crack at any bird there might be, when he suddenly caught sight of what he took to be a bear in the branches – though what a bear would be doing at that time of the morning, almost inside the village, is a bit of a mystery. He let fly, and down tumbled one of the villagers, stone dead! He also had been out after pigeon, and was rooting with his gun in the tree to make certain of things. The Duwa has paid [Vol 4, p102] a buffalo, a pig and God knows how many fowls to placate the Nats; and is being taken off with Makaw Tu tomorrow to interview La Doi who is now at Tara Hka.

Mischa is doing well with her daughters.

### **Mahtum. Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A foul day, with constant rain (very heavy from 12.45 p.m. till 2 p.m.) much mist and continual thick nimbus. Wind SW 2-3.

I was in most of today, finishing off letters in the morning for the mail, and doing odd jobs for the rest of the day. We have had to kill the wretched goat that was assailed by maggots. It had gone very septic inside and wasn't getting any better, and it was so thin that there was practically no flesh on it at all.

About 6 p.m. Ah Sin saw a barking deer hind not 200 yards from the camp. Unfortunately, it saw him too, and though I searched for it for an hour with him we didn't see it. Judging from what tracks we found (and there weren't many) it had made off down the hill.

**Mahtum. Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Another depressing day, with mist, low nimbus, and light rain until 5 p.m. Wind SW 2.

I made rather a good sketch of a Calotes in the morning, and spent the rest of the day writing to Tubby.

A terrible tragedy has [[Vol 4, p103](#)] occurred. All my negatives were in one of my watertight boxes; but continually opening it to get things out, damp must have got in because they're all inclined to stick to their envelopes, and some of them are mouldy. Furthermore, unless we get a fine hot day, I don't see how I can dry them out, and I'm very much afraid most of them will be ruined. This is the second biggest blow of the trip. Willy thinks if I had used a hardener they might have been better (acetic acid and alum). I've got the acid, but no alum. I must send for some to use on any others.

I wandered a short way into the jungle this evening in case yesterday's barking deer had come back, but I didn't see anything. I shan't go after the bison till we get a good fine day.

**Mahtum. Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A foul day, with mist, low nimbus and almost continual rain.

I didn't go out at all until the evening, when I wandered down the hill to look out for a barking deer or something. I didn't see anything though. The rest of the day I spent mainly in writing letters. We dried out my films in the flower-drying box, with

the lamp turned to its lowest, and they're so infinitely better that most of them may be all right in the end. I won't be able to deal with them properly, though, till we get a fine [[Vol 4, p104](#)] day.

### **Mahtum. Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day until 3 p.m., when heavy nimbus came over on a SW wind, force 2-3, and there was a severe rainstorm lasting 1½ hours. After that the day was drizzly and gloomy.

I went out earlyish this morning with Hpsi Naw to have a look at the spot where West was ambushed (in 1927?). I had an idea – in fact, we both had – that it was only a couple of miles off, but it turned out to be a good 5, so we have had our exercise. We would never have found it if we had not been joined by a Kachin working in a big communal field close to the spot. It was a grand spot for an ambush, with a thickly overgrown gully running just beside the path, and if the man was right about the tree from behind which the actual shot was fired, it wasn't more than 3 yards from the path. There wasn't much chance of a miss. Pig had been raiding that field at night; but it's too far to go out for a night show I feel. On the way back I heard a very faint rustle in the grass by the side of the path. I took it for a bird, and wandered on without caring; but almost at once an old barking deer called and made off up the hill. I went after him but there wasn't much hope. [[Vol 4, p105](#)] The place was all thick grass, and I didn't see anything.

We've taken to Chinlon again, the servants and I. No skill but much keenness.

### **Mahtum. Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Not a bad day. The morning and afternoon were fine, though very cloudy; and there was no rain until 7 p.m., after which it has been pretty steady with much thunder and lightning.

We were joined yesterday by another pyada to take Makaw Tu's place. Hpung Male his name is, and I know him from of old. He's not a bad chap at all, though at the moment he's got fever. So has Hanan Ha, and they're both being dosed with Atebrin.

Htingnan Gawng Hka arrived back from Kajihitu this morning, with two tents; and a mail came at the same time. Two letters from Mother, and four books from her, so it's been a great day. I don't know what the devil Sayer thinks he's doing though. I wrote to him in Sumka Uma and sent the note off on July 26<sup>th</sup>, asking him to push along my cartridges. There's not even an answer yet, let alone the ammunition.

In the afternoon I was persuaded to go out with a couple of boys who reported fresh sambhur tracks. The tracks were there all right, but in impossible jungle, so there was nothing doing. However, we wandered on to a ridge where there were a lot of fairly fresh barking deer tracks, and where the jungle [[Vol 4, p106](#)] wasn't too bad. I prospected along that for a couple of hours, and I even think I might have seen something; still-hunting, but for the boys. They made an immense amount of noise on the move, and couldn't sit still when I was waiting. I shall go out again to the same place by myself sometime.

### **Mahtum. Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy showers throughout the day. Low nimbus, and wind SW 2.

I spent the morning getting on with Tibetan place names, and have now only Y and Z to finish, thank God. In the afternoon I pushed off to yesterday's place, and still-hunted the top of the ridge pretty thoroughly, but there was nothing moving. We had the heaviest rain of the day while I was out, and by the time I came back I couldn't have been wetter if I'd had a bathe. Incidentally, I lost my way on the return journey, and spent a considerable time ploughing about in the dense jungle and



swamp before I struck a track made by the village buffaloes and could follow that to the path.

My chair was under the Primus lamp this evening, and, getting up to show Willy something, I knocked it down with my head. The glass was smashed, of course, and the mantle, but otherwise the damage was negligible. They're very strongly built.

[[Vol 4, p107](#)]

### **Mahtum. Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A wet and filthy day with mist, low nimbus, and rain almost the entire time. Wind SW 1-2.

I didn't go out at all today, but worked indoors, on one thing and another. I've begun doctoring again, dosing an abscess in a woman's foot, and treating a bad case of scabies in an old man.

### **Mahtum. Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain in the morning, but the afternoon was very fine until about 6 p.m. when there was a heavy thunderstorm. It is raining fairly heavily tonight.

I got on with some work in the morning, and went after the bison again in the afternoon. I found fresh tracks of a moderate bull and followed them down the side of the valley for some way until they came to a point criss-crossed with mainly other bison tracks of varying ages. I lost them there, and did some fruitless still-hunting instead. I found the old tracks of the big bull though, and saw where he'd been amusing himself with a couple of trees. He'd ripped one up with a horn for a distance of about 2', and 2" deep, and had used the other to rub himself against. The rubbing marks were a good 5' high. Apart from birds, I didn't see anything living. There were fresh bear tracks though.

[[Vol 4, p108](#)]

**Mahtum. Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day on the whole, with some light showers, till 7 p.m. when a heavy thunderstorm broke. Since then rain has continued.

Doctoring this morning. At noon I started off with a couple of hunters to try for the bison again, and I came back more or less exhausted. We didn't do more than about 12 miles altogether, but it was all through long heavy grass and up and down steep slopes. I've frequently walked 20 miles over an ordinary mountain path without feeling anything like so weary. We found the tracks of a bull (made yesterday sometime, we thought) quite early on, and followed them up for ages in the hope of running into him sometime. We didn't see a thing though, and it was an altogether blank day except for the exercise and the leeches. There were a good few of them, but I didn't get bitten more than 10 or 12 times. Hunting isn't easy at this time of year, and I haven't seen any game now since N'Changyang.

Hashu Ha left us yesterday. No trouble from our end; but apparently all was not well in his village and he wanted to go back and see to it. He says he will come back if we want him when we return to Sumprabum. He took off quite a mail with him, mostly for the B.M.

Htingnan Gawng Hka is doing [[Vol 4, p109](#)] his work. I'm getting very few snakes or lizards here which is a disappointment.

**Mahtum. Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Rain throughout the day. I didn't go out at all, but worked indoors, and cursed the stiffness which is on me from yesterday. I thought I was so fit that anything of the sort was a thing of the past, and it is a shock to find I was wrong.

**Mahtum. Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day with no rain until 7 p.m. when there was a light shower lasting five minutes. There was a thunderstorm which moved all round us during the afternoon.

I went out at 8 a.m. with my Friday's hunter (a very good one, called Nban Naw, the son of the headman of Nban Ga) to a place about 6 miles west of here, where he had been told there were bison and serow. It was desperately hot, and though I had meant to spend the whole day out, when we found no new tracks (except of bear) I beat the retreat and we got back at 1 p.m., simply dripping. Some work on snakes after that.

In the evening a pyada turned up on his way from Sumprabum to N'Changyang, with a coolie bringing our mail. A most miserable mail too. The Pembroke Magazine, the K.H. newsletter, a note from Bhudiman Rai to say that our house had been broken into again (though nothing, [[Vol 4, p110](#)] he thought, had been stolen), and a letter from La Doi thanking me for the air rifle and saying that he had sent a youth called Kaiji Gawng to me as an expert snake catcher. I don't quite know what to do about Kaiji Gawng, but I think I shall take him on on the understanding that I don't fix his wages until after he's been with me some time. I can work them out more or less by the current value of the reptiles he brings in, if any.

**Mahtum. Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day with no rain. Wind SW 2. Almost cloudless.

This morning Sing Nan Ha (yesterday's mail coolie) asked if he could be engaged as permanent postman, to go backwards and forwards between our camp (wherever it might be) and Sumprabum. It's quite a good idea, so I've fixed it up,

much to his joy. He's a good man, tall and nice-looking, from the Upper Hukawng Valley.

I've been doing doctoring (sores and abscesses mainly) for some days past; and after that was over this morning I went out down into the valley beyond Mairon (Mairawu?) with a comic little man called Maran Yam, who is quite a good hunter. That was at 10.30 a.m. He said there was a sambhur lying up there on the other side of the valley. Down by the Mahtum Hka we almost walked into a biggish hamadryad (about [Vol 4, p111] 12 feet) but it made off at once, and I didn't get a chance to capture it. We came on the fresh tracks of 2 sambhur (a stag, and a hind) and a fawn, and we worked out exactly where the stag was lying up; but we couldn't do any more about it, as it was in very thick cover which we couldn't get into without waking the whole place. Then we followed the hind for an hour or so; but we didn't get much forrarder. It had gone round and round all over the place, and finally we gave up. There were fresh bear tracks, and on the way back we saw two bears' "nests" in trees, though they were unoccupied. Each was a little platform of sticks some 2' in diameter or a little more, and 20' or so off the ground. We got back about 4.30 p.m.

Willy is sick of hanging around here he says, so I suggested that he go to Tara Hka tomorrow and spend a few days there. If this weather holds, the fishing ought to be quite good; and in any case it will be a change for him. The thought of going as soon as tomorrow seemed to take him aback, but in the end he decided on it, and will have Hpsi Naw and Hanan Han with him.

### **Mahtum. Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day, practically cloudless and with little or no wind.

Willy pushed off this morning for Tara Hka, [Vol 4, p112] and I began a long overdue letter to Aunt Joan. I had a large and early tea to fortify myself, because I

am off at 4.30 p.m. to go down to a salt lick close to the Chingma Hka, about 10 miles from here. Nban Naw is conducting me, and we will spend the night there in hopes of sambhur or bison, both of which are said to frequent the place.

**Mahtum. Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

Very heavy nimbus clouds all round this morning, with almost continual thunder, but apart from a light shower of half an hour's duration about 9 a.m., we had no rain by the Chingma Hka; and there was not even that at Mahtum. About midday the sky was nearly cloudless, and has remained so since.

It's a good 10½ miles, and a drop of 3000' to the salt lick, which isn't really a 'lick' at all, nor 'salt' either, for that matter, but a mineral spring, slightly effervescent, with a taste like Vichy water. There was a well-built hide close by, and that was a relief to me, as the surrounding jungle was swarming with leeches; but it had one drawback, which was that it was only 5' square, and with two of us in it, I found it a bit cramped. We got there just after dark. We heard at least three sambhur moving in the [[Vol 4, p113](#)] thick jungle close by, but nothing came to the spring; and at last (we were watching alternately) it was my turn to sleep. The next thing I knew it was 12.30 a.m. and torches were approaching through the forest. It turned out to be the headman of the nearest village and two retainers, full of apologies for not having been on hand to greet me the previous evening when I passed through. It was a damn nuisance his turning up then, as it effectively ruined all hope of any game that night, but the damage was done and there was no point in berating him. He took Nban Naw's place, saying that he could give me a hunt in the morning, and Nban Naw and the two retainers went off to spend the night in a hut in the fields a couple of miles away. I slept, in a cramped sort of way, till 5.30 a.m. after that, and then we moved out into the jungle together. One great thing about that spring was that there

were no sand flies or mosquitoes to make the night a misery. The jungle was pretty thick, and though it wasn't hard to get through it was very difficult to see more than 10 yards or so at a time; and though we put up a barking deer early on, and I caught a flash of chestnut as it went, I didn't get a shot. A little later we started a sambhur too, but I didn't even [Vol 4, p114] see that at all. About 9 a.m. we went along by the Chingma Hka to the field where Nban Naw had slept, and there we sat while a meal was prepared. I shared it, and it was remarkably good, though we had to wait some time for it, as cooking didn't begin till we arrived. Rice, of course, was the mainstay, but apart from that there were baked roots (Nai Kadawng) rather like yams but thinner and smaller, and coming from a plant about 10 or 12 feet high, large roasted nuts (Kahpai Si) full of oil; chopped sambhur meat (killed the day before) cooked in very little water with chillies, garlic, and sour herbs; and a soup made of sambhur meat, chillies, garlic and brinjals. All excellent. At 11 a.m. we started the weary climb home through the heat of the day. After 2000' or so we were all but dead, so we stopped and all had a bath under a stream of water flowing from a bamboo tunnel. It did us a lot of good. Then, arrived at the village a little further on, we rested for an hour in the headman's house, and drank Kachin tea (green) which is bitter but very good. The head of the sambhur was presented to me, smelling to high heaven, and I can't imagine how it was that the meat we ate earlier on seemed all right. We finally got back about 3.30 p.m. I am going down again the day after tomorrow, in hopes of better things.

[Vol 4, p115]

**Mahtum. Thursday, August 24<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day with no rain and little cloud.

Work on snakes and things in the morning. In the afternoon (about 2 p.m.) I started off with Nban Naw to try for those bison again. We went about 4 miles down the path before striking off into the long grass; and we ploughed through that until about 6 p.m. without finding any new tracks, gradually making our way up the valley, and hoping to be able to climb directly up to Mahtum. We had given up any idea of more hunting for the day when suddenly we came on a fresh track, and the flattened grass where a bison had lain this very afternoon. That revived our spirits, and I decided, late though it was, to follow the track in case they weren't far off. We went about half a mile and were suddenly assailed by a host of cattle flies, biting like the devil. I was just pondering whether that meant that the bison were at hand, when we heard a crackling of twigs and swishing of grass close at hand, and knew that they were feeding. I told Nban Naw, who had nothing more lethal than a knife, to stop behind, while I crept on down the track, tense with anxiety in case they should hear me. The wind was good, and I had no fears on that score. With that long 5' grass I couldn't see a single animal; but I could [Vol 4, p116] make out where some of them were at least by the waving grass and bushes being pulled about. I stole on till I was not more than 10 yards away from three of them, with a fourth about 25 yards off down the hill, and there I waited, hideously tormented by the cattle flies, for a sight of the bull. I waited 20 minutes, being several times on the point of raising my rifle as a beast seemed about to show itself, and then suddenly there was a stampede from above me, and I counted eight backs galloping in single file down the hill. What had happened was that Nban Naw, depressed at being left out of the fun, had climbed a tree to see as much as he could, choosing, for the same reason, one which was nearly leafless. He roosted in that like some fearful ape, and of course was spotted in the end by a bison. I had my rifle up as soon as the stampede started, but there

was nothing to shoot at in the occasional flash of a back above the grass; and I had more or less given up hope when the last bison of all stopped 30 yards from me and looked back, I imagine to see what the fuss was about. It was either a cow or a young bull (I could only see its head) but whatever it was, and the big bull having presumably led the route, I wasn't letting it go. It gave me about two seconds. I aimed at the eye (the head was  $\frac{3}{4}$  on) [[Vol 4, p117](#)] and let fly. It fell and remained down, kicking a good deal, for a minute or so, and breathing very heavily. Then it got up and stood (though out of sight) still breathing hard. I waited a quarter of an hour or so, and then began to creep down towards it, when it dashed twenty yards further down the hill and stood again. I couldn't move quietly in that long grass, and, as I could never see more than 5 yards or so (apart from that lucky spot I was in when the stampede took place) I felt that the odds were too heavy on the bison getting in first if I went on – especially as the light was going – so we left it till the morning and started back. It was a long and sweaty climb up, cutting nearly all the way, and it was dark long before we arrived. In fact, we didn't get back till nearly 8.30 p.m., but we were helped a lot by the half-moon. I'm terribly pleased, even if it is only a cow, more especially as there aren't any game laws here.

### **Mahtum. Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some moderate showers between 8 a.m. and noon, and the morning was cloudy on the whole. After noon the sky cleared, and the remainder of the day was nearly cloudless.

We started off at 8 a.m. with a whole train of the local men and boys and made our way down to where the [[Vol 4, p118](#)] bison was. Then Nban Naw (who insisted on coming) and I left the others and went down to finish it off. It was easy to find where I had shot it. It had kicked up the ground a lot and there was a good deal



of blood, but not so easy to tell where it had got to after that, as there was no more blood and the ground was criss-crossed with their tracks made in feeding. I didn't want to go thundering about with no visibility, just asking for a charge, so I sent Nban Naw up a tree. It was standing under a tree 20 yards off, giving a sideways view of its head and no more. I waited, and presently it looked round, when I shot it in the middle of the forehead. It fell with a crash and rolled 15 yards down the slope, dead as a doornail. My first shot had hit it 2" below the right eye, and had been deflected and travelled through the bone to the cavity of the ear where we found it. The bison was probably deafened and suffering from very severe concussion. It was a big cow, so my worst fears were realised! The hill was too steep to skin it on, so the coolies were mobilised and built a large platform onto which we rolled it, measured it and skinned it. Then we cut it up for transport. The skin, skull and [Vol 4, p119] meat took 22 men and 4 boys to carry. The skull was a load for 2 men and the wet skin weighed more than 120 lbs, though 2 men managed to bring it along, arriving 2½ hours after the rest in camp. I gave Nban Naw Rs 10/- as a reward and a haunch. He was so thrilled that he will never be satisfied until he has got me another. But the next must be the bull! I gave almost all the meat away, keeping a little for the camp and sending 6 or 8 pounds down to Willy at Tara Hka.

The potatoes arrived from Sumprabum this morning, and with them a mail and a note from him to say that fishing was fair. He also sent a snake.

### **Mahtum. Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot day, with little cloud and less wind.

Work indoors in the morning, and also largely on the bison skin, removing yesterday's alum and saltpetre and putting on new. If only we have a few days' fine weather it will dry out well, but it's taken all the powder I had and I am sending a man

into Myitkyina tomorrow with a wire to de Souza's for more. I am leaving here at 3 p.m. with Nban Naw to go down to the salt lick again.

**Mahtum. Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy thunderstorm last night from about 11 p.m. on till [Vol 4, p120] about 2 a.m.; and then till 9 a.m. frequent showers. After noon the sky cleared and by 2 p.m. was 4/10 covered with stratocumulus. Wind SW 2-3.

Nban Naw and I went straight down to Ngawn Ga yesterday afternoon, and drank tea in the headman's house while he smoked a dozen pellets of opium to hearten him. Then we pushed on down into the valley, the three of us, Nban Naw presently leaving us at a fork, as he was to sleep in one of the fields. The headman and I spent the night by the salt lick, and heard a barking der and three or four sambhur quite close, but the rain came on then and that prevented anything from coming to the spring. In the morning we hunted from 7 a.m. till 10.30 a.m. but saw nothing, and eventually we re-joined Nban Naw in the hut in the field to have breakfast. Another good little meal, like the last, and after it both Chingpaws smoked opium for a while. The opium was home-grown in their villages, and carried in cloth. That is to say ordinary homespun cotton cloth had been soaked in the opium till it was the consistency of canvas, and then dried. A piece of this cloth was cut off and boiled with a little water for a few minutes in a roughly-made copper spoon (kept very clean on the inside) till the liquid was quite black. It was then taken off the fire and the cloth [Vol 4, p121] carefully squeezed dry, after which the liquid was poured into a small bamboo cup. The cloth was then reboiled with a little more water; wrung out again and put to dry (for the sake of the little opium which probably still remained in it); and the liquid from the cup was added to the second brew in the spoon and boiled down till it looked like black treacle, when it was set on one side. A piece of

banana leaf was finely shredded and dried on an iron plate by the fire, till it was like tobacco; and this was then rolled and kneaded into the opium till the mass was slightly sticky and nearly solid. Bits were pulled off and rolled to the size of a large pea for smoking. The pipes were mainly of bamboo, like this:

[See [sketch 8](#)]

Each pellet was lit with a piece of charcoal and burnt for about 20 seconds, while the smokers drew the fumes deeply in. When the pellet was burnt out, they breathed back into the pipe, and the cinder was blown out of the top to make room for the next pellet. They smoked about a dozen each.

On the way back we had another refreshing dip under the water; had more tea in Ngawn Ga, and so home. [[Vol 4, p122](#)] I had been very nervous as to how the bison skin had been doing in last night's rain, but all was well. For one thing there had been practically no rain at Mahtum, and, for another, Hkawng Hpung had managed to get it under the high porch of one of the village houses – the only place big enough for it – so that it was drying well. A youth guards it by day from flies and dogs; and Kaiji Gawng sleeps by it at night to keep off dogs and cattle.

### **Mahtum. Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day without rain, though the morning was cloudy.

Willy came back today from Tara Hka. He had only caught 2 fish (one of 4 lbs and one of  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb) both on the day before he wrote to me, but he seems to have enjoyed himself all the same. Not much news otherwise. I did some bat shooting in the evening, and wrote some letters.

### **Mahtum. Tuesday, August 29<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain in the morning, but the afternoon was mainly fine.

Work in camp all day, at one thing and another. Bat shooting in the evening.

Otherwise no news.

### **Mahtum. Wednesday, August 30<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Some rain in the morning, but the afternoon was fine and hot.

Fate has struck me a heavy blow. The neck of the bison is going bad, and the ears, although it is all right every- [Vol 4, p123] where else. It's this infernal damp. If I'd only got it in the cold weather it would all have dried perfectly, but as it is I think I shall have to scrap the head and neck altogether. And the big porcupine skin has got fly maggots into it. I may be able to save that though I think. Anyway, as though in compensation, I saw Bill's name twice in the London Gazette as Captain. I didn't know he'd got his promotion and I'm most awfully braced. The Army's looking up!

### **Mahtum. Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine morning though cloudy. Rain began at 1.30 p.m. and continued on and off for the rest of the day.

Work indoors, sewing snakes largely. I haven't given up hope for the bison skin yet. It may improve to some extent, and be worth sending entire.

### **Mahtum. Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup> 1939**

A fine morning, though cloudy. Rain from 1.30 p.m. on, in showers.

Still no exercise, and still the bison skin isn't dry enough for us to leave here. I spent a good part of the day sewing snakes into their shrouds, and the rest in writing letters.

### **Mahtum. Saturday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

A fine morning though cloudy. A heavy shower began at 2.30 p.m., after which the day was showery.

[Vol 4, p124] The only interesting things about today were (a) that a man turned up from Gumprawng Ga to say that he'd shot a serow in his field and did we want it. He hadn't brought it along though, so I told him he'd better hurry: I certainly wanted it (as I did every sort of skin) if it was good, but if it went bad on his hands I would not take it. He has not turned up since so I imagine the worst has happened. And (b) the headman of Hpawa (Hpauwa?) came in and offered some lumps of metallic iron as a gift. He said that lots of them were dug up near the next village to the east on top of the ridge – not mined, but found in the earth generally when digging the fields. The lumps look meteoric to me, but if so it must have been a big meteor, as the pieces brought in today alone weigh a couple of pounds. They are not apparently used to make anything, which seems strange. He also said that near the same place there is an old silver mine which was worked by Chinese "more than 100 years ago". The Chinese all died suddenly, after which the Duwas blocked the entrance to the mine with rocks, since when no one has ever been in it. He is going to take us to see the place sometime during the next day or so. It is about 8 miles away.

[Vol 4, p125]

**Mahtum. Sunday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

A fine morning, with rain from 2.30 p.m. on.

I got to bed last night about 10.15 p.m., and at 10.30 the serow arrived! There was nothing for it but to give up any idea of a real beauty sleep and start to work at once. Willy came out to have a look at it, never having seen one before, thanked God piously that he was the botanist of the party, knowing no more of skinning than he did of the mating habits of the whelk; wished me luck; and retired again to bed! The rest of us were at work on the beast (a good male) from then until 3.30 a.m.,

when we tottered to bed. The alum and saltpetre having been finished on the bison, we used wood ashes for the skin; but by keeping it in the shed, with a fire going, I think we may be able to dry it out properly.

A mail came in today, Sing Nan Ha having only left Sumprabum yesterday morning. It was a poor mail though, with no personal letters at all.

### **Mahtum. Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day without rain.

I had meant to go and see the silver mine today, but just when we were on the point of starting the market opened, with a spate of stones and bronzes and a fair number of snakes and things. So we had to put it off and [[Vol 4, p126](#)] deal with them instead. The serow skin is drying very well indeed, and I have decided to leave here for Bwi Sam on Thursday.

### **Mahtum. Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day until 3.30 p.m. when there was a heavy rainstorm lasting until 5 p.m. From then on showery.

Snakes and things in the morning, and about noon we started for the silver mine, picking up the headman at Hpawa. It was just about 8 miles, up to the top of the ridge and then along; but though he swore he knew where the place was, and had seen it himself only a few years ago when hunting, he couldn't find it today, and so we returned gloomily. I've told him to look for it while we are away, and that we will go again with him when we come back.

The most serious thing is that I think there is a fair chance that Mischa is going mad. After 6 miles she suddenly got into a frenzy (looking, as Willy said, as if she had a devil) and leapt round me screeching for half a minute or so. Then she returned to normal, until 10 minutes later she did exactly the same, except that this

time she finished by tearing off down the path the way we had come. Two minutes later she passed us yelping and vanished into the [Vol 4, p127] jungle, and we never saw her again until she came into camp about 7 p.m. I have tied her up for observation.

### **Mahtum. Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A great day packing, and very little else, except that a big cobra (5' 5¼") was brought in alive in a basket. This makes the second I've got. I think Mischa is all right, though God knows what was wrong with her yesterday. At least she seems perfectly normal now.

I gather from a pyada that Sayer is due here on the 29<sup>th</sup>, coming into the Triangle from Gwitan. He's a mannerless swine. Not only has he never answered my note of six weeks ago; but he can't even be bothered to let us know his movements.

Leaving skins here to finish drying, under the care of a coolie.

### **Htingnaw Ga. Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day till 4.30 p.m., after which there was continual light rain.

A march of 7 miles over a good mule-track. The path runs through Hpawa, moderately up and down for the first 4 miles, after which there is a steady climb of  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile. The remainder is moderately up and down. To our surprise there was a bungalow here, just above the village; but it is said to be the only one in repair on this road.

A langur was brought in dead. The headman says that there are serow and bison quite [Vol 4, p128] close to the village, so we will try to stop a couple of days here on the way back and have a crack at them. This is a Chingpaw village.

**Hyawm Uka. Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine day, though cloudy till about midday when there was a slight shower lasting half an hour. At 2 p.m. moderate rain set in and has since continued, with few intervals.

A march of 7¼ miles, over a good mule-track. The first 2 miles are moderately level; but there is then a fairly steep and steady descent of about 2000' to cross a moderate stream at just over 3 miles, followed by an ascent of rather more than that distance, quite steep to 3¾ miles, and irregular to 4¼ miles. The remainder of the way is very much up and down, though without any long climbs. The village and camping ground are just over the north crest of the Htiyi Hka valley, within 50' of the top. We are in tents now, on a small but quite good level space immediately by this Maru village. A good little hut had been built for kitchen and servants, and, by enlarging one end of it a little, we have made a dining room. There is the usual 'bathroom' made of screens of plaited bamboo. There doesn't appear to be any game round here, which is odd, because the [Vol 4, p129] jungle looks all right for it, though thickish for hunting. The headman of Mairawn is with us, as he can speak Maru and knows the route well. He says that Bwi Sam itself (now that the bungalow has fallen down) is a bad camp, and that it would be better to push on to the next place Nalau (Nolu?) down the valley. That being so, since tomorrow's camp is good, with good hunting (usually) there doesn't seem to be much point in going beyond it. It's within 2 or 3 miles of the Kabang Hkyet, so we can easily go up and look into the Ninai Valley. However, we'll decide finally when we get there.

When I was drying myself after my bath tonight, a large green hawk moth (like a Lime Hawk) hovered in front of my face; and, when I stood quite still, it shot out a



long tongue and drank saliva from my mouth for about a minute before flashing away again. Quite pleasant but very tickly!

Mischa's last puppy is rot! This morning it was eating a sock of mine, and when I remonstrated and removed the remnant, it bit me deeply in both hands. I lost patience and commanded the servants either to kill it or to give it away in the village. I don't know which they did and I don't greatly care. It was becoming a devilish nuisance. Mischa herself was very [[Vol 4, p130](#)] bored with it, and deserted it whenever she could, so that it was always screeching.

### **Hyawm Uka. Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain most of the night, and light rain most of the day, until 4 p.m., after which the sky began to clear slowly. By 8 p.m. it was 5/10 clear.

The place was thick with mud this morning and the coolies sent round to say that they couldn't make the grade on the next march, which must have some very steep bits on it. Accordingly, we stopped in camp, and I did some snakes and lizards and wrote to Mother. In the evening I went out with Hpsi Naw after green pigeon. We eventually found some, in frightfully high trees. I did try a shot, but it was too high and I didn't score. On the way back I got a couple of parti-coloured bats with two shots, but it was getting dark by then and we were only able to pick up one. The other fell in 10' grass and was a dead loss. The jungle here is pretty thick, and there are no paths in it at all. The villagers never go into it, which seems to me extraordinary. Hyawm Uka is half Kachin and half Maru. The camp is by the Maru half, and the Kachin half (with the same name) is about 1 mile to the south-east on the crest of a ridge. The Kabang Hkyet is in full view from this camp, about 5 miles away in an air [[Vol 4, p131](#)] line. Strange to think that it is 1½ marches off!

**Hkawng Gaw. Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day until 2.15 p.m. when nimbus cloud came over on a SE wind, force 2, and a heavy shower began, lasting till 2.45. By 4 p.m. the sky was 6/10 clear (stratus) and so it has since remained.

A march of  $8\frac{3}{4}$  miles, fairly steeply up and down the whole way, and finishing with a climb of some 2000'. At  $2\frac{3}{4}$  m Samhpum is passed and at  $6\frac{1}{2}$  m Bumbang, both Maru villages. On the way I ran into a brace of partridges roosting in a tree just over the path, but I was carrying the rifle at the time, and by the time I changed it for the 12 bore they were off. Later I shot a langur, about 300 yards from the camp.

They have done this camp very well for us, by the way. There is a good hut for the servants and kitchen; a genuine bath hut with roof; and a dining hut as well (though that roof leaks badly), so we will be well off during our stay here, sleeping in tents.

The headman brought in a specimen of a very rich ore (Willy thinks it's silver and antimony, while I have no opinions) this evening. He says there is a lot of it in the bed of the Htiyi Hka at the bottom of the valley, and that must mean a heavy vein somewhere very close. He is going to bring me a handful tomorrow, and I shall send a bit to Leyden to see what [[Vol 4, p132](#)] he has to say about it.

I don't know whether hunting is going to be any good here or not. A bear was feeding in the crops last night, but we neither of us felt energetic enough to sit up for it this night. As for the salt springs, they are down at the bottom of the valley and no one has ever shot anything there because there are no hunters in the village. That means I shall have to do everything from scratch, finding out where the game is and everything all for myself. There ought to be serow about here, but I haven't got any news of them. There's a great difference in the Mahtum water and that we have been

getting since leaving there. At Mahtum it is so very soft that it's difficult to wash soap off, but in the camps since then it is very much better. Not so hard that you can't get a lather, but hard enough to be pleasant. I only hope we get good weather while we're here. It gets very nice and cool in the evenings anyway.

**Hkawng Gaw. Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Mist in the morning at camp level until noon, although 500' below there was sunshine. Moderate rain from 3.30 p.m. onwards, increasing to heavy after 9 p.m. Wind force 2 (SE?).

Willy went up to the Kabang Hkyet this morning. He says it's only about 1½ miles from here and not more than 100' above the camp, covered with tall trees so that from the pass [[Vol 4, p133](#)] itself one can't get any sort of a view. I went out in the morning to try for Imperial pigeons, but I only heard one and that was on a very tall tree. I didn't see it. In the afternoon I went down to have a look at the salt springs. I was told that the path went first to the fields and that there I could ask. This I did, only to find to my gloom that no one there understood a single word of Chingpaw, and that I was foiled. I went down no less than six paths from there, each steeper than the last, and each ending in blank jungle; and finally I gave up and toiled wearily back a couple of thousand feet to camp.

Mischa put up a partridge on the way and at once a big hawk stooped from a long way up, coming down like a stone with a tremendous rushing noise. It missed, however, and made off disgruntled. Only one snake has been brought in here – an Ahaetulla prasina – and that was yesterday. It doesn't look as if it will be worthwhile hanging on very long in this camp, good spot though it is otherwise.

**Hkawng Gaw. Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain all night, and moderate to heavy rain throughout the day with few intervals. Low nimbus and mist. Wind apparently S 2.

I stayed in all day and didn't do much. The headman of Bumlang came in with a report of a herd of [Vol 4, p134] bison having moved up the valley to a place not far from here. I have told him to look for fresh tracks and then to come and tell me again.

A good mail arrived this morning, with three books and a letter from Mother, one from Erik and Elsa, and one from Joan Walker to say that she's engaged to Bob Rumsey, who, I think, is the young doctor at Crowborough. I am sending her a cable. It appears, from Bhudiman and La Doi combined, that Hkawng Hpung, Hpsi Naw, and Hpung Male are all wanted urgently in Sumprabum on a matter of 'verification' as ex-riflemen. I imagine it is to find out whether they will serve again in the event of an emergency. They can all go tomorrow. Otherwise, no news.

**Hkawng Gaw. Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Heavy rain all night and until 3 p.m., after which it cleared, though the sky remained covered with nimbus clouds until 6 p.m., when a few clear patches began to show. By 10 p.m. the sky was 8/10 clear.

A filthy day, and I did practically nothing but read. Hkawng Hpung, Hpsi Naw, and Hpung Male left about noon for Sumprabum; but unless they are held up badly by the [???] Hka or other streams I think they (except Hpung Male, who won't be coming back) ought to be able to join us before we leave Mahtum.

The headman of Bumlang came in with a langur he had [Vol 4, p135] shot close to where I got mine on the day we arrived here. He says the herd of bison is

still about, and I have told him I'll go out with him tomorrow if the weather's a bit better and have a crack at them. There are apparently about 10 in the herd.

Paraffin is getting short owing to using the stove for drying flowers, so we have taken to Summer Time for a while to save daylight, and to candles in our tents rather than lamps.

### **Hkawng Gaw. Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day until about 2 p.m., after which light nimbus clouds came over on a SW wind, force 2-3. By 3 p.m. the sky was 9/10 covered, and at 3.45 p.m. there was a heavy shower lasting 20 minutes. After that the sky cleared slightly to 4/10 light nimbus, but no more rain fell.

I went out this morning at 10.30 a.m. and walked over to Bumlang where I picked up the headman. Together we set off after that herd of bison; and we were out on the hills until 6 p.m., but we didn't do any good. Their tracks were there of the day before, but a party of men had been up (cutting grass apparently) and the bison had left in a hurry. Towards the end we picked them up some 3 miles away in an air line, over the Htiyi Hka valley. It was no good going after them, as the ground distance would have [Vol 4, p136] been at least 8 miles. Instead we went after a panther for a short time. Tracks of that morning, and, as the earth was very soft, it was easy to follow. The jungle was very thick though, and our progress through the tangled bamboo brakes was so slow that I gave up. I was astonished to find that the headman would have nothing to do with the panther game. He said he hadn't come out to be nibbled by cats, or words to that effect, and stayed at a very respectful distance behind me. I got back to camp (after repairing the Bumlang bamboo aqueduct with him) at about 7 p.m., just in time to have a few words with Willy before

he pushed across the valley to spend the night in a field waiting for a bear which had been eating the maize last night.

**Hkawng Gaw. Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Light rain most of the time until about 2 p.m., after which it was fine but cloudy. Wind SW 2.

I stayed in, doing odd jobs today until 3.30 p.m. when I went up to the Kabang Hkyet. You can't see anything from the pass in either direction, owing to the trees, and I wasn't able to get a view of the Ninai Valley, even from well down the other side; but there's a grand view right back to Sumprabum, with Hpunlumbum and Shagri Bum in [[Vol 4, p137](#)] the foreground, from a little distance this side of the pass.

When we got back (Willy had joined me up there) we found a mail runner had just arrived with, among other things, an urgent letter from Durrant to say that we had declared war on Germany on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, that the French had broken the Siegfried Line, and that the Germans were making hay with Poland and were on the point of taking Warsaw. Also that London had been raided, but apparently without much damage. Well, that finishes this trip. We leave here tomorrow for Sumprabum, and, failing some really useful job out here, we'll make tracks for England by whatever means we can manage. I shall have to borrow my fare back from Willy. He has only had a short run with me so I have told him to take all the cash that remains when we get to Myitkyina. It's all his, as my money is all in kind, sunk in the paraphernalia of the expedition. I only hope Mammy is all right in London. I imagine she will not evacuate to Sycamore House with Vi there.

As light relief, I adopted a very young langur today, called Amelia. She has the most amazing face, and regards me very seriously.

[[Vol 4, p138](#)]

**Hyawm Uka. Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Fine and sunny until 4 p.m. when moderate rain began, increasing to heavy between 4.30 and 5 p.m., and stopping about 6 p.m.

No particular news. We only did a single march as the stage is not only longer than usual but pretty steep.

**Mahtum. Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day until about 4 p.m., after which there was a slight shower.

A long and exhausting march, doubling the stage, and both Willy and I were very glad to get in. It is his birthday today, and we cheered ourselves with caviar beforehand with our gin and lime; and a dinner of soup, whitebait, haggis, and raspberries and cream. We are stopping here tomorrow to pack up, and will be sending some loads direct to Myitkyina. Amelia is still doing well. An attractive creature.

**Mahtum. Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day, with thunder round about but no rain.

Earnest packing all day long, and no other news.

**Mahtum. Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine, cloudless and very hot day. Wind SW 1. Night cloudless.

A march of about 8½ miles, mainly downhill, to this good camp on the left bank of the Tara Hka. I [[Vol 4, p139](#)] sent off the bison skin (packed with a porcupine), a big box of skins, a box of native clothes, a box of stones and bronzes, one Marshall case of mine, and one of Willy's to Myitkyina; and we came here with 49 coolies ourselves. We had a bathe in the river as soon as we got here, and after tea Willy fished for a while without any luck; but it's been desperately hot down here

and I stayed in, doing typing and odds and ends. I'm taking Mairawn Tsan Tawng with us to Sumprabum. He's invaluable at collecting, and is besides that a pleasant soul.

**N'Sankawng. Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> 1939**

A fine hot and sunny day with no rain at all. Wind SW 1.

A march of 10 miles, up and down, but climbing on the whole to about the same height as Kajihitu. I started before the coolies, with Mairawn Tsan Tawng, and didn't hurry. It was much too hot for that. About halfway we met Sing Nan Ha and another with the wireless and the latest mail, including a letter from Mother. I stopped and read it, and then came on here where they were just having a sacrifice and general tamasha. The Madai had not yet arrived when I got here, but he did so shortly after to a volley of shots and much beating of gongs and cymbals. I didn't go along to see, but the whole show was being put on by the [Vol 4, p140] local Duwa, who has failed so far to get any offspring at all. I must say I think this sacrifice business shows extreme faith, because he is getting on in years now, and nothing short of a miracle would be any use to him.

This is a pleasant camp on top of a ridge and close to the village. About 6 miles back we passed through Gumlas where the rebellion started. Amelia is no more. I think she must have got sunstroke (like Ichabod) on the road. She took her breakfast quite normally, but suddenly pegged out shortly after arriving here. Just as well I suppose, though it's a pity. I don't know what I'd have done with her, if, as I suppose, I'm now on my way home. There is likely to be some difficulty about getting coolies between Kajihitu and Sinan Hka. I'm offering As 4 extra per day to all coolies who work two or more days with us, in the hope of keeping a large nucleus till the [??] area is past. The Sumprabum people say that very little news is coming from



Daventry. That seems bad to me. There is a censorship of course, but it is only bad news which is censored after all.

**Kajihthu. Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> 1939**

Moderate rain during the night and until 10.30 a.m. The remainder of the day was fine though cloudy. Wind SW 2.

A march of 9 miles over a very level path, except for [Vol 4, p141] the last mile climbing up to Kajihthu. Hkawng Hpung and Hpsi Naw both reached here shortly after I did, and I am discharging Kaiji Gawng. I took him on originally on La Doi's recommendation as snake catcher in chief, and said I'd give him a month's trial. He's been with me six weeks now, and caught nothing till this morning when he achieved a *Natrix subminiatus helleri*. Hkawng Hpung, on the other hand, has done brilliantly. He caught 2 on the way between Hkawng Gaw and Mahtum, and arrived here with 3 more, including one new to the collection and a young cobra. A great piece of work.

La Doi's wife has been having fever. I gave her an intramuscular injection of Atebrin this evening, and I'll give her another shot tomorrow morning, just before we go.

**Nbun Daru. Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1939**

A fine sunny day until 1 p.m. when there was a short heavy shower. During the afternoon there were several others.

By a miracle and some excellent work on the part of the pyada and Mairawn Tsan Tawng, we got all the 67 coolies we needed (we arrived here with 49, most of whom went back though), and turned up here without any trouble. After we got here there was nothing whatever to do unfortunately. I had meant [Vol 4, p142] to push up the riverbank and see if that panther was still lurking, but the Mali Hka is too high and what path there was is well under water. The coolie bandobast today was almost

too good to be true. There is bound to be difficulty here to make up. Gibbons have been howling and yelling over the river this afternoon. It's fun to hear them again. There are very few in the Triangle, and the only place I have heard them, in fact, is near Ningma.

**Sinan Hka. Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939**

Fine and hot until 4.30 p.m. when there was a heavy shower lasting about one hour. Frequent light showers afterwards.

Great difficulty over coolies today, and a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. Willy went off fairly early, when things looked brighter, but I stayed on till 4 p.m. By that time there were 39 loads without coolies and no prospect of getting any men, so the five of us (Gawng Hka, Hkawng Hpung, Mairawn Tsan Tawng, Ah Sin, and myself) took a load each and started hopefully off. There were no proper yokes and head straps available, so we just had a bamboo band over our heads, and the strain was terrible. I got my load the half mile to the ferry, and I might have taken it further; but there a couple of chaps said they'd [[Vol 4, p143](#)] take half each, so I was spared. The other four of us could only manage a further half mile before they too had to give up. Odd really, because the Himalayan hillmen only use the head strap as a normal thing, but all these people are so used to the yoke as well that they couldn't do without it. It was our necks which suffered. I left the four loads at Tam Gahtawng with the servants, and got to Sinan Hka at 9.45 p.m.

**Sumprabum. Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Light rain most of the day.

More coolies turned up than we wanted this morning, and we were able to send back 13 men to pick up loads from Nbn Daru. A muddy march, and I suffered to some extent from my feet. Yesterday both chaplis I was wearing came to bits,

and, as all my other footwear is still at Ngun Daru, I had to come along in leather socks only. It's surprising how many pebbles there turn out to be when you're more or less defenceless. Went up to see Durrant straight away. He's in good form and gave us all the war news, which he gets on his wireless. Providing our baggage arrives in time, I want to leave here on Saturday next. Bhandiman is arranging for coolies to go all the way through with us. We dined with Durrant this evening.

[Vol 4, p144]

**Sumprabum. Monday, September 25<sup>th</sup> 1939**

Moderately heavy rain at night and all today.

Two more coolies arrived this evening, and I'm full of hope that the others may get in tomorrow. I went down to see Bonney (Lucy Perkins) this afternoon, and Willy, Durrant and I are to go down for tea tomorrow. We are going to be able to sell most of our stores and things I reckon. Durrant will take a lot, and perhaps Bonney too. I sent off a cable to Bill telling him that I'm making tracks for home and conjuring him so to pull strings that I get out to the front quickly.