

**CNAC**  
ASSOCIATION



# CANNON BALL

August 1, 1980

319 Euclid Ave. Loch Arbour N.J.

Reg Farrar Editor

This issue contains several items that are at least unusual. Maybe I should not have included some of them but after much thought I included them. The letter entitled "This will Explain" was written by Dick Sweetman about the last hours of Diana. Many of us knew her as the wife of Higgs who crashed in China. Diana later remarried to Dick Sweetman. His description of her last hours is so poignant that I felt that Dick would not mind my publishing it. We loved her too.

Al Mah's contribution is long delayed. Such a guy deserves to be included. I have been waiting for his description of his trip into China during the Japanese occupation. Maybe he will send it now.

The article taken from The China Letter of April 1980 seemed very expressive. In spite of the marked changes in China (Communist) and their apparent change toward western ways. Communism has not changed as much as they would like us to believe. The China Letter is worth receiving. Write them.

*Jerry Sounebliek - Legality of love*

There is a projected volume of Wings over China. As you know this is sort of our official history. The past issues have featured the exploits of some of our more colorful members. Most of us, you and I, didn't do enough to merit inclusion in their adventures and yet, we were there. In some way we were a part of the adventure. A few made history before CNAC and a few after. We were all there and helped make CNAC go.

In an issue of wings over Asia, I am going to list everyone I know that was a part of it. I hope to have a biographical sketch after everyone's name. Of those who have gone to the Hogy Taw I will record what I can find out. It may not be much. If I find nothing more than a name that will be it. I would like something about everyone. 200 words would be about right. Would everyone write me an autobiographical sketch telling me where you came from, how you got into CNAC, something about what you did there, and what you did after. Include your wife and children.

Many of our members seem to have little interest in our association and maybe indifferent to what we did then. Maybe they feel their part was insignificant and maybe it was. We all didn't make "Who's Who" although some of us did (not me!) Wouldn't it be nice to have your name written down somewhere. It won't get you much but some of us will be glad to see it.

There is a sheet in this new letter which I wish you would fill out and return to me. There is no charge although the volume maybe sold at cost. at least extra volumes will be.

I used to address all the mailings by hand as I did the last cannonball. As I did, faces came out of the past. Faces I have not seen or heard from for 35 years. I can even remember some of the addresses. Occasionally one of these names is on a letter to me. I may never answer but it is a thrill to receive them. If it is a request I try to fulfill it. If it is publishable or has some general interest I publish them. Some of the requests are answered in the pages of the Cannonball. Most of all it lets me know that the time and effort is meaningful. Kitty Hauser, is a doll, Robby with his his interests writes, so does Al Oldenberg (occasionally) and Christie and Bob Rengo and Paul, Laube, Mac.

I read them all. Sometimes you may wonder. See in this issue Al Mah and Geo. Van Cleves' letters. I've only had them 10 years.

Now I am asking of each of you to return the "big" sheet. Do that one small favor for me.

PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS  
135 East 42nd Street  
New York City

For Release Monday, April 23rd, 1945

SUPPLIES DROPPED FROM PLANES TO BUILDERS OF CHINA'S NEW LIFELINE

Transport planes of China National Aviation Corporation, which have made more than 35,000 trips over the treacherous Himalayas since the Burma road was lost to the Japs early in 1942, were in the forefront of the fight to reopen the vital land artery through rain-lashed mountains of norther Burma, now known as the Stilwell Road.

While United States and Chinese Army Engineers and thousands of Chinese coolies were hacking the Ledo Road connection out of the precipitious jungle and virtually rebuilding the tortuous old Burma Highway on the heels of Chinese Army forces which were routing out the Japs, CNAC's job was to supply certain forward positions along the Paoshan-Myitkyina section with men, equipment and food.

In C-47s specially fitted out for the task, CNAC pilots swooped at treetop level over enemy lines while specially trained American and Chinese "rice Kickers" booted 50-pound sacks of rice out of the rear door for the army of road builders. In the narrow, deep gorges such a maneuver called for precision flying at best and in many cases it meant roaring through a valley too narrow for any evasive action when the Japs let go with everything from small arms to \_\_\_\_\_.

The old Burma Road was closed in April, 1942, when the Japs captured Lashio. CNAC flyers perfected their food-dropping technique then as Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell's forces fought a losing battle against overwhelming odds in the sweltering jungles along the banks of the Irrawaddy River.

Each night six transport planes with CNAC pilots at the controls flew in from India over the barrier peaks of Arakan Yoma to hidden landing fields behind the battle lines, each plane carrying from six to eight thousand pounds of combat and medical supplies. And in the last bitter stages of the retreat they dropped food to scattered Chinese forces which had been reduced to eating the very bark of trees for the strength to keep going.

As a result of the counter-offensive campaign launched from India by Chinese American and British forces nearly three years ago and the road construction job over country where it was believed impossible of accomplishment, the first convoy of American supplies to China rolled into the border town of Wanting on January 28, 1945. Indicative of the size of the project is the fact that some 30 000 Chinese coolies were employed in the reconstruction of the Burma Road section alone. Indicative of the military effort involved was the fact that Jap resistance was broken the day before the first convoy arrived at Wanting.

When this concerted effort to open a land supply route to China was at its height a number of the planes of CNAC, the airline in which the Chinese National government and Pan American World Airways are partners, were diverted at the request of the Chinese Government and U.S. Army, to fly supplies to Yunnanyi, Tengchung, Paoshan and Myitkyina on their India-bound trips. In 224 trips between October 22, 1944 and January 21, 1945, CNAC carried in a total of 736 persons and 540,719 pounds of equipment.

Rice dropping operations were begun on October 22, 1944. By last January 21, CNAC had piled up a total of 523 trips and kicked out a total of 1,836,970 pounds of rice for the road builders.

ACQUISITION OF CHINA AIRWAYS FEDERAL, INC., U.S.A.  
BY PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS

China Airways Federal, Inc. U.S.A., (C.A.F), a China Trade Act corporation, was organized September 19, 1929 under the laws of the District of Columbia with authorized capital stock of 200,000 shares, \$10 par value, of which 50,000 shares are issued and outstanding.

Pan American Airways Corporation (PAA Corp.) acquired all of the 50,000 shares of C.A.F. stock from Intercontinent Aviation, Inc., on March 31, 1933. Prior to that time C.A.F. had conducted a trading business with various parties in China and had acquired a 45% interest, (1,873 shares), in China National Aviation Corporation (hereinafter designated as C.N.A.C.).

The total payment to Intercontinent Aviation, Inc. for the 50,000 shares of C.A.F. stock was 3,000 shares of PAA Corp. common capital stock, \$10 par value and based upon information available as at the date of purchase, PAA Corp. recorded its investment in C.A.F. at \$181,395.06, which was the proportionate part of the computed net worth of C.N.A.C. at December 31, 1932, represented by 1,873 shares. The only asset which C.A.F. had at the time of purchase was the 45% interest in C.N.A.C. Subsequently at the time of the 1933 audit of PAA Corp. and Subsidiaries PAA Corp. increased the book value of its investment in C.A.F. by \$100,863.63 to reflect a book value based upon the net worth of C.N.A.C. at March 31 1933. Thus, as at December 31, 1933 PAA Corp's books reflected an investment in the stock of C.A.F. of \$282,258.69 which was offset by an increase in PAA Corp. capital stock of \$30 000.00 and by an increase in the capital surplus of the same corporation of \$252,258.69.

The cost of the C.N.A.C. stock to C.A.F. was \$561,943.13. The market value and the book value of PAA Corp. stock at the time 3,000 shares thereof were issued to Intercontinent in payment for the C.A.F. stock was approximately \$28 per share.

From the date of its acquisition by PAA Corp., C.A.F. engaged in no activity other than the holding of C.N.A.C. stock and whatever minor activities were necessary to maintain its corporate existence.

On September 27, 1935 PAA Corp. transferred its investment in C.A.F. to PAA Co. (a Nevada corporation) for 14,059-95/100ths shares of the capital stock of PAA Co. PAA Co. recorded its investment in C.A.F. at \$282,258.69.

On August 8, 1941 PAA Co. was merged into PAA Inc. and the C.A.F. stock was thus acquired by PAA Inc., the books of which reflect the investment in C.A.F. in the same amount - \$282,258.69.

The remaining 55% of the issued and outstanding C.N.A.C. stock is owned by the Chinese National Government. Efforts are being made to secure its consent to the dissolution of C.A.F. and the transfer of the 1,873 shares of C.N.A.C. stock to PAA Inc.

PART NO. 3 - HUMP OPERATIONS

(First person account - Captain Woods)

When I arrived in Upper Assam in April 1942 for the evacuation of Burma and rice dropping flights I realized that due to our strategic location we should prepare for a large and rather long period of operations, but didn't dream that soon we would be flying over 60 planes with about 200 flight crews.

I took over (rented) a couple of Assistant Tea Garden Managers' bungalows and bought three Chevrolets and one Ford Sedan, which was all the ground transportation available for purchase at that time. Shortly thereafter we acquired some Jeeps and Command cars, also a couple of 6x6 trucks, but ground transportation was always in short supply. Scrounging spare parts for ground units and aircraft became a way of life. It was sometimes politic not to inquire too closely into the source but I figured that the end justified the means. Cannibalizing equipment was the line of least resistance but was avoided as much as possible.

Our operation required making 'on the spot' decisions and a lot of improvising. Fortunately I was given almost complete autonomy and the Chinese Managing Director authorized a \$100,000.00 Rupee revolving fund for me, which was replenished as quickly as I submitted paid bills. While I had my problems, finances was not one of them.

After the Monsoon season ended in the Autumn of 1942 the Japs started moving northward through Burma and it became apparent that we could expect Jap air raids at most any time. No effective warning system had been installed so I decided to build a small dispersal strip where we could leave our planes when not actually loading or refueling.

A 2400-foot landing strip was built four miles east of the Dinjan airport (named Baliyan) and served its purpose admirably but had to be abandoned after it was determined that dust was getting into the carburetors and causing the engines to lose power. We actually lost our first plane from this cause but the two crew members, Captains Laughlin and Bartling, survived.

There were several air raids on Dinjan field which came without warning but CNAC did not suffer any casualties or loss of equipment on the ground in Upper Assam during the entire war. I was rather severely criticized by Vice President Bond for wasting the money for the dispersal strip but Dinjan had a severe air raid the day his letter arrived and the next mail brought a letter of commendation from the Chinese Managing Director for having saved all staff and equipment.

There were reports of Jap infiltration and sabotage about this time and the Civilian Police Commissioner decided I should have armed guards for the dispersal strip. I agreed and authorized him to recruit a small army of about 50 men consisting of Gurkhas, Sepoys and other native ex-soldiers who had been British trained but had either retired or had failed to re-enlist. I provided the finances for salaries, uniforms, messes and accommodations, and all other costs, while Commissioner Rutledge assumed responsibility for their arms and guard duties.

I was somewhat obligated to inspect my 'troops' occasionally, which I did, but with considerable trepidation. I have never spent a day in the military service and walking up and down in front of a bunch of men standing at stiff attention made me feel ridiculous. I never knew what to do with my hands. Also, when I would approach their quarters the word would get out that the 'Burra

Sahib' )Burra meaning big - great - large or in this case - No. 1) was coming

and the clattering and confusion that ensued was something to behold.

When we first arrived in Upper Assam Police Commissioner Rutledge viewed our arrival with considerable apprehension and distrust. He practically considered it an invasion. He was supposed to keep close tabs on the arrivals and departures of all foreigners and I was supposed to notify him in advance of any of our people coming into or leaving our area. Operations in Calcutta usually failed to notify me in time of personnel changes and continuously kept me in hot water, but my luck held out and I finally fixed things up to where we had no more trouble on that score. Mr. Rutledge's wife had a set of false teeth that must have been made by a blacksmith and they nearly drove her wild. I had the brilliant idea of phoning the U.S. Ministry Dental Corps, which had just been brought into the area and set up at Chabua Air Base. I asked for the head man there and announced that I was Captain Woods, whom of course he had never heard of, and told him that in accordance with instructions from my superiors to try to promote better relations and cooperation from the local civilian population, it would help matters considerably if we could arrange to make a new set of dentures for the Police Commissioner's wife. The Dental officer said "Send her in", which I did. They then proceeded to make Mrs. Rutledge a beautiful and near-perfect fitting set of false teeth. To say that Commissioner Rutledge was grateful to me was an understatement. Needless to say, the question of CNAC staff moving in and out of Upper Assam never was brought up again partly due, I am sure, to a much more tranquil atmosphere in the Commissioner's residence.

No story of the Hump operation would be complete without a considerable portion of it devoted to smuggling. The Jap blockage of China caused a critical shortage of medicines, toilet articles, clothing, ballpoint pens and hundreds of articles not manufactured in China, but had found general acceptance there. All of these items brought up to ten or twenty times their initial cost in the Chinese black market. To the Chinese, being natural born merchants, the temptation was irresistible. It is doubtful if there was even one solitary Chinese who refrained from becoming involved in some sort of black market operation because it was unlawful and had an upsetting effect on their general economy. Only the penalties for getting caught or the gamble of losing their investment through detection and confiscation proved a deterrent to those few who were not somehow connected with the business. Right now let me emphatically state that the illegal traffic was not by any means confined to the Chinese. A good many Americans, both in CNAC and the U.S. Military forces feathered their nests in the same manner. In fact, some of the now very prosperous and prominent CNAC alumni augmented their salaries with certain activities that they do not care to discuss. However, the business was a natural for the Chinese and few failed to take advantage of it.

Just as our story would be incomplete without reference to smuggling, a gross omission would be made by leaving 'Customs Smith' out of the picture. Mr. Smith, of the Indian Civil Service Customs Branch arrived at the Dinjan base assigned, alone with half a dozen rather inconspicuous and ineffectual assistants, shortly after our freight operations began.

He immediately informed me that neither he nor his office was to be taken lightly. He was of mixed ancestry and while his complexion was jet black, he often spoke of going home to Scotland on his home leave. I made absolutely certain that I didn't change facial expression during discussions on this subject. He was rather intelligent and extremely sensitive, and while not overbearing or belligerent, definitely wanted it understood that he was not to be ignored or overlooked. It didn't take me long to realize that dealing with him would require considerable tact and diplomacy, and I take pride in the fact that after he became convinced that I recognized his position of authority and also that I was walking the straight and narrow as far as my personal activities were concerned, a rapport developed which made things easier for both of us. It reached a point that my OK on a piece of mail or package was recognized officially and no further questions or inspections were required by the Indian authorities. I was also authorized by the U.S. Military to act as censor for any incoming or outgoing mail.

Not the least part of my job was to maintain amicable relations between all parties. Within our own organization there was the ever-present smoldering jealousies and rivalries between the Americans and the Chinese, who were extremely sensitive to any slight or demeaning attitude or word. Then there was our relation with the U.S. Forces to maintain. Some of the old Cavalry Colonels who had been called back into service after retirement looked upon us as a bastard outfit; and the fact that we were outperforming the military and providing a yardstick whereby their performance could be measured rankled them. Only one or two caused us any real inconvenience as most of them were glad to be able to study our methods in order to improve their own. Then there were the local British tea planters, some of whom resented our intrusion, but for the most part were extremely cooperative.

Then there was the native Indian population to consider but very little friction developed with them that couldn't be settled quickly.

The real delicate relationships were between the civilian Police and Customs and ourselves, which have already been referred to. Keeping on good terms with 'Customs Smitty' was a project in itself. There were rumors to the effect that Customs agents received up to 25% of the value of contraband they confiscated although this was vehemently denied by Smitty. His diligence, however, appeared to be beyond the call of duty and to this day I have my doubts.

The ingenuity used in the smuggle operations taxes one's credulity. To this day some of the methods are a well kept secret. Gold bars were case in the form of engine and propellor parts and actually used on the flight to China where they were removed and replaced by confederates. Foreign currency bills were individually rolled into a tight cylinder about the diameter of a kitchen match and inserted into the loops of a corrugated cardboard box and the edging tape carefully replaced after having been steamed off. Inspection plates on the aircraft were removed and pigeon cargo inserted inside the wings so often that the retaining screws and latches wore out and were replaced regularly. When the goods was placed in these concealed niches, usually it was packaged and secured to some structural member where it could be retrieved on the China end. Quite often the package broke loose from its mooring and the various articles floated

freely, in the wing, center section and fuselage sections of the aircraft, never to be discovered unless the plane crashed. Even long after the war a plane crash resulted in toilet articles, nylon hose, etc. being scattered all over the ground. Some of our aircraft losses might have been caused by jammed controls but this could never be proved. There is, however, no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the smuggling activities were the direct cause of at least one or two of our losses, and maybe more. Pilots plowed into storm conditions and ground fog when their motive must certainly have been stimulated by more than just a desire to complete a routine trip. Later rumors and scuttle-butt would confirm our suppositions. These were some of the reasons I took such a hard line against smuggling in general.

Customs Smith and his crew usually made their aircraft inspections in the wee hours of the morning. I never knew what to expect from him when I arrived at the field. If he had made a good haul, he was jubilant. If someone had given him a hard time or had given his mat-shed office a good dusting while taxing, I was really in for it.

One morning when I arrived I found him and his whole staff out practically crawling through the weeds and underbrush near the field. It developed that one of the Chinese crew members had had several gold bars attached to his body somewhere in the vicinity of his private parts. When the Customs search reached that area he turned and ran for the bushes as hard and fast as he could. In his panic some of the gold bars broke loose and started falling out of his pants leg. Naturally he escaped as the Customs men quickly abandoned the chase to hunt for the lost gold. Needless to say, I joined in the search but unsuccessfully.

On another occasion I found Smitty on Cloud 9 when I arrived. It seems that he had discovered a new hiding place for gold bards. It was in the control cable channel in the top of the tail section as far aft as the cable ran. The spot could not be visually inspected but could be reached by hand by crawling into the tail section and reaching overhead. That morning's search had produced several gold bars which Smitty was displaying with childish delight. It was one of his best hauls. He was esthetic!

On the following morning our relationship hit its absolute nadir. Looking back on the occasion I believe I detected a charged atmosphere even before I entered the airport. Smitty was waiting for me with his black eyes practically spitting fire and he himself on the verge of apoplexy. His ebony complexion had turned livid. I finally pieced the story together from his incoherent recitation. It transpired that some Chinese, in anticipation of his search, had done his business on a shingle and had inserted it in the place where Smitty had to reach for his inspection. That morning I found out the true meaning of the old Navy expression "There was hell to tell the Captain."

There are enough tales relating to smuggling and pigeon cargo to fill a large volume and doubtless some of the other contributors to this story will have something to add.

A considerable amount of our Hump cargo consisted of Chinese currency, which was printed in the States, boat shipped to India, and flown into various destinations in China. Several times a load of currency was jettisoned due to engine failure or icing conditions. This always caused an uproar and detailed explanations as to why the action was necessary.



### PART NO. 3 THE "HUMP" OPERATION

In the latter part of 1940 and during 1941 it became increasingly evident that we would eventually have to find alternate supply routes into China. Our position in Hong Kong was extremely precarious due to the constant threat of British-Japanese hostilities breaking out at any moment.

The principal factors determining the feasibility of an airlift supply route were:

1. A railhead or seaport where cargo could be brought in and made ready for the airlift.
2. Distance to be flown not to exceed the roundtrip range of our aircraft.
3. Far enough away from the theatre of Japanese activities to make a warning system effective.
4. Permission from the country where the base was located for such an operation.

It did not require much study to determine that the great tea producing area of Upper Assam, India, met the physical requirements and as soon as war was declared between Japan and the Allies, the authorization was more or less automatic.

Captain Sharp made a trip to Upper Assam where a new airport was being constructed on a tea estate by the name of Dinjan. (Little did we realize how familiar we were to become with that name.) About the same time Captain Woods, on a trip from Rangoon back to Hong Kong, flew north up the Irrawaddy River to a point intersecting a direct line between the Upper Assam railhead at Digboi and Chungking, then proceeded on to Chungking by way of Likiang, Chekiang and Suifu. Elevations and locations of mountain ranges and peaks were noted as the maps available at that time showed most of this territory as "unexplored." This was actually the very first flight over what was later to be known as the 'Hump,' although Captain Sharp had made the initial survey flight between Kunming, Yunnan Province, and Lashio Burma, a route nearly paralleling the 'Hump' route although somewhat further south and over much lower terrain.

The copilot on the first Hump flight was Frank 'Dude' Higgs, the prototype for 'Dude Hennick' in Milton Caniff's 'Terry and the Pirates' syndicated comic strip. Frank had been a schoolmate of Caniff.

The radio operator was a Chinese by the name of Joe Loh, one of the finest, most capable and gentlemanly individuals ever to set foot in an airplane regardless of race. Joe lost his life in an airplane crash after the war was over and after the Central Government had moved to Formosa. All crew and ground personnel alike who had known and worked with Joe were deeply saddened by the news of his death.

The only passenger on the flight was CNAC Vice President W.L. Bond. (More on Bond and Higgs in other sections of this narrative.)

Shortly after war was declared in December 1941 Calcutta became the base of operations headed by Chaptain Sharp. Regular passenger service to Chungking and Chengtu by way of Dinjan and Kunming was inaugurated.

It became evident that Dinjan was to become a base for air freight operations and in April 1942 Captain Woods went to Dinjan with two C-47 planes and crews to set up shop. Before air cargo became available for delivery into China the crews and aircraft were kept busy by charter flights for the British evacuating people from Myitkyina, Byamo, Lashio, etc. fleeing from the oncoming

Meantime CNAC's service on the supply route from India to China over the Himalayas was steadily increased in round-the-clock operations. In all-out operations for the transportation of urgent military supplies in December, 1944 for example, CNAC completed 992 round trips over the hump.

In describing the operation of the unique supply route Capt. Harold Chinn, one of the fliers who has been "over the hump" more than 500 times, says that the Army's Air Transport Command is doing an incredible job.

"Where we used to try to hold things together with six overworked airplanes, the Army has a fleet of hundreds of their big transports flying between India and China," says Capt. Chinn. "CNAC alone has 100 flight crews on the China job, ten for every one we had two years ago. But, to give you a better idea of the size of the job the U.S. Army Transport Command is doing today, CNAC is moving just about ten per cent of the current total.

The number of planes in actual operations now is, of course, a military secret.

In the seven years of war, during which they have operated their air transport for China, CNAC had had three airliners shot down or forced to land by Japanese gunfire.

There have been other casualties, but the flying over the world's worst air stretch goes on. The China "life line" is being and must be kept open regardless of the cost.

#### IN MEMORIUM

#### HUGH WOODS

woody was one of the CNAC who may go down in history. He was the pilot of the first airplane to fly the Hump as part of the first great airlife. Like Lindberg's solo flight from M.Y. to Paris or Neil Armstrongs' step on the moon, it isn't such a feat if done now. It was then. It pointed the way to the Hump Operation, the Berlin Air Lift and The Flying Tiger Airline. Hugh Woods flew that first flight. It was a routine flight in some ways but it must have had exciting aspects. It was over rugged terrain and it was an experiment to see if it could be done as it later was done, so successfully by CNAC and the ATC.

The newspaper clippings say some of it and the 1st person account which he wrote years ago. Part appeared in wings over Asia, most of it did not.

Japs. On one flight from Myitkyina CNAC Captain 'Pop' Kessler loaded everyone waiting on the airport into his plane due to an air raid alarm and flew them to Dinjan. 69 passengers and 3 crew members, a total of 72 people, poured out of the plane, a record which probably will never be broken for a DC-3. In between evacuation operations the crews were called upon to drop rice to the Chinese Army, in Western Yunnan Province, which had been cut off from their regular supply line. The amount of rice dropped and flights made are indicated in our other sections of this book.

As cargo and supplies became available, airfreight flights to Kunming commenced and more aircraft and crews were assigned and the Hump operation began in earnest. It was extremely fortunate that CNAC had arrived in Upper Assam and set up their base before the U.S. A.T.C. arrived as the U.S. forces immediately took over all available tea planters' bungalows and any other facilities they could use, but CNAC had had first choice and was already well established.

On July 4, 1942 the A.V.G. 'Flying Tiger' contract expired releasing a large number of both flight and ground personnel. Quite a group of them joined CNAC. This was extremely fortunate for CNAC as they were a high class, intelligent and capable bunch. What they lacked in airline experience was amply compensated for by aptitude and a willing desire to learn.

while most of the pilots from the A.V.G. had never been in the cockpit of any aircraft larger than a P-40, they readily adapted themselves to transport equipment. Apparently the A.V.G. had done a fine job of screening as these boys, without exception, qualified as Captains after a few trips and most of them stayed with CNAC throughout the war.

Every effort to provide comfortable and pleasant living accommodations for crews and ground staff was made. No expense was spared. Chinese cooks were flown in on the return trips from China and Chinese food supplies were brought in both from China and Calcutta.

Providing food supplies for the American staff was more difficult. Native cooks trained by the British were used, but after the shelves of the local merchants were depleted and before a regular commissary supply line was established from Calcutta, the menus suffered. Captain Woods' secretary (and later wife) 'Maj' Major operated the 'foreign' mess alone for the first year. Later professional commissary men were acquired and with the supply from Calcutta established the CNAC mess acquired an outstanding reputation. Lucky indeed was the G.I. or U.S. or British officer who wangled an invitation to dinner. The British women considered it completely beneath their dignity to enter the local Indian merchants' shops and actually do the marketing. 'Maj' disregarded convention and made her daily rounds in an Indian chauffeured 'Command' car to Dibrugarh, Panatola, Tinsukia, Makum Junction, or any other settlement within a 25 mile range and tore into the darkest recesses and corners of the shop, much to the amazement and consternation of the shopkeepers and the British community, and eventually cleaned the establishments out of food stuffs. Many of the long-stored canned goods had lost their labels and until the can was opened in the kitchen no one knew whether they were going to get carrots or sterno.

Cigarettes became very scarce but a large carton of Raleighs was discovered under a pile of junk in a shop in Dibrugarh. These were most welcome to the smokers but were so full of worm holes they had to be held in such a way that each finger covered a worm hole else the consumer inhaled air instead of smoke.

Alcoholic beverages became increasingly scarce. The British tea planters occasionally got a bottle of good Scotch but usually sold it to some G.I. for sometimes as much as US \$100.00 Towards the later part of the war a distillery was built at a small village named Dikum. From the day they opened they started selling scotch, bourbon, gin, rum, vodka or anything else one asked for. Apparently it was all the same stuff with different flavoring and labels. It was all horrible and was promptly dubbed 'Dikum Death' and matched anything produced in the U.S. during prohibition for downright vileness.

In an effort to supplement the meager larger it was decided to send to the States for seed and try to raise enough quick growing fruits and vegetables for the American mess. Some of the tea planters agreed to handle the farming part Captain Sharp ordered 200 lbs of vegetable seed and sent it to Dinjan. Captain Woods assured the tea planters that this was the finest selected seed money could buy and that it would be unnecessary for them to plant their local variety. The planting season started about October after the Monsoon season and the crops had to be raised and harvested during the cool winter months. The tea planters eagerly accepted and planted it. Not one sprout germinated! Whether the seed was old or had been stored near some hot water or steam pipes will never be known. What was known, however, was that the tea planters had to hasten to get their own seed planted, which, being put in the ground late resulted in a very poor harvest and caused a greater food shortage than ever. To say that Captain Woods 'lost face' is an understatement.

During the first few months of Hump operations nearly all the flights were round trips to Kunming with an occasional flight to Suifu. Therefore, the necessity for food and lodging at the China end of the run was not as acute. By the time round-the clock operations were inaugurated, accommodations in Kunming had been organized but Dinjan was always the main base.