**Transcript – Senior Private Manabu Wada, Transport Section, 3rd Battalion, 138 Infantry Regiment, 31 Division, Imperial Japanese Army**

**Warning: This transcript contains descriptions of warfare and death.**

**All narration and voices are provided by actors.**

**NARRATOR**

Senior Private Manabu Wada of the 3rd Battalion, Japanese 138th Infantry Regiment crossed the Chindwin River on 15th March 1944 with twenty days’ rations and a herd of cattle.

However, by Mutaguchi’s order to withdraw, Wada’s battalion was suffering from a lack of food, shelter, ammunition, or adequate medical facilities.

**WADA**

“At the beginning of the Imphal Operation, the regiment was 3,800 strong. When our general gave the order to withdraw to the east, we were reduced to just a few hundred still alive.

Without shelter from the rains, with boots that had rotted and had to be bound by grass, we began to trudge along the deep mud paths carrying our rifles without ammunition, leaning on sticks to support our weak bodies.

Our medical corps men slipped and slid as they carried the sick and wounded on stretchers or supported the ‘walking wounded’.

Some of the orderlies were themselves so weak that they fell to the ground again and again until their physical and moral endurance was at an end, so that when a sick man cried out in pain, they simply said, ‘If you complain we’ll just let you go, and throw you and the stretcher down the cliff side.’

Icy rain fell mercilessly on us, and we lived day and night drenched to the skin and pierced with cold. I remember how we longed for a place, any place at all, where we could take shelter and rest.

Once we found a tent in the jungle; inside it were bodies of six nurses. We had never imagined there would be female victims, especially so far over the Arakan Mountains. Why, we asked one another, had the army not taken the nurses to a place of safety?

In another tent we found the bodies of three soldiers who had killed themselves. How could one ever forget such terrible, distressing sights as the dead nurses, and the soldiers who had taken their own lives? All I could do was to swear to myself that, somehow, I would survive.”

Source: Senior Private Manabu Wada, Tales by Japanese Soldiers of the Burma Campaign 1942-1945 by Kazuo Tamayama