

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.D.S.T. ON TUESDAY, APRIL 18 (i.e. FOR WEDNESDAY MORNING PAPERS). NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF 18/19 APRIL. THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

MAJOR GENERAL W.D.A. LENTAIGNE, D.S.O.

It is announced that the successor to Wingate is Major General W.D.A. Lentaigne, D.S.O. He is an Indian Army officer of the 4th Gurkha Rifles. He is a substantive Major and is 44-years old.

One of Wingate's disciples has taken over his job. Joe Lentaigne has great knowledge of the Japanese and Burma, having commanded a battalion during the 1942 campaign, a Brigade on the Assam border and was commanding one of Wingate's Airborne Brigades when the death of that leader occurred. As soon as Wingate's death was confirmed, Admiral Mountbatten at once placed Lentaigne in command of Wingate's forces. He was in the closest touch with Wingate's plans and ideas and is a man who can be trusted to carry them out.

Although Lentaigne can put after his name the letters p.s.c. (passed Staff College), he is not nor ever has been an office soldier. During the years of peace he spent as much of his time as he could on the North West Frontier of India, that training ground for keen soldiers.

During the Japanese invasion of Burma in the winter of 1941-1942, Lentaigne was in command of a battalion of the 4th Gurkha Rifles. He was a magnificent C.O. and gained an almost legendary name for bravery. His Gurkhas would have followed him literally anywhere.

On one occasion he was walking down a jungle track, when he was attacked by four Japanese who jumped out of the jungle on him. His revolver was knocked out of his hand, but he grappled with the leading Jap and tore the sword out of his hand. He slew the Jap with the sword, turned on the others, hewed one to the ground and chased the other two back into the jungle.

On another occasion a convoy of ambulances carrying wounded was captured by a Japanese force, infiltrating in rear of the 17th Indian Division. In one of the ambulances was an officer. Suddenly this officer heard a noise, which he described as being like the roaring of the Bull of Bashan. It was Joe Lentaigne arriving. Leading his Gurkhas in a charge he had out-distanced them and arrived first. The number that he killed on that occasion varies in different accounts, but it varies between four and eight, and the ambulances were saved.

He brought his battalion out of Burma along the road to Imphal and Dimapur. A month's rest and he was back on the frontier with a Brigade of the 17th Indian Division, training for the jungle and killing Japs whenever opportunity occurred. He had definite views on the way to deal with this enemy, and he found a kindred spirit in Wingate. He applied for, and obtained permission to serve under Wingate and became ~~the~~ most trusted and able Lieutenant of Wingate in his long-range penetration plans. We can remain content that Wingate's ideas will be carried on in a manner which Wingate himself could approve.