



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Editorial

A Job Well Done

We in Western Australia have had the recent privilege much mixed with sorrow of once again meeting and also farewelling His Excellency the Governor General, Field Marshall Sir William Slim.

Our Governor General who is rapidly coming to the end of his term of office has truly endeared himself to all Australians. He and his Lady are so much the type of person who are good to and for Australians. He has shown a marvellous interest in this country and especially in its people. But best of all he is a forthright citizen who having something worthwhile to say, says it irrespective of its palatability to the particular audience. It is this particular trait of not sugaring the pill which has made all genuine Australians take him to their hearts. Possibly it is a legacy of a long and outstanding and honest career as a soldier where the calling of a spade as a spade is the true essential of long term success.

He, along with Lady Slim, have

travelled far and wide throughout Australia and have on all occasions made it their business to get to know the denizens of the various areas. He has lauded us where he sees a good job and has dropped quite an odd brick or so where it would do the most good. The general demeanour of our Governor General is such that it is a wonderful example for other public figures to follow.

Possibly we as an ex-service organisation appreciate his outstanding qualities more than many other people because we know that men such as he who have weathered the storms of two wars and have risen the hard way to success are men who really get to know manly qualities.

Let us before he departs from Australia thank him and Lady Slim for a job well and truly done in the best interests of Australia and of the British Commonwealth and of our Queen whom he has so ably represented.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

NEXT MEETING: 3rd NOVEMBER, 1959

at Monash Club (Melbourne Cup Night). Guest Speaker. Make this an absolute must as it is most embarrassing to get a speaker along to a poor attendance, so don't let your Association down — Be There!

FILL IN THAT QUESTIONNAIRE NOW!

West Australian Whisperings

Committee Comment

Once again the Committee have met together to undertake the various tasks of organisation which are part and parcel of the Association. On Tuesday, Oct. 20, a good muster of Committee members met under the chairmanship of Ron Kirkwood.

A full review of recent events, including Ladies' Night and Legacy trip to Don Turton's, was made. The Committee agreed that Ladies' Night was an excellent function but was a trifle dismayed at the small attendance considering the expense incurred in making this function available. Steps were taken to have this function reviewed prior to next year when the venue, type of function and many other things will need consideration.

The field day arranged by Don Turton on Oct. 18 for wards of Legacy was voted an outstanding success and the Committee vastly appreciated the wonderful gesture of Don and Vida Turton in making this terrific picnic possible. The efforts of Ernie Bingham who worked like a trojan along with Don, were also highly appreciated along with Eric Turton who provided portion of the events of the day.

It was arranged to have an approach made to the Water Supply Dept. to allow us some minor watering at least in Kings Park to keep the present grass alive. The Committee felt that at this juncture any further efforts to establish new grass this year would be doomed to failure.

Arrangements for the Children's Christmas Party were furthered another step and most arrangements are well in hand and this function promises to be as good as ever.

Many other matters were discussed, and generally speaking much good ground was broken and Association affairs furthered.

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Association Activities

LEGACY TRIP TO DON TURTON'S

At the instigation of Don and Vida Turton a field day was arranged at Don's property at West Pingelly. Legacy was requested to supply 40 children and the Association arranged for a bus to transport the children to the farm, a distance of 87 miles from the city. Although it was hoped to get an early start from Perth this, owing to poor public transport on Sundays, was delayed until 9.30 a.m. Jack Carey, Ken and Millie Bowden and their family, Mick and Jean Morgan and family, and Dulcie Ryan and family travelled in the bus as escorts. Ron and Gwenda Kirkwood and their family, Arthur and Beryl Smith, Glad and Fred Napier, Bill and Jess Epps, along with Bill's sister and their families, made the trip by cars. Col and Jess Doig and Arch Campbell were already at the Turton property.

The children were given lunch on the bus supplied by Don Turton and those travelling on the bus and were ready for the fireworks when they arrived at 1 p.m. The journey took a little longer than anticipated and this made for split second timing on Don's part on their arrival. The children were first given copious draughts of milk and lemon and orange drinks then the programme got under way.

A friend of Don's, Eric Turton (no relation) gave a demonstration of tree felling with a power saw, also log splitting with a gun wedge which supplied big crashes and loud bangs. Don and Ernie Bingham showed how sheep are drenched and inoculated by modern methods using a knapsack type equipment. Then much to the evident delight of the kids they were taken for a ride on the "Turton Train" comprising Don's Land Rover as prime mover, his hay lorry and trailer. The next demo was disking and sowing of Sudan Grass. Another long ride in the "train" through crops and over pastures until a miscellany of machinery came into view. Then a forage harvester went to work and turned crop into

silage. This is the mother and father of all lawn mowers and a real eye catcher. Next the complete operation of hay baling from mowing, windrowing and rotary baling all the time getting a most educational introduction by Don on the way of a description. As if all this were not enough Ernie Bingham who seemed to bob up as if from nowhere to assist with all these demos, shored a couple of sheep and Don showed how a fleece is picked up, skirted, rolled and classed. One of the things that took the kids' eyes was to see Don and Vida's 10 year old son Ian capably driving both Land Rover and tractor.

Dame Nature co-operated nobly providing marvelous weather and to cap it all a lovely litter of three day old sheep dog pups and a couple of litters of large white piglets. The children fondled and handled these with huge delight and one bloke suggested to Don to take a count of the pigs before departure to see that all were still intact.

Last but not least a barbecue tea on the famous Turton barbecues, the eats being supplied by Don and Vida and Jack Carey and boy have those nippers got hollow legs the way vast quantities of steak, chops, sausages and bread disappeared!

The Wardens of Legacy, Arthur Campbell and Peter McRostie, who accompanied the children, were highly eulogistic of the day and Arthur thanked those responsible in a nicely worded small speech and the kids handled the "three cheers" as if they really meant it.

The bus took off for Perth at 5 p.m. to the accompaniment of "For They are Jolly Good Fellows" sung with a will by these children.

The behaviour of these children was excellent and a credit to their upbringing and their mothers.

Now for a word or two of thanks. Firstly to Don and Vida who provided the idea, the venue, most of the entertainment, most of the food, and practically all of the work. The split second timing to get this big programme through in the short time available was amazing. We are once again heavily indebted to this wonderful couple for their assistance to Association affairs.

Next to thank marvelous but highly silent co-operator Ernie Bingham who worked like a beaver and

seemed to appear on the scene as if spirited out of the ground. Bing's efforts are highly appreciated by the Association and we thank him sincerely on their behalf.

Then Eric Turton who came along and really started the day off with a "bang". It is marvelous souls such as Eric who slip into the breach, do a sterling job, then silently fade away who sometimes get forgotten but we extend our thanks to him for all he did.

A truly wonderful outing and a great credit to all concerned and we hope this sort of thing will some day be repeated as it must bring its just reward to those who assist others less happily placed than themselves. This sort of thing is a highly personal job and the Association part is of course the minor one of certain organisational details.

LADIES' NIGHT

Despite heavy rain and gusty winds, members and their wives gathered together at Crawley Bay Tearooms on Tuesday, Oct. 6, last for their annual Ladies' Night.

The keenness of the country folk to meet city members was evident by the number of familiar faces from districts as far afield as Wongan Hills, Nungarin and Denmark.

How exciting it was to step from the dark wintry night into the hall ablaze with coloured lights, streamers and balloons, to be shown to small tables and to be waited upon with the best of wines and ale, by the dapper white-coated Mick Calcutt and Curly Bowden, while some gathered for a natter by the attractive bar at one end of the hall.

As the orchestra played members and guests left their tables to mingle on the dance floor in one of the happiest and most informal gatherings we have seen.

It was a pleasure to meet Don and Mrs. Turton, from Wandering; Jack and Mrs. Fowler, from Wongan Hills; Mal and Mrs. Herbert, from Nungarin; Stan and Mrs. King, of Pingaring; Tony and Mrs. Bowers, from Kojonup; Norm and Mrs. Thornton, from Denmark; Royce (Wendell) and Mrs. Wilkerson, from Goomalling; Mrs. Peter Alexander, unattended unfortunately because Peter was in Hollywood Hospital; Ernie and Mrs. Bingham, from

Wandering; and George and Mrs. Timms, from Kojanup.

Those who enjoyed little Neil McDonald's songs to his own accompaniment on the guitar round the barbecue at Don Turton's a year ago were quite surprised when comper Mick Morgan introduced the first entertainer, a tall handsome young man as our grown up Neil. With a deeper, more developed voice he proved his popularity by the acclamations and encores.

Ted and Beryl Withell brought peals of laughter with their humorous songs and recitations from their apparently endless repertoire.

During the evening Percy Hancock, waistcoat buttons straining, and head erect in an air of physical superiority, stepped forward with a 90 per cent bow to the audience, to receive the coveted "Green" belt for champion sportsman of the year.

The presentation was performed by President Ron Kirkwood, who called upon Fred Napier as triple ex-champ. to offer congratulations on behalf of the other competitors. As time and space do not permit the recording of this speech it must suffice to say it was a true classic, a gem of rare quality, born of a master mind. In short Fred said a few words of praise.

Supper provided a delightful interlude. The long flower bedecked tables were spread as for a banquet, with everything imaginable from poultry, curry and rice, fish and hot savories to cakes piled high with whipped cream, and tea and coffee.

It was such a delight to meet friends in this happy carefree atmosphere that dancing interspersed with conversation and entertainment continued until the wee sma' hours. The city members present feel that they are greatly indebted to their country cousins for travelling long distances to join in the fun and so make this ladies' night such a grand occasion.

Heard This?

Phil: Dearest, will you take father apart and speak to him.

Bill: Loved one, when he hears I want to marry you I won't have to take him apart, he'll explode of his own accord!

LEST WE FORGET

OCTOBER

Wordie, Pte. R. D., died of illness New Guinea, Oct. 30, 1943. Age 23.

Brown, Tpr. T., missing New Guinea Oct. 25, 1943. Age 29.

Mitchell, Pte. P. R., killed in action New Guinea Oct. 25, 1943. Age 20.

Nagle, Lieut. V. F., killed in action New Guinea Oct. 4, 1943. Age 28.

Personalities

Merv Ryan is at present in Hollywood Hospital having a skin graft on his leg and looks like having a long stay. Here is YOUR chance to do your boy scout act. Hop down and see him and cheer him on his way. We hope that this operation will see the end of Merv's troubles and is a complete success.

Peter Alexander has also had a stay in Hollywood but has now recovered and has returned home. Mrs. Alexander was in Perth and took the opportunity to attend the Ladies' Night for the first time.

It is my sad duty to report the passing of Jack Chisholm who died at Longford, Tas., on Sept. 9. Jack, you will remember, was a Major with 2/40th Bn. and was with us for a considerable time and assisted Don Turton to form "Don" Platoon on Timor. He was a truly lovable man and I never remember ever seeing him put out or out of sorts. He died while playing indoor bowls at the local R.S.L. club from a heart attack. We extend our sincere condolences to Mrs. Chisholm and the family and hope their loss will be tempered for them.

News to hand that Ray Cole has at long last entered the holy state of matrimony. No details but we extend our felicitations on the double harness business, Ray, and wish you bundles of success. If you are in need of any advice on matrimony just drop me a line and I will send you the culled experiences of many of us "old hands" under plain sealed cover in asbestos binding.

Tom Nisbet brings news of a chap who nearly was one of us having been on the "Armada" when

it was sunk on its way to Timor. This is Don Callender who is now a permanent soldier captain type in charge of school cadets at Western Command. Don, if I remember aright, was sports officer with one of the battalions we encountered during our stay in the Wau-Bulolo area.

The response to the circular issued to Western Australian members requesting vital statistics is still not wonderful so if YOU or YOUR WIFE have not performed this small chore then there is no time like the present.

Betty Mackintosh wrote on her circular to say that she was one of

the "original" wives of the Unit and reads the "Courier" avidly as does the whole family. Betty says she feels as if she knows everyone. Thanks for your nice compliment, Betty.

Congratulations to Lynette Boyland, elder daughter of Geo. and Dot Boyland, on obtaining a scholarship in the recent examinations. Looks like you have a genius on your hands there Geo. and Dot, treat with utmost respect.

Sorry to hear May Campbell, wife of Arch, is on the sick list and confined to barracks for a few weeks. Hope you have a speedy recovery, May.

Random Harvest

F. P. CUNNINGHAM, of 182 Augustas St., Geraldton, writes:—

I am enclosing the sweep butts and a money order for £2 and hope the sweep meets with every success. I have been flat out since I have been home. Renewing water pipes and repainting the interior of my home. I met Joe Brand in town the other day. He had been called for the jury and was he going very crook. He said he had to leave shearers on the property and as the weather was threatening he should be home to get some sheep yarded up and to top everything off the police force here didn't know he had been summoned.

Best wishes to all the Unit.

JEAN (Mrs. Herbie) THOMAS, of 44 Medina Ave., Medina, writes:

I am enclosing postal notes to the value of £1/14/- for tickets we have sold for you. We are sorry not to have sold the lot. Herbie and I have been very busy, we have moved from North Perth to Medina and ia has taken all our spare time to get packed up and get away and to get settled in our new home. We both like the place and I think we will be very happy living here.

Tommo said before leaving Perth we were surrounded by Dings and now we are hemmed in by Wood-blines.

Hoping you are in the best of health.

IAN RONALD, of 527 Cummins St., Broken Hill, writes:—

Thank you for the "Courier" which has been arriving regularly.

Lionel Newton and I both think we are now unfinancial, so we are enclosing £1 each to bring our subs for the paper up to date for a while.

In the last few years here we have seen Ted "Saltbush" Timke and "Drip" and "Drop" Hilliard.

I shall be attending the re-union next Anzac Day in Sydney.

REG HARRINGTON, of "Ainaro," Wyening, writes:—

Just a line to answer a query regarding date of embarkation to Timor. We got on the boat on my 22nd birthday, Dec. 8. I would not be certain but am almost certain we landed on Timor on the 12th, but am quite certain of the 8th.

I wonder if through the "Courier" you could get some addresses for me. I'll put them in a column list to make it easier to follow.

Kieth Waters, Wagga, N.S.W.

Ron Eastick, Vic. (I think).

Charlie Browne, Vic.

Pat Haywood, Tas.

Jack Byrne or Burn, Tas.

I would be grateful if you could get me these as I would like to drop them a line some time.

I doubt that Dot and I will make it to Ladies' Night. It is the one night of the year she really enjoys, but accompanying list will give you

a bit of an idea how impossible it is to get down. Incidentally mum indicated that said list was designed purely for slackers. I don't really think she means that though. We get a lot of fun out of them to compensate for the occasions when we have to forego outings we would like to attend.

(Here are your addresses:

K. Waters, c/- P.M.G. Dept.,

Wagga, N.S.W.

R. Eastick, 46 Pyalong Avenue, Rosanna, Victoria.

C. Browne, 30 Mountainview Pde. Rosanna, Victoria.

Pat Haywood, no address known.

G. L. Burns, Khartoum Avenue, Caulfield, Victoria. —Ed.)

RON SPRIGG, 60 Hill St., Albany, writes:—

You must get sick of the same old heading of, a few lines in with sweep butts, but that's all it ever seems to be from me these days, as usual I have taken most of them myself and enclose cheque and wish you every success with the sweep.

I would like to be with you all next Saturday (15th) but no such luck this year. I did want my holidays in August but as two of our boys are on the maternity roster and that means holidays where possible I had to stand back. However I will be thinking of you all and can well imagine the spirit of things at this time, 9.15 p.m., and wish everybody the very best of evenings and no hang-overs. Have not seen anything of the Denmark boys so do not know if they are journeying down.

Everything going fairly well in this part of the globe, we have had a really marvellous winter, most days have been more like spring but I guess plenty of time yet for rough weather. Things do not look too bright for you city folk and your gardens if you don't get a good downpour.

Must close so will say once again all the best with the sweep and hope you have a bumper Re-union.

W. A. DRAGE, of Box 117 Northampton, writes:—

What the hell is the meaning of this pink paper? And all this information you chaps want?

Well I hope every one of you

cityites are O.K. down that way, wearing the a— out of your pants and the seats off your chairs.

Well if all goes well I hope to see some of your smiling faces come Christmas, promised to take mum and kids down for a couple of weeks so look out. I'll try and develop a thirst by then.

At the present time I am in the middle of shearing, the sheep are cutting pretty good, hope to get 110 to 115 bales of wool.

Things are pretty darn dry up this way. Looks like there will be very little water to drink, so the local pubs look like doing extra well this wheat carting.

Well, chaps, must away now, have to arise at 5.30 to cook the breakfast for six hungry men.

B. J. (Peter) BARDEN, of 6GN, Geraldton, writes:—

This is the Voice of the North calling you once again from 6GN Geraldton. First of all let me heartily congratulate Joe Poynton on winning his rugby club's best and fairest award. They tell me you have to be tough to play that game; and how well I remember those games of "dog eat dog" we used to play at Strathpine before sailing for New Britain. Getting on to a more spectacular and scientific game (what did you say, Joe?), Aussie Rules, the Brigades Club of which I am secretary, has just held a very successful wind-up dinner and social, and for some unknown reason the club presented yours truly with a lovely tray. The name got another mention when my son Ross (17 next January) who is vice captain of the "Seconds," was awarded a trophy for best placed man. The "Seconds" won the premiership but our "A" grade failed in the final after being runner-up to the premiers the previous two years.

Eric Smythe continues to make his presence felt in our fair community. He has just been elected hon. auditor of the Surf Life Saving Club, which reminds me that the Perth surf clubs thought so highly of the surf boat constructed by the Geraldton Building Co. Pty. Ltd. and donated to the Geraldton Club, that the Swanbourne-Nedlands Club has just had one constructed, and other metropolitan clubs have also placed orders. Getting back to

Eric Smythe, he experienced yet another successful season of hockey with Yacht Club, and, despite the passing years, they find him a tough nut to crack in defence. In addition his knowledge of the game is such that he is also one of the association umpires. Eric had hoped to get to Perth last weekend and meet the boys, but he found this time of the year too busy a period to get away.

Jack Denman says he's feeling very well at present. He was at Northampton for the agricultural show, and said he met Bill Drage, who was looking fine (not in statue) and prosperous. He says Bill was helping the society by running a competition for guessing the weight of a sheep, and while Bill's not often short of something to say, he had just about lost his voice by the time the show had finished. There was one compensating point, however, Bill had his stall in a convenient situation and was able to oil his vocal cords. Jack also saw Joe Brand at the Northampton show and he too looked well. The same applies to Brush Fagg whom Jack saw on another occasion.

I've just been told that according to the local paper, one Joe Poynton, visited Geraldton with a rugby union team on Sept. 13. However none of the double-red-diamond types seem to have met up with him so he must have been busily occupied in his position of skipper of the visiting team.

Well I must be off now as it's time to broadcast my regional news.

A Further Letter from Peter:

I thought so much of a news item I'm using tonight over 6GN that I felt the rest of the boys should read about it in the "Courier". One Bill Drage of Northampton, deserves a special pat on the back from all of us for his thoughtful gesture. The item reads: "A Northampton farmer, Mr. Bill Drage, and fellow members of the Northampton Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. have combined in a novel money-raising effort for the sub-branch. Working on Mr. Drage's farm all last Saturday and Sunday, 16 members of the sub-branch carted more than 2,700 bales of hay from paddocks to the homestead. In reward for their efforts, Mr. Drage made a donation of £70 to the sub-branch."

NEXT MEETING 3rd NOVEMBER, 1959

FILL IN THAT QUESTIONNAIRE NOW!

Victorian Vocal Venturings

Jim Wall bumped into Arthur Hurst in town recently, looking as fit as ever. Bert Tobin called in to see Stan Weppner recently. Stan has his own property at Colbinabin, approx. 800 acres—650 sheep—200 acres under wheat and barley. Is kept very busy and doing very well. Bert also called in on Kev. Curran in Bendigo and spent the night there. Was right royally received and well looked after. Said Kev was still talking about the wonderful trip he had over in the West.

It was with deep regret that we learnt that Kev lost his mother recently, and we extend our deepest sympathies to Kev and family.

Dusty Studdy duly turned up for his holiday over here. Had trouble with accommodation owing to it being show week, but I put him up

at home and we have been having a good time, taking in the final and grand final football matches and Roy al Show, etc.

We had a night out last Tuesday but unfortunately we only got a couple of starters, Gerry O'Toole, Max Davies, Jim Wall, Dusty and self but we had a very good night.

Took Dusty to see Gerry Maley and Pete Krause who were tickled pink to see their old Sig mate again. We are going to take in the races at Flemington next week. Dusty has not altered much just a tell tale bald spot at the back of the cruet. I think Dusty may be glad to get back West as the weather has been pretty cold most of the time.

Have run out of news for the present so until next time, cheerio—
HARRY BOTTERILL.

New South Wales News

For those members who are not in close contact with us in Sydney, and in particular our country members, the tragic news of the deaths of Sid Hilliard, his wife Phyllis and their two children Ross and Sherman, must leave a lot of unanswered questions, so I am taking this opportunity to tell you the whole sad story.

On Monday morning, June 15, neighbours of the Hilliard family at Broken Hill discovered the bodies of the parent and children shot to death in their beds. One infant daughter Jennifer aged three was left unharmed and is now in the care of Sid's sister Grace in Sydney. At the time of the tragedy there did not appear to be any reason for it and the reports in the newspapers left much to be desired. Subsequent thorough investigations by the Broken Hill Police have revealed the full facts, and the Coroner's report from the inquest stated that Sid had shot his family and himself to death whilst of unsound mind.

Evidence given by close friends in Broken Hill showed Sid to be a loving husband and father, completely devoted to his home and family, a man who worked extremely hard to give his loved ones a good home and a happy comfortable life. No one could ever picture him as a man who would destroy the things he cherished most in life, and even now those of us who knew him well find it hard to believe that such a thing has happened.

Definite proof has been found that for some time prior to this Sid had been suffering from a nervous disorder and had been on the point of a complete breakdown. He had booked himself in to a hospital in Adelaide for shock treatment, but after a rest from work had been feeling much better and had deferred the treatment, probably hoping that it would not be necessary. For some days prior to the Sunday he had been acting very strangely, not recognising friends in the street, imagining things and talking of incidents which never occurred. He had no sleep for several nights and everything pointed to the fact that he

was again on the verge of a mental collapse, but unfortunately the climax came so suddenly and violently that no one was able to help him.

On the Sunday morning he went out two or three times but details of his movements are rather vague. He apparently returned home about 9 p.m. when all the family were in bed asleep. We can only assume that at this point his reasoning left him completely and he took his rifle and shot his wife and the two elder children as they slept. Then he must have snapped out of it, and realising what he had done, he wrote two brief notes, one asking his sister to care for the baby and the other a will. Then he went back to the children's room and shot himself. This is the only reasonable explanation for the survival of the little girl and the briefness of the two notes. The police doctors and clergymen all supported this theory but as the minister said at the funeral service, "God alone knows the full truth so we will leave them in his hands."

The bodies were flown back to Sydney for burial at Woronora cemetery, Sutherland. The funeral was by far the biggest and most touching that I have ever witnessed, and it was gratifying to see so many of the 2/2nd there to pay their last respects to our old comrade. We regret that it was not possible to contact everyone in time for them to be able to attend, but we didn't know the arrangements until the afternoon before, so we had to rely mainly on ringing the few whose phone numbers we have and hoping the rest would see the notices in the morning papers.

I would like to add here that Sid's parents believe his breakdown was largely due to a severe head injury which he suffered in a jeep accident early in the war, and I think it is highly probable that this old injury, plus strain from overworking, was indeed the cause of the tragedy.

Little Jennifer, who would touch the heart strings of even the toughest of you pseudo tough men, has been accepted as a ward of Legacy and has settled down happily in the home of her Auntie Grace and Uncle Jack. Our deepest heartfelt sym-

pathy goes out to Mr. and Mrs. Hilliard senior, to Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, parents of Phyllis, and to our mate Ron who was called upon to bear the burden of making the funeral arrangements and clearing up the inevitable tangle of legal procedure. Ron speaks very highly of the wonderful kindness shown to him by the police and other good people of Broken Hill, but nevertheless it must have been a tremendous strain upon him, and I must say that he displayed great fortitude in carrying the job through to the end.

As you all know by now from Ron Trengrove's very entertaining letters in the "Courier" we have recently been favoured by another visit from Barry Lawrence, here on a two weeks' movements school at Chowder Bay. It was the very great pleasure of my wife and myself to be able to play the hosts on this occasion, and we thoroughly enjoyed the company of Bloss and all the good friends who turned up for the party. Thank you all for coming and we hope there will be many more such happy gatherings in our home. Heading the list of those we invite next time will be Dorothy Went and Norma Keenahan—boy, do those two bints know how to enjoy themselves. A note of regret creeps in here though. I'm afraid the lemonade and other refreshments we dished up rather upset Jimmy English's ulcer and the poor fellow has been very sick ever since so sick in fact that they slapped him into Concord Hospital for a few weeks. By the time this reaches you I hope he will be fighting fit again.

Before the captain left for the West again we had another small gathering for the few who were unable to make the grade the first time. Last to arrive at the party was Bloss himself. On the previous morning, a Saturday, he set off for Cabramatta to visit Snowy Went and Co., blissfully unaware of the ambush he was walking into. "See you tonight about 10, Jack," he says. Knowing the form of the Cabra. push I says: "Listen, mate, you'll be bloody lucky if you get home tomorrow night."

Sure enough at eight o'clock on Sunday night everybody has arrived, the dinner is on the table and still no sign of the Lawrence. So I

get busy on the phone and eventually found his last port of call was at Paddy Kenneally's for Sunday dinner. Whilst Paddy was telling me how he poured him on the train at six o'clock, Bloss arrived ready to battle on—what a constitution the fellow has. Must be the good clean life he says he lives in the West. O'Neill held the floor most of the night and we all enjoyed his peculiar sense of humour as he reminisced his way through Timor, New Guinea and New Britain again.

Many thanks for the lovely landscape Barry, it looks swell on our lounge room wall above the buffet. Looking forward to your next visit, Bloss, and hope Red (pardon the familiarity, Mrs. Bloss) can make it too.

It was a great pleasure to see Doug Fullarton in Sydney recently, but unfortunately he was fully occupied with business during his brief stay, so apart from a flying trip out to see Curly O'Neill one afternoon, we were unable to arrange the usual welcome we accord our visitors. Doug is manager of a lumber company operating in a part of Borneo where I spent some time looking for Japs in 1945, and it's a pretty rugged country. He hopes to settle in Sydney in a couple of years time when he finishes his job up there. We'll be looking forward to having you with us Doug, and I hope the old liver is in better shape by then.

I'm indeed sorry that we missed seeing Don Turton when he went through here recently. I understand he intended seeing us on his way back from the north, but in a letter to Bill Coker Don said he picked up a bait somewhere along the trail, and because of the delay while the vet gave him a handful of salt and swung him around by the tail, he was forced to return by a different route. Ah! well, better luck next time Don.

ALAN LUBY, of Ambulance Station, Prince St., Grafton, writes:—

For years I have been trying to find both time and inclination coincidental and so send you a "surat"—at last it appears I have the ingredients, let's see what the cake turns out to be.

Firstly, I must congratulate you fellows in the West for the wonder-

ful way in which you have maintained the high standard of the "Courier". That little booklet is something which we all look forward to each month and how interesting it is to hear of the doings of all the old boys of the Unit. I feel that the esprit de corps which was built up during the years of the war is as strong as ever and something in which we all take great pride.

Unfortunately, in our little corner in the north of N.S.W. there are not many of the Unit members resident—Ron Orr, Harry (Doc.) Fredericks, George Mathieson, and myself being the only ones in the Clarence area since we lost Snow Weir and Mac McCarthy. Since moving here some four years ago 'blow-ins' have been Bob (Beaky) Smith, Cliff Paff, Smith. On my travels elsewhere I've contacted Col Knight at Lismore and Basher Adams when he was in Coolangatta. On another occasion Ron and I had the pleasure of meeting Stan Sadler and his family on their way through to Brisbane—could not make it on the night of their return as we were in the centre of a cyclone and Ron was flood bound at Maclean.

We were looking forward to a visit from Don Turton on his recent trip but were most disappointed when they failed to turn up. Jim Smailes is another who called in one time with his family—sorry to learn that he has been on the sick list.

Bob Smith was in the news recently when he met with an accident and rough seas prevented his removal from Solitary Island to the mainland for some days.

Fellows from other companies living here are Kevin Garney, 2/4; Sandy McCulloch, 2/7; and Jim McDonald, 2/5. Kevin Garvey has a magnificent set of pencil sketches by John Popworth, 4 Sec., 2/4, mostly of Timor, with a sprinkling of the N.T. and Arnhem Land, they are really worth seeing.

As I said before, we have been resident in Grafton for almost four years and find it very much to our liking after our three years in Gileandra. "We" being my wife Edith, Barrie (14), who is in second year at the local high school, Peta (8) and Maria (5) all who are fit and well.

Being so far from Sydney (450

miles) we do not get down that way very frequently and so have lost many of the contacts down there. We do miss the Anzac Day re-unions which were mostly held at our place but will try to fit in holidays to suit that time at the first chance.

Our service here is a mighty busy one as you will see from the enclosed annual report. My board has approved of an extra man to be appointed at the end of the month which I hope will make my lot easier. We cover the whole of the Clarence River area which has a population of over 30,000 and has an area of more than 6,000 square miles. Having a base hospital in Grafton, most of our work is done within the district, with an occasional transport to some other centre.

This Clarence area is in the main a rural area with dairying, cattle raising, timber and cane being the main industries—in the secondary line we have a watch factory, two ply wood mills, three butter and bacon co-ops and the only brewery north of the black stump where a delicious amber fluid is made.

Grafton is noted for its number and variety of trees, especially the jacaranda, which forms the basis of a festive week each year during early November when the trees are a glorious sight.

Every phase of sport is well catered for with the exception of Aussie Rules. We have many fine beaches within an easy drive and the upper reaches of the river system provide many picturesque drives.

Whilst at Giegandia I began to play golf, but after coming here I found that the course was a little out of the way. After a time I took on bowls and find it the most relaxing game I've ever played, and one in which pleasant fellowship plays a big part. Our club and greens are right on the river bank, the effect from the verandah of the club house being similar to a boat deck. The local R.S.L. have recently added a green to their amenities and they are due to open a £40,000 club building early next month which is really beautiful.

What spare time I can muster I try to be a Legatee with five widows and one teenage girl as my wards. Which creates a lot of inter-

est for me in the suggestion raised by Arch Campbell that the Association devote some of its thoughts along some definite line. Only those of us who are privileged to serve in the cause of Legacy, or by personal experience, can ever realise the need for assistance that the wives and children of deceased members of the forces experience. There are so many ways in which they need help and the statisticians tell us we can expect an ever increasing fold until 1965—not a pleasant thought but we must face up to it and plan ahead. I'm not quite sure what Arch has in mind but assume that it would be in the nature of an "adoption". This should be well within the means of the Association, not only in the

West, but N.S.W. and Victoria branches could also consider something along the same lines.

I feel sure that something will be done and trust it will serve as an incentive to increase interest in all branches.

While I'm on the job too, I'd like to compliment you fellows on their Honour Avenue project and the efforts they put into making this a real show place. I look forward to seeing Kings Park one day and join in with you in a jug of "Swan".

I guess it's time I finished this lengthy epistle and will endeavour to remember some of the things you need for "Historically Yours!" meantime my kindest regards to all with a wish that it finds all hands fit and well.

Have You Heard These?

A Man's A Man For All That!

Man comes into the world without his consent and leaves it against his will. During his stay on earth his time is spent in one continuous round of contraries and misunderstandings. In his infancy he is an angel; in his boyhood he is a devil; in his manhood he is everything from a lizard up; in his duties he is a fool; if he has no family he is committing race suicide; if he raises a family he is a chump; if he raises a cheque he is a thief, and the law raises Cain with him; if he is a poor man he is a poor manager, and has no sense; if he is rich he is dishonest, but considered smart; if he is in politics he is a grafter and a crook; if he is out of politics you can't place him as he is an "undesirable citizen"; if he goes to church he is a hypocrite; if he stays away from church he is a sinner; if he donates to foreign missions he does it for show; if he doesn't he is a stingy tightwad. When he first comes into the world, everybody wants to kiss him—before he goes out they want to kick him; if he dies young there was a great future for him; if he lives to a ripe old age he is in the way, only living to save funeral expenses.

Overheard in an Aussie hospital.
"Ullo, Bill."
"Ullo, Alf."
"Come in to die?"
"Naw, yesterdie."

★
The reason why Richard wouldn't open the door as he was asked in the recently popular song: "Open The Door, Richard," was because of how he had the house made.

★
The teacher was examining the class in physiology. "May, you tell us," she said, "what is the function of the stomach?"

"The function of the stomach," the little girl answered, "is to hold up our pants."

★
The commercial traveller's wife grew suspicious. She sent a telegram to her husband: "Jack, dear, remember you're a married man."

Later in the day she received this reply: "Am sorry, but your wire arrived one hour too late."

★
A man who had been asked to make an after-dinner speech as short as possible arose and said: "I have been asked to propose the toast of Mr. Smith, and I have been told that the less said, the better."

Historically Yours!

CHAPTER 5

WAR CLOUDS GATHER

The health of the troops started to improve after the change from the cocconut groves around the drome. "A" Platoon moved from Cactus Camp between the Comoro River and Tibar to a site near Railaco. What a relief that was! Many of the boys got it hard, those "A" Platoon boys did! The hardest chore was water carting and with most of the platoon weak from malaria and dysentery it was only will power that kept them going.

"B" Platoon moved further west towards Liquica and more congenial surroundings and commenced to learn something of the country and its inhabitants.

"C" Platoon and Headquarters were now well settled in at Three Spurs and efforts were soon under way to explore the country covered by the three platoon areas. Traversing by compass went on rapidly and the results were soon taking shape in the form of a map under the capable hands of Lew Thompson. What a pity that the good work was soon to be wasted. Little of this area was used after the strife started. The country further inland was to remain a closed book for some time and then the terrain was learned the hard way.

This waiting time was not wasted. The troops gradually hardened and what was perhaps more important, started to make friends with the natives—those unloved "boongs" who were soon to mean so much to all.

At this stage a determined effort was made by some to learn the language. The ring leader, was Capt. Callinan who, armed with a Malay-English dictionary and a Malay speaking native, was soon able to rattle off a few simple phrases, tossed off with a nonchalance that brought envious glances from the others. The only catch about it was that very few of the natives spoke Malay but at that time we knew little about the universal language of the island—Tetum. Meanwhile,

few of the troops could not bark a severe "Piggi" at any venturesome natives who approached too close. In fact, quite a few of the boys managed to go through the whole campaign with the sole use of that one word. In their usual insular style the Aussies insisted that anyone wanting to converse with them should use English. If they could not do that, they could keep quiet. Then there was the other school of thought who reasoned that a loud voice would break the language barrier. As soon as the Boong assumed a puzzled expression, the voice would go up a few octaves (or decibels) until eventually the long-suffering boong gave it away.

Life was reasonably pleasant in those days. Food was not bad (judged by some standards) although M. & V. for breakfast every day soon evoked nasty comments but we had fresh bread every day from the Dutch in Dilli, and odds and ends could be bought from the natives. But what tyros we were! The natives must have looked on us as manna from heaven. Our standard of values nearly caused inflation on a grand scale in those early days.

To digress a moment. Our downfall was caused early in the piece by one who was known to all and sundry as "Indian Joe". Where Joe came from and how he managed to get to Timor in the first place we never discovered. He appeared at the drome on our first day and was hailed with delight and wonder by the troops. His English was good and his flow of invective something to marvel at. The way he handled the boongs and advised all and sundry not to trust "those bloody niggers," was a delight—more so as Joe was black as the proverbial ace of spades. He claimed to hail from the West Indies and his proud boast was that he was a British subject.

Whatever he was, he was greeted as a friend and he turned that to

good purpose. At that time we had been paid in Dutch guilders at the rate of six to £1. Joe promptly proceeded to relieve all and sundry of their hard won dough. For a guilder, he promised to produce large quantities of fresh fruit, and, for that matter, he kept his promise. All troops at that time were confined to the drome, except for working parties and Joe was the ideal carrier. The catch was not discovered until much later. To the average native a guilder was wealth beyond the dreams of avarice and the fruit purchased by Joe for that amount (or stated to have been purchased) could have been bought in any market for a few pence. However, no one grudged Joe his rake off and we often wondered where he finished. No one would have been surprised to see him robbing the Japs with the same engaging manner.

Meanwhile the war clouds continued to gather. News was bad as the Japs moved closer to Singapore. The troops, who a short time before were complaining about the apparently aimless existence at Katherine, were now voicing loud complaints about their inability to help their comrades further north. Their turn was soon to come! An odd Jap fighter and recy plane came over to show that the enemy knew of our existence and it soon became necessary to post aircraft sentries. Slit trenches became more than holes in the ground and were looked on with some affection (except by those who had to dig them).

The Dutch commanding officer could not understand why Major Spence had condemned us to a life of exile in the hills. On several visits to headquarters he voiced his disapproval and urged our C.O. to move back to Dilli where the troops could occupy good quarters. But Major Spence took a firm stand. Whatever his reason, whether it was his native caution or considerable foresight, his decision was the means of saving the Unit. However, troops were allowed in to Dilli from time to time to sample the flesh pots and a trip on the ration truck was something to be wangled whenever possible.

The Portuguese Governor was still upset about the stationing of foreign troops in his domain and

moves were going on to have us shifted. At last the news arrived that the Portos intended to garrison the island themselves with troops from their African colonies and we were to move back to Dutch territory. Sgt. Eric Smythe took a small patrol through to the Dutch border to recy the route and the Dutch commenced to move large quantities of stores to Liquica by launch. They also established a staging camp at Hatolia where a dump of rations was made. More mention will be made later of the cases of Bols Gin which were sent to Liquica!

At this time, an accident occurred which had some influence on our later moves. In attempting to cross the swollen Commoro River by a ford which was never good at the best of times one of our two trucks was bogged. By the time it was towed clear the water had penetrated to all parts of the motor and it became a major overhaul job. It was returned to Dilli and never rejoined the Unit. It is not known whether the Japs ever repaired it but Peter Banovich looked like earning his long service pay before the job was completed. This truck would have been of untold value a few weeks later in saving stores.

Coy. H.Q. now moved to Railaco but all Company stores—food, clothing, explosives and ammunition—remained at Three Spurs. These were stored in large huts on the side of the road and were in a most vulnerable position. However the huts were of native construction with thatched roofs and, from the air, would no doubt have looked like a native settlement. Some thought was given to their movement when orders came to evacuate Portuguese territory but this was going to be difficult with only a one ton truck.

Jap planes became more frequent and strafed Dilli on several occasions. However, although they flew over Three Spurs occasionally, no hostile moves were made. Perhaps our crude attempt to camouflage white tents was effective but this is doubtful. Even a liberal garnishing of gum boughs did not make them look like anything but white army tents and the fact that the camouflage died and had to be renewed every few days made it a

permanent job. However, we proudly imagined the Japs could not see us but even so we scampered smartly to the slit trenches at the first alarm. If we had only known, the enemy probably knew to a man how many troops were on the island and was prepared to disregard any who were not on his immediate objectives.

We were learning more of the natives and their language every day. With no common denominator the language problem was difficult but at least we were soon able to master proper nouns. By pointing to an article and saying the Australian name it was fairly easy to get the native name, but it was still impossible to conduct a conversation. The myth of savage natives in the interior was still being expounded but the natives we met up to that time were simple and lovable—that is, apart from their odour!

They were inveterate gamblers and seemed to enjoy life in our company. Perhaps they sensed the gambling instinct in the Aussies. They love cock fighting and would stage a bout (or "main") at any time. We later found that they were mortally afraid of the Portuguese and the friendly approach of the troops found a ready response. They would stand for hours watching open mouthed while the boys performed the simplest of tasks and their doings were just as strange to us. Their first sight of a man taking out his dentures nearly caused a stampede. On the other hand their habit of decapitating fowls by the painful method of stretching the neck and sawing away with a blunt knife evoked protests from the troops. It was East meeting West with both sides having much to learn.

News of the Jap success continued but save for an occasional plane the war seemed very remote. Guards were mounted but very few

took their duty seriously—much to the disgust of the C.O. One guard committed the awful crime of firing his rifle at a stray dog (or so he said) and this caused a general alarm. No further news was obtainable concerning the Portuguese troops apart from the fact that they were reported to be "en route". We never found out what really became of those troops if they ever really existed.

(To be continued)

J. CORNEY, of 1306 Albany Highway, Cannington, writes:—

In last month's issue of the "Courier" you were asking for a check of the dates in "Historically Yours," of the day of leaving Katherine and Darwin. According to my old calendar we left Katherine on Sunday, Dec. 7, and Darwin on the evening of Tuesday, Dec. 9, arriving at Koepang on Friday, Dec. 12, leaving there on Tuesday, Dec. 16, and arrived at Dilli on Dec. 17. I trust the above may be of help to you. I had some more data on the moves over on the island but when I looked them up the writing had been rubbed out, so I presume it must have been when I was in hospital at Katherine when I returned, as there were some other things such as maps that disappeared there, but I never had occasion to look at this calendar until tonight and found it rubbed out. Fortunately the small one I got the above dates out of was in my pocket book, the others were in my pack which was in the store.

★

Heard This?

Fred: "That was certainly a heavenly kiss."

Meg (disappointed): "Yes, I kissed like an angel and you kissed like a saint."

NEXT MEETING 3rd NOVEMBER, 1959
at Monash Club (Melbourne Cup Night). Guest Speaker.

FILL IN THAT QUESTIONNAIRE NOW!

Address All Association Correspondence to Box T1646, G.P.O. Perth