



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

(Registered at the G.P.O. Perth, for transmission by post as a periodical)

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

Vol. 14, No. 140.

APRIL-MAY, 1960

Price 1d.

Editorial

Where Do We Go From Here?

The highly publicised and long awaited Summit Conference has come and gone. Ended before it really began. So much was hoped for! Absolutely nothing achieved.

The question arises: Are these talks at top level worthwhile? It seems so disproportionate that four men should have such power over so many millions, the greatest number not even subscribing to the global policies under debate.

The only seeming thing that happens is an inflation of ego prior to the conferences by the parties concerned and a consequent deflation of ego after they have met. The present policies of East and West are such that any attempt to marry them together is doomed to failure as it appears to be similar to the mixing of oil and water. It can be argued that any attempt at outlawing of war is worthwhile but it seems that in the present climate of things these abortive conferences are more likely to touch off the tinder to the powder barrel than anything else.

These conferences do not seem to be approached in a spirit of conciliation but rather each party wishes to bring their policy uppermost and expect the other parties to accept their evaluation of the situation. The lesser conferences of Foreign Ministers who just talk with little or no power to act,

seem to fit the situation much better as they seem to suit the status of both East and West providing a safety valve to blow off steam without the threat of a piqued leader rushing home to press the button to start World War III.

The West is facing these Summit Conferences in the position of having no security of tenure. The American President is in his last year of office and there is definitely no guarantee that the new incumbent will follow the policy laid down by his predecessor. Mr. McMillan has a slightly longer grip on the government of his country, but he most certainly cannot voice the whole sentiments of his own country or of the Commonwealth of Nations. The history of France is such that General De Gaulle may be here today and gone tomorrow. This leaves only the Soviet Chief with any real security of tenure or power to make any decisions stick. (This gentleman is not likely to stick very long to any decision that doesn't suit him.

On the face of it there appears no sound or fundamental reason why these conferences should be continued in the future as they do nothing but build up a false sense of high hope with the subsequently fits of world depression when they fail, as they seem predestined to fail from the outset. If a sounding board is required then surely the

rightful place is United Nations forum.

The fact that seems to have penetrated fairly deeply into most literate minds today is that Neuclear war is most unlikely as nothing can stop retribution. The side that sets the spark to the powder barrel is for certain to cop it on the back of the neck within 24 hours. And the big thing is the boys that press the button will be among the early casualties not as in the past when usually the instigators of war were very late on the death list.

Let not the failure of these alleged high level talks depress, rather think that while there is lots of noise and blowing off of steam there is little chance of actual war. Remember when the air is stillest it usually presages a storm.

—C. D. DOIG.

(The views expressed in the above Editorial are not necessarily those of the Association, but are purely the expression of opinion by the writer.)

Committee Comment

Since last a "Courier" went to press two meetings of the Committee have taken place.

The April meeting dealt in the main with final arrangements for Anzac Day and also took note of the position with regard to our claim for Theatre and Battle Honours. Mr. Nesbit has taken this matter in hand and is contacting various persons who may be able to assist us in this matter.

The Secretary reported that an excellent job had been done in cleaning up Kings Park although the roll-up to the working bee was not anywhere near as good as should have been expected. Thanks to Popes Ltd. a motor mower was made available and the long grass in the area was reduced to quite a good sward.

Another matter that was discussed was a recent circular from the Dept. of Army with regard to the early closing of applications for assistance in publishing of a Unit History. The Secretary was empowered to make further enquiries and if necessary make a formal application on behalf of the Association.

The financial position was a mat-

ter of some concern and it was decided to keep the matter under close scrutiny until the end of this financial year.

The Committee meeting for May was held on the 17th at Monash Club.

Anzac Day was reviewed in retrospect and the arrangements voted a success. The day paid for itself and did not impose a further burden on the Association funds.

It was decided that once again the annual Sweep be conducted on the Kalgoorlie Cup. Application to be made immediately to Lotteries Commission for permission to conduct this sweep. Mr. Doig would start off this application.

The June meeting was to be a Sports and Picture night with Maimed and Limbless Soldiers Association at Monash Club. It was decided to make an approach to State Govt. Insurance Office to use their parking facilities opposite the club on this occasion as it would obviate long walks from parking places by these disabled men.

Discussion was held on whether it was advisable to hold a meeting in May so soon after the Anzac Day re-union. Most members were inclined to think that this meeting was too quickly on the heels of Anzac Day and accounted for the poor attendance. It was decided to make a recommendation to the incoming Committee to do away with this meeting in future years.

An invitation from 2/16th Bn. for two members to attend their Annual Dinner was received and Messrs. Bowden and Doig were delegated to attend.

A letter was also received from 2/11th Bn. Association asking for representatives from our Association to attend a meeting to found a Council of Unit Associations. Unfortunately this letter could not be acted upon until after the actual meeting had taken place. It was decided that the Association write 2/11th and apologise for not being able to attend but that we send delegates to a future meeting with power to join such an Association.

The Treasurer was requested to make a copy of the statements of receipts and expenditure for the year 1959-60 available for discussion at the June Committee meeting.

Association Activities

The activities of the Association have been many and varied since last we managed to print a "Courier". To take them in order of happening:—

APRIL MEETING

This was held at Monash Club on April 5 and took the form of a Rifle Shoot on the small bore range. Boy, have we deteriorated as marks men! The enemy would be pretty safe with most of us drawing a bead on him at the present juncture.

As tipped in the previous "Courier" Merv Cash proved to be the winner. Quite a number tied in second position. Jack Penglasse was shooting like a champ for three shots, all dead in the middle of the bull, but then the old "Joe Blakes" loomed up and the last two shots flew off at a tangent. One marksman who shall be nameless, nicked out a piece of plaster at least two feet up the wall from the target.

A real happy evening with a most excellent roll up and voted a success by the gang.

ANZAC DAY

As usual this was an excellent re-union. The day started with the Association laying a wreath in the shape of our colour patch on the State War Memorial at the Dawn Service. Arthur Smith and "Spriggy" McDonald did the honours this year.

Assisted by a few from other Squadrons, apart from the 2/5th who marched on their own, we mustered probably our best ever Anzac Day march. About 66 were on parade and when you consider the big battalions who had five to seven thousand through their ranks only muster a bare 300 to 400 then our muster of 60 odd is pretty good indeed. That hardy perennial Mick Morgan carried the banner and gave the non-cheering populace a good sighter of the double cherry patch. Geoff Laidlaw led the parade for about the sixth time. Afraid can't say we were an outstanding body of men marching with the verve of 1941. It was a real hop, skip and jump act with a change of step every couple of chains. One thing I can say we make ex-

cellent time from the disposal point back to the 2/16th Bn. Drill Hall to take a quick refresher! The refreshment side was in the usual capable hands of Jack Carey, Mick Calcutt, "Curly" Bowden and Arthur Smith. They had the fluid flowing freely as soon as the troops arrived. Lunch was also the result of a great effort by Jack Carey. The Association owes a terrific debt of gratitude to those who attend to the refreshment side especially Jack Carey who always manages to see we are well fixed up and then retires unobtrusively into his shell. Add to this that Jack and Fred Napier also look after the financial side and see that the Association remains solvent and you will appreciate how indispensable he is. Too often too much is left to too few and if there is one complaint that can be levelled at Anzac Day it is the way Mick Calcutt, Ken Bowden, Jack Carey, Arthur Smith and Fred Napier are left to do all the yakker without much more than token efforts by others to assist. There is always the chance these lads will get browned off and indicate a particular orifice in which Anzac Day Re-unions can be placed.

The boys from the country were not so well represented this year, but one who made it this year who we hadn't seen before was Johnny Moore from Dwellingup. Johnny looks the same boyish lad he was in the army. Reckons the chance to meet the mob was wonderful.

The main doings for the day ended about 7 p.m. when we were driven to evacuate the rendezvous. The tougher ones carried on at other venues and reports to hand show that quite a few didn't get home till midnight.

All in all Anzac Day was celebrated as in the past with a slight improvement if any in attendance but on all other fronts we are definitely slowing down with catching up of Ammo Domini.

MAY MEETING

This was held at Monash Club on the 3rd and owing to proximity of Anzac Day and other causes, the attendance was pretty small. As there were not enough present to make this a bumper evening, those present indulged in a good old ear-bash.

JUNE MEETING

This will take place at Monash Club on Tuesday, June 6, and will take the form of a Picture Night and Games Night with the Maimed and Limbless Soldiers Association as our guests. Please roll up and make this a bumper evening. Thanks to Ampol and Arch Campbell a good programme of sporting films will be shown. We want a good representation of dart, quoit, and table tennis players to give our guests a bit of stiff opposition as despite certain infirmities they all wield a neat dart, quoit or table tennis bat.

EMPIRE GAME RE-UNION

Just to further jog your memories on this a few progress reports are herewith appended for this function to be held from Nov. 8, 1962. The Association is about to get down to detailed planning for their side of the Re-union and you can be assured if you make the event you will have the time of your life. The overall picture of the Games is one of frantic activity. The Games village site has been levelled and is in process of being grassed and made ready to receive the housing which will be done at the latest possible moment. The stadium area has been bulldozed and now awaiting the actual burning off and the earthworks done. This is expected to start this winter to allow initial grassing next summer. This site is situated in Bold Park under Raebold Hill and close to Perry Lakes. The scenic situation would be hard to improve. The present writer lives in very close proximity and will be in a position to keep you informed of progress at this all important venue of all the track and field events and of course the opening and closing ceremonies. Initial testing of the area of the proposed swimming and diving pool have been made and proved 100 per cent satisfactory and this will be proceeded with practically immediately. Tenders have been called for the grandstand for the Velodrome which will make this cycling track into one of the best in the world. On the private venture side the Chevron Hotel group are negotiating with the State Government for the building of a multi

story huge hotel in St. George's Terrace. This will definitely be completed prior to the Games. The Dept. of Civil Aviation is making resumption of land to make certain that Perth Airport at Guildford is a complete A1 jet port in time for the Games.

You will readily see from all this that Perth will be in a position to offer you entertainment par excellence in 1962. You who had your appetites whetted in 1956 with the Olympics in Melbourne will be able to take a second helping in Perth in 1962 and those who missed out here is your chance to catch up. Remember a quid a week saved now will give you the holiday of your life in November, 1962.

Personalities

Ron Kirkwood, our genial President, has been on the sick list. Had the cartilage removed from a knee which rendered him hors de combat for over three weeks. Unfortunately this period covered Anzac Day and Ron was a scratching. He is back at work now and says absolutely O.K.

Ray Aitken on parade Anzac Day as large as life. Hasn't learned to march since last parade, still bobs up and down like a yo-yo. Ray now the proud owner of a home at Mt. Lawley.

Bob Smyth also looking a picture of health and thoroughly enjoying himself at the 16 Bn. Hall. Says with his travelling in the North-West he finds it most difficult to be in many Association activities.

Pleasing to see Jimmy McLaughlin on parade once again. Jim is another country traveller who cannot be in much of our doings.

Fred Sparkman was one of our towering six footers on parade and looking as lean and hungry as of yore. The same ready smile leaps out at the slightest provocation.

Jack Sweet, from 2/6th, manages to make this parade each year and says that for sheer value it stands alone. Dick Brand is another of the lads who joins us each year and says he would be dead crooked if he had to miss such a swell do.

Ron Mears who was with the L.A.D. on Timor and was in Campbell Rodd's section in Don Platoon later, made it for the first time and

managed to recall a few old mates. Ron is in a garage at Scarborough and hopes to become an active member of the Association.

As usual the Fremantle area helped in a big way to swell the ranks. Merv Ryan now fit and well, was there as was Alby Friend, Mick Morgan, "Ping" Anderson, Curly Bowden, Jack Carey, Mick Calcutt, Arthur Smith and many others which shows just how strong the Association is in the port area.

Dave Ritchie made it this year and seemed to be enjoying himself no end.

Don Murray came down from Wagin for the parade and he is another who never seems to age a Wendell Wilkinson down from the outer suburb of Armadale with a permanent grin like a cow in a cabbage patch.

Saw Dick Crossing at the Dawn Service but apparently unable to make the re-union.

Joe Poynton who is now living at Fremantle, was among those present.

Ray Parry and Len Bagley who both work for W.A. Newspapers, made the grade also. Ray looks extra well and Len always looks as if the stoop he lives in is just the best.

Percy Hancock, complete with Coy. tie, looking the immaculate young father.

Jack Wicks and Geo Boyland were sighted among the hurly burly.

Tom Nisbet made it this year for our march. In past years Tom has usually marched with the uniformed troops and joins us later.

Jim Menzies, of 2/3rd, nearly always with us and was seen imbibing until late in the afternoon.

Bill Epps and "Dusty" Studdy represented the Midland area.

Joe Burrige and Col Doig still having their little contest to see who can attend the most marches consecutively.

Arch Campbell, of course, was also there to add a bit of good jest and lively conversation.

Had news from Harry Foster that Tom Foster now managing a big show for Victorian Government Sewerage Board. This is Dutson Downs, via Sale, and is being developed on similar but much larger lines than Weribee. Tom is most happy in this job which gives him tons of scope for initiative.

"LEST WE FORGET"**APRIL:**

Barclay, Tpr. C. J., died of illness, New Britain, April 6, 1945.

MAY:

Lilya, Sgt. D., killed in action, Timor, May 17, 1945. Age 21.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Don't forget June meeting on 7th at Monash Club. We want you there in a big way to give our guests, the M. & L. Soldiers, a good evening.

Mark your calendar in red ink for Saturday, August 20, 1960, for the Annual Re-union.

Start saving now for the Empire Games Re-union to be held from Nov. 8, 1962.

Remember to write to your long suffering Editor to provide him with much needed material for our "Courier".

EDITORIAL NOTE

This "Courier" incorporates both April and May. This has been brought about for quite a few reasons, one being lack of material, two lack of finance, three lack of time by the Editor.

(Printed for the publisher by "The Swan Express", 10 Helena Street, Midland Junction, W.A.)

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Mark Your Calendar in Red Ink for SATURDAY, 20th AUGUST, 1960, for the ANNUAL RE-UNION

Random Harvest

**BERNIE LANGRIDGE, of "Crawlia,"
Donnybrook, writes:**

On Monday I am railing a couple of cases of apples which I hope will arrive in time to be distributed after your meeting on Tuesday.

It seems we country folk are always using the excuse of being too busy—quite a justified excuse—and I thought this would be some evidence of being busy. I do hope you all enjoy the apples as much as we country folk enjoy the "Courier".

Now please accept our sincere apologies for this very late letter of thanks to the Unit for sending the very excellent Christmas presents to our family. There was a parachuting jet which our eldest son Kim enjoyed very much. Then Alex, our second boy had a very impressive army truck equipped with mounted guns. David, no. 3, of the boys, got a bus conductors bag of tickets, something quite unusual, and the twins, Erica and Glen got very popular toys in the form of a rabbit and a dog. Babs and I do most sincerely thank you all for the kindness and we know how much work there is in it all for some one wrapping and posting all these parcels. We are sure you would all feel well repaid if you knew how much the presents were appreciated.

As you know the Apple Festival is being held at Donnybrook this year and next year it is to be held in Bridgetown and the following year at Mangimup.

Could I suggest that the Country Convention be arranged to coincide with one of these festivals? The town "putting on the show" really is out to provide entertainment for the spectators, another advantage is the four days holidays enabling members to come from distant areas. There is usually an abundance of apples to be procured very cheaply.

During a telephone conversation with Bert Burges a couple of weeks ago he mentioned grouping the members of the Unit in alphabetical order and a certain group to be responsible for providing the "Courier" with the "necessary" each month. I think the idea is good

and have another one to offer. Make each Section responsible for providing the news each month. There were nine Sections, H.O., Sappers and Sigs. making 12 all told. If the idea appeals and is introduced No. 1 Section of "A" Troop could make a start and then it would be 12 months before the same Section would be called on to provide news.

We are looking forward to having the power on. Quite recently we were advised to get our house and shed and the cottage wired in readiness for S.E.C. to connect us up. All who have experienced farming with the power laid on say it really makes a difference. One friend even said an electric kettle was as good as a wife—that is his version. Not mine. I am sure it is going to simplify pumping for irrigation. We found the long hours required for pumping really tied the tractor up too much and we were considering getting another old one just for pumping.

We are kept pretty busy with our farm and family. I suppose life was meant to be like that. I feel sure we are all born with a desire to have something of our own and ownership of a home is man's greatest joy. It just happens that our back yard is rather spacious.

Robbie frequently drops in to see us on one of his trips to Perth. As you know he is a director of Wes. Farmers and knowing the service Robbie gave to the Unit it is not surprising that he is a really good representative for us in the South when our interests are being considered by the Board of Directors. Robbie is really on the ball.

As the time is about 10 p.m. and "lights out" will be sounded any minute now I had better prepare to crawl into the bunk.

Kindest regards to every member of the Unit. It is so good to get tit-bits of news of them all through the "Courier".

**JIM SMAILES, of P.O. Box 7, Guyra
N.S.W., writes:—**

Seeing that it is St. Patrick's Day and that it is also some time since I graced your mail bag, I will get a

mood. I have just received the February "Courier" and maybe you have rung a guilty bell in this quarter with your appeal for script. few lines off to you while in the

But truth to tell I have been away in Concord on two occasions since November last. The old arthritis has caught up a bit on me and I have had to go down to Sydney for specialist treatment. It is now in the back bone, and gives me a bit of curry at times. The local doctor thought that the specialists may operate in Sydney, but the verdict was no. It is too late they say, and I will just have to grin and bear it. I have to wear a leather corset to support the back, and derive a fair amount of relief this way. I am able to get about quite well, and supervise my 30 odd slaves, but am limited in many ways, and must not lift anything heavy. The hilly country about here makes walking quite an effort but I am getting along O.K., and there is no suggestion of having to give up the job or change my mode of making a crust. That would be hard after all the battling to get up the mining ladder a bit.

With the good old Federal Govt. taking off the import restrictions on several commodities last November, the users of antimony now find that they can import it from Red China and such places for about half what they pay us here. Consequently we have had to cut our mine production by about half, but of late some of our customers are coming back, and we are now slowly building up again. A little bit of pressure being applied somewhere I imagine. Yes, last year, 1959, this mine produced 95 per cent of Australia's requirements in antimony, and employed up to 50 men in various ways. There has been several new uses derived lately for antimony, and production may soon increase. There has also been a change in the ownership of the mine, and is now controlled from Sydney. I am retained however, and feel very happy about prospects for the future.

This mining is a really fascinating life, not only in dealing with the wiles and whims of mother Nature in finding the stuff, but in the human relations, such as the labour problems associated with

mining, and the often inexperienced directors who control the companies. They can present the greatest problem that a man in charge of a show has to face. They may mean well, but do not realise what is involved in the practical application of modern mining methods, and the hazards of the industry generally. However, I have always been able to show the reason for certain moves and have come off very well in the finish. The old out going company have shown their appreciation of two years' success, by a handsome bonus and a sound reference. One never seems to get to the end of it though, every mine and mineral has its own problems, and there is just as much to learn now as there was when I started 12 years ago. I must admit that the Kalgoolie trained men are sort after in the mining world, and certainly get a much more thorough training than elsewhere.

Well I hope that the enclosed few lines will help with your Editorial worries, and that you have spurred others also in to the act of taking up that lethal weapon, the pen. I will promise a further contribution for a couple of months hence, and hope by then to hear that your demands are not so pressing. Don't give up the sponge, the boys mean well, and your efforts are truly appreciated. The boys generally are typical of the race, and will not move until really in a spot. Regards to all and any of the boys you see, until next time.

**ARTHUR MARSHALL, of 7 Peet
Street, Harvey, writes:**

After reading this last "Courier" felt I too should take up the pen and make a donation towards its pages.

It is a fair while now since I last wrote so won't try to go back that far with my goings on, but will endeavour to catch you up on the last 12 months.

Since last writing I have gone into a carrying business in Katanning with my brother-in-law. We are partners in the top dressing outfit and this is just an extension. Sheep carting is our main work, but in season we do grain, bag super or machinery carting. I go back and forth to Katanning to work each week, from Jan. to the

end of April. I still carry on with my work here in Harvey which is mostly hay baling and a bit of semi work.

This season I baled just a shade over 50,000, my best year ever. Not a bad effort really when you consider just about every second farmer owns their own baler.

Robbie sure did call at my place one day when I wasn't home and the kids were all full of the news when I came home from work. You see Robbie makes quite a few trips up and down, to and from Perth. And according to me this wasn't just a social call. (Remember last time I wrote I reckoned he was getting a little deaf.) Well now I think the distance is getting a little too far and he is spying out the land for a stop over for the night, to break the journey kind of. Must really be coming a cartuous.

Donald (that's my boy) said to me: "Dad, was Robbie a soldier like you?" I said: "Well, hardly, son. You see it was like this. I used to let Robbie look after me when it was Langridge's day off." Don said: "Gee, Dad, I thought he looked like a soldier." Well Robbie we at least now know how you got that one stripe.

We did Bert Burges' top dressing this year and I sure hope we did a good job, because it appears to me that a lot of farmers in Bert's area follow his lead in a lot of things, and it would be good advertising for us. We have been flat to the boards with the bulk super this year and Clarrie Turner for your information (seeing you are doing some at home) with two broadcasters we have carted and spread up to 36 tons in the one day. At half a bag to the acre you can see we get over a fair bit of territory. We usually do about 25 tons a day. I suppose you would think that I wouldn't find time for much else, but I've made and sold my first broadcaster and have had a go with another chap at raising Christmas poultry. Played cricket during the summer. Won the Association bowling average and took most wickets, and to top it all off expect to become a father again any old day. Still in this case I am keeping an eye on my neighbour (he is 84). I have told Audrey that the game will really be on if the youngster is

born with a little white moustache.

(I was asked to censor this letter, as usual, to pick up the mistakes he may have made, but have decided to leave them as is, on account of I've made a few myself lately. —Audry.)

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

First of all let me heartily congratulate you on the excellent Editorial, and Ken Doak on his fine letter which prompted your Editorial. I must say that both the Editorial and Ken's letter provided plenty of "food for thought" and should make us refrain from worrying people about our little trials and tribulations when there are others less fortunate who like Bill Breslan accept their lot philosophically and make the best of the situation.

In these days of international squabbles it is certainly a tonic to read of the finer side of life. At Geraldton for instance, we have just been given an example of how nice most people can be in time of need. A Scottish migrant with three kiddies lost her husband when he was swept from their fishing boat, and within a short time one of our cultural organisations, the Repertory Club, had put on a benefit night for the family and raised almost £200. Patrons of the repertory show co-operated to such an extent that apart from filling the Town Hall to overflowing and paying as much as four times the admission fee, they contributed £16 in 1/- bids in three minutes 25 seconds when the stage hat of the main actor, the "Mikado," was Dutch auctioned.

I had a yarn recently with Don Young, who visited Geraldton from Mullewa to see local boxer Aldo Serimondi (former welterweight champion of Italy) defeat W.A. heavyweight champion, Steve Zoranich, on points over 12 rounds, despite the fact that Serimondi only weighed 12 stone as compared with Zoranich's 14.4. I noticed Don having a chat near the ringside with Nip Cunningham, who was amongst those cheering on the local lad. Don Young has been working on Bowtell's farm at Mullewa for years and says he's fighting fit, and that the same description also applies to

Irish Hopkins, who is still barman at the Club Hotel, Mullewa.

Jack Denman says his health is not too bad these days. He says you'll all be glad to know that Brush Fagg is out of hospital after a long stay, and is back again at Northampton. Jack had a few noggins with Brush the other day and says he looked reasonably bright.

Eric Smyth continues to take an active interest in hockey and is at present recovering from a cabaret held by his hockey team, Yacht Club, at which he and Jack Denman got together and had a good yarn over old times.

Kind regards to all the boys.

A Later Letter from Peter reads:

I have been having an even busier time than usual lately, as a result of the increasing recognition of the importance of our fair township of Geraldton—the virtual "Capital of the North".

We have just had an influx of 800 Country Women and 50 husbands from all parts of Australia for the first C.W.A. State Conference ever held outside the metropolitan area, and which proved an overwhelming success as well as a definite move towards "decentralisation"—a word which is often given little more than "lip service" by the higher-ups, but which you will all agree is essential if our great State is to be developed. Geraldton businessfolk had a colossal week, the cold spell resulting in the sale of a record number of woollen garments. In addition, one milliner alone sold 502 hats after emergency stock had been air freighted from Perth. ("Come to Sunny Geraldton" it's that way nearly all the year!) Then we had a week's visit by the Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner, who amongst other things had a good chat with R.S.L. members at an informal gathering, and a longer-than-usual chat with Jack Denman, who with his Military Cross might have been asked something of the 2/2nd's exploits.

All "Double Red Diamond" types around Geraldton would like to extend their sincere sympathy to Bert Burges of Broomehill, in the death of his sister, Mrs. Lesley Maude Mitchell, who was killed instantly when her car overturned

near Northampton on May 3. Mrs. Mitchell was a member of one of the best known families in the Geraldton region and had been Postmistress at Howatharra, 15 miles out of Geraldton, for a quarter of a century.

I ran into Brush Fagg, of Northampton, at Geraldton the other day and sad to say, despite his lengthy period of hospitalisation, he's still far from well. Brush says the complaint has now extended to his other leg. We're all hoping it's not long before Brush is able to be his old bright self once again.

Eric Smyth continues to figure prominently in Jaycee activities, being to the fore in debating and leadership training. Their next project is a "Civic Pride" week, early next month.

Irish Hopkins is no longer a barman at Mullewa. Apparently he's sick of the smell of beer, and has since been having a go at fencing and farmwork round about the Mullewa district. He is sweet with a particularly attractive lady at Mullewa these days.

To wind up for this month, let me mention one of the finest Mother's Day gestures I have known. It may be food for thought for Guides and Brownies in other areas. A party of Guides and Brownies from the suburban area of Wonthella visited all the Geraldton hospitals, as well as Nazareth House, St. George's Rest Home, Elderest Flats, and several lonely mothers in their homes. They presented 100 mothers with bouquets of chrysanthemums and roses as Mother's Day gifts.

Regards to all the boys, and tell Bob Burns I'm still waiting for a line or two.

BILL TOMASETTI, of Tapini, New Guinea, writes:

Without doubt reading the history of the 2/2 in the "Courier" stirs a lot of memories. It has prompted me to write about the trip Bernie Callinan did into Dutch Timor to discover the facts of the 2/40th Bn. and the other units that comprised the force at Koe-pang. If B.J.C. and Paddy Wilby also write you will have three versions for comparison, if you choose to use it. Mine is from memory

and is thus probably not fully accurate.

I suppose the trip was not among the most interesting of the side-lights to the Unit's campaign, but it was not without its use and, when we set off, the island (at least to me) seemed to stretch a long way to the west.

After my return to Dilli from Koepang three days before the Japanese landing, with the mail (Portuguese, as some will recall) I went to Railako. After the Japanese landing I assisted in the movement of stores back towards Vila Marie. At Vila Marie one day Smithy (Sergeant "C" Pl.) drove in on a motor bike and told me to straddle the pillion to be taken to Hatolia where I had to report to B.J.C. No doubt those who walked the distance envied me the ride—despite the skill of the driver I envied them the serenity and safety of walking.

The next day the party set off from Hatolia. B.J.C., Paddy Wilby, two (I think) N.C.O.'s of the N.E.I. army, and myself. We were mounted and must have looked a fine body of cavalry—I recall my stirrups were intended for bare foot riding and consisted of a small thick disc of wood on the end of a piece of rope. As many will recall, the rope was fitted between the big toe and its neighbour. It was a late start and the way was across the wide valley of the Lois River and then up to Kailako. I recall some distant shots as we crossed the flats but nobody seemed very upset. We reached Kailako very late that night—very tired. Joe Burrige and his Section were there and made us welcome. The next day on to (I think) Maliana and the next to Memo. Here we found Sig. McCabe comfortably ensconced in the Posto with the Chef—our party made do in an empty house. These two days were just hot hard work and the horses probably enjoyed it less than did we.

The Portuguese-Dutch border followed the river just next to Memo so the next day took us into Dutch territory. I recall B.J.C. and myself speculating about the number of laws we were breaking taking Portuguese citizens into Dutch territory. If I may make a

small aside, a party of Indonesian V.I.P. civil aviation people have just visited Tapini and it was my pleasure to give them lunch. One of them told me that an Indonesian surveying party, when recently working near a river that formed the border between their end of Timor and Portuguese territory, put a beacon on the wrong side of the river. It was immediately removed by the Portuguese. I wonder if this was the same place?

That night we camped in a village the name of which I cannot remember—we did buy and eat a small pig—however. Rumours of the position in Dutch Timor were now many and various—ranging from a counter-invasion by Allied Forces to large Japanese parties all through the territory.

The next day we reached and camped at a village whose name I similarly forget but where we did get useful information of a large mission station one day's travel ahead. It proved to be a long day and we arrived well after dark. The place was named Lahurus and it was a very attractively developed establishment of the Mission of (I think) the Sacred Heart. On arrival, not knowing the lay-out and hearing a service being held in the church, we quietly joined the congregation well to the rear. Needless to say we were soon identified and shown a particular brand of hospitality. That evening the priests gave B.J.C. a fairly accurate outline of the fate of the 2/40th Bn. and attached troops.

At one point that day we thought we had blundered into an ambush when we were faced by two close shots and all sorts of bird cries. In fact it proved to be an Indonesian serviceman on the loose who had accidentally twice fired his rifle.

The next day, at the request of the missionaries, our party set out for the camp of a small group of stragglers from the N.E.I. army, who were said to be terrorising the area. It was intended to disarm them. However we were preceded by a priest who had talked them into yielding. Perhaps he used our promise of assistance as a lever. We did confiscate, for the better prosecution of the campaign, a number of arms, some food, and some

saddlery. The arms were of immediate use as, either the same day or the next, we contacted Capt. Parker and his party of escapees from the Koepang battle. They had had an unpleasant trip and were glad to see our party. B.J.C. filled in his picture of the situation from them to the point where he decided it was not necessary to go further West.

After, I think, one more day being recuperation for Capt. Parker's party, we faced East and set off for what we called home. Our party was now much larger. Capt. Parker's group numbered, I think, nine and we had also collected or accumulated some Indonesian members of the N.E.I. army, some of whom later proved of great worth. No opportunity was lost to add to our line of ponies.

The return home was uneventful and the trip finished at Kailako, where we dispersed. B.J.C. joined, I think, with C.O. to report to Brig. Veale who had then entered our sphere of operations. Others went elsewhere and Paddy and I commenced shifting stores from Hatolia to Atsabe with the pony line that was one of the results of the trip.

In retrospect I suppose the passage of events rendered the trip unnecessary. Brig. Veale doubtless told our command more than the trip yielded, and probably Capt. Parker and his party would have kept moving East (as others did) until they linked with us. However those are hind-sighted speculations. The trip was conceived as necessary, none of those things that could have gone awry did and I, for one, recall it with perhaps a silly sort of romanticism.

Very best wishes to you all.

GORDON HART, of India, writes:

If my memory serves me correctly it was sometime during January, 1952, that I spoke to you over the telephone from the P. and O. liner "Stratheden" whilst on my way back to India.

I think at that time I promised to look you up when on my next home leave, but unfortunately I have not been able to do so as on my two subsequent trips back to Australia in 1954 and 1957 I travelled by air both ways. However,

I will be going on home leave again in May, 1960, and have decided to travel by ship this time so that I will be able to keep the appointment with you, although rather belatedly so.

I would like to thank you and the boys of the 2/2nd for forwarding to me each month a copy of the "Courier", and it rather astounds me to think that I have been a regular receiver of same although from that date to this you have not heard a word from me.

The "Courier" is read from front to back immediately it arrives, and I can assure you it has afforded me many moments of pleasure.

I must admit that my conscience has been pricked every time I have received my copy of the "Courier," and I regularly make a resolution to drop you a line. As you can see it has taken me over seven years to do so. In addition, I have always kept one copy with me with your address so that I can send you a cheque.

Recently I have read with great interest the article "Historically Yours". This has brought back many old memories and as you probably remember both Dan O'Connor and myself were with the Advance Group of No. 4 Cadre who arrived at the Prom whilst both your Unit and the 2nd New Zealand Unit were still there. We had the pleasure of accompanying both "units" on several of their training "stunts" which at most times invariably wound up in a certain section of the camp which left us rather the "worst for wear" the following day.

During one of my leaves to Australia I was fortunate in running across several old members from "B" Platoon of the 2/4th who will be well known to all your old "B" Platoon personnel, namely Bill McMicking, Jack Ellis, Ron Kemp, and of course, Dan O'Connor who I continue to keep in touch with. These happy re-unions have always ended up in a similar fashion to that which apparently some of your functions have a habit of doing.

Since last hearing from me there have been two additions to our family, and I now have a 14 year old daughter who attends boarding school in Sydney and who flies to

India each year for Christmas holidays. The two new ones are both boys, aged 7 and 5 who keep my wife and myself fully occupied.

In winding up would you kindly give my regards to all my acquaintances in the 2/2nd, and particularly all the old "B" Platoon and No. 4 Section boys. I am also pleased to note that quite a few of their names appear regularly in your monthly "Courier" and I am hoping to be able to meet some of those who are resident in Fremantle and Perth when on my next journey to Australia.

A draft of the above has been lying in my desk for nearly nine months. I guess it's time I did something about it.

I will be on the "Oronsay" due in at Fremantle around May 14, so instead of sending you the cheque referred to above I'll give it to you.

I hope you and a few of the boys can make it to the ship and "imbibe one or two" for old times sake.

My address for further "Couriers" is: 16 Colwell Street, Kingsgrove, Sydney, as I am returning home for good.

Victorian Vocal Venturings

Once again our big show of the year—Anzac Day Re-union—and with a change in procedure with our day, namely having the march in the morning and sport in the afternoon, we had to alter our usual form of re-union and at a committee meeting we gave it a lot of thought and discussion and decided that as it was an experimental year we would kill two birds with one blow. The 2nd Commando Coy. have been wanting us to use their drill hall for all our functions. The locale at Ripponlea (which is not as central as George Street Drill Hall where we have held it for the past six or so years) so we decided to hold our re-union there, straight after the march and see what reaction we would get. Well I think we hit on a real winner and it was one of the best re-unions I have been to. It started at 12.30 p.m. and I left at 8 p.m. and it was still going strong and I have since heard that they cleared the last of our fellows out at 11 p.m.—and they had finished the bulk beer by 6.30 p.m. (this hasn't happened for years) and then got stuck into the Officers Mess supply. Major Phil Bennetts, C.O. of No. 2 Com. Co., has been a wonderful help to us and is all for us getting together with his fellows, and so we invited their chaps to join us in the re-union and we found them a great bunch of chaps. We had a very good roll up considering the change. Some well known faces were missing but

we had one or two new ones, namely David Dexter, who later in the day got his brother Fred out to join us (Fred is Harbour Master at Ocean Island) and one look at him and we knew for sure he was a Dexter. He is down on leave and returning shortly. George Bryant who was interpreter to Dave Ross Consul on Timor, was also a welcome visitor, looking a little older (who isn't) but thoroughly enjoyed himself and was real pleased to be with us. Tommy Mildren came down from the bush. It's years since we have seen him, looking a little thinner but fit. Gerry McKenzie (round as a barrel) happened to ask him how come he looked so thin. An obvious answer: "I work for a living," from Tommy. Well, Gerry, ask silly questions, etc. But it was good to see Tommy. Ken Monk was down again. I do not think Ken has missed a re-union for ages, and Ken, Tom and Dex had a great pow-wow together and listening in I'm convinced "A" Troop won the war on their own.

We had our little impressive ceremony. Major Love gave a short address and Phil Bennett laid the wreath, and just before our ceremony I had the pleasure of making a presentation of a tie to Major Love. The tie has been designed by the present Commando boys C.M.F. in Australia. A green tie with a boomerang and stiletto motif on it. A very striking tie and Major Bennett kindly offered

to let us fellows avail ourselves of them if we so wished—an offer which was very smartly snapped up by a lot of chaps present.

We had a telegram sent from Lionel Newton at Broken Hill, wishing us a very successful re-union and was sorry he couldn't be with us. Thanks Lionel for your kind thoughts. As the re-union progressed the boys looking at all the present day equipment the Commando boys use these days, suddenly felt quite young and several boys were seen climbing up ropes hand over hand (amid much barracking) doing it the hard way until one of No. 2 Coy. chaps just showed us the right and easy way to do it, but I still think Bill Tucker did a sterling job in getting up to the top the hard way. Bruce McLaren prevailed on one of the young chaps, namely Mike Stewart, to show us the drill in jumping out of a Dakota during a jump exercise and he proudly gave us a fair dinkum exhibition even to jumping on to the mats. The parachute harness also came in for some solid work and quite a few chaps had a go at it. It was a great day and everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves and for you chaps who missed out this year make it a must next year.

Gerry Mailey has had a change in jobs and is now with a firm of Chartered Accountants in Dandenong. He came with Des Williams (still has his own butcher's shop in South Melbourne) and both looked very fit. Pancho Humphreys is still giving us great hope for the future (his wife is expecting in August). This will make two, already has a girl seven years. I also believe Pete Krause is also an expectant father. His tally will be four, already has three boys. Good luck to you chaps, nice to see a bit of life in the old bucks still. Bert Tobin had a letter from Max Davies who is now manager in the State Savings Bank in Hoptoun (up in the Wummera), saying that he will not be able to make the re-union this year. Finds the people very friendly and he and Grace have been well received and as Max says they haven't had time to wake up to them yet. They have roped him into playing bowls. The vice president of the bowling

club turned out to be a 2/40th chap by the name of Norm Kinghorn. Max says he is not far from Boy Coates. Has not seen him yet but as Max is getting a car shortly he will certainly call in on him. Max has asked that his new address be passed on so that he will still get the "Courier". Max thinks that Col Doig may remember L/Cpl Norm Kinghorn who came up as far as Atamboer but returned to the south coast on the split up and was taken by the Japs and spent the rest of the war as a P.O.W.

Well here is Max's new address: Box 143, Hoptoun, Victoria, also David Dexter's new address: 12 Grandview Grove, Upper Hawthorn, E.3., so if they do not receive their "Courier" you will hear the screams over in the West.

Bruce McLaren has taken on the royal and ancient game of golf and is a member at Eastern Golf Club.

Nearly forgot to mention our old ever-green, Baldy, who came up from Geelong during the afternoon and soon became the life of the party. It's always a pleasure to see Baldy and he really enjoys himself. He's all for us having another day out at the You Yangs—so we will have to see what we can do when the weather gets better.

That's all the news for now.

—HARRY BOTTERILL.

Heard This?

An old maid landlady rented her house on the agreement that no children were allowed. Several months later, the stork visited the house and the landlady was furious.

After writing to the Rent Collector, she learned that nothing could be done since the baby was born after the couple had lived in the house all these months.

Answering the letter, she replied: "Why, he's 64 years old and I did not think he had it in him. Would not this be false pretences?"

* * *

Manufacturer: "I want every married woman in the country to read this message."

Advertising Manager: "That's easy. All you have to do is address the letter to their husbands and mark it 'personal'."

Historically Yours!

CHAPTER 8 HISTORIC WITHDRAWAL

In all that has been written to date of activities in the Dilli area not a great deal has been written about "B" Platoon. You will recall that "B" came to Dilli on the "Canopus" after the "famous landing". This platoon settled down like all others in the Cactus Flat area and had their share of the malaria trouble as did all other platoons. Recces were carried out in the surrounding area with a view to familiarising themselves with their immediate area. Such places as Dinner Tree Hill, Malikow, Bazaar Tete and Liquorsa were reconnoitered and mapped. Cpl. Ray Aitken of 4 Section and his sub-section, were nearly trapped on one of these expeditions when a watercourse which they were mapping suddenly became a raging torrent as result of one of the many cloud bursts that occurred so frequently

The Platoon moved eventually from the hell of Cactus Flat into the healthier high ground overlooking the coast. The Platoon was disposed as follows: Ptn. H.Q. and 5 Section now being led by L/Sgt. Dudley Tapper at Malihow; 6 Section at Dinner Tree Hill and 4 Section at Bazaar Tete. This period, early January, 1942, was used to settle in to the new areas and carrying out further recces and getting to know the ground. Company H.Q. and "C" Platoon were at Three Spurs camp and contact was made with them through the Nasuta Saddle. Rations and mail were scarce and most sub-units were living off their own money, purchasing provisions from the various native markets. Creados (native servants) were being quietly selected by most of the boys and generally we had little bother to get a native lad to take on the job.

Rumours were still persistent that the Portuguese were sending their force from Africa to relieve the Dutch and A.I.F. and that when this occurred we would once again rejoin the main body at Koepang.

Occasionally recce planes with the famous red ball on their wings

would be sighted and later the lads of "B" Platoon were to see planes strafing the drome in Dilli.

About this time 4 Section was ordered to recce a route from Bazaar Tete to Balibo (Dutch Timor) suitable for the movement of the platoon to the Dutch territory when the movement became necessary. A small patrol with Lt. Nisbet in command, set out on approx. Feb. 18, 1942, to carry out this task. Moving through the coffee and rubber plantations of the Sociade Agricola (Jap owned and alleged to be bristling with transmitting and receiving sets) the party soon reached the wide reaches of the Lois River. After crossing the many smaller streams which went to make up the main stream they pushed on to Balibo where they found the Chinese stores well stocked and that night lived it up a little on the excellent wine and gin which was purchasable.

Early the following morning, Feb. 20, the party were awakened by the locals who reported that the Japs had landed and occupied Dilli. Some support was added to this rumour when nine Jap "Betty" bombers flew low overhead either on their way to or returning from some mission probably the now historic bombing of Darwin. By breakfast time further reports were received and this most thoroughly confirmed by local administration and the priests that simultaneous landings had been made at both Koepang and Dilli.

With all sorts of thoughts about what might be happening in their absence, Nisbet decided that he would make all haste to return to the rest of his section and to "B" Platoon. This was achieved by a long day's travel.

With the landing putting Coy. H.Q. and stores in jeopardy, preparations were made to move from Three Spurs camp. This was accompanied by many and frequent explosions giving a signal for the usual soldiers' comments about H.Q.'s.

This withdrawal by Coy H.Q. and "C" Platoon left "B" Platoon's left flank in the air and 5 Section took over the responsibility of holding this down at Nasuta Saddle.

The situation at this time was not considered to be too bright and the future definitely uncertain, but morale in the platoon continued on a high level. Everybody was kept thoroughly busy with patrols, camp chores and O.P.'s with a view to obtaining the maximum warning of enemy approach.

It might be as well to mention here that just prior to the outbreak of hostilities the "great" Paddy Knight had rejoined 4 Section after a period of penance with Coy. H.Q. "Paddy" was being made to earn his spurs all over again as by this time most of the boys were awake to him and his little tricks and were no longer being taken in to the same extent. "Paddy" had settled down well and was working like a trojan.

During the late February and early March period a number of incidents occurred which will remain forever in the memories of "B" Platoon. First there was the recovery of Keith Hayes by 5 Section and the excellent job carried out by Cpl. Allan Luby in looking after him and making him comfortable. The second was the sighting of the great Japanese Naval Task Force off the north coast of Timor as it slowly steamed westward. Wishful thinking on our part made it out a Yank Navy but we were quickly disillusioned when we saw the red ball marked fighter planes flying around it. The third incident was the night patrol "in strength" which the platoon carried out by going down through Tibar along the coast road towards Dilli to a native village near the Commorro River which was reported to be occupied by Japs. This patrol was carried out in the best traditions of Wilson's Promontory training and deserved a better result. Unfortunately the intelligence was incorrect—no Japs!

Until March 19 it appeared that the Nip was going to be content to occupy Dilli and stick fast. This was soon to be changed. Reports were received from both 6 and 4 Sections that a Jap convoy consisting of 10-12 trucks loaded with

troops and escorted by two Bren Carriers, was moving along the coast road from Dilli towards Liquisa. 4 Section later reported that the vehicles had unloaded the troops at Liquisa and the empty trucks were returning to Dilli. This section also reported that they were moving down to the coast road to set up an ambush. A patrol was quickly organised from Pln. H.Q. and 5 Section and it also set off to join the ambush.

The distance to the road could not be covered before a further convoy loaded with troops went past, also bound for Liquisa. However the ambush was set up by 4 Section who at this stage were unaware that Pl. H.Q. and 5 Section were moving in to support them. The return of the vehicles was awaited with mouths watering—this was what we were trained for—right up our alley! Preparations "as per the book" were set where the road wound around a rocky point with one side of the road dropping away to the sea and the other rising very steeply from the road. The charge set to stop the first truck failed to explode! Hell, what damnable luck! This vehicle got through. Thereafter 4 Section opened up with everything they had and although most vehicles were hit and would not go, the section could only certainly account for one "kill" with these trucks, and this was one Sgt. Morgan and Pte. Eric Mitchell caused to run off the road and plunge down the embankment.

In the middle of all this activity Pln. H.Q. and 5 Section joined in and added to the fire directed at the empty Jap trucks. 4 Section was still unaware that they were being supported.

It was a long uphill pull back to respective positions and the journey was not marked by incident. The possibilities of the following day were in the minds of all the troops. All those troops at Liquisa made a vivid impression on everybody's minds. It was not difficult to keep the lads on their toes. The troops reached "home" around about dawn.

"B" Platoon did not have long to wait. Early in the morning 4 Section reported that a large party of Japs were moving up the Liquisa-

Bazaar Tete track towards the latter village. It seemed with the number of enemy involved that this was to be a determined effort by the Nip to drive "B" Platoon out of the area. 4 Section subsequently reported from their position behind Bazaar Tete they could observe the Japanese concentrating around the Posto. They also saw the Chefe de Poste brought out and obviously interrogated about the Australian troops and their positions. The range was around 400-500 yards and there were some good L.M.G. targets presented. However it was decided to wait and get the attackers at closer range.

The wait was not to be long delayed. The enemy attacked in strength first on the flank of Cpl. Ray Aitken's sub-section. At point blank range the Japs suffered heavy casualties as they came through the chest high maize field. Pte. Eddie Craghill who was manning an O.P. some hundred yards further up the ridge, busily engaged the Japs on his own while the Sectoin was engaged below. The Jap support weapons, mortars and heavy M.G.'s concentrated on Eddie's position, thinking it was part of the defence.

The Nip continued to press home their attack despite casualties and at the same time commenced to move around the right flank of the section position. Nisbet at this stage gave the order to withdraw and the section commenced to move back up the ridge. It was at this stage that Ptes. Eric Mitchell and Paddy Knight were killed by a Jap L.M. Gunner who had managed to outflank the section position. Pte. Charlie King who was a great bushman and had done a considerable amount of kangaroo shooting in his day, got the flash of this Jap gunner and promptly dropped him.

To be continued)

* * *

Bernie Callinan writes:—

I started to write a letter some time ago to congratulate you once again on the work you are doing with "Historically Yours". It is becoming more and more difficult to be quite sure of the happenings of those days; however, the following comments may be of value.

I have often wondered whether the fog that covered Dilli that night

was a natural fog or whether it was actually a smoke screen put up by the Japanese to cover their landings. One of their ships stayed outside Dilli harbour and fired some shots which undoubtedly had the effect of concentrating attention in Dilli itself and thus away from the Comoro River.

I am not sure whether I actually attended the conference that was held at Railaco. As I recall it, the conference was held in the morning and I did not get back until the afternoon. I think I had a discussion with George Boyland and Rolph Baldwin whose headquarters were then not far away. My present recollection is that I did not attend the conference between Major Spence and the Platoon Commanders.

A lot of action about that time arose from decisions that had been made before the Japanese landed, and which of course subsequent events proved to be unwise. It had already been decided that the Company was to move back into Dutch Timor across the Nunera Plains. This decision was to conform with the requirements of the Portuguese and also the strongly expressed desire of Colonel Leggott to have the Company operating in conjunction with his force in the western part of the island. With this background it appeared desirable that the Company should move as rapidly as possible into Dutch Timor once it had fulfilled its initial role of destroying the aerodrome even if only for a short time. As later events proved, it was a great pity that the stores at Three Spurs were destroyed, but at that time it was felt that further stores could be drawn from the main force in Western Timor, and of course nobody envisaged the long period during which the Company operated independent of the main force and, in fact, of Australia.

Heard This?

"Jack," pleaded the girl of his heart, "won't you please stop drinking for my sake?"

"What on earth," was the reply, "gave you the idea that I drink for your sake?"