

2/2 COMMAND 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. 15. No. 148.

MAY, 1961

Price 1d.

Editorial

WHAT IS THE STATE OF OUR PREPAREDNESS?

The Anzac Day Parade prompts the writer to think deeply on the state of the nation in regard to military preparedness. The snap decision from seeing the various units both past and present, on this parade, must be we were never at lower ebb.

There is no doubt whatever that the remains of the famous units of World War II have reached a stage where they could no longer be of any great use as a potential defence force. Age has definitely wearied them and the years condemned them to the permanent turn out paddock. Despite optimistic press releases by the various Service Departments the parade of uniformed personnel leaves one with very lingering doubts as to the potential effectiveness of the present set-up.

It would be difficult to imagine a time in history, apart from actual war periods, when international

tension was higher. The Congo, Cuba, Laos, Algeria, France, Angola, could all blow up into major conflicts on the drop of a hat. The stirrings in Indonesia, Laos and Africa cannot be ignored by Australia. Despite the best assurances of the government the situation in West New Guinea could very easily embroil Australia in a dangerous situation, even a shooting war.

The present navy leaves terrific room for improvement and is a most doubtful fighting force through lack of personnel and of ships and armaments.

The air force is in much the same state. Procrastination by the government with regard to the type of plane to be used by the Air Force has the nation in a position where it couldn't fly an adequate Royal Salute let alone defend our shores.

The new pentropic formation of

SPECIAL MENTIONS

JUNE MEETING — at Anzac Club — 6th June, 1961

GUEST SPEAKER—Mr. Lincoln Wilson, of Wilson Johns, will talk on the General Aspects of Gardening. Bring along your long-haired mate. Have her bring along all her problems for Mr. Wilson to handle.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on 4th July, 1961 (first Tuesday in July) at Anzac Club. This is your chance to show your interest in Assoc. affairs.

the Army also seems long in accomplishing its objective of full strength.

Overall it appears that our defence should not knock an international top off the proverbial gridiron.

Assurances from the government are not enough to overcome the feeling of disquiet especially as the government has not a terrific record of keeping its mind made up for very long about anything as is instanced by the "On again, off again" attitude to National Service Training.

The time is swiftly approaching when associations such as ours, must get vocal with regard to Australia's preparedness for possible trouble. There are more than sufficient ex-service organisations to bring pressure to bear on any government, irrespective of its composition, to take a proper view of defence. When the larger nations such as Russia, America, United Kingdom, consider that some form of National Service is required, how much more so must this be required by a small nation like Australia, faced as it is by a long and vulnerable coastline to defend and with commitments to our island protectorate of New Guinea?

We cannot remain complacent much longer and probably in this election year would be as good a time as any to raise this all-important issue and see that Australia gets the protection it deserves.

Committee Comment

Since the last edition of the "Courier" there have been two Committee meetings and at both a considerable amount of business of interest to the Association has been conducted. Most of this has been of a month to month nature such as arrangements for monthly meetings, Anzac Day, etc.

It has been decided that the Annual Re-union will be held this year on Saturday, August 19, at the usual venue at Karrakatta. This particular Saturday is one week prior to the commencement of school holidays which commence on August 25. Please keep this well in mind and if in the country make up a party.

It was decided that the June meeting should be in the nature of a Ladies' Night and that a guest speaker be arranged. This was left to the Editor to arrange.

There was little else of general interest to readers.

Association Activities

MARCH MEETING

The annual Carpet Bowls Championship of the Association was held at this meeting held at Anzac House on March 7. There was quite an excellent attendance of members.

Thanks to the good offices of Geo. Boyland an excellent carpet was provided and this added to the enjoyment as it was possible to really put the bowls where you wanted to.

The winner proved to be a real dark horse, none other than Len Bagley who arrived unheralded and unsung, no record as a bowler as far as anyone could find out but, boy, did he show us how! Just romped through the elimination rounds and then went on to beat Percy Hancock in the final. Percy must be one of our most consistent sportsmen as he figures in most finals of any type of sporting event.

All in all a lot of good fun.

APRIL MEETING

We hit an all time low with this meeting only nine members attending at Anzac House for the Rifle Shoot held on the 4th.

Nevertheless those that participated had a bundle of enjoyment.

As usual Merv Cash proved to be too good and won by a couple of points from Bill Epps.

The Editor then suggested a "bob in" and a handicap event based on the results of the championship. Guess who won it? Yes, you were right the first time. None other than your Editor. He hasn't lived it down yet, especially as he had to shoot off Merv Cash for the "dough" on a no handicap basis and still won.

A further "bob in" on a "handicap yourself" basis was won by Percy Hancock, showing that Percy knows his own ability to an inch.

We are as usual indebted to City of Perth Sub Branch R.S.L. for the use of their miniature range, rifle and ammo. The only fly in the ointment was the poor roll up and we hope this is not a sign of things to come.

BOWLS NIGHT AGAINST MAIMED AND LIMBLESS ASSOC.

This particular function was arranged in a hurry and there was no time to advise all members of the date. The evening took place at the M. & L. Club at Colin-st., West Perth, on Friday, April 21, and unfortunately Jupiter Pluvius was not at all kind to us as the first lot of bowls had hardly been rolled up to the far end of the green than the rain set in and forced us all most reluctantly to rush to the safety of the bar.

Then it was decided to try ourselves out at darts. I never did discover who won the darts but it was a lot of fun.

The ladies of the M. & L. then treated us to an outstanding supper just to help round off the night. Fred Napier, "Dusty" Studdy and Col Doig supplied an item or two as by that time it was a case of "anything goes".

President Alf Ley, of the M. & L. Bowling Club welcomed us in a breezy speech which "Spriggy" McDonald most ably responded to.

Those present to enjoy this impromptu evening were: Fred and Glad Napier, Bill and Jess Epps, "Spriggy" McDonald, Percy Hancock, Jerry Maley, Jack Carey, "Dusty" Studdy, Ted Loud (down from the country), Clarrie Varian and Col Doig.

We extend our thanks to the M. and L. Association for a truly enjoyable evening and hope to be able to reciprocate in the near future.

ANZAC DAY

Anzac Day passed off in much the same manner as in past years, despite the change of character of the day in this State. I think all present were in agreement that no change from our method of conducting the day was desirable at the present time.

President "Spriggy" McDonald laid a wreath on behalf of the As-

sociation on the State War Memorial at the Dawn Service. Others noted to be present were: Bill Epps, Jerry Green, Col Doig and Fred Napier. As this service is held in the near dark there may have been others present but not seen by the writer.

The march was once again well attended and if anything we had a greater attendance of members than on any previous year. With a few from other Squadrons we mustered 66 which is a good showing as a few years ago the 2/5th Sqn. used to march with us and this year the 6th Div. Cav. marched under their own banner for the first time. They usually contributed one or two to our numbers.

As Geoff Laidlaw has been transferred to Victoria and Tom Nisbet was being used up to lead the uniformed army march, Col Doig led the parade. For the umpteenth time Mick Morgan did the honours with the banner.

After the march we adjourned to the 16th Bn. Drill Hall to slake the thirst acquired marching in an April temperature of 84 deg.

Thanks to grand prior work by Mick Calcutt, Clarrie Varian and Jack Sweet, all was in readiness for a flying start in the lager stakes. After a few rapid rounds thirsts got back where they belonged and then the ear-bash started. This was halted for a while to have lunch, mainly supplied by Jack Carey with assistance from Ron Kirkwood, "Sprig" McDonald, Bob Smyth, Alby Friend and one or two others. Boy, what a repast! Crayfish (10d. an oz. on the New York market), fish, crumbed chops, crumbed sausages, sandwiches, and what have you!

After the luncheon the show continued ad infinitum with the floor gradually being covered with dead Japs and cowardly confetti. The writer was an early departure owing to inability to cope with the fluid that cheers nowadays but it is understood that several of the better equipped types continued on into the small hours.

Now for a few personalities on parade.

Pride of place to the two Teds, Ted Loud from Manginup, and Ted Monk from Latham, who travelled

the greatest journey to be present and really made a day of it.

Ray Aitken suffering more than somewhat from meeting Ted Loud the day before.

John Burrledge also finding the going a bit rugged after a previous night out.

Doug Fullerton out of the blue, but looking his usual cheery self.

"Slim" James after getting his name in print about not opening his S.P. premises and it was real pleasing to see him at our show standing by his principles.

Fred Sparkman looking younger than ever.

Never saw Harry Sproxton looking better.

Joe Poynton, a ball of dash.

Charlie Gorton with a lip whicker to be proud of.

Afraid can't say Jim Corney looked all that well. He is having a bad trot at the present time with his health.

"Bloss" Lawrence, the mighty Capt. of Engineers, and a real tasty drop in his uniform.

Jimmy McLaughlin also out of the blue but carrying a ton of meat and looking well.

Arch Campbell marshalling the lads and lasses of Junior Legacy.

Dick Brand of the ready laugh and easy wit enjoying himself as always.

Fred Napier now fully recovered from his bout in Hollywood.

Dick Geere looked better than for a long time.

Padre Botterill who was with the Unit briefly in New Guinea marched with us on this occasion but attended the 2/6th function.

Jack Penglase oozing good health.

Dave Ritchie obviously enjoying himself, and the same can be said for Arthur Smith.

Mick Calcutt, doing a great job with the keg and ably assisted by Clarie Varian.

"Curly" Bowden doing things quietly this year.

Good to see Charlie King with the boys again.

Merv Cash, Bill Epps, Mick Morgan, Ron Kirkwood, Bob Smyth, Gerry Maly, Col. Doig, "Dusty" Studdy, Len Bagley and Jack Carey were other stalwarts noted.

This does not purport to be a complete list of those present so if

your name has been omitted don't be upset, just blame it on the Editor's crook memory.

There were a few notable absentees such as Percy Hancock with a staked foot, Ray Parry, Keith Hayes Geo Strickland, Jack Wicks, Roy Watson (working), Merv Ryan, Ping Anderson, Geo Boyland (sick) and quite a few more. We hope we see them next year.

Think it can be voted as well up to the best Anzac Day Re-unions, and we hope it continues along these lines in the years to come.

EMPIRE GAMES RE-UNION

Things are still shaping up well with regard to the Empire Games Re-union to be held in Nov-Dec., 1963. Despite what may be written in the press arrangements are well up to schedule, with regard to the games themselves. The 'stadium, the village, the velodrome, all moving along apace and should prove to be really outstanding sites.

The main fly in the ointment may prove to be accommodation and that will not worry our Association as we will undoubtedly be able to billet all who attend. But to be fair to other persons who might like to use any surplus billets we may have we would like to know from intending visitors of their desire to attend. It is not necessary to be absolutely certain that you can make it before you advise. If you think that all things being equal that you will be able to be in Perth for the Re-union and you have the present intention to attend then please let us know and we will book you into our billet.

Remember this function could be the last of its kind in Australia in our lifetime, so make every effort to be in it.

Heard This?

One burlesque theatre really packed them in with the sign: "20 Gorgeous Girls — 19 Beautiful Costumes."

* * *

Big Time Tess says her boy friend insulted her. He ran out of petrol right in front of a service station.

Personalities

Pleasing to see "Boyo" Hewitt in town recently. Hasn't appeared to have changed a scrap. Still keen on training a race horse or two and said he had a bit of success with one of his neddies at the last Kalgoorlie round. The "Boyo" very soon tires of tramping the city streets and after a couple of days headed swiftly back to the Golden Mile.

Also down in the Big Smoke for his annual leave was Peter Barden. Peter looked top of the morning and is certainly enjoying his job with the A.B.C. at Geraldton. It was good to enjoy a couple of beers with him before he headed back to the northern port.

Since the last issue of the "Courier" Ken Bowden and his good wife Millie, have become parents again. Another daughter, making three girls and two boys. Congrats to you and hope this addition is as good as the other four, Ken.

Also in the birth stakes was Clarie Varian and his wife. Twin boys were born to them but unfortunately one died after a few days. This was very sad for Clarie and wife and we add our very sincere condolences on their loss.

Saw Les Glasson also for a short while about a month ago. Les was heading up to Wyndham to take a job as maintenance carpenter with the meat works up there. He left his joinery business at Kalgoorlie to be carried on by his partner. Les never seems to age to any extent and was looking forward to the change of environment.

"Dusty" Studdy is also heading for Wyndham to work at the meat works and expects to be away for most of the footy season. Swans will miss a good solid pair of lungs on the sidelines.

Bert Burgess dropped in for a brief chat on a couple of occasions. Bert seems to get deeper and deeper involved in civic things in his area and his latest is a Veterinary Club of which he looks like being the organiser.

As mentioned in Anzac Day notes Doug Fullerton was at the march. Still in the timber game with Buntings, says he is seriously thinking of heading back to Borneo.

It was like a breath of spring for the writer to see his old mate Ted Loud once again and enjoy two or three good wongies. He took a bit of talking into staying down in the city for Anzac Day but I don't think he regretted his decision. He looks extra well but in point of fact was in the city for a Repat. Board for his back which has been giving him a bit of trouble.

Ted Monk must have the elixir of eternal youth as he looks the boy who first joined the show in 1941. He and Mick Calcutt and self bashed one another's ears on all subjects from army to politics before Ted discovered he had a "fine singing voice" and joined in the choruses of the day.

Ran in with Kev Waddington the other day and he was saying that he had run into a bad patch of health trouble with his wife who had been on the dangerously ill list for quite a while. We hope that your long run of outs as far as health goes comes to a speedy and successful conclusion, Kev, and that you both have a long run of good health from now on.

Saw Keith Hayes briefly a while back and he was a ball of dash as always. Still does a bit of country travelling and on one trip down Busselton way ran in with Joe Poynton and Roy Watson also on a spot of leave.

"LEST WE FORGET"

MARCH

Mitchell, Pte. E. H., killed in action Timor, March 2, 1942. Age 35.

Stewart, Cpl. Alex, killed in action New Guinea, March 19, 1944. Age 24.

Mulqueeney, Pte. G., killed on service, Queensland, March 22, 1943. Age 37.

Knight, Pte. P., killed in action, Timor, March 2, 1942. Age 31.

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.

Ladies' Page

This page of this issue is being devoted to the ladies to obtain their views on one subject and their co-operation on another.

Firstly the Ladies' Night held in Royal Show week has always been a bone of contention and it has been proved over the years as an Association we would be about the worst dancers this side of the black stump. So now we would like to know from you good wives just what form this particular evening should take so that you, the ladies, can get the maximum enjoyment from it. After all its main object is to give you a good night out and after us males have plotted the course of the night for many years with only average success, perhaps you women could weigh in with a few ideas. Please give this your earnest consideration and write in soon so that whatever arrangements are suggested can be put into effect this year.

Some suggestions which may help could be, not necessarily in order of preference:—

1. A theatre night at the Patch Theatre or some such venue.
2. A dance social such as in the past.
3. A barbecue evening at a private home.
4. A combined picture and games night at, say, Anzac Club.

The second matter concerning the ladies is the June meeting of the Association to be held at Anzac House basement on Tuesday, June 6.

For this evening we will have a guest speaker, Mr. Lincoln Wilson of the firm of Wilson & Johns. Mr. Wilson will speak on gardening in general and as most wives are usually very interested in gardening, we thought you would like to attend and so a most cordial invitation is hereby issued. Keep your mate up to attending this meeting.

Mr. Lincoln Wilson has requested that you bring along your problems so that he can give you expert advice. We can assure you of a most pleasant evening if you will desert the T.V. for one night.

Random Harvest

RAY AITKEN, writes:—

On Anzac Day a check on who knew the words of the various songs we used to sing, shows that we are getting old and that memories are failing. It was with a great deal of regret that we were unable to sing Geof Laidlaw's masterpiece "A Soldier in the A.I.C.," after the amber fluid had loosened vocal cords and Mick and Dusty had reached the conducting stage.

For what it is worth I am including those words I still remember. Before retelling them let me insist that "the meals were very sketchy" and "it's about this little rest home" are the original forms. It is noted that in the corrupt Ted Monk version these have become "scratchy" and "ranch house".

A SOLDIER IN THE A.I.C.
(To the tune of "Oh Lordie")
(Composed at Remexio by G. G. Laidlaw and certain co-opted major literary figures)

There's a spot not far from Dill
It's a home away from home
The meals are rather sketchy
But you never hear us moan.
It's about this little rest home
That this tale I'm going to tell.
The Chef Posto he is good to us
The natives all are swell
The Liorai gives us everything
And that's fair dinkie die,
And when we go away from here
We'll all break down and cry.
It's nice to be a soldier,
A soldier in the A.I.C.
Gor blimey, etc., etc.

We have some Porto friends with us
Of great stuff they are made
We know them as the famous International Brigade.

They've teamed up with the Aussies,

They're keen to have a slap,
With their old fashioned rifles
They're out to beat the Jap.
The only trouble with them

Is each Sino is a spy,
But when the shootings over
They sing as they halai:
It's nice to be etc., etc.

Now you must have heard of Nissie
And his Section No. Four.
They all went down to Dili
Just to start a private war.
They got in through the wire O.K.
And started up the street,
A Jap stepped out and said hello,
Their hearts all missed a beat.
They opened up with everything
And slowly backed away,
And when they got outside the fence
They all were heard to say:
It's nice to be etc., etc.

There may be other verses. If so they should be collected before we lose them entirely. It seems to me that no Anzac Day celebration will be complete if we are so hazy for words that we aren't able to give tongue on:

"A Soldier in the A.I.C.,"
"Stand to Your Glasses Steady,"
"Sailing O'er the Ocean,"
"The Lousy Lance Corporal,"
etc., and that some effort should be made to refurbish a few memories. Perhaps we could collect the songs and publish them in the "Courier" or failing that, what about a select committee to prepare a Company Hymn Sheet? If such a committee is formed I'd like to nominate Messrs. Morgan, Stud dy, Burridge and Monk. These mighty skilled canaries would no doubt add "Beautiful Dreamer" to the list in honour of our one and only gramophone record and undoubtedly "This is my story, This is my song, We've been in Foster and/or Timor too long," should also be included. The late Stan Ludlow used to sing it with a verve and dash which often scorned narrow musical rules.

Quite seriously, it's a matter for some regret if we are going to forget things which were part and parcel of the group and which at times of re-union can be quite effective factors in re-inforcing Association cohesiveness.

Further they are as much part of essential Company reminiscence as are stories of the great Paddy Knight and old catch phrases such

as "Mantolo La Iha" with the accent on the "ee" sound.

What about sending in those words boys?

With regards to all and a special mention for that big blonde animal "Pemberton Edward," who inflicted an Anzac Day eve wound upon me.

W. F. BRYANT, of 319 Stanley Rd., Carina, S.E.7., Brisbane, writes:

No doubt you will get quite a surprise to hear from me. Yes, sir, the old Sgt. Cook himself and still in the game cooking. Since leaving Victoria in early 1947 I have been living in Queensland, mostly all the time in Rockhampton, but at present I have my home in Brisbane. Some time back I met Alan Spence, the old C.O. of our show. He gave me the above address and until now I thought it would be nice to hear a few things about our old mates and what is doing over there in the way of the Association activities for since I have lived in Brisbane I have come across quite a few of the lads, Frank Craig, Spud Murphy, Angus McLaughlin, Frank Searly, Peter Hearl, Sailor Ward, Dr. McPhee, Beeky Smith, Percy Hancock, and a few others. Well I told them that I would write you and perhaps you might be able to give us some G.G. of the lads over there and what's doing in general, for it is my intention to keep these lads together so that we can let you know what's over here and who's who in the manner of speech, but on Anzac Day I told these lads we march with "Z" Force, and afterwards around to Victoria Barracks for a little yarn and a few grogs. They said they would be there O.K. but writing you I thought that perhaps you may have some papers, etc., put out monthly or so and if I could get something of the current affairs with the Association and of the lads over there then maybe we will have our own social and would be able to bring up to scratch about the lads in Queensland. I want to start this as we haven't a thing going and I reckon we should, so I am taking this on my shoulders to get things moving and round up every Tom, Dick and Harry who I can.

Are you in contact with the Victorians and N.S.W. lads? If so I would appreciate it greatly if I knew my old mate's address, Max Davies, Smash Hodson and George Kennedy, or better still, maybe if they have an Association going I could write them also.

Anyway clobber, I would be very grateful if you can let me have any information you can by Anzac Day for I know the lads will appreciate any news possible and it would make our day a bumper.

I do hope and wish to send my best regards to the Association and to all chaps of the old Unit, so bottoms up for the present.

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

V. P. WILBY, C/- P. Swain, "Kemsdale," Darong, Q., writes:—

Please find enclosed some more fuel for the fire. I ran across that newspaper article on Hoop and the oil prospects and other industries at Roma. You may find something in it to interest you. News is news whatever it may be, so I am told.

We branded over 1,000 calves today and tonight they are letting us know all about it. I find it hard to concentrate midst all this noise so excuse the brevity of this note. I intend to make up for it someday by sending you a bombshell. I'm just getting it primed up.

(The enclosed press cutting shows a photo of Alderman Neil Hooper, Mayor of Roma, looking at a bottle of natural gas from the nearby bore. —Ed.)

Historically Yours!

THE RAID ON DILI

Capt. Laidlaw, who had taken "B" Platoon back to the south coast regions of Alas, Same and Haterbidu to give the boys a chance to recoup from the severe mauling received on the occasion of the movement from the near precincts of Dili and also to give the malaria a chance to die down, decided early in May that the time had come when we should revert to a fighting force. He made his decision to move back into the fighting zone and considered that the nearer he could get to the main Jap base at Dili the better for all concerned. He moved the whole of his platoon to the village of Remexio (pronounced Remsha) and then disposed his forces throughout the area. Lt. Nisbet's No. 4 Section remained with Patoon H.Q. at Remexio which incidentally was situated about 10 air miles east of Dili. No. 5 Section, under Lt. Cardy, was at a small native village a few miles to the south and No. 6 Section under Lt. Mackintosh, were in reserve at another village further south. Lt. Garnet with a small band of our reinforcements was also under command.

The first task was to set up O.P.'s at one or two points and observe the method by which the Jap controlled Dili. It was also at this time that through natives who were loyal to our cause that contact was made with several Porto officials, one in particular being a police official by name Juan Vierra, who used to send information of Jap movement to Laidlaw using natives who moved out of Dili to till plantations and such like. These natives would have notes concealed in their leipers and when searched by Jap sentries would drop their leipers, folds and all, to the ground and when the search was over lift them up again, note and all.

It was at this time that Laidlaw conceived the idea of a night raid on Dili as a diversion and if carried to the ultimate to try and release Pte. Merv Ryan who was known to be a prisoner in one of the huts in Dili.

Now let Ray Aitken, who was a member of this raiding party, tell the story in his own words.

The raid on Dili was conducted by No. 4 Section on the night of May 15/16, 1942. It was conceiv-

ed and planned by Geof Laidlaw as a partial answer to the dangerous inroads the enemy had made by occupying Eremera. At its outset it had a dual purpose. Its aims were to shoot up Jap H.Q. and if possible in the subsequent confusion to liberate Pte. Merv Ryan, who had been wounded and captured in the aerodrome fracas at the time of the initial Nipponese landing.

Laidlaw and Nisbet conducted a two man daylight reconnaissance of the eastern approaches to Dili and proved that there was little enemy activity outside his wire which enclosed the main township and the outlying groups of huts and a coconut plantation to the south east of the town.

They established contact with the people of the village of Cumeer on the forward slopes of the first ridge to the eastward of Dili.

It is perhaps symptomatic of the Australian prestige and also of the Mombai hatred of the Nipponese that these people who lived only perhaps 2,000 yards airline from the Jap perimeter and were in day to day contact with him saw nothing strange in a night raid being mounted from their village. It is also evidence of the trust we placed in these people that I do not think it occurred to any of the force engaged that treachery was even a remote possibility.

After effecting a survey within the limits prescribed by working in daylight Laidlaw and Nisbet set up camp in the village of Guiraca (pronounced-Kikrassi) to await the arrival of No. 4 Section which was moving from Hatuhuda via Mambisse and Aileu. The section arrived on the evening of the 13th and on the following evening the famous secret contact with certain Porto army personnel was made. No one has seen larger side boards, larger cigarette holders or a thicker smoke haze than was to be found in the Guiraca guest hut that evening. The writer never admired Geoffrey Gosford Laidlaw more than on that night as he tried to acquire reason and order from the mixture of Portuguese, English and Tetum and the occasional obscene and unsolicited remark from the door sentry, one George Hamilton Smith. The main tenor of the

argument appeared to tend towards the complete destruction of Porto neutrality, the elimination of Capitan da Costa and the liquidation of the island Chinese on the grounds that every sino is a spy. The centre for such a disturbance was to be Sergenta Martaens, who had little to say, but for whom his compatriots claimed much as a future guerilla chieftain. Martaens appearance and general bearing always led me to believe that some cockney sailor named Martins must have visited Lisboa 27 to 30 years earlier.

This Gilbert and Sullivan interlude while it had nothing to do with the raid, did amply illustrate the Porto love of intrigue or at least this love in its most verbal and smoke laden form. I think it was Robert Ewan who said: "If the bastards can fight as well as they can talk they don't need us to help them."

Next morning with our arch plotters of the previous evening long gone to their aguadiente and fetohs the section moved quietly to Cumeer arriving in the late afternoon. Here the first casualty emerged in that it was discovered that Charlie Pickering had a raging attack of malaria and a dangerously high temperature and he had to be left behind in the village. Norm Thornton had a similar if less severe attack and though he covered up so that he might remain in the party he must have had a very bad time of it.

"The Bull" ordered that faces be blackened with charcoal and clothing suitably camouflaged, and made a start with a total section of 15 as soon as it was sufficiently dark. Time dulls memories and no doubt anyone who went on this raid would like to be listed. The writer is not able to make a complete list but here goes. Capt. Laidlaw, Lt. Nisbet, Cpls. Morgan, Aitken, L. Cpl. Ewan, Pts. Thornton, Smith, C. King, Lacey, Kenneally, Blundy, volunteer Julie Madera and three more (speak up boys). Two were probably Holly and Ludlow. The latter is very likely as there were three Tommy gunners, Ewan and Thornton were two and Ludlow the probable third.

Only three natives were taken. These were those attached to Laid-

law, Nisbet and Aitken, and were respectively Battista, Rufino and Man Lare.

On arrival at the dry river bed close to Dili a rendezvous was established under a large tree and the three natives and surplus gear were left here.

The squad arrived on the north-south road opposite enemy outer wire at about midnight and some haste was needed as a diversion had been organised. Lt. Garnett had been detailed to conduct his section down the Cumeer spur to the east coast road and to open fire on the bridge and wire at this point.

Laidlaw ordered Aitken to take a man and investigate the possibility of finding a way through the wire on a usable track or road. Aitken selected Thornton, which at this distance of space and time was a pretty hard thing on a man who was rocking on his feet with "the wog". They found that the wire on one of the main streets was of two very efficient "knife/rests," but that the "rests" were secured together only by two or three barb strands to themselves and to the main gate posts. They reported back to Laidlaw that it would be possible to go over these links by pressing them down with a rifle barrel. Aitken was accordingly ordered to take a man and to prospect up the street to the approximate area of a lighted hut he had seen. At this stage Nisbet probably aware of Thornton's near physical incapacity, put himself in by saying: "I'll be the man, Ray."

Nisbet and Aitken prospected quickly up the roadside travelling in a drain about knee deep, but reasonably dry until they came opposite the lighted hut. The gateway to the hut was of white stone pillars. There was no gate but some kind of L.M.G. was mounted in sand bags abutting on the left pillar. It was apparently unmanned. They made haste back to Laidlaw and reported that the first 250 yards or so was passable and clear.

The section entered the town led by Laidlaw. Opposite the light Laidlaw halted his section and enquired of Nisbet and Aitken whether they thought the mounted gun was a Lewis. It did in fact look like a Lewis in such light as was

available and on this assumption and to allow us to use the same route in retreat Laidlaw started to cross the road to disarm it. A small bald headed shirt sleeved Nipponese came through the gateway to meet him in the middle of the road. I have always believed that our movement had been so quiet that the little chap was probably answering a call of nature. At any rate he tried to make polite conversation with "The Bull" who browned him off with his .45 automatic. They were so close that the O.C. must have run the risk of a big toe blood blister when the little fellow hit the ground.

The diversion, somewhat feeble in fire power, could now be heard. It lasted only for a few volleys and had No. 4 Section accomplished its mission and reached H.Q. it would have been very poor cover for the section's retreat.

Laidlaw now ordered the open fire and a general slow retreat. An enemy soldier with more guts than brains, ran through the gateway. A rifleman, I think Morgan, shot him through either the lower body or the thighs. He collapsed on the road but succeeded in firing three shots from a pistol almost vertically into the air. Apparently in a fit of mental aberration he was still trying to give an alarm signal. The Tommy guns enfiladed him at a total range of about 40 feet and he lay still. These were the only shots fired by the enemy.

The section backed away concentrating their fire low down on the bamboo walls of the huts. I think in that fairly dark night this was the most beautiful exhibition of controlled fire power I have ever seen. It was provided chiefly by about seven rifles and three subs. and was fired diagonally since each man was side stepping down the drain. It was not until the following week that we were to discover how effective and lethal it had been directed as it was into over populated huts with completely vulnerable walls.

Three people misjudged the speed of the movement and were left behind in the drain. These were Laidlaw and Kenneally, who were further into the town and Aitken who was still opposite the gate of the guard house. The last

had a quick look at the fellow who had fired the shots and discovered that he was headless. He then returned to the drain. Hearing noises further up the drain which he wrongly supposed to be the enemy but were in fact made by Laidlaw and Kenneally, he discarded the drain and took off down the middle of the road giving a fair imitation of John Treloar. He had no trouble getting through the "knife rests" as the cross strands were no longer in position, apparently being taken away on Julie Madera's shins as he navigated the section out. Paddy and Geoff also left the drain and made off diagonally through the plantation crossing the main wire at the north-south roadside. Aitken arrived first at the rendezvous, followed in about three minutes by Laidlaw and Kenneally. This speaks highly of Madera's capacity for pilotage as they waited a quarter of an hour for the section to arrive. During this time they endeavoured to quell Rafino's bawling since he was convinced that Tenente Nisbet was no more. "The Bull," probably since the group was so small, committed himself a small indiscretion, the only one of its kind I ever heard him use, in some well chosen words about the length of diversions.

None of us was injured in any way during the raid. The only losses were one rifle and one tin hat.

It is pointless to claim too much for it but it is possibly significant that the Jap withdrew from Emera and that he instituted a long term system of stand to's.

The bodies of the enemy killed and some fortuitously killed natives were incinerated on the aerodrome in a cocoanut pyre complete with slouch hats and web belts from the original struggle. The natives were invited to see the "Australians" who had been killed. This was a source of much amusement to them as their Cumeer cousins had been able to count us in and out.

Several weeks later, after the Singapore Tiger ambush and the subsequent mortaring of Gulgcraca by the Jap, when "B" Platoon was firmly established at Remexio, Juan Vierra paid us one of his information giving visits. Vierra it will be

remembered, was a police corporal at Tibesse who tried to keep us posted on enemy movements, subsequently joined the International Brigade when he hit the "Wanted" list, and was later killed with "Z" Special. On this occasion he taxed us with the charge that, "Australi mati fetoh," which he thought was a great joke. On being assured that no Australian killed women as such a move would have been regarded by a certain Cottesloe boy as a wicked waste, he asked us how we explained the number of women killed in the raid. We couldn't but he could. It appeared that hut number one was the main eastern guard hut as we had hoped but that hut number two had been the brothel.

Subsequent higher orders and a period of "passive resistance" eliminated raids like the one described from our battery of tricks. Although Laidlaw had proved that the wide Dill perimeter was intensely vulnerable to night stunts no further moves in this direction were made. There was surely little doubt that such minor raids were economical of effort and casualties. They were a type of activity for which we were specially adapted. It will always seem that it would have been much better to have had the Nipponese having the sleepless nights rather than ourselves and further that an intensive series of such raids might have forestalled the August debacle.

No summary of the Dill raid would be complete without a statement from Mervyn Ryan who must have died a thousand deaths that night. He was much closer to us than we realised and was convinced that he was due to collect a three-o round or a Tommy gun slug at any tick of the clock.

Get mobile and scribble a bit, Merv.

When in Town
Make The
DON CLOTHING CO.
Your Rendezvous For Mercery
 Meet Dave Ritchie and Say
 Good-day
 10% Your Way on All Purchases
Remember
DON CLOTHING CO.
 William St., Perth

Victorian Vocal Venturings

At a Committee meeting held 14/3/61 the main business under discussion was the arrangements for our Anzac Day re-union to be held as usual at the No. 2 Commando Coy. Drill Hall, Ripponlea, immediately after the march. All catering arrangements were attended to with the help of the No. 2 Coy. boys who are in a position to arrange our liquid refreshments through their own channels and this is a great help to us and we are very grateful for their keenness and support to help us at all times. It promises to be a re-union out of the box. Bruce McLaren as always is looking after the food and various other jobs were allocated to members. It was also decided to try and arrange to get a recorder and tapes to tape messages from our members to send over to the West boys—as we enjoyed their tape messages last year. We are hoping that Alan Munro will be able to help us out here.

We arranged a night out to meet "The Bull" and officially welcome him to Victoria now that he has been moved over here by his firm. We held it on March 24 at the London Hotel, met for drinks before tea and those that were able to stay on and have dinner afterwards. We had a very good roll-up and those present to welcome Geoff were Bert Tobin, Dave Brown, Smasho Hodgson, Bruce McLaren, Gerry McKenzie, George Kennedy, Gerry O'Toole, John (Bluey) Southwell, Kev Curran and his mate Cec Lapsly (who was over in the West with Kev on one of his visits and met a lot of the boys over there). Kev and Cec specially made the trip down from Bendigo. Jim Wall, Dave Dexter and Yours Truly. Everybody was able to stay on for dinner and we had a very enjoyable night and it was good to see Geoff again and we are glad that he is going to be with us for a while. Bernie Callinan sent his apologies. He was up in Sydney on business. It was good to see old Smasho again. Dex was telling us that Vol. 6 Official War History, "The New Guinea Offensives 1943-44" which he wrote should be published by Anzac Day and he earnestly recom-

mends it to all the boys. Dex put in a lot of hard work and research to write this volume and we should be very proud of him. Kevin has promised to come down for the Anzac re-union and we are hoping to see a lot of new faces this year as well as all the old ones.

This news is a little late but better late than never.

Pete Krause cracked it for a baby daughter just after Christmas this makes the score three boys and a girl. Congrats to Pete and Alvina they are both doing fine and we wish them all the best.

Was very surprised to hear that Gerry had gone back West. He snook out very quietly which was a pity as we would have liked to give him a farewell. Gerry has been a tower of strength over here for years and we all wish you the very best of luck and health in your new venture over there, Gerry, and may you make a packet and really enjoy the best of health. We will always be pleased to see you should you come over this way.

Well, chaps, that's all the news from Victoria at present.

—HARRY BOTTERILL

Hoard This?

The usual forms were being filled out at relief headquarters.

Official: "Do you owe any back house rent?"

Applicant (with dignity): "We ain't had no backhouse for years—we got modern plumbing."

* * *

A judge, noted for his straight from the shoulder talks, was addressing the court.

"We must all remember that money isn't everything. Money will not give us health, nor will it ease the gnawing pain of a broken heart. Money can never mend our broken dreams or bring happiness to a shattered home, nor can it ever repair the ravages of a misspent life."

He paused, adjusted his pince-nez, and continued sternly: "I refer, of course, to counterfeit money."