



White over Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by Post as a Periodical
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MONTHLY DOINGS

Considering that no monthly meeting was held in January owing to the fact that the first Friday was New Year's Day, the news for the article which is normally called "Monthly Doings" (for want of better name) is this month NIL.

Perhaps I should mention that this year has already created a record, as it is the first year, to my knowledge, that no meeting has taken place during this month. This monthly meeting has normally been the Annual General Meeting main business being election of Office Bearers. This year, however, I feel that the privilege and comfort afforded by our new meeting place, the Royal Naval House, more than compensates us for our loss and on the other hand it did this year enable us to have a Christmas Meeting in December, which in previous years only was possible every four years or so.

Per medium of the "grape vine" (not the bottled type) it has been brought to my ears that an ex-member of "C" Coy., during the holiday period, decided, and rightly so, to take his wife and family for an outing beside the sea and after a pleasant few hours returned home to find "Emoh Ruo" was burnt to the ground and all that was left among t the crew, after a tarpaulin muster, was swimming costumes and towels. The moral of the story is that "Rusty" McWilliams is looking for somewhere decent to live until such time as things are straightened out. CAN YOU HELP?

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

the night is FRIDAY, 5th FEBRUARY

All Members are requested to attend

ROYAL NAVAL HOUSE

GROSVENOR STREET, SYDNEY — 8 P.M.

DOES IT SEEM TWENTY YEARS AGO?

Twenty years ago, January 10, 1940, the first contingent embarked on His Majesty's transport, U.3. The 2/4 Inf. Battalion went aboard the Strathnaver on the morning of January 10 in time for lunch and sailed shortly afterwards. Although the departure was secret (officially), tightly packed against the big iron gates was a mass of people, mostly women and children. Down the harbour, accompanied by a horde of miniature craft and the roaring and shrieking of ships' sirens, the Strathnaver joined the other ships of the convoy.

It is unlikely that combat troops had ever before been transported in luxury equal to that aboard the Strathnaver. Officers, W.O.'s and sergeants enjoyed in their cabins everything the paying civil passenger had had, including a cup of tea with biscuits each morning. The whole ship's company concentrated on making things as happy and congenial as possible for all.

The Y.M.C.A. issued more than 30,000 sheets of writing paper and 10,000 envelopes, of which the boys made full and ample use. Training was easy and beer plentiful at 3d. a glass. Sgt. Joe Rognini was able to exercise the famous 2/4 Bn. Band and knock some of the rougher spots off its playing. There was a march through Fremantle, where the enthusiasm of the people was unbounded. Then on to Colombo and hot and arid Aden.

Disembarkation took place at El Kantara at midnight on 12th February.

SECRETARY'S MAILBAG

From Pat Lahey, who is now at the Technical College in Broken Hill. Pat received final word on his transfer, leaving him very little time to pack and make all the necessary arrangements and adjustments. We regret losing such an active Committeeman, and wish him good luck in his new location. From Jim Collins of 16 Iluka Street, Golflands, South Australia. Jim reports seeing Gordon Robbins in Melbourne recently, who mentioned that an Association tie was now avail-

able. Jim promptly forwarded a request for a tie. Jim was formerly Treasurer of the 2/4 Bn. Assn., Victoria.

Xmas and New Year greetings were received from the following:

4th Battalion (1914-18) (A.I.F.) Association, Frank Mallett, Jim and Marcia Crowe, "Bluey" Waltho.

Subs. from Alf Burgess.

Members, please advise the Executive or Committee if you know the correct addresses of the following:

C. K. Cameron, 70 Berry St., North Sydney. L. R. Campbell, 126 Stacey St., Bankstown. W. Carroll, 9 Stubbs St., Auburn. S. Calis, Ritz Cafe, Main St., Lithgow. W. Cearns, 225 Forest Rd., Hurstville. E. Cheadle, 9 Crown St., Fairfield. R. Christopherson, Dalton St., Orange. K. W. Collison, "Elroy" Noonan Flat, via Scone. M. L. Cosier, Lake Road, Wagga Wagga. J. Coombes, 14 Rose St., Merewether. K. Cowell, Hope St., Ermington. G. Cowie, 25 Healey St., Paddington. A. R. Crannis, 19 Jubilee St., Orange. T. Creasey, 4 Willis St., Arncliffe. E. L. Crispin, 202 Keira St., Wollongong. W. A. Crocker, 9 Bemore St., Penrith. L. E. Croft, Salisbury St., Orbost. D. Cunningham, 69 Dennison St., W. Tamworth. S. Croaker, Mitchelmore St., Wagga. H. Cameron, 57 Arthur St., Grafton. W. E. Dunn, 54 Bellevue St., Glebe. C. Day, Farm 595, Yanco. F. Dargan, 52 Tafort St., Glebe. N. Dudley, Cellandoon St., Goondiwindi. W. K. Eady, Mimosa St., Temora. J. Eatham, 25 Claremont Ave., Ryde. D. B. Everingham, Steelworks Hotel, Port Kembla.

HOSPITAL LIST

As far as we can ascertain none of our members are in hospital, which is indeed getting us away to a flying start this year and I only wish this present state of affairs could remain consistent for the remainder of the year. This, I feel, unfortunately is impossible, as we are all growing long in the tooth, so make another New Year's resolution that if you hear of any 2/4 Bn. man in any hospital that you will notify us and that you will yourself visit them as often as possible.

YOU HAVE A DATE FOR THE 5th OF FEBRUARY AT ROYAL NAVAL HOUSE

SUBS., CHANGE OF ADDRESSES, ETC.

Literary contributions, etc., should be sent to Peter Cade or Fred Staggs. Change of address and general correspondence to the Secretary and Subs., Donations, etc., to the Treasurer. President: Cec Chrystal, 24 The Battlement, Castlecrag, XL1993. Vice-President: Fred Staggs, 18 Bundarra Ave., Wahroonga, 46-3411. Secretary: Ron Barber, c/- Mosman Post Office, Mosman.

Treasurer: Fred Searle, 31 Griffith Ave., West Ryde, WY4905. Editor: Peter Cade, 19 Boheme Ave., Carlingbah.

BATTALION PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

Dear Editor,

I wish to acknowledge receiving from Joe Lowe of Auburn ten photos — 1 postcard size, 6 snapshots and 3 small ones. The postcard is of Jack King and Joe Lowe, evidently on leave, standing alongside stone building in F.S. dress. The 3 small snaps are (1) Jack Turner and Colin Stiff standing on lawn, background of shrubs; (2) at Tewfick, Aub South standing at door of railway box car P.R. on side; (3) in N.T. four chaps, only two names, Jack Collins bent over, with rear towards camera, Tom Mort near trees. The six S.S. snaps are (1) Bill Frater, Harry Taylor, Jeff Galvin, in Gallipoli War Cemetery, Anzac Day 1940, standing around a what appears to be a recently made grave, covered with flowers and wreaths; (2) Ian Menzies and another chap, name forgotten, in summer dress. Ian is holding a packet and something else I can't define; (3) Stiffy Way, Bill Wall, Lionel Ormiston, one not named, sitting in cafe, glasses charged. Now up to Balbeck, Syria. (4) Les Saxby and Joe Lowe standing in front of one-man tents, large tents and hills in background; (5) "Blue" Mooney in same surroundings; (6) Charlie Pearce and Joe Lowe standing in front of Nissen hut, all dressed up for leave; another chap in doorway, can't place. Many thanks, Joe, for photos and information. Also a coo-ee to Bill Collie. Well, Bill, I met Les Payne, he works on the Council. Said he was an old mate of yours and wishes to be remembered to you and Sam Gail. He lives at 127 Acacia Ave., Greenacre. —Cock Robin.

TRAVELLERS' TALES

From Alf Carpenter (continued):

12.30 found us ashore after handing in our already stamped passports to the Egyptian Army Police, for which we received a chit which has to be handed in to collect your passport on return. On shore we were at once met by a barrage of gypos, each "touting" for their various firms or with their own wares for sale, from Fez's to wallets, including all classes of leather goods. Things are slightly dearer here than at Aden and most shops were on fixed prices, although not many were lost on account of a slight reduction in price. Here we have a Woolworths, but with no connection with the famous American chain stores. Only a few of the souvenir shops near the port were open, on account of the late hour. I made a few purchases and then went to have a few "Stella Beers" at a cabaret. It was good to sit and listen to an orchestra again whilst we sipped a much improved Stella than we had dished out to us during our Army days. 5.00 a.m. came very quickly and soon we were winding our way back to the ship.

The population of Port Said is about 138,592, mostly native, with a mixture of Italian, Greek, French and English. We really enjoyed our few hours in this cosmopolitan city with its mixed population and usual footpath racketeers.

Mediterranean Storm

4.00 a.m. found us on our way again and in no time the lights of the city faded away and we were out into the Mediterranean on our way to Naples. As I got into the bunk and the ship started to pitch and roll I noticed that all canvas awnings and boat covers had been "stored in", a sure sign of wind and rough weather, so with this thought in mind I passed into the depths of pleasant sleep.

Morning found us rolling and tossing something violently and we were met with a freezing gale force wind as we made our way to the dining room for breakfast which, by the way, was very poorly attended. During the morning the wind increased in velocity and an enquiry from the Captain told us it was up to a constant force. Rope life lines were rigged along the sports deck between the different points so those foolhardy enough could make their way round.

I stood for some time leeward of the glass look-out awning on the sports deck. Waves were constantly washing over the decks and had by this time been whipped up to thirty or forty feet in height. The old tub was shuddering from stem to stern as wave after wave tried to envelope it in their grasp. After really freezing I decided to have a look at the stern which was more sheltered from this freezing wind which howled continually in the rigging. Standing on the stern was really frightening, as one second you were on tip toes trying to keep with the deck as it receded into a wave and the next second your knees bent as the deck came up to meet you in its 40ft. rise in the next wave. I hung onto the railing and looked over at the propeller, which was endeavouring to keep this shuddering mass of ship moving into the storm. Now it was out of the water and the engineer was endeavouring to throttle down to stop the terrific vibration, and next I wondered if the downward movement was going to stop before the stern was submerged. Throttle opened, we pushed onto the next wave again to repeat the performance over and over as we tossed at the mercy of this perilous sea. A small cargo vessel passing close seemed to be lifted out of the water as it bounced from wave to wave.

Frozen through despite a couple of heavy woollen sweaters, I made my way indoors and left the worry of keeping this mass of floating iron to the crew, thankful that they were from Genoa, where great sailors have been bred from the time of Columbus.

Inside, seats and tables were slithering around as their occupants tried vainly to anchor them to the roof supports. I had had enough and retired to the cabin to sleep my way through at least some of the storm. The deck stewards woke us with a bread roll and orange thrust into our hands, which relieved the necessity of going to the dining room, even if we could have managed it. We slept again throughout the afternoon and on cleaning up for dinner the gale had not abated. If anything, the wind had increased. Mrs. Carpenter and I went to dinner and managed some soup before giving it up as best, and although not sick I felt much less squirmish lying down. During the night the gale increased. A great pile of chairs and people crashing down brought the pictures to a sudden hold-up, whilst in the cabins stools, etc., were overturned and loose goods strewn all over the floor. During this chaos I went into a fitful sleep. Morning found us in clearer seas with a lessening wind. Over 70%, I would say, of the passengers were in various stages of seasickness. We called this the beautiful blue Mediterranean!

I notice that our route today takes us close to the Island of Crete. Many who read these notes will remember not only those who were left there during World War II, never to return to their native land, but also our forced marches from place to place and our final stopping place at Heracleon near that important aerodrome "The Charlies" and the Vineyards and the Cressy at 40 dracks a kerosene tin-full and in the morning the full force of the German airborne forces were poured down upon us from the skies, to be met with a barrage of small arms fire from all available weapons. There is no doubt, as it was proved on this occasion and many others, when quantities of small arms fire was brought to bear, that its destructiveness was greater than realised. But those are only memories which, we hope, will never be repeated.

During the 15 hours of the storm, the ship made only 137 miles, whilst our usual average for 24 hours is over 300 miles, so you can realise how we had to slow down during it. Today, it's really beautiful blue Mediterranean. The sea is like a mill-pond and one wonders how it could be changed overnight from what we had during the storm to what it is now.

Friday, 27th February

We are due at Naples at 6 p.m. tonight. During the early hours this morning we passed through the Messina Straits with their high volcanic mountains, and the lights of the many villages could be seen. We had the pleasure of passing very close to Stromboli Island, of Ingrid Bergman fame. This island, with its active volcano, looked as if it has had its rugged peaks pushed out of the sea. We passed a small village on its southern peak, where the main industry seemed to be fishing. No vehicles could be seen and I am sure they would be of little use, for the cliffs around the village would be impossible, even to a mountain goat. The only access would be from the sea. The ship passed between the island and Stromboli Rock, on which is situated a lighthouse and signal station. The lighthouse keeper would have to be very agile for the volcanic rock has no approach. The cliff face goes straight down into the blue sea and ladders are used to scale their 200ft. height. The top is flat where the lighthouse is perched.

We lose half our passengers at Naples, so we should have a very spacious ship for the rest of the journey. Last night the ship turned on a formal farewell dinner (with champagne for all), followed by a ball and the crowning of Miss Flaminia. One of the Spanish dancers, a charming lass, decked out beautifully and with the poise and grace of a talented actress, was selected and duly invested by the Captain. Gaiety and high spirits prevailed until the early hours. A few sad faces for some shipboard romances will be severed tomorrow night as individuals take their respective ways to their various destinations.

Naples — City of Culture, Architecture, Sculpture, Squalor and Poverty

The sun was sinking low in the western sky as we passed between Sorrento and the Isle of Capri. A heavy haze made visibility poor, but the rugged volcanic outline of both was very pleasing to the eye. Big castles

have been built in the most inaccessible places or perched on the very edge of precipitous cliffs overhanging the sea. Through the glasses I explored these two romantic places, both of which have had famous songs written about them. I felt one could spend a lifetime exploring all the wonderful wonderland of these two alone. As we passed Capri, I saw it outlined against the setting sun and it looked so lovely tinged with the red, gold and yellow of the sun's rays. I knew that I may never get photos of it like this again and I managed to get several, which I hope will show up just as good as it really was. Several luxury yachts passed us and then the light on the entrance to Naples blinked its warning through the haze. Shore leave is granted until 11 a.m. tomorrow morning is blurted over the intercom and we hastened to the cabin to get dressed. I have found from past experience that the less you look like a tourist the better you get along and the less you are pestered by the street vendors and the cheaper your purchases. So ashore I go with only pullover on, only to find everyone of the locals dressed in a coat. So you can't win.

Your subs. for 1960 are now due and should be sent to the Treasurer, Fred Searle, whose address appears elsewhere in this issue.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

This most important event will be held on the first Friday in February, the date being the 5th, at 8 p.m. sharp, Royal Naval House, Grosvenor St., City.

Main business for the night is to present the Balance Sheet for adoption and election of officers.

Make this night a must.

This coupon is only a reminder. Do not destroy your W.O.G. if you save them regularly. Just scribble a note and send your subs. along.

THE SECRETARY 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION.

Enclose herewith 10/6, being subscription to W.O.G. and Membership of Association to 31st December, 1960.

NAME (block letters).....

ADDRESS.....

Signed.....