

This is the War Diary of Private R. H. Edwards.
of the 52nd Battalion, 39th Battalion, & the 21st
Field Ambulance.

Called up for military service on the 15th August
1941. was in Camp for three months, went into full
time service on the 17 December 1941 with the 52nd
Bn. ~~was~~ volunteered for the 39th Bn on the 25th
Jan, 1942. from Seymour, came down to Royal Park
some day, stay there for two days, getting all our
new equipment, I managed to get home back night, on
the 28 Jan. In estrained on the first part of my
journey to Queensland, had tea at Wangaratta 6.30
P.M. arrived Albury 8 P.M. Changed trains, and left
8.30 P.M. for Sydney, breakfast Moss Vale 9. A.M. 29th
arrived Sydney 11. A.M. left soon after, and arrived
Newcastle 2. P.M. for dinner, left 2.45 P.M. arrived
Werris Creek. 7.30 P.M. for tea, left Werris Creek 9 P.M.
arrived Lenterfield 8 A.M. ^{3.00 P.M.} for breakfast, changed trains
again and left 9 P.M. for, Loughwamba, arriving 3. P.M.
here & de-trained and with the rest of the lads, were
led up the main st, by the local Pipe band, but
it was not much of a march, as we had too much
gear to carry, we were marched up to the local
showgrounds, we were the first troops that had
ever been camped there and the townspeople gave us a

a great welcome. we were corralled in horse stalls, but they were clean, and we were quite comfortable.

After tea two coppers and myself went for our first night out in the town. on the way up in the train the three of us had agreed to stick together, what ever came. Had a few drinks in town, and then went to a dance, and had a very enjoyable time, though we didn't know all the dances, we were soon taught them. on the 2nd of February, we were put into our Companies, and found out who our officers were. we were lucky, as we had one of our own from the 52nd Bn. and he knew most of us. the day was spent in getting settled down. which we eventually did. went to another dance on Saturday night, after borrowing a friend from our Regt. also had a great time there. we started training pretty heavy in the daytime, but all our nights were free. money was our greatest problem until payday, which was not for a week yet. we just had enough in our books to pay our debts on payday. it was an open Camp until 12 o'clock of a night, but some of the boys got a bit over the fence, while drinking, and it was cut down to 10 P.M. but we were having a great time, plenty of beer, and long marches of a day, we were all feeling in great nick in no time. Our C.O. tried to cut out all our

night leave, but we had to get over the fence. and
 come in the same way. The following Friday after our
 arrival we went to a dance, and there I met a very
 nice girl, Lucy was her name, we had quite a few
 dances, and I asked her if I could see her home. she
 wouldn't let me at first, as my cobbler was taking
 two married women home, and she wanted me to go with
 them, but I managed to persuade her, that I wanted
 to take her home, and she gave in to me. and I took
 her home, she was with a married friend and her husband
 anyway I made a date for the following night, which I kept
 and we had a good time, when it was time to go home
 I took her down, and she said, "What again", and I said
 "I hope so." I was in for quite a surprise, I thought I had
 taken her home the night before, but tonight she
 let me take her right home to her door. she said she
 was not gone to let me see her home the night before,
 as she did not know me well enough, anyhow it took
 much longer to say goodnight this time, and before I
 left I had the promise of another date, for the
 Friday night dance. at this time Day was getting
 on with the married women. I took her cobbler out
 and had some fun with her, but I did not like her
 very much, I would much rather Lucy. training was still
 on some of it was pretty hard. no talk of going

away, but we expect to anytime. I won the shooting match today, with 98 out of a possible 100. on Friday night I met Lucy again, and had a real good time, there was no protest this time when I asked to take her home.

and we made arrangements to meet on Sunday evening and to go for a walk, which we did, and we both enjoyed ourselves. I was beginning to think that I had met the right girl. I met her people who are very nice, and they gave me a very nice reception. altogether, I had a wonderful time in Townsville, but all good things have to come to an end, and we had word, that we were going up to Belkair, which is near

Charters Towers. needless to say I spent as much time with Lucy as I could the last week, and I really think she likes me a lot. her people do anyway. on April 16th. we extrained once again leaving about six o'clock. Lucy saw me off, with a few tears, and I didn't feel too happy myself, as neither of us knew what was in front of us.

We travelled all right and had breakfast at Oxendenburg. dinner at Lyddstone, and tea at Prockhampton, where we stopped for a couple of hours, the three of us are still together, we got some addresses of some girls who said they would write to us. I don't know if we will write to

them on not yet. on again, breakfast at Mackay
 dinner at Bruner, and tea at Tunnsville, left Tunnsville
 8.30 P.M. and arrived Belheim at 11.30 P.M. 19th April
 and had to settle down once again, this seems to be
 an awfully ~~fine~~ place, nothing here at all, we go into
 Charters Towers on leave rights, I have had three letters
 from Lucy lately, also one from her mother. we are
 not doing much training here. Today the 2nd of May, I
 had some bad news from home. my dear grandmother
 passed away, she had just celebrated her 73 Birthday
 have had a lot of letters of sympathy also one from
 Lucy. 4th May was detailed to act as provost
 today, to go after some chaps who had gone A.M.L
 but we didn't find them, or we didn't look very
 hard, and we had a nice day, it is a great war
 so far. 5th May unloading Arms from trains. This
 continued until the 16th, when we went collecting poles
 until the 20th which is pay day. In the afternoon
 we were in my tent playing cards. an officer was with
 us, and he had his revolver on. they had orders to
 load them the night before, and he was to test as
 how to unarm anybody who had on. one of my coppers
 came up behind us, and took the revolver from
 his holster, and not knowing that it was loaded, he
 pulled the trigger, and shot the Lieut. through the

6
chest, he died almost at once, the bullet went right through him, and came out where I was leaning against him, and I just felt it. they arrested my cobbler on a charge of murder, and things looked pretty black for him. Later in the evening, quite a few of us were taken out into the bush, as there were thought there were Jap spies sending planes up. we are taking turns in watching for them. in the daytime we are sleeping or playing cards. we stay out here for a week. when I am summoned to appear in Charters Towers Police Court, as I have to give evidence for my cobbler. I never want to go into a witness box again, but my evidence cleared my cobbler, and he is now a free man again. we are here for two more days, when we go back to camp. I am on guard duty tonight, but about 8 P.M. I and some of my cobblers are called out and told to pack everything as soon as we can, as we have to catch a ship in the morning, we know nothing of where we are going or what we will have to do. all we know is that we have to man machine guns on the ship. we arrive on the ship about 3 A.M. and go on board, and promptly go to sleep. when we wake up we are miles out to sea.

3rd June, we are sailing up the coast of Queensland, we are escorted by some planes. we still do not

know where we are going, but we are having a great
 time, good food, and we are catching up on some sleep.
 not much card playing, the ship is a Dutch, and is
 manned by a Philopino crew, we can't make head nor
 tail of their talk yet. I am on Watch daily, from
 12 to 4, and at night the same. Found out where we are
 going it is Port Moresby, we expect to reach there
 on the 6th, the water is very smooth. no seasickness
 as yet. 6th landed Port Moresby this morning, don't know
 much of the place yet, there is an air raid, and we are
 standing by the guns, while the ship is zigzagging
 everywhere, so as to make a hard target from the air.
 but the planes are not near us, and we can hear
 them drop on the Drome, which is about 2 miles away.
 we went ashore about 9:30 A.M. to see some chiefs we
 knew, who were already on the Island. after a lot of
 walking, and getting lifts we eventually found them,
 and were they pleased to see us. they asked us hundreds
 of questions, all of which we tried to answer. talk
 about hills, I have never saw anything like them, they
 go straight up and down, but we had to leave, and
 get back to the ship, as some of the others went
 to get ashore. when we got back we played cards.
 with some of the crew, we are getting on very
 well with them now. they have started to

unload the ship now, and we should be away from here
 by tomorrow, so of the houses are well knocked
 about by bombs, though not so much as we thought
 the 24th M.C. have a pretty good name around here,
 have a couple of Jap planes to their credit, also
 the act. act. which have brought down quite a few Jap
 bombers. Left P.M. 6.30 A.M. on the 8th June, for
 our return journey, the sea is very rough, I was very
 sea sick for awhile, but it has worn off now.
 It is now 10.30 A.M. and we are completely out of sight
 of land, it has been raining and is pretty dull, Tuesday
 9th the sea is very rough, very nearly sea sick, some of the
 boys are but I am still able to keep my breakfast
 down by a big effort. 10th June no change in weather, have
 not been sick yet, don't think I will be now, the boys
 are not eating yet, the food is too rich for them, the
 name of the ship is the "Japan" 11th we are having
 a pleasure cruise now, it is lovely sailing along with
 hardly a ripple on the water, we are coming down the
 coast inside the reef, there are quite a lot of islands, and
 they look very nice, just about the most beautiful
 sight I have ever seen, when the sun is setting behind
 them 12th, the water is a bit rough this morning,
 as we have no reef to protect us, we should hit
 Poreband about Sunday. I hope we stay there for
 a couple of days as I might be able to see Lucy.

it is now 10. A.M and I am watching the coast, just about
 opposite Bourdeaux. The sea is still very rough, also the
 coast line. Had a very interesting voyage so far. Sat 13th
 the sea is a lot calmer, and we are able to walk about
 with out staggering, which is quite a change, starting to enjoy
 ourselves again. On Sund. have just started to come into
 Gray and Aire, on which Brisbane is situated, we can see
 little towns all along ^{the} coast, we have to anchor about
 30 miles out, and wait for the pilot to come on board
 and guide us in to Mond. The pilot has just come on board
 and while I am waiting we are slowly moving again will dock
 about 10 A.M. Well we have docked at Borella Wharf, and
 we can see a fair bit of Brisbane, we will so be going
 ashore. Then I will have to find a law office, so that
 I can send some wires one to Mack and one to Lucy.
 Telling them I am back in Arossie again, have had all my
 wires, and have been to the pictures, also had a good
 feed of steak and eggs and tomatoes, which tasted very good.
 I am going back to the ship now to sleep. Tues. 16th we
 we didn't stay long in Brisbane we left 9.15 A.M and
 now believe we are on our way to Newcastle, couldn't
 get up to see Lucy and so ~~was~~ disappointed as I was
 looking forward to seeing her again, but if we keep
 going south, I might be able to get home and see
 my Sister, which will make up for not seeing Lucy.
 The sea is getting a little rough again now, and will

be for some time now 19th still following the coast down, sea
 is very calm now just like a pleasure cruise, had some drinks
 this morning, morning a fine inch gun, also vectors had quite
 a lot of fun Thurs 18th arrived in Newcastle, went ashore the
 afternoon found a pay office then sent mine home, also one
 to duty and posted out a letter, I am going ashore tonight
 to a dance. Fri 19th had a good time at dance didn't take
 anybody anywhere, the ship into dry dock this morning, and I
 went ashore again looked up some old friends who were glad
 to see me, will see them again tomorrow. Sat. 20th
 went with friend to see fight, then to a dance, then
 back and said goodbye, got on board about 1. P.M. Sun 21st
 left for Sydney at 7.30 A.M. arrive 3.30 P.M. went ashore and
 had a look over Sydney again. Mond. 22nd didn't go ashore until
 night, saw a shark and came back. Tues 23rd went and look up
 Mrs. Goe. who I knew when I was going to school she was very
 pleased to see me. Come back about 9.30 P.M. and went to bed.
 Wed. 24th just a lazy day, had a few drinks. Thurs 25th the
 same as yesterday. Fri 26th pulled out into the Bay 7.30 A.M.
 and anchored until 2.30 P.M. then left Sydney. Sat. 27th
 a bit of a swell running have some more on board, to
 look after Anti Sub. gun. they are all sick Sun 28th
 weather good, just keeping watch now 29th just passed
 Brisbane, we are 60 miles out to sea which is calm.
 Tues 30th Day day for crew, plenty of gambling for them now
 Wed. 1st weather pretty good big ring around moon, night

be some nasty weather ahead. Thur 2nd arrive Suva
H.A.N.I but only stopped on board couldn't get off to post some
letters. Fri 3rd very nice going past. now could see very far
because of haze Sat 4th becoming more rough Sun 5th

Had a very rough night, can hardly stand on deck, we
lost all our food this morning, the steward put it on a
table and then there was a big wave, the boat tipped
and it all went on the floor, but we got some more, caught
of being sick, so had good breakfast. Arrived P.M. 6 P.M.

Anchored in Gray. Mond 6th had an air raid about 9:15 P.M.
no bombs closer than a mile, could see planes, but
they were too far away for our guns. Two alerts in
two hours. Tues 7th Another raid this morning managed
to get a few shots at some planes, heard after that one
was brought down, but don't know by who. Two more
raids during day, and bombs were dropped all about us,
but only one close, about 12 feet away. This one did
pretty hard, and was nearly deaf. but only one chap was
hurt. Wed. 8th all quiet getting unloaded. Thurs 9th

Left P.M. 6:30. Sea is quite calm. have two chaps
on board, one very sick. Fri 10. Having a very trip
nothing happened, will reach Suva Sunday
Sat 10th nice sailing, Sun 11th Anchored at midnight
waiting until wharf cleared. Mond 12th went in to wharf
this morning and started to unload. going into town to
have a look around.

Tuesday, 14th Arrived Townsville, and docked at 10 A.M.

Tuesday 14th. getting a cargo of Air Force gear on, looks like P.M. again. Wednesday, 15th received our long awaited mail from Belheim today, there were 22 letters for me, was & pleased to receive them, as I had been waiting for a letter from Lucy, also from home. have just found out, that the M.A.F. gear belongs to Blaney Treescott Esq. Thursday 16th expect to pull out today have 45 more on board, we will be pretty crowded this trip, left jetty 2.15 P.M. anchored in Bay, to wait for a Convoy. Friday, 17th Still in bay expect to sail to - night, for somewhere near Lae. Saturday 18th Left Townsville 10 P.M. sea very calm. I will be going on watch in 2 hours time, but we do not expect anything to happen just yet. Sunday 19th, had to wait for 4 hours, for an escort. heading for a new place this time, as we are not on the same course as P.M. Monday 20th Sea is a bit rough today, a lot of the chaps on board are sea sick, should see land tomorrow. Tuesday 21st. Came in sight of land this morning, we are now going thru the Antic Cascade Straits, or which is better known as the Danani Straits, it is very pretty, it is about the nicest trip we have had yet. it is 40 miles up the Bay, to where we are going, tied up at the jetty 1 P.M. but left again very soon, as there is a score on. we are going in a big hurry. Wednesday 22nd Still going away from the Bay. 2 P.M. Changed course again, and we are now heading back to Milne Bay, will arrive sometime tomorrow.

Thursday 23rd July. Arrived back at 2 P.M., and started to
 unload our cargo, we went ashore, and managed to get some
 natives to climb coconut trees and get us some, which
 we enjoyed. Friday 24th Still unloading, I have been
 playing cards all day, as it has been raining, and
 so too wet to go ashore. I lost this morning, but
 got it back this afternoon. Saturday 25th Left Milne
 Bay this morning at 9.30. A.M. for Townsville, was pleased
 to get away, as we were scared all the time, as there
 are reports that the Japs are not far away, the Coral
 Sea Battle has just finished, we sailed not very
 far away from it, when we had to get out of the
 Bay last Wednesday. Sunday 26th Still going good,
 and nothing to report, looks like a good trip home,
 we are getting sick of the rich food, or the way it
 is cooked, we bought a lot of our own last time.
Monday 27th nice and calm, looking out for Jap Subs.
 hope we don't see any, have been having some drill on
 our 3.7 anti-sub. gun. fired a couple of shots, also
 had some practice with our smaller weapons.
Tuesday 28th Arrived Town, which is just below
 Townsville went ashore about 10 o'clock, with some
 of the crew, had quite a few drinks, and then to
 the pictures, also saw a clam or two, but didn't
 have any. back on board about 12.30. A.M. Wednesday 29th
 went ashore all day, saw some of the sights, pictures
 again at night, then into an alert about 12. and some

talk about Jap planes being over Townsville.
There were a couple of bombs dropped but no damage.

Thursday 30th arrived Townsville, very nice trip of eight hours. Friday 31st clocked 10 A.M. we went ashore and got fixed, as I was broke after my stay at Draven. more sight seeing at night, we are beginning to be known now, and people ask us what kind of a trip we had.

Saturday 1st ^{August 1st} stayed on ship and wrote letters, posted them at night, saw pictures. Sunday 2nd took on more traps, and pulled out at 3 P.M. and started our trip to Lille Pyllie, which is up ^{mile} ~~the~~ bay.

Monday 3rd just nice, have just come off watch.

Tuesday 4th Sea a bit rough, some of the boys not too good. Wednesday 5th landed at our destination 10 P.M. anchored out in bay. Thursday 6th clocked at 10 A.M. Air Raid at 3 P.M. Saw a couple of Jap planes.

Friday 7th just finished unloading, another raid, on ship sunk in bay. the "mackerel", hope I don't see any more bombs coming down. Saturday 8th on our way back to Port Moresby, will arrive this afternoon. Sunday 9th

Caught up with Convoy 10 A.M. we are now headed for Townsville again. Monday 10th sighted land at 9 A.M. this morning. we are just going thru the reef.

Tuesday 11th arrived Townsville and clocked 10 A.M. here we were told that we had to get off the ship, by 2 P.M. as our voyage was finished, very sorry to leave the old ship, also the crew, who were good to us.

we were taken out to Cloucton, about 3 miles away,
 but come back into town at night. Wednesday 12th, put
 on train for Selkirk this morning, and arrived back
 in our old Camp, at 5 P.M. where we received a great
 reception from our coppers, and we were kept busy
 telling them our adventures. Thursday 13th went on guard
 didn't like it very much. Friday 14th we who had been
 away, tried to get some leave, but couldn't, & we
 were disappointed, we all talked of going home,
 if somebody had of started we would have all
 went, but we decided to stay. we also decided to
 join the A. I. F. Saturday 15th joined up today, and
 sworn in our name. Hope to get my V.T. number soon.
 also had some letters today, I am not on the best
 of terms with Lucy at present, but hope to get
 things straightened out soon. Sunday 16th wrote letters
 all day, we have all been warned for a draft, and expect
 to move out tonight about 1 A.M. it is very cold now
Monday 17th went on board ship at 7 A.M. this morning
 and sailed once again at 9 A.M. will not be coming back
 as quick this time, I will soon know this part
 now, as this is my ninth trip. Tuesday 18th nice and
 quiet, quite a lot of gambling going on. we are on a
 Dutch ship of which I can pronounce the name.
Wednesday 19th still quiet just about sick of cards. we
 had the job of manning the ship's guns. but we did
 more sleeping than watching. Thursday 20th arrived P.M. 7.30 P.M.

left ship by corvette 9 A.M., we were then taken by trucks
 to Low Levels, which is about 20 miles inland, and about 30
 miles from P.M. here we meet quite a few of our old
 coppers who were just coming back from their first go at
 the job. Friday 21st just getting fixed up, no work
Saturday 22nd went for a route march this morning,
 just about about knocked up had a swim, with all
 our clothes on, and felt a lot better, had a lecture
 in the afternoon. Sunday 23rd had an easy day. from 24th to
 30th just training, boy am I losing some perspiration. a couple
 of months of this and I will be a grease spot. had two
 letters from Lucy, and one from Mark & Sue the week.
 still training with the "step" on the 5th we moved camp. we are
 now camped near an aerodrome, about 12 noon, we pitched
 our tents, in the afternoon we did not do anything. nor for
 the weekend. Monday 7th we went for our first real route
 march, pretty tough going, as we are going up and down
 pretty steep hills, and I was just about knocked up, when
 we got home, one of my best coppers from the 52nd Par. ~~got~~
 got skittles yesterday, he was a great chap. about this time
 there were quite a lot of raids, anything up to 25
 bombers would come over, but there was never very much
 damage done. we are still giving some tough training, we
 moved camp once again. I am having a lot of trouble with
 my beds, beds are not supplied by the Army, and we have
 to make our own, and material is pretty scarce, I am
 afraid I am more after on the ground than not.

Saturday 19th there was a big air raid this morning, when over 30 bombers came over. they dropped somewhere near 200 bombs, but only hit some fuel, which made a big smoke, also a couple of Pkitty bombs, but that was all.

Wednesday 23rd we have moved Camp once again, we are up in the hills now, a lot closer to the river, the guards will be a bit harder now, it is very nice where we are camped at present, right on a high bluff. of course we do not train up and down the bluff, and boy is it steep.

Saturday 26th have been digging quite a number of new trenches, they must think the river will come across here but we have heard that they have been stopped, but only just in time, if they had kept on coming, I think I would have been finishing this back in Russia, as the plans were made for our evacuation, anyway we will have to push them back across the ranges again, most likely do a bit of that myself. Saturday 3rd Oct have finished these positions here, will be moving to another area today, have had a little bit of action, when some river tried to get in our lines one night, we drove them out, and chased them for 10 or 12 hours, caught up with them, and quite a few of their coppers, and had to get out as best we could, one chap didn't, and another got wounded, but I am still all in one piece. Saturday 10th have been on the alert this week a lot, getting a bit tired now. also been out on patrol since last Monday, ran into a few river and got a couple, one had no casualties.

From Saturday 10th to Thursday 15th went out on patrol
 twice had a go at the japs and got back. we accounted
 for 15, when I arrived back there was a letter from Ducey
 and Gable, things are fixed up between us again, all
 well at home. we are moving Camp again to day,
 back to 12 mile Drome. And then on to Rootless Bay.
 so we might be able to have a swim in the sea
 we are hearing a lot of rumors about going home. I wish
 they were true. went out on Patrol last night. Saturday 17th
 went out on patrol this morning contacted the japs, had a
 misc up for a while, would have been wounded with a
 bayonet only for a friend who skidded the rifle first. we
 got four of them this time with our "arvens" returned at
 8 P.M. with one man wounded. Sunday 18th had a spell today
 but out again at night to a position which we have to hold
 all night, so it looks like no sleep. Monday 19th had a bit
 of a scare last night, as the japs threw a few grenades
 at us, but we did get hurt, though we had the wind
 up all right, our relief has just arrived, home again
 news. I have just written home, and to Ducey, we have
 been told there will be no more patrols for us, for
 some time, so we are fairly happy. but there is
 plenty of work, as we have to dig more new positions.
 I have a broken gun now, and have to carry it every
 where I go, there are two of us in little tents, but they
 are not much good, when it is raining, which is pretty
 often. Saturday 31st still digging all this week, nearly finished

Monday 2nd Nov - have moved again. I guess if they filled all the holes up with water that we have made the damned Island would sink, can't say it would be any loss either. December 1st there has been plenty of digging lately, the last lot of positions, we had to sleep in and live in for 48 hours. am not feeling too good. a lot of chaps getting maloneis, hope I miss out. have just got word that we will be moving anytime now. looks like another go at the mips, I hope I am as lucky as last time. December 2nd have had word to pack up, which we have done, we are going over by plane. December 3rd went to the Drome this morning, and flew to a place called Papenditto, then had to walk about 22 miles through mud up to our knees I knocked up one, but managed to catch up by night fall. but a lot of chaps didn't, we went straight into the front line. but didn't do any fighting that night, or next day, though we fired a few shots. December 6th. My Birthday today, very nice, there was a big attack this morning, I lost two of my mates, I got a suback on the head, and had a sleep for a couple of hours. I am having a lovely Birthday. I got a zap for breakfast. December 7th I took over a Vickers M.C. this morning so feel very pleased with myself. There are still 3 of us from the front crew, out of five one killed, and one wounded so far, I hope that doesn't back up, or my turn will come soon. I expect to go in with the

Vickers in the morning, and look for Snipers, we are
 still attacking but not getting very far, have had no
 sleep for three days, or a shove for a fortnight our
 Causablets are pretty heavy. Can't keep this up for long
December 8th went in with the Vickers this
 morning, fired just on a 1,000 rounds. Had quite a bit of
 fun, it was just daylight, came out 45 minutes later
 without loss. December 9th didn't do any fighting today
 had three hours sleep. December 10th, expect to take
 Lyons west to day, timed to go in 3.30 P.M. (later) well
 shots that, we are where the Japs nests be. I don't know
 how many I got, for sure, we have to go somewhere else
 now. Pretty hard going today, are marked that mud
 up to our knees for five hours. have had less than
 15 hours sleep since we came over. have just about (had
 it) might have a wash tomorrow, as we have not had
 one yet. I feel awfully December 11th have taken up position
 and waiting for Japs to come, can hear them not very
 far away. looks like another tough night, with no sleep.
December 12th well we got some last night, but I did not
 have a hand in it, spent a sleepless night, every thing
 pretty quiet to day. December 13th. haven't been dry or had a
 wash for 10 days. another quiet day. December 14th things are
 starting to happen, this morning, nearly got blown up with
 a shell from our own artillery a piece landed about three
 feet from where I was and covered me with mud. we are
 going in again this afternoon. so I hope I will be able

to finish this when I come out. wish I could get a letter from Lucy. ~~next~~ December 14th went into Action 5.4.11 it was murder, we went down into our holes which were full of water December 16th. Still in holes we are fanned down properly, bullets are missing everywhere, no food to sleep. December 17th. I was taken out and made a sniper, as the other chef had been murdered, had some fun. for the days. managed to get 17 out of 20 shots. December 20th. I am feeling pretty sick now, have the shivers and chills. we took the position at last, a bit costly to both sides, we buried just over 800 Japs. and quite a few of our own.

I can hardly keep my head up now. but there are quite a few worse than me. got an email yesterday, and I took it up the tree to read, and got a bullet thru it.

December 21st Sick as a dog but I have to keep going, we are on our way to Sonarandere, but don't I will make it. December 22nd Called in at A.P.S. after I went out to it, had a tentorium 105" put straight on Jack Ambulance, and taken to Pofarditta drove, where I stayed the night, and shivered. December 23rd I don't say much about the next 2 days, arrived in hospital U.P.M. times over. I do not remember the flare trip back across the ranges. December 29th feeling a lot better, have been told that I will be going home in the first hospital ship that is in, also told I had the first stages of Black water Fever, that is why they are sending me home. Even January 5th 1943. I am already

To leave hospital, just waiting for the Ambulance to take us to the ship, went on board at 3.30 P.M. and sailed at 6 P.M. the best night I ever saw, the last of N.C. fading away in the distance January 6th. Sea nice and calm and the food is good, will be getting back some of my best condition soon. January 7th just lying in my bunk, or up on deck in the sun, I am feeling better now.

January 8th arrived Townsville this morning, and put all the spunks off, left again at 5 P.M. heading for Sydney, the name of the ship Katuramba. January 9th having a lovely trip this reminds me of when we were on the "Jopara" going backwards and forwards. January 10th went to Church this morning, and enjoyed the service, cell is well. expect to reach Sydney on the 13th. January which we did. Arrived Sydney, 1.30 P.M., we disembarked on to a hospital train, we are now heading for Bathurst which is over the Blue mountains, arriving about 4.30 P.M. we were then taken by Ambulance to hospital. it is great here, we are getting looked after like kings, I am feeling pretty well now, looking forward to going home on leave. we stayed in hospital until the 5th February, when we went to Sydney, where we were put on train for Melbourne, where I was given 14 days leave, on which I had a great time had to report back to Royal Park, and left left for Sydney again on the 25th Feb. hanging Sydney Harbour for a few days, got sick of it, and decided to go down to Townsville to see Lucy, went and made

enquiries regarding trains, bought a ticket to Gosford
 for 2/6, and travelled all night, until 2.30 P.M. at
 Eglon Innis, which was as far as the train went, when
 were Provost on the station, so I had to get off the
 wrong side of the train, and go around the town so
 as not to miss them. I got onto the main road, got
 a lift for 5 miles when had to walk for seven or eight
 after that I got a lift into Dentonfield, arriving 9 A.M.
 on the 4th march. Slept until daylight, then started
 to walk again, and then got a lift in Wanganui,
 arriving there about noon, when there were no trains leaving
 so walked to Lyra which is 7 miles over the
 N.S.W. border, waited until 10 P.M. for goods train.
 had to walk a little way, but mistook the railway
 line, and walked up a ramp, which abruptly came to
 an end, and I fell about 25 feet on to the line
 below, knocking myself out, when I came to, I found
 I had quite a bit of skin missing, on my face,
 also a badly cut finger, I didn't know where I was
 for some time, but managed to crawl into a truck,
 and hide myself, and so went on to Waverley, which
 is about 40 miles from Tarravoomba, arrived Waverley
 3.30 A.M. I left the train, and got onto the road
 again, I did quite a lot of walking, but managed
 to secure a lift or two, and finally arrived Tarravoom
 about 2.30 P.M. on the 5th, I went to a friend's
 place, Mrs Pargelly, who gave me a cup of tea, I then

and had a shave and haircut, after that I went up to Lucy's, she was not at home when I arrived, and her mother did not recognize me for a while, but she was very pleased when she did, had to wait for Lucy to come home, but went to sleep in a chair when I woke up she was standing looking down at me, she was real pleased to see me, and quite surprised but she made me go to bed very early, I was not sorry either as I was very tired, I spent a very enjoyable 12 day not with them, and found out that Lucy was just a good friend, and I found out that we would only be good friends, her mother & Dad treated me like a son while I was there. Started my return journey on the 17th caught a goods train, which was very slow, taking all night to cover 140 miles, arrived in Arrergera 7.30. A.M. 18th. then walked about 2 miles along the Tentorfield road, when I got a lift into Tentorfield, there was not a train leaving until 1.0 clock so I had a meal and a sleep, and then caught the train to Glen Davis, arriving there about 4.30. P.M. decided to wait till 10. P.M. and catch the Sydney Express, I bought a ticket which cost me 1/11. just as well I did, as the M.P.S were on the train, and I had to produce my old ship's pass, which I had freshly dated while at Lucy, it had them puzzled, but they said it was alright, and was I pleased, as I didn't want to get caught just then. had a fair night's sleep, and arrived Sydney, arriving

1.10 P.M. on the 19th March, I had dinner, and sent Lucy a wire, also wrote to Mabel. Then went out to show-grounds, and told them I had been away for ten days. I should have told them I was there all the time they would not have known any better, and I would not have been in any trouble, they gave me a ticket to Bathurst, caught a train 7.25 P.M.

arrived Bathurst 1.4.00 20th March. it is very cold here, had to find my own way out to camp. which is eight miles out, I arrived 3. A.M. feeling very tired had to find 39th Cobbers, made a few enquiries, and found their hut, curled up on a ~~floor~~ blanket, with my over coat for a pillow and went to sleep. woke up next morning, my cobbers were pleased to see me. and wanted to know where I had been, so I told them. I didn't do anything in the morning, but got put on a charge sheet in the afternoon, then had two days of doing nothing.

On Monday the 22nd March I had to go up, before the C/O, he said he would let me off lightly, and only fined me a £5. and forfeited ten days pay.

My finger is still giving me so trouble, I will have to get it seen to before long. Tuesday, 23rd

I was issued with all new gear, and spent the rest of the day putting it all together. Wednesday 24th March I went out on parade this morning, and dropped my rifle a couple of times, and then told them that my finger was too sore to hold it, but they would

not believe me, I kept doing the same thing for nearly a fortnight, I had been going on sick parade pretty regular, and at last they took notice of me, and gave me seven days no duty, at the end of that time, when was still no change, so I was sent to Hospital at Bathurst, from there I was sent to the 103 Convalescent Depot, for treatment. have been here for ten weeks, and have been having a wonderful time, going into town every day, plenty of beer, and some nice girls to get around with. I have had to send home for some money several times, but managed to get enough, my finger is still getting treated, but is just about the same. I went up to my old home town last weekend, they gave me a welcome home, my partner received a nice bouquet, while I, a lot of nice words. was discharged from the Depot on the Wednesday 23rd June. and went to C.D.D in Sydney. where I had to move needles, and have a bit inspection, went to Newcastle for the weekend, had a great time, came back, and then had the bad luck to have my whole kit bag stolen while I was away, seeing if a telegram had arrived saying I was granted some home leave, but I am still waiting for it. Wednesday 30th supposed to be on draft to Liverpool today but it has been ~~wiped~~, so I am off to town now. 13th July arrived Liverpool today. I am still waiting on the telegram about my leave, but

have just about given up hope. have been here, at
 Liverpool for over a week now, but have been
 warded for draft tomorrow, have been granted 24
 hours leave in the city, still spending money, have
 spent just on £55 since the middle of April.
 We will be glad to get away from here. Came back
 this morning of 1st July, and told draft not going until
 night, so I am going to have a few hours sleep, as I
 had a very ~~bad~~ hectic night, last night, taken into
 town about 6 P.M. and put on train at Central, pulled
 out 8.3 P.M. there are only six of us in the compartment,
 so we are not too crowded, arrived Brisbane 6.57 P.M.
 Friday night. Trucks were waiting to take us out to a
 Camp called secondarily, where we are to sleep
 tonight. Had tea, then saw a concert, and then to
 bed. got leave next day at 1 P.M., I didn't have much
 money, so I only had a look around Brisbane, I was
 shunted to the picture, which were not bad, got
 back to camp just after midnight. wanted for
 draft on Sunday morning, but there were no trains
 so a cabbie and I went for a walk, but were
 back in camp, and in bed by 10.30 P.M. wanted for
 draft next day morning, but do not go until night
 so had to stay in camp all day. Caught train 10.15 P.M.
 on the way to Ipswich, it is now 10.45 P.M. 12.1.43.
 arrived Fort Mandacla 18th July and drafted into 2nd West
 Field Ambulance on the 21st July 1943.

Started to learn medical work. it is fairly interesting so far
 than one plenty of streets, route marks, and building work
 hospital where ever we maybe. Home on leave for times.
 31 days. had a great time. arrived back on the
 tablelands 20th January 1944. getting very sick of the Army
 but it don't look as if the war is going to end for
 some time yet. From Feb to July. we did nothing but
 stunts. Had plenty of lectures passed ~~us~~ for
 extra 6th day in month, having been having a bad
 tooth at gambling lately, but managed to get it all
 back in one night, having done much since I have saw
 Lucy a couple of times, but can't get her to make
 up her mind. had leave in July, and arrived
 back in Cairns 6th 9. 44, I am getting on the beach.
 writing this up. I am going to see an old friend of
 Mrs Cameron, a Mrs Mallowe. she is getting pretty old
 now, just on 80. Left Red Bank, at 9 A.M. 7 Sept.
 for the last stage of my journey back to Camp, at Warden
 had the luck to get my old hat bag back from G.C.
 while I was in Brisbane last time, and took it up
 to Lueys, and left it there, where it will be quite
 safe, and I will know where it is. when I arrived
 back in Camp, was warned for overseas draft, but
 we do not know when, but we have an idea,
 that our next camp might be in the Philippines,
 which should be alright, carried on with the
 same training. It is now November, and the training is still

the same, we are starting to pack up the @ store now
 some boxes have already gone, but I think we will be
 the last to go. December plenty of work packing up
 now, it is funny where all the gear comes from,
 we will have about 80 tons when we leave here.

Well here it is the 6th, and I have had my
 birthday. Sorry to say I got just about full, as some
 of the boys got a couple of bottles of gin, and gave
 to me. didn't feel too good on the 7th so went down
 the deck and had a good sleep. I was, and we are
 still here, but will be gone before the end of
 the month, had a very nice Xmas dinner, and tea
 Turkey, and all kinds of poultry, also plenty of ham
 and meat, and plum pudding, and best of all plenty
 of beer, there were some fights, and one chap, just
 about went mad, and took to the C.O. with
 a carving knife, he is now in the lockup,
 and waiting for court martial. 27th leaving Wendeck
 tonight, one would not think there had ever been
 a camp here, and everything is cleaned up. the
 trucks have all been loaded, and some of the
 boys have already gone with them, to load onto
 the ship. entrained at a quarter past twelve A.M.
 and arrived Cairns for breakfast, then went straight
 on board ship. the "City of Mexico", we are pretty
 crowded, we pulled out 9.15 A.M. and are now
 watching the shores of Australia fading away. having

a very calm trip, we have no escort. passed Milne Bay about 1 P.M. Second day out, the leaded up the coast of N.C. we know where we are going now. Arrived Aitape 4th Jan. 1945. we had to climb over the ship's side by rope ladders, to get into the barges which are to take us ashore, arrived in our new camp 2.30 P.M. on the 6th. we went for a swim in the surf, and saw where the Japs had landed the July before, also saw some Jap pill boxes, but we had saw them before at Gona. these boxes had been burned out by flame throwers, came back and went to a Jap picture show, which was not bad, the 'Merry Marukans' nothing much doing next day. so I wrote a couple of letters, it is now 12 noon 8th Jan. From 8th Jan. to the 15th Feb. we had a pretty long time. on the 16th Feb. we got word that we were going up to the front. and left next day 17th with every thing we possessed and went about 40 miles by truck, where we camped for the night, I was on guard from two am. till 4.30 but everything was very quiet. the next day 18th, we started to march, and boy was it hot. we marched for two days before we caught up with 240th Bn. which we were to be attached to, we then had a days spell, and then went up with the Bn. and I helped to carry our first battle casualty of this Campaign. on the 21st Feb. party of work in the next

month, as we were with a Don. all the time. had
 some very hard carries, as there are a lot of hills
 around here. The advance is going pretty well at present.
 the engineers can't keep up with the Inf. as all the
 roads have to be remade by them, we had a couple
 of days spell on the 19th & 20th March, and then
 on again, I was with the forward troops when
 Brett Brown was taken, so far B. Coy. has brought
 in just over 400 casualties, we are told that we
 have been doing a good job. and we are very
 popular with the Don. who do not like A. Coy. of
 our 1st Arb. and they are always pleased when they
 know what Coy. of stretcher bearers are going in
 with them. we are by ourselves at present, just
 B. Coy. we have our own A.D.S. and have to keep
 things moving, a couple of hours guard every night
 is starting to tell on us, and we are all starting
 to get a bit tired. received a letter from Lucy
 on the 2nd of April telling me of Mally's death,
 sent her a telegram of sympathy, Mabel is very
 sick at present. I have only written a couple of letters
 home in the last two months. went in, to take
 a hill on the 5th April it was pretty hot for
 an hour or so, and I got a couple of scratches, from
 a nip and his rifle, but an Inf. chap got him
 before he hurt me too much. had a piece of
 plaster on my forehead for a couple of days.

on the 7th April, I received a telegram from home, saying that Mena had been operated on and that she was very sick, and could I get home. I tried all day, but all I received was sympathy, I had a talk to my C.O. but he said he couldn't do anything without a Drs. Certificate so I sent a mine asking for it, but it will take a fortnight to get back here. in the meantime I was sent back to my post, as we are very short handed I don't go much on my chances of getting home. so I hope everything turns out alright. 8th April Still no word from home, I am pretty worried 10th April letter from home today, Mena is not ^{so} ~~not~~ ^{so} ~~not~~ too bad. but I am still trying to get home, we are having a couple of days spell at present, which we badly need. had a look at the small cemetery today, and saw where there were quite a few of my coppers from the 39th Bn. buried there are a lot less of the old bunch now, I have helped and carried quite a few of them out. 12th April Still no word, but expect to go in again soon. 13th April Still no more letters from home. wish I could get home to see Mena. 14th April no word yet. and no word from home. 15th April letter tonight, Mena still very sick, treating her with Penicillin. 16th April wrote home today. news from front line not so good I killed yesterday, and they called this a mopping up Campaign. 17th April Another man killed. 18th April going up in

the morning, 19th went in with the Inf. Today. fired my
 first few shots of this Campaign, think I hit a bird, but
 not sure, but I had to take cover, and get a wound
 chop out. I received no praise from the Coy. O.C.
 for getting him out. the nights are the worst, as
 they are hard on the nerves. 24th out again, 26th
 looks like another long march in a couple of days
 out behind the ranges. 27th moved Camp near beach.
 28th going into the hills tomorrow. 29th & 30th
 about the hottest time we have had so far.
 we received our first @ Casualty, Trooper Plummer
 got killed last night, couldn't get him out, and had
 to leave him there with another dead chop. had
 a letter from home today, wasn't too bad,
 my application for leave knocked back. it is raining
 like the devil at present. and we are all wet
 thru, 1st day, another bad day today, too much
 lead flying for my liking, didn't get any sleep last
 night, as the nips are only 60 yards away, and they
 are throwing grenades at us. so I am keeping well
 down in my hole. my nerves are starting to
 go, now, but every body else are the the same, 2nd still the
 same wet thru for three days now, don't look
 like getting out yet, 4th had no sleep again last
 night, and it is still raining, and the Japs are every-
 where. found Plummer's body today. after an attack
 to clear up the hill, which we did. the little

Curves had cut him up. taken out his heart
 and liver, and cooked and eaten them. we are
 all feeling pretty sore about it. I got myself an
 Owen eye last night, so I will feel a bit safer
 now. Any body would think I was an infantry chap
 instead of a stretcher bearer. ^{5th} well thank goodness
 that is over, and my relief came up this morning,
 and we are going out for a spell again, I said quite
 a few prayers the last week, and they were answered
 on our way out we were ambushed, I forgot all about
 being a medical orderly, and I was out in front, a chap
 along side of me got on thru the chest. I fired a few
 shots, and then started to dress the wound. by
 this time we were out among about 20 yards, and the
 O.C. had to get the chaps together and come over
 get us back out. there were 4 Owen guns, and
 11 Owen's guns, and they stood shoulder to shoulder
 till we crawled out, I was just about all in, as
 he was a big chap, and couldn't help me much.
 but he thanked me, and that helped somewhat.
 I lost my gun in the scrimmage, so I didn't have
 to carry that out. the gaps were still there, and
 there was quite a lot of lead flying about.
 I grabbed the wounded chaps rifle, and had a
 few shots, and I know I hit one in the arm.
 We are back on the coast again now. but don't know
 how long for. There was a very nice letter from

General Stevens pinned up on the board, telling us
 how what a good job we had done. There was a
 D.C.M. and M.N. man in about 6 days. So we didn't
 do too badly. Nothing doing at present. The
 war is over in Europe. might not be so very long
 before it is all finished now. Had a letter from
 Lucy today, she is going to marry a yank, so
 that's that. 14th June. Having a spell at present.
 Looks like I have had my last eye at the job.
 Have not done very much in the last month
15th... had a couple of stretcher carries lately.
 one have taken Newok, and Lone Bay. it is only
 a matter of time now. and till the end of the
 month. when I went to a Commodore Squadron.
 had two more casualties one shot thru the back
 and one in the eye. but both O.K. plenty of
 patrolling with Commodore troops. and nearly every
 day, get one or two rips now and again, we have
 the Native Police Boys with us, who save us
 getting into a lot of trouble, I think they can
 smell when there is a job close. 26th July,
 still with the troops have worn out a pair
 of boots which I have been here. will be going
 down to the beach tomorrow, for a weeks
 spell. went up to the Field Amb. today, and
 had a yarn, stayed for two days. will be
 back with the Troop 21st. up in the hills

again, but things are very quiet, the war is nearly over. Prussians are coming down on the Gaps and the Atomic Bomb. Well the good news has come true, but we are still in our positions but will be going out in a day or two, back down on the coast again, and the Colts and I have been told we can go back to the 15th Fld Amb. the C.O. thanked us for our work and we were put on a barge, headed for Weeruk. we arrived back in Camp, that night, and were told we were exempt from duty for a fortnight, all we did was eat and sleep, and swim and lay in the sun. it was a great life, plenty of talk about going home now, and think we might be home for tomos. hope it is, night the points system is starting to work now, but we still think we will be home for tomos.

Well that settles about being home for tomos, the Bomb has just fallen, all those with Points below 157 are getting transferred to the 15th Fld Amb. and we are going in the morning. I have just written to Mabel telling her.

Well we are down in our new Camp, but we all reckon we are not going to do any work, as we are all very involved on things. Had a pep talk by our new C.O. today

And he told us that this Camp will be what we make it, and that he will not be hard on us, as all the work will be divided out, and there would only be about 4 hours work a day. I was put on the wood heap with five other chaps. it is not bad work, and a chap gets some exercise. we stayed there for just on two months, making arrangements, ^{for} t mos, & am on the welfare committee, & also give out the beer of a Thursday. we have jobs working around the Camp now, and I think next week I will be getting some for the wood heap. I have 12 jobs working now, and they do nearly as much as the 6 of us used to. all the others are swimming of day, life is generally pretty cozy just now.

I had a very nice t mos. 4 of us saved up our beer for over a month, and we just about got full t mos Eve, also t mos day. Couldn't do any work between t mos and New Year. Today the 2nd of January 1946, I had to go and get a saw bench, which I did, also an engine to run it, the next day ~~day~~, I set it up, and it worked it would be a lot easier to saw by an engine than by hand. I also had a job sander, which was very handy, as we used get all the news.

I have got a big heap of wood chipped now.

They have the new party list out now, and I am on it, I will have to see what can be done about getting off it, I was persuaded to the C.O. this morning and I told him why I wanted to get home, and he said alright. I could go, as long as I had enough wood chopped for a month, so I was the only one who could use the bench. needless to say the wood was chopped up.

At last we were told the name of the ship that we were to go home on. "Orion", and there were just over 100 of us. my number was 449 we left N.C. Newark 26th Jan, and arrived Brisbane, we had a great trip thru the City in open trucks, and the people gave us a wonderful welcome. Left Brisbane for Sydney on the 1st Feb. arrived 3.30 P.M. and left for Melbourne at 6.25 P.M. Arrived 12 noon 2nd Feb, where Auntie & Aunt Les. & Aunt were waiting to meet me. went to the Hospital in the afternoon, and saw Ma & Dad and was I glad to see her, and she me. and then I arrived 6 P.M. on the 2nd Feb 1946, after an absence of eighteen months.

Finner.