May 17, 1944.

ORCHID FOR SISTER KENNY

One of her young patients decorates Sister Kenny with an orchid after the noted Australian nurse had demonstrated her method of treating infantile paralysis to a host of doctors and nurses at a hospital in San Francisco.—U.S. Office of War Information photo.
Thur. Jan. 6, 1944. This morning we received the following note from Florence:-

"Nyngan 4-1-44. Dear Mother, We are returning your ration book; I hope you haven't worried about it. The trip over was pretty crowded, but a bit of an improvement on the trip over. I don't know how many dust storms they had while we were away, but it will take some time to get the house back to normal. I am busy today making a start, so everything will be bright & shiny by tea time. Will write more later. Hope Pip has arrived & that you are all well as we left you. We enjoyed our trip thoroughly. No more "Bottomley" heads I hope. Cheerio. Florence."

Thur. Continued: The following letter came by air from Fred:


It seems that you weren't disappointed over Christmas, as both Art & Wal were here, because I had a letter from Wal which he said that he had booked his passage. So, unless something unforeseen happened, he was home; a card from Art & Phyl with a Mayfield postmark; were Jack & Glad home too? What's the kid like? the same as all the rest, I suppose, although I'll bet that Art does not think so. Did you go rounds with him & help him skate? but then I'm sure that he didn't need any help.

The yard should be looking very nice now again; who cut it?

Art, I suppose, he was first home, wasn't he? Did you get anything at all from the trees-- or did the storm blow the all off? and are you getting anything from the garden? Thanks for attending to my insurance. I have plenty of mone if you need any at all. Just before Christmas I had a letter from Flo, & for the new year a "Best Wishes" telegram. It seems that it won't be long before she is pretty well set out there. I suppose you wonder what my Christmas was like? Very good. The grub was good--turkey, pork, ice-cream, jelly, pudding, drinks, grapes, in fact everything that anyone could wish for; this with a couple of comforts hand-outs, toothpaste, shaving soap, writing-tablets & the like, & absolutely nothing to do, made Christmas quite nice under the circumstances; but still there was that something missing--a "blooming Friday"s dinner would have been much better.

I'm glad to hear that all is as usual at home & apparently with the possible exception of Keith, o.k. with 126 A too. I forgot to mention that I had a letter & card from Joe & Ivey, but it's too late now to write any more, but next week.

I'll have to spend some time with the pen, as I'm well behind.
I still continue to feel well, & the weather is still hot, but every 2 or 3 days now we get a real sharp thunderstorm, but it doesn't cool things down much—only makes things muggier, but I can take it better than the cold. Fred."

On the 2nd of Jan. I sent the photo of Art, Phyllis, & Doreen to Selina Murphy.

Mon. Jan. 10, 1944. This morning Walter left here to go to Sydney by train. He intends to stay there until, next Monday, & then return directly to Brisbane. Jose came down, before going to work, to see Walter off, but was a few minutes too late. Yesterday I finished reading "Soviet Strength", by Hewlett Johnson, dean of Canterbury. It is a very instructive book.

Wed. Jan. 12, 1944. Last Thursday I had my usual injection at the hospital, & on the way home I paid 3/6 to Mrs. Watts for the pensioners' Association. I have finished reading "Soviet Strength" by Hewlett Johnson, & am now reading "One World", by Wendell Wilkie. Our nectarines are getting ripe, & we have had some off the trees.

Sat. Jan. 15, 1944. This afternoon Jose started off in his car with with Ivy, Daphne, Keith & Noel, for Nabiac, to stay with Ivy's sister Daisy for a fortnight. Yesterday's papers published the leaving certificate results for the North, & Jose's name appears under the heading: Miscellaneous Passes. They are pasted on pages 3 & 4. Hot weather. Many of our nectarines are ripe.

Wed. Jan. 19, 1944. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm. Last Monday I went to the out-patients' department of the Newcastle with Mum in the afternoon, & she got a card at the office to see doctor Arnold who wanted to examine her lip. We sat at the beach until 4:15 p.m. & went back & waited until after 5. The doctor saw Mum & told her that if her lip keeps like it is she need not return until next September. Mum bought 2 shirts for me at Woolworth's shop.

We have received the following letter on brown paper from Flo.:

"Box 15, 15-1-44. Dear Mother & Dad, Well, have you got over all the excitement of all your visitors? I suppose by this time you have settled down again to a quiet life. How did you get on with doctor Arnold this time, Mother? Hope everything was satisfactory, & that the lip is completely healed. We are sending over a photo of Connie Bobs. One appeared in the "Telegraph", too, but this is the best. She is
LEAVING CERTIFICATE RESULTS
FOR THE NORTH

NEWCASTLE BOYS' HIGH

McMahon, J.: 1B 5B 6B 10A.
Gallagher, M.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Gilmour, I.: 1B 2B 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Goggin, R. W.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Finn, F.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Gillis, G. W.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Loftus, J.: 1B 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Wardle, J.: 1B 3B 5A 6A 10A.

NEWCASTLE GIRLS' HIGH

Gilmore, I. J.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Gallagher, M.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Finn, F.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Goggin, R. W.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Finn, F.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Gillis, G. W.: 1A 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Loftus, J.: 1B 3B 5A 6A 10A.
Wardle, J.: 1B 3B 5A 6A 10A.

THE EXAMINATION BOARD OF規模比

CENTRAL HOMESTEAD

Galloway, J. M.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Gallagher, M.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.

MARIETTE, HAMILTON

Conroy, M. R.: 1B 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Browne, C. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.

MAlTLANO BOYS' HIGH

Atkinson, K. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Browne, C. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A 10A.

MARTIN, H.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.
Murdoch, R. K.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.
O'Connell, J. M.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.
Penney, C. M.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.
Peters, R. W.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.
Samways, C.: 1B 3B 5B 6B.

C. OF E. GIRLS' GRAMMAR, MORPETH

Jennex, N. M.: 1B 3B 2A 5A.
Kernawray, H. E.: 1A 2B 3A 5A.

NEWCASTLE GIRLS' HIGH

Allen, M. C. R.: 1B 3A 4A 5A 6A 8B.
Anderson, J.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Aitken, J.: 1B 3A 4A 5A 6A 8B.
Baker, G. A.: 1B 3A 4A 5A 6A 8B.
Moir, G. J.: 1B 3A 4A 5A 6A 8B.
O'Sullivan, K. P.: 1B 3A 4A 5A 6A 8B.

NEWCASTLE BOYS' HIGH

Turnbull, J. W.: 1A 2B 3B 5A 6A 8B.
Tyson, T. D.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Walsh, G.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Warrington, W. M.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
White, R. G.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Wilson, P. W.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Wilson, R. H.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.

C. OF E. GIRLS' GRAMMAR, MORPETH

Featherstone, H.: 1B 3B 5B 6B 10A.
Kernawray, H. E.: 1A 2B 3A 5A 6A 8B.

MARRIOTT, HAMILTON

Conroy, M. R.: 1B 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A.

MILTON, HAMILTON

Atkinson, K. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A.

MILTON BOYS' HIGH

Atkinson, K. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A.

MILTON GIRLS' HIGH

Atkinson, K. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A.

MILTON BOYS' HIGH

Atkinson, K. J.: 3A 5A 6A 8B.
Dugherthy, M. E.: 1B 3A 5A 6A.
Beattie, A. W.: 1A 2A 3A 5A 6A.
quite grown up to when I saw her last. It doesn't matter about sending the things over, my feet seem a bit better since I came back, so I won't need the old shoes & the other things are not of much value either. Bill hasn't been well since we returned, not with asthma, but with continual headaches & not feeling well in general. His temperature was 102 on Thursday night, so he thought he had better see the Dr., who wanted him to go straight to hospital, but has given him until to-day, & he is much better to-day. So I think that he will be on his way to Bourke on Monday. This old doctor--even if he does like the beer--must be able to prescribe medicine well. Robert & I are O.K. You ask how we are standing up to the heat. We'll, it's just a matter of standing up to it, although it's not Robert & myself that is worried much, it's all right inside, but Bill finds it pretty hot riding around in the sun all day, & with his headaches its been a bit of a trial for him.

Everything is very dry here; no sign of rain. It's hard to think how often it's cloudy & wet over there. Lots of people here have dry tanks, but ours is still o.k. There is not much news, so I will close up. There are only a few minutes in which to catch the mail. Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

To-day ( Wed.) we received this letter from Fred:

"From No. 450-17. Name, F.Cocking. Unit or troop, No. 3 Bty. 5 Aust. A.R.D. Bellheim, Nth. Queensland Sat. 15 Jan.
Very glad to know that you had such a nice time at Christmas, but I never expected that Flo & Bill would manage to be there. I'm only sorry that I couldn't be there too, but as you say, there'll be plenty more, & we'll appreciate being together all the more. It's good to know that Art's kid is all that he said she was, & that everyone is in their usual health. As for me--I'm in good nick--despite the heat-- & if it's possible, feel better & better every day.
I didn't expect that Flo would be home, & had just posted a letter to her at Nyngan when I received yours. I haven't written to you yet, but I must do it first chance I get, now I know he's back on the job.
I was beginning to think that the photo was a wash-out, but although I know that I should have had it taken in more favourable times you seem to like it, so all's well.
You said that Connie was being married, but not who to: I was under the impression that she was only a bit of a kid, but people grow up in no time, don't they? Joe should have a fair time on his holidays. If it's worse than his last one I wouldn't be Ivy for a minute, would you?
I haven't had the result of Dad's blood-count yet. I do hope it was encouraging. Did he get his sarsaparilla yet? Lately
I've been doing some carpentry up here & have had 2 separate jobs inside refrigerators. Very nice inside, but what a shock to walk back into the sun again. Anyhow, that's twice since being here that I've been coo@, at least, br-r-r-r.
I've been wondering for some time now whether things were hard to get down there, but if your Christmas menu was any criterion you are doing o.k. Forget about not sending a telegram; you should know that there's no need for things like that with me. Just so long as you & Dad look after yourselves. It's time for the pictures now, so I'll have to close. Look after yourselves. Fred.

Fri. Jan. 21, 1944. Yesterday we received this letter from Wal:

"13-1-44. Dear Folks, Had good trip up yesterday, 7 things at the office were all in good order. Have now to move off to Townsville in the morning to test an air conditioning plant, then proceed to Cairns to install winch for slipway. I have also agreed to go up later & organise all mechanical work in North Queensland, but this trip will give me my bearings. Had good week in Sydney & tried to contact Art, but he had gone on holidays. Hope you are all o/k & I will write again from up North. Cheerio, Wal."

Fri. con. I got an injection in my right arm at the hospital yesterday. I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- for Mum & myself at the Hayfield post office. In the afternoon I got a certificate from a young doctor who is in doctor Opitz's place. Mum & I have been sleeping at Joe's house since last Monday while he & Ivy & children are up at Nabiac with Daisy. This morning I received the following letter from Selina Murphy:

"Sunday, 16-11-44. Dear Joe & wife & family, Just a few lines in reply to your very nice & very welcome letter, & thanks very much for the snap you sent; it is a good plain one, & your daughter-in-law looks a very lively person. I think I could like her so much. Is that the son who came here with you & Mrs. & Florrie that time? Well, Joe, I hope you & all of your family & their children are all quite well. I am only fair myself, but it is no good to complain - there are a lot worse than me. The rest of my lot are all well. The little John that cut his foot is coming on slowly. The doctor has taken the bandage off now it has all healed up. He said the boy can try to walk a little each day; but he can't walk on it yet; he said it hurts him too much. His leg has gone real thin, & is all swollen up around the ankle yet. It is 11 weeks tomorrow since he did it. His father is a returned man from the last
war-- a limbless soldier & a T.B. supposed to be, but can drink like a fish. I got a letter from my son Lloyd, & a snap of him & his living quarters on the island. He looks so old & thin. I think his leave will be up by Easter, so he may get home to us. He said they took him that after being there 15 months they get leave; so let's hope so. My other son, Allan, is still at Warradale. He is in the Aust. pack. Trans. Coy. -- a donkey unit-- & he starts out tomorrow on a 3 weeks trek march. It won't be so good if it turns out as hot as we had it last week; but we've got a cool change now. I am out with Mrs. Gears for the week-end. She came up with me for 3 weeks -ends; so I am out with her for a change. We have been friends for 40 years. You should know them, Joe; they lived near you when you lived in the house you built. He was Irwin Gear. He worked in the Devon near the dump. Well, we've got the meat rationing; it starts here tomorrow; a lot of red tape, I call it. It won't affect me very much as I don't eat much meat. Joe, I am so glad that you spent a very nice Christmas & had your family at home. It is nice to have them, but you miss them when they go.

I have not heard any more about Eliza-- I won't hear till next month until the Army Home League starts, as my daughter Olive goes there, & Eliza is a member there too; so then Olive will see if she is any better. Yes Joe, Eliza is married, but she married a rotter & he left her. She was called Kelly. She had one daughter who died under an abortion case, & left 3 little kids. Her husband was an army man, & he hounded Irene to go & get rid of her child & she died. He married again long ago. Eliza never inherited lunacy from her father. She had a child before marriage, & a clot of her milk went on her brain & caused it. She has been in the asylum 2 or 3 times, but not for many many years now. I think she is run down & don't nourish herself enough. She had 3 fingers cut off in a machine once. She has a sister called Mary Terrell in Broken Hill. I don't think Lottie Slone would know aunt Lizzie Vercoe's address, but when I go to Adelaide again I will try to find her out.

Joe, I wonder could you get me a copy of that book, "Soviet Strength" you told me about, & I will send on the cost of it if you let me know. I would like to read it. I am taking more rest now that the little chap's foot is out of danger. I just go up on washing days & give her a little help.

I am expecting Lloyd's wife & little girl home to stay for a week or 2, & I've got no end of orders in to make toilet sets, & the few shillings I make by my labour help me out a little. I do hope Florrie's husband soon gets better too.

I am o.k. while I sit & rest, but as soon as I stand on my feet I am in pain & feel as if everything is falling
to my feet, & the dragging pain from my 2 sides & back is awful. I don't know, I am sure, what it can be, as I eat well & am quite o.k, while I sit & rest. Old age, I guess. My sister Ellen is 65 the end of this month, & my oldest brother, Jim, was 69 on the 6th of December last. He is 1 year & 9 months older than I am.

We are having a big new Community Hospital opened here at Kadina soon. They are getting up sports & all sorts, & collecting to raise funds to equip it out. Well, it is a good thing for our Kadina folk, for if you can't afford a private hospital you have to go to Wallaroo hospital; so I think it will be nice, & you don't mind helping for a good cause. Well, the Whites are still alive. Bess White's son cut my hair last Friday. He has a nice hairdressing business here. His second wife & his daughter do the perms & he does hair-cutting.

Well, Joe, I am about run out of any interesting news, so will say Cheerio & best of everything, & good wishes for a good & brighter new year, & to see the end of this dreadful war. So lots of love to you one & all from cousin Selina Murphy.

Olives daughter was 19 last Friday--her only girl--& she only got two boys & 1 girl. Betty is 19, & Vernon is 10 in March. I have 5 grandchildren's birthdays this month, Hazel's boy is 18 on Wednesday. Her oldest child. He has put in for the navy--a lovely boy; he is a great bike rider.

Sat Jan. 32, 1944. This morning we received the following letter from Ivy--

"Iona", Jan 21, 1944. Dear Mum & Dad, Well, here we are, farmers to the backbone, & enjoying it to the full. Jose, Daphne & Keith spend much time at the dairy which is ½ a mile away. Jose in his wellington boots, which took some time getting off. Nearly pulled his legs off at the same time. It is a most beautiful spot, & the weather has been, & of course it is raining. Blackberries are very plentiful here, & we have had pies which are very nice, Grandfather. In fact everything is plentiful in the fruit & vegetable line. I am that lazy I do not know what to do with myself.

This letter was started 2 days ago, & now I gather a little energy together to write Jesse has XXXX with Frank on his fruit run, & they had pineapples hanging on his & Keith went along the road, & to his delight he found 2, & they were delicious, as we tried them. Best pineapples I have tasted in all my days, but no good as far as profit goes. Brian's mate who is here as well as us, has had earache very badly & we have been very worried; had to take him to the doctor as we were afraid of mastoid. He gave him some of those s-
sulphur tablets, & he is much improved this morning, thank goodness. Well, this is only a note to let you know all is well with us; & I do hope you have not been carried away with skeets, & that you made yourselves comfortable in one bed or another. So will close with love from us all. Ivy, Jose & kids".

Sat. continued. Charlie returned this afternoon from Glen Oak. Last night Pam & I slept at Jose's house, which was very hot. Hot weather to-day. Our nectarines are falling off the trees with ripeness. We have an abundance of antique beans.

Fri. Jan. 28, 1944. Last Wednesday, Gladys, Adell, & Alma came from Raymond Terrace, where they have been staying about a fortnight, & stayed with us until this morning when they caught the 8 o'clock bus to begin their return journey to Port Kembla. John came yesterday, & went to-day also. He is almost a young man. The Intermediate results of examination appeared on Wednesday, & Daphne's sitting passed in the following subjects: English, B; Geography, B; General Mathematics, B; Physiology, B; Art, B; Needlework, A; Home Economics, B.

Two hundred & seven others girls passed in the Home Science class. Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence:

"Box 15 (Nyngan) 22, 1944. Dear Mother & Dad, Your letter came to-day, & I am answering straight away so that this letter will go in the same train as the towels we are sending over, & as they will arrive in Newcastle on Wednesday, I thought Dad could get them on Thursday when he goes for his injection. The parcel is being sent to Newcastle station — thought it would save a long walk to Waratah.

Well, it's good to know that doctor Arnold's report is good, also to know that Dad is putting on weight. We are all well & Bill has properly recovered from his headache, & is having the longest spell without asthma for some time.

We received Dool's (Fred's) letter; it was very nice too; he certainly writes a good letter — practice makes perfect. His letters are more interesting & more cheerful now. He says he is much happier now that he is carpentering, & time doesn't drag. There is always some entertainment for them. Don't worry about us & the heat, Min; we can take it, we are pretty tough. Yesterday took a bit of taking, though, & it's many weeks since we saw rain. We shall be looking forward anxiously this week for the results & Daphne's name.

Robert finds all the tools around the place, & says he is making a chain (train) to go to see Gumma & Dad. Bill brought a pup home on Saturday, partly for my protection & partly for Robert's fun. It's too small yet to act as a watch dog, that will come later, but Robert has stopped crying at the fence for "the kids" as he calls them, & finds a new int-
erest in "Spot". Well, Mum, the towels sent are the best we have seen for some time. Cheerio. Love from us all.

Fri. continued. This morning the following letter came from Walter:

"Townsville, 24-1-44. Dear Folks, Had a good trip up here, arriving last Wednesday afternoon. Living conditions here are pretty poor, as there is no running water, due to lack of rain; then to make it worse the only accommodation I could get was on the verandah of the hostel, which is itself a very cheap wartime structure. However, after the first shock, I am now settling down pretty well, and there are some redeeming features. There are several other chaps on the verandah and it is cooler there, as the hostel is facing right across the bay. Also shorts & shirts are worn by everybody, so the heat is not felt more than in Brisbane. The food is good, as the Hostel has just got a new cook, and there is practically nothing on which to spend any money. Yesterday I played the Good Samaritan by spending about an hour in cleaning up the local beach of debris, and the swimmers must have thought I belonged to the local Council, as nobody offered to give me a hand. Six of us then went over to Magnetic Island, about 2 miles across the Bay, and enjoyed the day there swimming in the baths, etc. Rain has been falling a couple of days since my arrival, so we might soon get a shower. Fred is about 70 miles South West from here, so it is unlikely that I will see him. I will move on to Cairns as soon as I can get clear of the jobs here, and then return to Brisbane for a while. Any letters should be addressed "C/o Dept. of Interior, National Mutual Buildings, Queen Street, Brisbane," for the time being. I am in good nick and hope you are all the same. Cheerio. Wal."

Fri. Continued. Last Thursday I had an injection in my left arm at the hospital. I took Mum's spectacles to Mr. Cavaller's place and left them with a girl until next Thursday when they will be repaired and ready for me. I bought a copy of "Soviet Strength" (2/-) to send to Selina Murphy. When I got home I had to go straight back to Newcastle to get the 2 new towels from the station. I bought another copy of Soviet Strength, which Benny Broadfoot, the butcher, will pay me.

Sat. Jan. 29, 1944. Yesterday we got this note from Florence:

"Box 15 Nyngan, 27-1-44. Dear Min, Last letter was posted without the postal note being enclosed, but I suppose it will do this time. Hope Dad is able to get the parcel today. Our usual o.k. Hope you keep well. Will be looking forward to our letter next week. Until then Cheerio. Florence."

(A postal note for 3/- was enclosed).
Sat., continued. This morning I cashed the postal note & bought a 2/6 book of stamps & 6 penny stamps. Benny paid me the 2/- for Soviet Strength, & gave me some empty bottles for the hospital. I got Mum's medicine bottle refilled at chemist Stevenson, & got a bottle of tonic made up on Clement's formula, which cost 2/6. Last night I finished reading a book entitled "The Bible & Evolution", 128 pages by Arthur B. Moss. He writes as though the theory of evolution were a demonstrated fact, which it certainly is not. It requires as much faith as the religion he derides.

Sun. Jan. 30, 1944. I have written the following verses & sewn them into the copy of "Soviet Strength" that I will send to Selina Murphy:

"SOVIET STRENGTH".

This book reveals the width & length
And height of modern Russia's strength
Through Socialistic factors
Which made that land the envied place
For millions of the human race,
Despite its foul detractors.

And notwithstanding falsehoods told
Against the Russians, strong & bold,
From Timbuctoo to Needham,
Here Hewlett Johnson has explained
How Russian workers all have gained
Their liberty & their freedom.

Now land is there as free as air,
And wealth is gained by methods fair—
By honest, useful labours—
For Russians are no longer fools
Who let their country & their tools
Be owned by idle neighbours.

No parasites, although adroit,
Possess the power to exploit
The whites, or blacks, or yellows
Through private ownership of land
Which gave them power to demand
The goods of landless fellows.

For Russian workers are awake
And now enjoy the wealth they make
Unhindered by the shirkers
Who stole the people's fertile land
And dwelt in mansions great & grand,
Despising honest workers.

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Herein the Dean describes the change—
Now evident throughout the range
Of Russia's vast expanses.
The change from ignoble to toil
To freedom on their native soil
Where learning now advances.

Now more shall rich, rapacious drones
Have power to bestrew the bones
Of victims they have banished
Along the cold Siberian way,
For now in blissful Freedom's day
Those parasites have vanished.

No more shall autocratic Czars
Immure behind strong locks & bars
Of some Siberian prison

Heroic men whose only crime
Was working for the longed-for time
When Freedom's sun has risen.

The world should note the wondrous deeds
Of Soviets, whose work proceeds
With speed unprecedented,
For, from the Arctic ice afar
To warmer climes, the peoples are
In unity cemented.

Now all the youthful Russians learn
That all should live on wealth they earn,—
Not what they steal from others
By legal means, or brutal force,—
But all should live in peace, of course.
And love of justice, the source
Of wealth, devoid of want & war.
Henceforward & for ever.

May all Earth's war-plagued nations see
That they, like Russians, may be free
And earnestly endeavour
To live in peace, with ample store
Of wealth, devoid of want & war.

To Selina M. 31-1-44. To "Tribune." To "C. Cause", 15-1-44.
To Walter. 26-1-44. To Dean Johnson 28-1-44.
Mon. Jan. 31, 1944. Last night Jose returned by car from
Nabiac with Ivy, Daphne, Keith & Noel. We gave Daphne the big
illustrated book entitled "The Needlework Gift Book", for
passing her examination in domestic science. This morning I
wrote to Selina Murphy, & posted the 3 page letter & "Soviet St
Strength" to her. Warm weather. Charlie has gone somewhere aga


3452
Wed. Feb. 2, 1944. Yesterday we received a book of views of Wyo from Art & Phyllis. Charlie returned from Gleneag with a can of blackberries last night. This morning I have written the following verses:

PIG-IRON BOB.

Now Pig-Iron Bob & all his mob
Who helped their friend the Jappy
With loads galore of iron ore
Should feel extremely happy.

For now with ease in Southern seas
The Japs hold wet & dry lands
And shoot Bob's lead at any head
Of Aussies in the islands.

The iron sent By Bob is spent
By Japs in gay regalia
To murder Yanks & thin the ranks
Of diggers from Australia.

There was a time when such a crime
As treason to a country
Would be reproved, but now unmoved
Some do it with effron'try.

But Bob & Bill & Co. are still
Where justice seldom reaches;
They're yet at large, & not in charge,
And no one yet impeaches.

They think that Japs are decent chaps
Who, when the war is over
On land & sea, should henceforth be
Allowed to live in clover.

They sympathise with Nippon's rise
By empire-building plunder,
And like its plan (long since began)
To keep weak nations under.

Dear Bill & Bob would never rob
The Jappies of their dower
Of untold wealth by stealth
And brutal martial power.

A long-since dead Mikado said,
"Let empire be extended;
Let's grow & kill & rule until
All other rule has ended!"
So let's again forget the slain
Who perished in Japs' battles,
And let us hie to buy
Their trashy goods & chattels.

Let's send our ships on trading trips
To buy their wares, like brothers,
But never dare to strip them bare
Of lands they stole from others.

Let filthy sties where Jappy hies
To kiss angelic ladies
Remain intact, & not in fact
Be blown to "blith'ring Hades."

Let them retain Formosa's grain
And Chosen's stolen treasure,
And let them stay in rich Malay
To plunder at their leisure.

Let none disturb Japan nor curb
Her militant ambition,
But let her take, for Billy's sake,
A dominant position.

Yes, let her hold each mine of gold,
Each mountain, plain, & river,
And let her keep the rice & sheep
Where starving Chinese shiver.

For thus once more, from shore to shore,
(See Pig-Iron Bob's oration)
Shall warfare cease & blissful peace
Bless ev'ry bleeding nation.

To "C. Card," 14-2-44.

Fri. Feb. 4, 1944. Yesterday I had an injection in my right arm at
the hospital. I went in by the 10 tram from Mayfield, & was
in time. I bought a packet of powdered lime for Mum at Ste-
venson's, & 2 ounces of ammonio-citrate of iron for myself.
Charlie repaired the radio set yesterday. I bought, "The
Socialist Sixth Of The World" at Wilks' shop for 1/- to
send it to Selina Murphy. I will send it to-day, I have
pasted these verses inside of the back cover:

"THE SOCIALIST SIXTH OF THE WORLD."

While the weary world is wailing
In a manner unavailing
And abusing wise inventors.
Of the wonderful machines
That are saving time & labour
Of each worker & his neighbour,
It is good to read of Russians
In this volume of the dean's.

He relates the wondrous story
Of the honour & the glory
Of the Soviets' achievements
In the scientific sphere;
Of unlimited millions yearning
To increase their scanty learning
In their schools & seminaries
Where they persevere.

He describes the vast improvement
Made by Socialistic movement
In conditions of the workers
Of that land of ice & snow;
And he's quite enthusiastic
Re the changes great & drastic
Which are welcomed by the people
For the benefits they show.

There the toiler's task is lightened
And his whole existence brightened
By the engines' mighty power
To perform gigantic deeds,
For machines are owned by workers,
Not as formerly by burkers,
And supply each, his owner
With the articles he needs.

There the work-day of each porter
And of other men is shorter,
While their holidays are longer
When their yearly tasks are done,
And they all are well contented
For their earnings are augmented
By machines which do ten's labour
When attended by but one.

On their splendid art & science
Modern Russians place reliance
To increase accumulations
Of the wealth they've made & grown,
And the things above all others
That delights our Russian brothers
By its novelty, so piquant,
Is the fact that it's their OWN!

When shall we have the gumption
To discard the false assumption
That a Socialistic Order
Is a system they should dread?
Why not follow the example
Of the Soviets that example
On the old superstitions
That are dying out or dead?

Why not make conditions pleasant
And more hopeful than at present?
Why remain the slaves of others
For a paltry living wage?
Why live lives of toil & sorrow
When it's possible to-morrow
To inaugurate a system
That is worthy of the age?

Why be plundered any longer
By impostors? You are stronger!
Show the world that you are wiser
Than forefathers used to be
Who were secretly contented
Like our ancestors half demented.

Now demand a social order
In which workers shall be free
Don't be fooled by politicians
In their overpaid positions
Who deliver cunning speeches
To uphold this rogues' regime.

It is time you did awaken
And had resolutely taken
Mon. Feb. 7, 1944. This morning we received the following telegram from Fred:—New address No. 2 Coy. 1st Aust. Adv. Reinfr. Depot, Australia. O.K. Fred.

Mum went to get her new dress tried on, & got this letter from Ivy on the way home:—

"N 450817, Pte. F. Cocking, No. 2 Coy. 1st Aust. A.R.D. Australia. Dear Joe, I ve & Family, You may as well know now as later on that I'm in New Guinea, but don't let it bother you at all, because by what I can see of it so far, it's not too bad, & it would seem that most of the reports about how terrible it is are mostly so much hot air.

I find the place full of interest with the jungle trees going straight up without branches until they get to the sun; some of them must be 100 feet high, & from them hang that monkey-rope that used to be on the trees in Danger park, as strong & tough as rope—in fact we use it as clothes lines etc., & underneath all sorts of undergrowth & about 6 feet of dead leaves. I'd like the opportunity of re-stocking the fernery because there's some marvellous specimens of nearly everything up here, even to the common old fish-bone fern, & then of course there's a lot that I've never seen before. We are not bothered much by insects, even though there's plenty about, but we sleep in tents on beds about 2½ feet high with mosquito nets & a repellent lotion that is really good, rubbed on us. I expect to find hundreds of all sorts of birds, but have so far been disappointed. We hear quite a few, but I've only seen about half a dozen, & then they were nothing to brag about. I'm only sorry that I never read more about this place, & then I could have found more to interest me & appreciated the place even more than I now do. The natives are all that is said of them—short, tough little guys, but I never expected some of them to have blue hair, just the same. They come around sometimes selling paw paws at a deener a time.

Enough about myself, how are things at your place & ours? Have Jack & Glad been home yet? I saw a report in the "Sydney Telegraph"; I think it was of Connie's marriage. I didn't know till then that she was marrying a Yank, but from his picture he didn't seem to be a bad sort of fellow. The way I worked it out, you should be starting work again to-morrow. Did you go to Daisy's? & did you have a good time?

Has Dad got his sarsaparilla yet? I haven't seen any yet, but I'm still looking for it. I'm writing this to you in
Sunday January 30, 1944.

Instead of directly home, I know that either you or I've will take it home personally. There is nothing that I need here other than an occasional newspaper— I haven't got those others that were sent yet, but they'll catch up some time. Is all the bother settled yet? at the works, I mean. The kids should have their exam results now. Don't forget to send them on to me, will you?

I'm about to write to Flo & Wal now, so I had better finish up. Don't let my being here worry you at all, because I'm not bothered at all—in fact I'm rather happy about it. I mulled the address a bit, but will put it on the top of this page. Fred."

Friday Feb 11, 1944. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm. I met Mr. Helmes again & again told him how to cure boils by applying a solution of perchloride of mercury to a broken boil. He is getting injections to cure them. My right leg has been rubbed by the top of my boot, & is very sore. Mr. Ward has made a speech in the Federal parliament in praise of Socialism as a world system. He said that unless the world adopted socialism the capitalists will make another war. Charlie returned last evening from Glenoak.

This morning we got this letter from Gladys:

"Wednesday 7th, First Avenue, Narrabong, Dear Mum, Your letter just arrived, & I'm answering straight away, as you asked me to. I went into Port Kembla yesterday, but didn't get them (corsets). I intended going into Wollongong on Friday & trying in there. Anyhow, if you don't get suited in Newcastle let me know, & I'll go in to Wollongong & try in there for you if you want me to. We had a terrible trip home. The Brisbane Mail should have left at 9-30, but it didn't leave till 10 past 10. We had to stand up all the way to Sydney, in the luggage van. It wouldn't have been so bad if you could turn your feet. Poor John had his feet jammed on top of each other, & he couldn't even stand up straight. He had a bad side for a couple of days; & poor little Alma & Adell were both sick. There were over 25 of us jammed in. It wouldn't have been so bad if we could have sat on our cases or something. The soldiers had a job trying to let Alma & Adell get a bit of air from the windows; & talk about heat, & steam, & screech from the engine. It was the worst train journey we ever had in our lives. We reckoned, when we got home, that we wouldn't go to Newcastle again in a hurry.

I suppose I had better stop growling, or else I'll make you sick. We get our holidays in April, so I suppose we'll be going up that way; I know Jack will want to go up. I wrote 4 pages of a letter to Fred; I suppose he'll soon be answering me. How's Dad, is he still tip-top? We're very pleased
to hear you are both well. Remember us to Jose's crowd, & congratulate Daphne for us for passing her intermediate. We're very pleased to hear it. Tell them we're sorry we missed them; we'll see them next time most likely. Cheerio to you & Dad, from Jack, the children & Glad.
I have typed the following verses to send to the Newcastle Herald:

**A CONTRAST.**

SIR,

Newcastle was a sober town, & it is sober still,
For many citizens would frown on alcoholic swill;
But some there are whose blood is hot, &
So to hotels they hie.

To quaff an alcoholic pot, or else they think they'll die.

Now Watkins tries with sober James to make more "snake-juice"
Despite the fact that liquor shames the highest & the low.

The traffic these brave men would nurse, although it causes
Has long become the greatest curse: 'The dearth of bread that desolates the earth.

It robs poor children of their bread in hovels mis-called homes,
And fills rich mothers' hearts with dread beneath palatial domes.

Drink's infamy who can recall: What sorrow it has made:
What countless tragedies befell through its infernal trade.

Yet touts like Ryan, Watkins, James perhaps would laugh & sneer
At dunes whose brains the drink inflames, & chirps, "Give them beer!"

Aren't there already wrecks enough in this war-weary time
Without demanding brewers' stuff that instigates to crime?

Such men would help each guzzling guy who squanders cash galore,
On alcoholic drink, to buy & swallow more & more.

And they are "Labour" men of mark who play this brewers' game,
And, like their loyal puppies, bark without the slightest shame.

They'd give poor men the "poison cup" on which all good folks feed.
And thus would lift the fallen up by pulling farther down.

Compare such men with noble Ward who has a better plan
Than giving beer, in barrels stored, to lift a working man.

Ward has a sober brain to think, & intellect to see
That Socialism—not foul Drink—will set all nations free.

Where Ward's impassioned voice is heard, there James & Watkins shriek
From uttering—helpful word, yet boldly fight for Drink, ink

"Give men more beer, all differ they dry; not. "Give men freedom first
And, like their loyal puppies, bark without the slightest shame.

O what descent from thoughts sublime to nonsense most absurd!
Was ever in this modern time such piffle ever heard?

Don't give men freedom; give them beer; make drunkards still more drunk.

Such sentiments make crystal-clear how low some men have sunk.

May the dies of liquor note what these drink-boosters say,
And give them both a knock-out vote on next election day.

---C. Corse--- 25-3-44

This morning we received the following letters from Fred & Florence:

---Fred's letter---

I suppose you thought it strange that I wrote to Joe, rather than to you, but I thought it better that he or Ivy should tell you where I was. Don't let it worry you at all, because there has been nothing happen at all so far, & I'm not sorry at being here. Last night there was a concert on— I never went. I hate the things. — but about half way through it just pelted down rain, the mud came back wet through & found their tents leaking. Again I was lucky, for my bunk was the only dry place. However, they covered themselves over with their waterproof sheets & forgot all about leaky tents. Thanks to the rain it's nice & cool now, with a pleasant breeze. Twice a week we have a picture show & the twice I've been they've shown brand new ones not yet shown on the mainland. Last week we went for a walk up to a native village & garden where is grown everything— pumpkins, peas, etc., but I wasn't interested in anything besides the paw paws. I don't know whether you've tasted them, but if you ever get the chance you should. Coconuts & paw paws are the only fresh fruit I've had so far, but we get plenty of tinned fruit. We get plenty to eat; & from a good canteen we buy lollies, biscuits, & chocolate, so we live in fairly good style. Last Sunday I wrote to Wal & Flo, & remembering Dad saying that you are happier if you understand the different fauna & flora you see, I asked Wal to send me a book on what I have (seen) & expect to see up here.

I am going down to the river when I finish writing because I think that a bath every day is a necessity, & besides, the water is real cold, & it's a real pleasure just to be in it. I'm feeling extra well & don't find it at all hot, nor is it cold. I haven't had any letters or papers yet, but I don't expect any for a while. No more room. Fred.

Also this from Florence:

"Nyngan, Friday, 11-2-44. Dear Mother & Dad, How are things? Hope the weather that is roasting you to a frazzle has cleared up. Min. & Ngx that the temperature is normal again. The weather here is good. Last month we had some very hot days, but this has been a bad month, & I don't find it any hotter than over."

3460
In fact the heat doesn't worry me at all here, but the dust does. Everyone here says this is an exceptionally dusty summer. Now about the towels, Mother. When I think that we tried to save you a couple of bob, and you are trying to lose that couple of bob, I have come to the conclusion that you're a queer old stick. The towels only cost us 7/1 & the freight you speak of was 6d, which makes the total cost 7/10. The 10d you can have for Christmas box; so if I return the stamps everything will be O.K. I recently sent Robert money to buy him something. I haven't been able to get a suit yet. Tried the shops here, & Marcus C. haven't them either, so I'll try now to get some material & have them made.

Did you get your dress made yet? Thanks for sending the paper over with Daphne's exam in it. We already had it in a Sydney paper, so I cut the section out & sent it on to Dool.

How are you both keeping in health? No more of Bottomley's dizzy spells, I hope. What a great surprise having Glad & family visit you! When are you going to pay them a visit again? Tell Jose, or whoever sent the "Review" over—thanks very much. Bill saw the photo of an old friend of his in it, & it made very interesting reading for him. Jack's photo is in it too, isn't it? I thought I recognised him among the coke men's group. Pip is certainly having an interesting time seeing Queensland at the expense of the Gov.

How is the meat rationing affecting you? Dad get his quota of liver, & is it enough for him? But then liver is coupon free, I think. Anyhow, we get on well over here—just hand our coupons in & get as much meat as we like, without any question. Nyngan has its advantages, & you won't starve if you come over. We are all well, & Bill is better than ever—hasn't had any sign of a wheeze for weeks. How are Ivy & Jose & the nippers? Two going to High School, I suppose, this year. Duf is a happy girl now that the strain of the exam is over, & Keith will think it is just great to be past the primary school stage. I suppose Noel will hate to be going off to school alone. Ask him how is his drawing these days. Robert loves playing with his pup & spends hours with him, but he gets very cranky when "Spot" takes his ball or his other toys under the house. The house is too low for us to crawl under, & he has to wait days sometimes before the pup decides to return his things to him. Well, it's close-up time: Bill is in for his tea. It isn't often I write a letter without Robert chipping in, but he is asleep. Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

Postscript: I had this letter ready for the post, but just remembered that I haven't Dool's latest address, & I like to answer his letters pretty promptly; so will you please let me have it straight away?—the one after Sellheim. Was going to write to-night, but will write to Art instead.
Copy of a letter from Fred to Florence & Bill:

Australia. Dear Flo & Bill, of course Robert, You can see
that I've changed my address again, but although they call it
officially in New Guinea, but this is all I'm let to say.
However, it is not a bad sort of place & not near so bad as I've
been led to believe. Everything here is like they say, but on
a much lesser scale than is generally said. I think that you'd
find it very interesting; I do myself, wandering through the
bush with crows' nests & staghorns & ferns everywhere. I re-
member how you & Bill used to go for maidenhair whenever you
got the chance. I have just written to Jose in preference to
to writing home direct, & as Mum usually copies your letters
& sends them on to me. I will assume that she does the same
mine, & so it will not waste time & paper telling you about it
all here. I've got to write to Wal yet, & am in a bit of a
hurry. Sunday is my only chance to write, because all our day-
light is taken up clearing the jungle, & at night one hur-
ricane lamp to a tent trying to shine through a mosquito{
tent is an extremely poor light. It's by no means so hot here as
it was at my last address, but it's more muggy, & a bit hard to
get to sleep, but I think that I prefer the weather here.
It's rained here every night so far, with the exception of
last night, but the water gets away somewhere, & but for
wheel tracks there is no mud about at all. Anyhow, I think that
it's much better here than where I was last. I'm only writing
to you what I haven't written to Jose, so you can send this
home when you've read it. I've just posted a letter to you,
sympathising with you at not being able to go home for Chr
istmas, when I got one from Mum saying that you had been home.
How was Bill near the coast this time? I hope he was O.K.
this time, & that the 3 of you had a real good Christmas. Art
& Phyllis & the kids were the centre of attraction for a while,
I suppose, & with Wal being there too, it shouldn't have been
very dull. What's the new kid like? Mum wrote to me, skiting
about it; but then it just wouldn't be her if she didn't,
would it? How are you yourself? Is it too hot for you out
there? I can just picture the kid going around nearly naked
on his car. Have you tried out the creek yet? I suppose that
when you do they won't be able to stone you away. The river
here, but it's not much good, runs too fast & brings
down a fine black dirt with it. It looks just like the pic-
ture you've no doubt seen of the rapids, & is too strong to
stand up in at 4 or 5 feet from the bank. I'll close now, but
will write again next Sunday if possible. So long! Best of
luck. Fred.
Mon. Feb. 21, 1944. Last Thursday I got an injection in my right arm from Sister Grenell. In the afternoon I went to doctor Opitz's consulting room, but Mrs. Giles told me that he would not be there. Before coming home from the hospital I went by tram to the Sunnyside pub in Georgetown & inquired for a Buffalo forge at the second-hand timber yard near where Jack used to live, but the girl there did not know, & I could not find any in the yard. I got a bus at the Waratjah tram terminus & rode to Rand street. Last Friday evening I got a certificate from doctor Opitz for the Gardener's Lodge. We have been given the following letter which Florence wrote to Jose & Ivy:-

"Box 15, Nyngan, 10-2-44. Dear Jose & Ivy, I am enclosing a letter from Dool which I received on Monday. I suppose that by this time you will have the letter that he says he has written to you. You will see when you read his letter that he wants me to send it on home, but first incase they haven't heard yet that he is in New Guinea I thought that if you took it down it might not be such a shock as me sending it home in my letter. Although the news is pretty horrible Dool seems very cheerful; I hope he remains that way. Hope that you are all well, as we are. Give old Duff our heartiest congratulations about her pass; tell her we are all proud of her. Any news I will send in my letter home, but I can't write now—this has to go in the mail now. Cheeero. Our love to the kid. Florrie."

Yesterday Jose took Ivy, Daphne, Keith, Noel, & Mum to Wallsend, where they saw Bella Greenwell & her husband & her mother Mrs. Rees at her house. They stayed until the evening.

To-day we received this letter from Fred:-

"No. 450617 Pte. F. Cocking. H.Q. Coy. 113 Con. Depot (A.I.F.) Australia. Monday 12th Feb. To-day I sent a telegram both to Joe & to Wal giving this address. I sent to Joe instead of you because you don't like getting them, & to Wal so that if he hasn't already sent a book which I asked him for he will send it direct. You will know, tellFlo., ut then I must write to her again soon myself. I have been sent here to be part of the convalescent unit, & on first impression it seems to be the best show that I've been to so far. The climate is regarded as the best on the island, but it still rains everyday. We are on a rise well above sea level, with nice views of valleys & waterfalls, while down in the gully flows a very swift river. I haven't been here long enough to go anywhere much yet, but I expect to have some very nice walks if I get the chance. All sorts of different entertainments are provided for the chaps who are here to recuperate, some
educational, &c. &c. others just time users. & we are. I think, allowed access to them. so it seems that I couldn't have been sent to a much better place. I've had on re-directed encouraging-- Dad's count up 2 points, & we're doing O.K., & Joe & Keith both passing their exams. Daphne will too, I feel sure. She's no mug; keep it up! I'll write again when I find what my duties are, telling you how I'm getting on etc., for actually I haven't been here long enough yet to tell, but everybody seems O.K., & the grub is extra good, so I can see no reason at all why I shouldn't be happy here. I'm in the best of nick & looking forward to being here. Fred.

We received the following letter from Walter:

Cairns, 11-2-44. Dear Folks, I arrived here at 2-30 a.m. this morning by train from Townsville, having left there at 3-45 p.m., yesterday afternoon, so that you can see things are pretty slow up here for a 200 mile trip. Unfortunately it got dark shortly after leaving Ingham so I was unable to appreciate the scenery from there on. As a matter of fact I am here more in the capacity of a tourist than anything, as one of the air-conditioning plants at Townsville has broken down, so I decided to come on up here to have an eyeful of all the jobs, as well as everything else that this district can show me.

It has been raining very heavily both here & in Townsville, & is due for some time according to reports, but I will probably have a look at Kuranda & the Barron Falls to-morrow, & I have booked to go over to Green Island to see the coral reef on Sunday. There is plenty of water here, & living conditions are comfortable, although fairly primitive. Seeing that one of the creeks here is named Alligator Creek, & not without reason, I will have my swims under the shower, as there are no baths in service here, as at Townsville. With a bit of luck I might even get a look at the Atherton Tableland district & see some of the timber-getting among the big trees--- anyhow it won't be for the want of trying. Evidently you have no word of Fred's release yet, still the army has to maintain its reputation. I assume that he is O.K. Glad to hear of the visit from the Kembla gang; of Joe's & Daphne's passes, & of Chip's handiwork on the wireless, as I could just imagine how you would feel with no "Dad & Dave", or "Martin's Corner". Stories of the blackberry pies were a bit hard to take. Yes, I saw Wilfred in Sydney, but had no idea who he was when he confronted me, so that eventually I was forced to ask him to tell me. Seems quite a decent sort of fellow, & must have grown up all of a sudden. I told them at the Y.M.C.A. that they must be crazy when they told me that a 2nd cousin of mine, also a W. Cook, had looked in.

So Connie Bobs married a Yank! Which reminds me that I found £ 34 lying on the bathroom floor of the hotel in
Sydney, & when I had located its Tankee owner he told me that his mate had left it on the floor after giving him a shower. Queer people? I am in good nick as usual, & hope you all are. Cheerio. Wal.

Wed. Feb. 23, 1944. I have finished reading, "My Path to Atheism," by Annie Besant, & returned it to Jose. He came last evening & mowed the front lawn. My letter re Watkins' & Jones' application for more beer for Newcastle, was not printed. This afternoon I received the following letter from Selina Murphy:—

"Sunday 20-2-1944. Dear Joe & family, Just a few lines in reply to your ever-welcome & very interesting letter & also to thank you for the 2 books you sent me. I will read them both in good time. I started to read one, I have been doing a lot of crocheting work & resting at the same time. The few shillings I earn from it helps me a little. My back is still crook. I got one of Johnson's red chain plasters & I've got it on now; I have had it on 3 days, & it has relieved my back a lot. Old age, I think, creeping on, & all the hard work I have done. The rest of my family are all well, bar my son-in-law from the last war—Hazel's husband—& he has been pretty ill & is still ill, that is little John's father. John's foot is coming on nicely now; he can walk a lot better & his foot is a lot straighter; he feels it hurts him if he walks much, & the change of the weather affects him, but he is better in health now & looks better. Doctor Thyer deserves praise for the wonderful job he has done to John's foot. Well, Joe, I got bad news last Wednesday. My sister Ellen was taken to the Wallaroo hospital. They think it is a cancer in her stomach, & her heart is in a shocking state, Doc. says. I went down to see her yesterday. Her stomach is all swollen up twice its normal size, & as hard as a brick, but Doc. said he is very much afraid it is a cancer. I suppose they will X-ray her to-morrow. She was 65 on the 29th of January. Her children all came home to spend the birthday with her, & I think it was too much excitement for her, but she has not been well for a long time. She is 2 years & 4 months younger than me. Mrs. Mowbray she is called. I hope it is not a cancer; her liver is bad also. I saw Dick White up at a sale on Friday, but I was not speaking to him.

Joe, if you've got the last address of aunt Lizzies it will find her. I've got that one; I found it when I was going through some papers, but I am out at Mrs. Gear's for the weekend, or I would send it in this letter, but I am
writing here & posting. My son may get his relief the end of next month from the island. I do hope he does.

My younger son Allan from Warradale camp may be home with me for next week-end, also his wife & little boy. It will be lovely to have them. She is a lovely girl & is a good wife— every saving girl, & can do anything. Well, Joe, I can just remember your mother. She was a big woman, if I think right, but I can't say I know your father. I have heard my Mum talk about your people. It was not very nice of him to serve you all so badly.

Joe, my other sister, Lizzie is a sick woman; she has lost a lot of weight. She has sugar diabetes. She was Mrs. Larns? & was left with seven children to bring up. Her husband got killed in the mines here. She married again after she struggled & brought her children up. They are all married now. Well, Joe, I will say Cheerio now, & once again I thank you.

Lots of love from cousin Selina Murphy."

Fri. Feb. 25, 1944: Yesterday I went as usual & had an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. I paid the gas bill on the way home. This morning I took my blue striped coat & my second best hat to Dodds', at the Bank corner, to be cleaned. I posted a short note to the editor of "Common Cause" with "Pig-iron Bob", "Soviet Strength", & "The Socialist Sixth Of The World". This afternoon we received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nynyan, 24-2-44. Dear Mother, This is just a hurried letter this time while Bill is at the butcher's. I have to hurry this so that he can post it with his mail when he returns. I am sorry to know that Dad's leg has been troubling him again; it takes such a long time to heal, but when it is clean enough the old remedy of the plaster never fails to heal it, so I would try that if I were you; but watch for that offensive smell from it & take it off, but I suppose you know all about that. I am glad that you & Jose's family are well— keep it up!

I had a pleasant surprise on Monday morning. Bill & I were talking about sewing machines on Sunday, & how hard it was to buy them, but how much we would like one. On his first call the next morning a woman told him she had a machine for sale. The house being just around the corner Bill came back, & we went around together. The result is I have got a very nice nearly new Singer sewing machine (cabinet) & we are both very pleased about the deal. Bill is like a boy with a new toy, & he & Mrs. Rees were trying out the new gadgets last night. It has all the extras to do pleating etc., & they were fitting these on. Well now, regarding your trip over. It might be a good plan for you to come next month, but wait until Dad's leg is on the mend & securely wrapped in a plaster bandage. The wea-
ther here is not too bad at all, except for the dust, but I don't think the heat will worry you. We have ordered 2 pairs of blankets, so we will make you warm. I don't know how you are going to get on though about Glad & Jack coming.

You don't want to come for only a week or 2 when you do come. Yes, it's a shame about Dool, Min, but don't worry, he is probably a long way from where any fighting is going on. Bill was speaking to a chap who has just returned to Bourke after 14 months in N. Guinea, & he was telling Bill this. He knows a bit about it, in fact he told us Dool would be gone before before we got his letter. By his tone there is nothing to worry about.

Well, now I have really "stupendous" news even better than the machine. I see you include the pup in our family, well I hope that in September we shall be able to include a little daughter too. It's sure to be a girl this time Min-- it must be. I am pretty well-- not like last time. Robert & Bill are in the pink. Now I must close up. Bill is here hurrying me-- he is off to work. Cheerio. Don't worry. Love from us all. Florence.

Tbur. Mar. 2, 1944. This morning Mum & I went to Newcastle. She got ** of the tram at the Co-op. store & called at Dodd's for my hat & coat, but they were not to be finished until 4 p.m. Mum went to a saddler's for 3 hamper straps, but they will not be ready until tomorrow. She paid the municipal rates. In the meantime I went up to the hospital & got an injection from a different sister, as Sister Grenell is away on her holidays. Mum came later, & we went to the railway station, where I paid £4-0-3 for a first class ticket to Nyngan, for myself, & the same for one for Mum. I also paid 25/- for 2 sleeping berths, but the clerk had to send a telegram to Sydney to ascertain whether any berths are available, & I must go to Newcastle to-morrow to learn the result. We are to leave for Sydney on Monday the 6th, & will stay with Art & Phyllis, or her parents until Tuesday, when we shall start for Nyngan. Art spoke to Mum over the telephone yesterday.

Jose came down this evening & said that a military man wants to interview him about Fred. I bought a pair of new boots at the Co-op. store to-day for 26/2, but as I had no coupons I have to take some in to-morrow. I paid 2/- contribution to the Pensioners' Association before I went to Newcastle. I posted a "Readers' Digest" & a compass to Fred this morning.

We received a letter from Fred to-day, & one from Walt. This is from Fred:


So far I haven't received any printed matter at all, but I have a big stock of unanswered letters, but I regard a letter
either to you or Mum as being most important, so this one is first to-night. Flo sent me Daphne's exam results, but omitted the index to the numbers of the subjects, so I can't analyse them properly, but it seems that she & the rest of you too did very well; congratulations. I envy you fellows your trip, I've always wanted to go there myself; I suppose I will some day. The Christmas card that I sent Glad had good results, for to-day for I had a real happy letter from her. I would have written myself long ago only I didn't have her address & always forgot to ask for it. She tells me that Dad looks better now than he has for a long time ( Flo says the same ); let's hope it keeps up, also that both Chip & Mum look well. It's a big pity that she came just when you fellows were away, but she says that Jack's holidays are due about Easter, so no doubt you'll see them then.

You ask what I'm doing; I'm carpentry in a physio-therapy section: sounds good, doesn't it, & it is, too, really. To me it seems to be a sort of mental stimulus to 'chaps who, after sickness or wounds need something to make them interested in something other than themselves, so they make little things out of wood like boomerangs or paper knives etc. They have them French polished & some of them do a real good job. My job is to show them how, & I also have things of a bigger nature to do myself besides. You can see that I'm kept pretty busy, but it's a good class of work & very interesting. Everybody wants to send me World's News etc., but I haven't time to read much, & if I had there is, so I'm told, a good library with books on everything from fiction to fact, & I can always get reading from other chaps, so you can see that there's no need to send any. Cake & cream & fresh fruit are part of the usual menu here, & there's plenty of it too; in fact it's the best army grub that I've had yet. The surroundings are nice, & it's much cooler than Queensland, or in fact Newcastle in summer time. I'm feeling good, pretty good news from home, with the exception of Ivie who I hope is O.K. again, so you can see that I'm as contented as I can be under the circumstances. Above all, don't be concerned about me—there's no need to be. The size & number of the "mossies" are just plain lies. So far I doubt if I've seen a 100, & what I have seen are the same as what worry you people. Certainly everybody needs to be careful of insects & things up here, but a man would be just a plain fool if he didn't. It seems that the photo is satisfactory; everyone says so, but if you could have seen the crook job, & the worse place that they do it in, you, like me, would wonder why. I'll answer the rest of your letter when I write home, in a few days, so till then. So long & all the best. Fred.

This is a copy of the letter from Walter:-

"Tamworth, 29-2-44. Dear Folks, I came down from Cairns last Tuesday morning, & am now held up here, waiting final tests
on all-conditioning plants, so that you see my "week or two"s trip from Brisbane has now been almost six weeks, due to a variety of causes. I was fortunate in Cairns in getting a good view of the Barron Falls, also of going twice to green Island. Most enjoyable of all was a trip to Freshwater Creek, about 10 miles out of the town, which was a really beautiful spot with a series of freshwater cascades, each followed by a swimming pool, & bordered on each side by steep, jungle-covered hillsides containing all manner of staghorns, elkhorns, & other ferns in profusion. It probably would be no exaggeration to say that this is the prettiest spot I have ever been in--the swimming, too, was just perfect. I have not written to Fred while being up here, as I didn't have his address, & was very surprised to learn that he is in New Guinea. I wonder how life up there is suiting him? Let me have any news available, won't you? You'll have to tune Art up for not writing--certainly I have done more since leaving Sydney than ever before in my life. Glad to hear of your visit to Rees' as you would no doubt enjoy a good talk about the old days on "Billy Goat Hill." Don't let them worry you about being fat, Mum; better that way than on the undernourished list.

Young Robert's dog seems to be turning the tables on him--now it is the dog's turn to take things under the house. It probably needs a foxey to keep up with him. So you got the dress made up at last, Mum! & it looks the goods. Great news. Now you'll have to get Dad all done up & capture the headlines at the next Spring meeting; or perhaps you might just show the people out West how the other half lives. I am expecting to be back in Brisbane by next week-end.

Cheerio: Wal."

Fri. Mar. 3, 1944. This morning I went by tram right up to the hill near the beach at Newcastle, & enquired for the parasol that Mum left in the tram yesterday. The man in the tram office there told me to inquire at the Gordon Avenue at Hamilton. I went to the railway station & paid 6d each for 2 reserved seat tickets to number 4 carriage's number 27 & 28 seats on the 4-50 p.m. for Sydney next Monday. I inquired whether we had secured 2 sleeping berths on the train that will leave Sydney for Nyngan next Tuesday night, & was told that our names had been noted, & that I should inquire again tomorrow. I must also inquire next Monday & if no berths are available I shall get my 25/- returned to me. I tried to get a film for my Brilliant camera, but failed. I bought 2 leather belts for 1/3 each to put around the ports At Dodds' I got my coat & hat, the cleaning cost 6/-4. I took coupons to the Co-op. Store for my new boots, & got my old pair. I also notified the clerk that we had lost one of our store tokens. Then I walked to the Hamilton tram depot & inquired about Mum's parasol.
but it was not there. I posted a letter to Florence & Bill this morning to tell them we are coming. Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence:

"Monday, 28th. Dear Min & Dad, As soon as you receive this letter I want you or Dad to go & make arrangements to come over. The weather is good & cool now, especially in the mornings, so bring warm clothes with you. If you leave it much longer to come the trip may be too cold. Even if you can book to-day (Thursday I suppose you will get this) it means that you won't be able to come until Thursday's train from Sydney the 9th March. You must book 7 days ahead & that should give you plenty of time to prepare. Don't bring your real good dress, you won't have anywhere to wear it to, but bring your costume & cardigan. The days are nice & warm, but you will need a cardigan on in the mornings.

Dad, to insure a good trip please give in for once & book on the Inter City (it's the only train you can book to Sydney, & the trip to Sydney is very tiresome if you have to stand all the way. Judging by Glad's letter that is what you will have to do. The trip isn't so fast that it's dangerous; there hasn't been an accident with it yet: so be a sport, even if it's for Min. The train will arrive here just after 12 on Friday & either Bill or I will meet you. Get Art to put you on the Bourke mail: he will be glad to. The trains only leave Sydney for out here on Sunday nights, Tuesday, & Thursday, so if you miss out on Thursday you will have to wait until the following week. You will have to make up your mind as soon as you get this because the office in Newcastle may close at 5 p.m. Mother should be able to get ready in a week, as her supply of clothes is good. Well, it's up to you to act quickly because you will have a week to cool your heels. Cheerio. Hoping to see you on Friday week. Love, Florence.

P.S. It's nothing to worry about, but doctor wants me to go into hospital for a week's treatment, & I thought, seeing you were coming, anyhow, that you may come soon. Robert would be more contented with you."

Sat. Ap. 22, 1944. Mum & I left Newcastle by train for Sydney on Tuesday the 7th of March, & were met at Redfern station by Arthur, Phyllis, & Mr. Witheridge. We slept at Art's place on Tuesday night, & next day we visited Mrs. & Mr. Witheridge, & afterwards visited Grace Rixon. There we met Grace, Pearl Carpenter, brother Jack & May, & George Rixon's married daughter. In the evening Art took us to Sydney station by electric train, & we got our reserved seats in a first-class carriage. We left for...
Nyngan. We met Mr. Tom Barrow & his good wife & little girl, who occupied seats in the same carriage. Mr. Barrow told me he carried on a hairdressing business at Nyngan. We arrived there at about six o'clock on Wednesday morning, & found Bill Purdy waiting for us at the station. He had hired a taxi car, so we were taken to Canoblar street & met Florence at the gate of her house. She had just returned from the Nyngan hospital, & was weak & tearful, but she soon became cheerful. We found Robert healthy & happy & delighted to see us. We intended to stay with Florence a fortnight, but as she had to go to hospital 2 or 3 times a week for a month or more, we decided to remain until she was better. The weather was warm & dusty when we arrived, but during our 6 weeks stay there was very little dust, & only 2 lots of rain.

During our stay of 6 weeks I got acquainted with Mr. Finnmori, who is a photographer & works at Permewan Wright's store, & bought a dozen views of Nyngan of him. He wants me to try to buy some bromide photographic paper for him & some cyanide of potassium for reducing the density of negatives. Mum also bought a dozen copies of Nyngan views of him. We left Nyngan on Tuesday the 18th of April, & arrived at home on the Wed. On the 20th I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from a new sister, as sister Grenell was working in another part of the hospital. In the evening I tried to buy marbles for Robert, & bromide paper & cyanide for Mr. Finnmore, but could not. On Friday I got a certificate from Dr. Opit, for the Lodge. While we were at Nyngan we received the following letter from Fred:-

"Friday 25, 1944. N & 50817. Pte. F. Cocking, H.O. Ooy. 113 Aust. Con. Depot, A.I.F. Australia. I got 2 of these (letter-cards) among a lot of other things in a Christmas comforts fund last night, & although there's not much room to write this will serve until I have more time & can write a proper letter. I wrote to Glad last night, & to Flo just now, so I am pretty well square again—only Wal & Marj Raymond left. I'll use Wall's old address; he should be back again by now, & if he isn't I suppose that it will be sent on to him. I seem to be getting mail from everyone these days, & I've been writing nearly every night since I've been here. I've had no papers yet, but the letter & cutting about Connie's wedding was delivered O.K. Don't bother to send any World's News, or cake, or anything else—thanks, but I have everything I want. Joe can do just as he thinks fit—he knows what he's up to, but these things take time—no one is very concerned about them, except of course the mugs who can do very little about them. Fatty & Dirty Dick's namesake is; I think, the man to contact\"
as a last resource. Always see the Boss, is a good motto; I've found, haven't you? Since I told you of the bloke with blue hair another has gone by half & half; blue on top & jet black below. This, when a comb & ribbon are tied on, looked rather queer to me, but I think he kidded himself about it. He carried only a bow & arrows, & 2 or 3 women with grass skirts were loaded right down past the plimsoll; a kid in a sort of bag on the back, & about twelve bamboos maybe 14 feet long on their heads. Poor cows, they have my sympathy. The bamboos were about 2½ inches thick, & I wouldn't have liked to carry them myself. They seem to be pretty happy about it all, & not a bit hard to get on with. It's raining now as it has every day since I've been here, & now I just take it as a matter of course.

Flo wrote saying Bill hadn't been sick since they got back. It's good to know that at last they seem to have found a place to suit him, isn't it? In Flo's letter she says she has too many grapes; & I suppose you have too many nectarines. Are they any good? or has the fly got in? It's a pity you can't swap them, isn't it? I'm not tired of being here yet, & if anything, it seems to be better than at first thought. You never said why Wal had to go higher up, but maybe you didn't know yourself. I'll ask him when I write to-morrow night. Keep the good reports coming about you & Dad. Fred.

We also received the following letter from SHARK:-

Fred:—

Dear Dad,

It was very glad to get your letter dated 17-2-44 & to know that everything is as usual. I've also had the "B.H.P. Review" & 3 bundles of papers delivered. I have written to Wal & am anxiously waiting an answer telling me about his trip & why he had to go. He told me his district didn't extend that far North. I can well understand how monotonous the train ride must have been for him, because I found it very irksome, & I had plenty of company. Bert hasn't written yet, but I'll write to him; I know his address (17 I think is the number); a letter from him should be very interesting. It would be very nice if I could see you, but whether it was in your new dress or an old one wouldn't matter very much. You & Dad too need to be very careful of centipedes & red-back spiders; there's dozens of both at home, isn't there? So far I've seen no centipedes, but at my last place there were countless scorpions & a few snakes & death-adders, but I don't think any are here; anyway I've neither seen nor heard of any. I'm a fair way from there now, as to get here took 1 hour & 40 minutes by air; my first time aloft, & I thought it very nice, & quite the best way to travel. We have now been on the island longer than the stipulated
month, so I can now say that we were 8 days on the water, & at no time was it rougher than the lake, or even the dirty old Hunter River. It was a real nice boat— a passenger before the war. At no time did I remotely feel sick, & the only ones who were were they who knew right from the start that they would be. I was fortunate enough to be allotted a hammock on the deck to sleep in. Gee! but they're comfortable & no trouble at all to get into. I pitted the poor sows who had to sleep, in the cabins, for you wouldn't credit how hot & smelly & horrible it was down there. You say that Art doesn't write: it's easy to understand him not writing; he's so busy with his teaching & his nights at the university; but I expected that Phyllis would be a better writer. Neither has written to me since I was in Victoria. I'd be glad if he did write to me a bit, because his are always good interesting letters; but I can understand now that he is a family man him being pretty well wrapped up in his own little circle. Still, if he should write to you I'd be glad if you'd send the letter on to me. I'm still doing the same job, & so far I've had no arguments of any kind, & as I've done a diversity of different jobs, apparently I meet with their approval. I read the paper cutting you sent, but everywhere up here there is a strict lookout to see that all precautions are taken (more, many more than the writer advocates. I can't understand just why they print such stuff: about all it does is worry you people & does no good at all that I can see. I'm still O.K. & the grub stays first class; so things could be worse, couldn't they? Fred"

The following letter was sent to Florence & Bill by Arthur:

"137 Livingstone Road, Marrickville, 22nd Feb, 1944.

We were both mighty glad to hear from you, but of course sorry that Deg has gone to New Guinea. However, Merve (Ewers) whom we have seen a lot of lately, says worst of the actual fighting in that theatre is now over. He should know: he's been 2 years in the A.I.F. & hasn't been near the war yet. It's a pity you don't like the West, Flor. It is pretty crook to be out there in the Summer, but there's a treat in store for you— out your way is the best Winter climate imaginable, the stars 'fairly blaze at midnight in the cold & frosty sky', seem to be quite different from the same stars seen hereabouts, & after rain in Autumn the plains are alive with little islands of white lilies in the sea of green grass.

Little Doreen has disgraced herself! We were laboring under the impression that, although she isn't as pretty now as she used to be, (she's just a smaller edition of me now) she was at least a little lady of amiable manners & normal social instincts! How wrong we were!"
In response to an invitation we would have liked to refuse, we took the little hound out to tea last night. Now she has just lately woke up to the fact that there are two classes of people—those she knows & likes, & those she doesn't even want to know. The little brute nearly howled the place down as soon as she saw our hosts. Yet when I gave her a rare ticking off about it this morning she thought it was the funniest thing she'd ever heard & laughed like mad. What a little cherub she seemed!

Our garden, which provided a few pounds of beans for "Mutsie" while we were on holidays, pretty well went to the dogs during our absence. Now, however, we have it looking a bit more like a garden, & showing promise of giving us our money's worth of vegetables. I'm still teacher for 1st & 3rd year science, & second & third year singing. The latter is a joke. Most of the kids' voices either have broken or are breaking, so that when we have a go at the "Volga Boatsong" in two parts, we have the 2 parts as written, a piping whine from the little bloke in the front seat, the droning base from our six footer in the back a lusty bellow from "Podge" whom I don't like to suppress because he enjoys it so much, & "fifty different sharps & flats" from a few more who try to embellish the tune with parts of their own impromptu composition. The flute band is gradually creeping up to standard again. I think I'll be going home alone for a week-end in the near future. We (I mean Petoe Sallies) are on the air over 2CH pretty often lately. It's good that Robert is doing so well. We both look forward to seeing him again, & ending, send our love to him & you two. Arthur & Phyllis.

Copy of a letter from Ivy:

"Bull St., Mayfield, Thursday. Dear Mum, Just a note, hoping you are settling down to the far West & all well. We have read your letter as you would imagining. We received it this afternoon & I am posting it right away. Charlie came home on Tuesday. Jose went down on Wednesday night to have a talk with him. Noel has another black eye, but not quite as bad as the last, but nasty enough. A child was here playing & they both bent down to get a ball at the same time. I think he must be a shingle short, the way he knocks himself about. (You must not think that). I had a letter from Dan Rees thanking me for the coupons, & hoped you would have a nice holiday, & that his mother is much better & will be well enough to visit you when you come back. I saw Hazel Sheldon & Matie Gibson in town together, & they said their mother, meaning Violet Sheldon, is not much good. She sleeps most of her time. There is not much news as I have not been anywhere to glean any gossip, so will close hoping all the Purdys are in the pink, also Dad & yourself. Love from us all. Ivy."
While we were at Nyngan this came from Jose & Ivy:

"126 A Bull St., NSW-3-44. Dear Mum, Dad, & everyone at Nyngan, we were glad you arrived over there O.K., but I don't wonder at you both being "dead beat" after your all night journey. However I suppose you are used to the fresh air by now, & I hope hope you are benefitting by it. I am sorry to hear of Bid's ill health, & I hope she is soon O.K. again. You speak of dust storms; well they should certainly remind Dad of old South Aust. & make him feel at home again. We forwarded a letter on to you from Fred, which we opened & read--- also sent some papers over to Dad. You didn't say how Dad's leg is behaving, nor your own "gammy" one; I hope they are doing O.K.

Everything is going along O.K. here; we are keeping an eye on the place & giving the garden a drop of water now & then, but I don't see much to water other than some beans & cabbage plants, other than, of course, the various vines; but they seem capable of fending for themselves. The cabbages seem to be a happy hunting-ground for flies & caterpillars.

I have not heard anything more from the military people re Fred, & I haven't done anything through Bridges, though I certainly intend to do so if the military stunt fails. It is very dry here & fairly cold at night, & a fair amount of Westernly wind blowing. A store girl, a receipt for "Common Cause" subscription, & a letter for Charlie. I think you should stay over there for some time if you find it is doing you good, but I wouldn't miss Dad's injections for any length of time; but, as I said, he may be able to get the doctor over there to keep them up to him. Don't forget to get your medicine made up either, Mum, if you are feeling any dizziness. I think this is all the preaching I have for you just now.

Wishing you a happy holiday, Yours Jose.

Give the Honzer Kid a big kiss for me!"

The following letter was sent to Ivy & Jose by Fred:


Dear Joe, Ivey, & Kids, Everyone here is getting held up in mainland mail, so I'm writing to you knowing that you at least should be at home. I always try to write to Newcastle at least once a week. It rained a bit at tea-time to-day, but it was nice & sunny for the rest of the day, so I & another chap went to the falls to see what they were made of. We took a tin of peaches & one of cream besides some apples & a great big chocolate, & at one of the comforts huts we has biscuits & coffee, so we did O.K. for grub. They are well worth the going, & we had a real good day. The "jeep" till now was the only army
I hadn't ridden in, but now that I have I'd certainly like to own one of the sows. Golly! but they're fast, & can give a motor-bike about 10 on. You may have read of a volcanic .... (the 3rd page is lost, but the 4th continues.) "I haven't caught any dog's diseases, & don't mind being here at all, I'm still kept busy enough to stay out of mischief, & have only good reports about everything up here. This seems about all this time so I'll close up. Hoping everything is all right down there Fred."

The following letter was sent to Bill & Florence by Fred:-

"No 350-17, F. Cocking, No. 3 Bty. 5 Aust. A.R.D. 8ellheim, Nth. Queensland, Wed. 12th Jan. 1944. Dear Flo, Bill, & Kid, I suppose that by now you have settled down both after the holidays, & out where you are, that you are getting used to being out among the goats & dust. The longer that you are there the better you will like it, or at least I think you will, anyhow. Your telegram was very welcome, even though I got it a couple of days after New Year's day. Thanks. I had a real good Christmas; they turned on all the best grub about the place—from ice-cream to watermelon, but there was a real starvation diet for about a week prior, & the same time after the event, maybe this explains why we appreciated it so much. We had 2 days with nothing to do but go to church. Our mutual friend was in his element caroling after midnight & at church each morning. Your Christmas wouldn't start till next day, really, when Bill came home, would it? But still the kid with his car would be something to watch, I'll bet. Bill was certainly lucky to be able to get it. I saw some of the rubbish they call toys in the local town, & thought at the time that if that a kid was given the stuff he could make a better job himself. It's a pity that Bill & the dust don't get on too well, but you say there is a big improvement, & if so it is well worth your being there, isn't it? Who knows? he may get better & better as time goes on. Speaking of open-air shows, we had in camp a travelling broadcast turnout starting at 6-30 followed by pictures about 5 years old & from 9 till about 11 o'clock. It absolutely pelted down rain most of the time, but no one took much notice, but just sat in the rain like the dog, only this time there was no cart to get under... We do real well for entertainment, & just as well too because the town here is as dead as "Julius"; but we sometimes go in to clean up some of the steak & eggs in the restaurants— it's a welcome change from army grub. It's nice to know that the kid still remembers me. I thought he was too young for anyone to make an impression when I saw him last. You'll be thinking of a school bag for him soon. It's wonderful the difference even a month can make in a kid, isn't it? We're getting some pretty wild
37.

Iansstorms up here lately; they only last an hour or 2, but there's usually some tents & a tree or 2 over before it. I've been lucky so far; the tent I'm in stood up; but then a ducking up here doesn't matter much. I'm working every day at my trade, so I haven't the monotony that most other chaps have; in fact both the days & the nights don't drag at all now, & as I'm feeling good as well I can take it much better now than I could before. The warm weather will suit me at any time. The mangos are all finished here now, but we knocked a few over while they were on. Not bad, are they? Best of luck for the 3 of you. Fred."

Following is the 3rd page that was lost of Fred's letter on page 36. Continuing from "Volcanic", 3rd line, it reads:-

"eruption here about a month ago. Well, one morning when we got up, everything was covered with a fine dust which was still falling, & most of us guessed correctly as to its origin, which was confirmed in the local rag a few days after. If there are no pictures nor concerts on here I usually go to one of the writing huts, & although I have a good time playing different games, there isn't much to write of in that. After all the main thing that you want to know is that I'm doing O.K., &..."

The following letter from Fred to J.W. should have been inserted between pages 4 & 5:

"M 450817, F. Cocking, No. 2 Bty. 5 Aust. A.R.D. Sellheim, Nth. Queensland. When I last wrote home I asked that a paper dealing with the cause of the bother at B.H.P. (be sent) & I said that you only just mentioned the trouble there, but, apparently I missed reading a page of your letter, because on re-reading it I found all I wanted to know. It seems obvious that the fault was not with the men, because the papers I have seen have very little to say about it. You could send me an occasional copy, because bit of local news is always interesting. Thanks. Tommy Ball is a good bit south of here, & in a pretty decent sort of place too. The paw-paws etc. are finished up here, but while they were in I had a pretty fair go at them. Not bad, are they? Glad to hear you painted your car--it should look good with those colors. Don't bother too much about any unevenness; plenty of cleaning & polishing will soon level it all down O.K. To-day has been one of my usual Sundays, asleep all day, & then after tea me & my washing in down to the creek, which is not near so good as it was when I first got here. It just about clears up when the rains come again & makes it the color of mud. Still it's wet--that's the main thing. The other night we had a violent storm which only lasted about 2 hours, but trees were snapped off & a good
few tents blown down. I was lucky, as the one I was in stayed up; but then getting wet through doesn't matter much up here—things dry in no time. It's not too hot for me yet, & suits me much better than where I spent the winter.

I intended writing to Flo too tonight, but the Sallys have a meeting where I usually write, & the light is too crook to do much here— one light in one end of a hut about 60 x 2O— in fact I wouldn't have bothered this note only that I know that you will think that I'm crook or something. I'm not over surprised at the delay, as applications were asked for just after I applied— you understand. The light is too bad, so I'll close now. Hoping everyone is as they should be. Fred."

The following telegram came on Feb. 7th from Fred:)

"Mrs. J. Cocking, 571 Maitland Road,
O.K. Fred."

Copy of a letter from Gladys, no date, but probably Mar, 1944:—

1st Avenue, Warrawong, Friday. Dear Mum & Dad,
Your letter to hand safely. We were all pleased to hear you were all well; we are all tip-top. I received a letter from Fred yesterday. He's real well & seems to be quite happy. He says he likes carpentering, & gets plenty of good food. I'm pleased your new frock turned out nice; we'll have to see it when we go up. We get our holidays on the 9th of April, so I suppose we'll be seeing you all then. I've just written to Fred & Mother, so I'll have to say cheerio to you both & not forgetting Charlie. The kiddies are waiting for their breakfast; they're afraid they'll miss their school bus, & I'm feeling a bit empty. So I'll say good bye & the best of luck to you all...From Jack, Glad, John Adell & Alma.xxxx"

Here is another letter from Gladys:-

1st Ave. Warrawong, April 2nd 1944. Dear Mum.
I'm writing to let you know that we won't be home for Easter. Jack is getting his holidays on the 7th of May now instead of the 9th of April, so we will be up there then, all being well. It's better in May, as the children will be on holidays from school also. I hope you left Flo, Bill & Robert well. We are all tip-top & hope you & Dad are the same.

Wishing you all a happy Easter, from Jack, the children, & not forgetting myself.xxxx. Remember us to Jose, Ivy & family."

While we were at Wyangang we received this from Glad:—

"1st Avenue, Warrawong, Wed. 12th April. Dear Mum & Dad,
Your welcome letter to hand safely. We are pleased to hear that Flo is getting better, also that Bill, Robert, & your
two selves are well. We are all- tip-top. We didn't go up to Newcastle for the Easter holidays, as our holidays are put off till the 7th of May. Jack gets a fortnight off work so we are all looking forward to having them. I didn't think it was worth going up for the couple of days at Easter, the way the trains are, so I sent a letter to you to Mayfield telling you that we wouldn't be up. Anyhow, Jack had to work on Easter Monday; he didn't get home till 6-30 p.m. for tea. We're pleased Flo is getting better & will soon be her old self again. Flo was very fortunate in having such a nice neighbour to mind Robert. Well, I'll have to say ta-ta to you all, from Naek, John, Adell, Alma, & not forgetting myself. Glad "

Copy of a letter from Walter:-"Rosebank, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 20-3-44.

Dear Mum, It seems that you & Dad have joined the ranks of the wanderers, as I was quite surprised to see the Nyngan postmark above your handwriting. It was also good to know that you are both ok after the long trip, & that you were able to see Art & Phyllis in Sydney. I wouldn't hurry back if I were you. Was very sorry though to hear of Flo's illness.) She seems to have had a few tough times. It is to be hoped that this is the last of them & that she will soon be strong enough to get about with you. I suppose Dad & the young fella will be able to have their walks again, this time over new territory rather then over the old train line etc. You too will probably like the place better after you have been there a while... I know that was true in my case as far as Townsville was concerned. There were 2 letters from Fred awaiting me on my return (on Wednesday the), & he seems to be quite all right up North. I answered him last week & am now trying to locate a book on New Guinea timbers for which he has asked. I had an uneventful trip back from Townsville, & expect to have to go up again shortly, so would advise you to continue writing to the office, as they best know my movements & can forward mail on. Since being back here Jack Giles called on me, & we were able to enjoy a week-end's golf together, but his ship (the "Tung Zong") left again last Sunday afternoon. The Department also played Father Christmas when I came back, as there was over £ 95 owing to me in one way & another; so don't think the tenner I am enclosing will break me. You may have use for a few extra quid. Let me know if you run short. All the best, Cheerio. Wal."

Copy of a letter from Fred:-

Australia. Thurs. 23rd March. Last Sunday I wrote to Joe because I didn't know if you'd be at home or not, but on Monday I got your's written from Nyngan. Sorry to hear of Flo not being well. It must be disappointing for her to be in hospital now that you are there. You say all will be ok with her, so I won't let it bother me unduly.

I was wondering the other day how our grape vine was going, but I never expected that you'd get more than about half a dozen bunches. The fruit from both them & the nectarines must have been especially welcome now that everything is so scarce & dear. To-day I had to go & get a registered parcel, & I could think of nothing other than a book which Wal was sending, that should be coming. I knew that you wouldn't send a cake or the like unless I asked you to. When I did get it the size indicated a piece of wedding cake, so I thought of Connie. I was surprised & delighted at its contents for, although there is no chance of my having to need it, in extremity, I like to know where I am & where other places are. I know I have Dad to thank for it. Thanks, Dad; it was indeed a happy thought.

I'd like to be able to swap a bit of mud for a bit of dust. Only 2 Sundays since I've been here has it been fine, & on those 2 days I went in different directions; once to a rubber plantation, & once to have a good look at the falls I have previously mentioned being on the road up here.

Both trips were very interesting, & we had a real good time. You never said how the trip ever affected both of you. I do hope that you weren't too distressed, & that you, & that you enjoyed the train ride. To-day I had a long-awaited letter from Wal, which I'll answer also to-night. They seem to be heaping the responsibility on him in a big way, don't they?; but we all know that he is able, both in ability & temperament, to carry it well & not let it get him down.

Some day he certainly will be something.

You say that you stayed a night with Art, but gave no details. How's the kid? Did Art pass his university exam?, & is he satisfied with things in general?. You know I get very little news about him—neither of them write. With the letter from Wal I got another 4 bundles of papers from you, but I haven't had time to open them yet. A postscript of Wal's was about his back pay—if it had been from me it would have been in the very first line.

I'll bet that young Robert is in his 7th Heaven at you both being there, & that Bill runs him a very close second. I am feeling real good, & I am the heaviest that I've ever been — 11 stone 2lbs. Everything with me is o.k., & I get on extra well with everyone. There's nothing at all that I want. If you like Nyngan don't be frightened to stay there a while, & don't bother hurrying home for something, like you usually do. I forgot to tell you that the sensors open a fe
fair bit of our incoming mail. So far I've had nothing cut out of your letters, because you write nothing of a censorable nature; but it's as well to let you know, isn't it?" Keep well, Fred."

Copy of a letter from Arthur:—

"137 Livingstone Road, Marrickville, 23–3–44.
Dear Everyone, I'm sorry Flo is having such a crook time; there's one consolation, though; being in bed irks people because of what they're missing, but in a country town nothing is happening outside, so being in hospital shouldn't matter so much. I suppose 2 of you—the oldest & youngest—are having a pretty good time lately. It's a bonzer Autumn climate in the West, isn't it? If you want some Madagascar bean seeds, Flo, I'll send you some within the next few months. They only need to be planted, every 7 years, & are as hardy as paspalam grass. They should suit the inland climate admirably. Apart from the Madagascar our garden is doing very well—the weather lately has been very showery. I've had myself transferred onto the band reserve until December, hence the fact that I have time to write this on a Sunday. Phyllis is quite well, apart from an irritating cough, & the nipper is—well I'd better not start, Phyllis is knitting a pixie hood & cape for the young un—hang on—here come the details—it's a bitter-sweet shade (she tells me—I don't know if it's any relation to a bit of all right) & it has purls & plains mixed up a treat. Next time you see the kid—if you delay your coming, Mum & Dad, as long as I think you will when the friendly West gets into your blood—she may be wearing it. Jack & Glad & family were at our place on St. Pat's Day. They're all looking pretty good, & young Johnno seems to be a pretty good scholar.
The epidiascope, which I think I mentioned when you were here, is now finished & works much better than I thought it would. I'll have the chance of being a poll clerk at the next elections, I think. This, together with a couple of quid for issuing ration books, should prove very acceptable. We've written to Fred, but haven't had a reply as yet. Phyllis sends her love. Arthur."
(Answered April 5th, 1944.)

Copy of a letter from Mrs. Webster:—

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, Cornwall, Jan. 21, 1944.
Dear Mr. Coeking, I'm not quite sure if we answered your last letter, for Harry & I have been so sick with the flu that
really we have forgotten. It started just after your letter came. We did not get it until November. I see you wrote it in May on your anniversary day. We do hope you & Mrs. Cocking will be spared to live together to see many more. Yes, I've thought as I've looked at your & Mrs. Cocking's photos that she must be a very nice, kind person; she is, I am sure, a devoted mother. I am pleased to say that our children are all just the same. Our Frank came home for 8 days at Christmas. Him & wife & little girl just 3 years old stayed with us a few days. He is on the search lights still. He looked well then, but he has been removed to Sheffield. They were in nice huts at Luton -- plenty of good food & fires, but now they're in tents; no fire. I just heard from him; he says it's bitter cold & wet. Now they miss their huts & fire! It's really very unkind to the poor fellows turned out like cattle. They get their health ruined here in England; surely they could let them enjoy a bit of fire. Father & I can't feel happy over it. He's such a dear, kind boy; but let's hope it won't be long before it's over.

All our young men from the village are away. Fred has left St. Day school & gone to Barneocose. His wife is expecting a baby in March. Their son will be 14 in April; she's had none between. She came home with Fred, one time she wouldn't, what for we don't know & I don't think she knows herself. but we never said anything to her -- we just let her go. Now she comes ever so often. Our girls are fine: Myra has got home here at the Clyman. It made her ill at Bristol. He has day work now. Kath is still at Falmouth & is safe, like us, so far, thank God. Yes, it's wonderful how the people have stood up to it all. I am glad you have your pension: we have 6/- a week more added to our 10/-; so it keeps us o.k. We are promised more, as all we buy costs so much more. Sorry Mrs. Cocking has cancer trouble. A friend of mine knew a person in America who had the same on her nose, but doctors cured it in time -- very nasty. I have a nasty ulcer on my ankle; it prevents me from walking. Dr. says it's rest that's needed. I rest all I can.

Our little grand daughter Joyce & Mammy are coming to tea. I can just fancy you with your little grandson. Don't they bring lots of love with them ?. I get the blame for spoiling her when she comes. Poor Merleia -- Frank's wife -- say she misses Frank dreadfully. They have a nice little house at Illogan. It's very lonely for young people to be parted. I do hope your daughter will soon be with her husband. Frank had to live here with us until they were lucky in getting a house. They're awful scarce, & will be more so as there are so many getting married, & lots being divorced.

Young people seem to be crazy now. Mr. & Mrs. Cocking, we hope to hear on your next letter that you are both better.
We are like new ones to what we were. Oh, I had a letter from my cousin David Tabb; he was removed from his home by war conditions, & is now living with his brother at 164 Lord Street, Burnley E 1 Melbourne.

With all the best, from H.B. & E. Webster.

(Ans. 23-3-44.)

Mon. May 1, 1944. This afternoon I wrote to Mr. N.J. Finnemore, Bogan Street, Nyngan, giving him a description of my enlarger. Yesterday Joe took Ivy, Daphne, Keith, Noel & me to Newcastle by car to see the May Day procession. We saw it, & afterwards went to the sports ground, Union street, & heard Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Stan. Deakin, Mr. Thorpe & a few more speak. Mum did not go in, but went to the Army meeting at night.

Last Thursday I went to the hospital & got my usual injection. On the way home I weighed myself & found that my weight was 11 stone 2 pounds. That is my heaviest for some years. Lovely weather to-day.

Copy of a letter from Walter:-

"Rosebank" Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 27-3-44.

Dear Joe, Thanks for sending the letter on, also for the "Review", which is the second I have received from you, & is much appreciated. I notice a photo of John in it! Yes, I have been back here since the 8th after an uneventful trip down in the "Coolongatta" from Townsville. Luckily, on the way up we had clear weather all the way, so I was able to see a pretty good view of the coast, except that after Gladstone we went up to 8000 for more even conditions.

However, I was obliged to go by train in wet weather from Townsville to Cairns, & on the return trip Townsville by Douglas we were in cloud most of the way; also from Townsville to Brisbane we were above the first layer of cloud, so there was little to do but talk & sleep. On my next trip up, which will probably be very soon, I am hoping to see something of the country around Innisfail, which is widely renowned for its beauty. On my return from the North I received 2 letters from Fred, & I have since replied. He seems to be quite contented; & I am trying to locate a book on the New Guinea timbers for which he asked. Certainly you are making every effort for his release, & I was surprised to hear of the dismissal of the application with so much evidence behind it. I cannot understand why his address is now A.I.F., has he transferred? Lack of a reply from Mum for some time made me think that perhaps she was sick, so that I was reassured, but surprised to see her handwriting under the Nyngan postmark, & it is good to know that they are both well, & didn't suffer any ill effects from the trip. I am hoping to hear that Flo, too, is o.k. in the next letter.
As you say, they are not joking with this year's tax, mine amounting to £133 odd. Don't quite know when I'll be South again—certainly not for Easter, although it is quite possible I'll be North again by then. The weather should be pretty good up there by now, as I felt it rather cool when I came back to Brisbane. The weather has been much cooler here over the last fortnight. I just came back last night fromCurrumbin & Coolongatta, & it was pretty chilly out of the water yesterday morning. Glad to hear you are all o.k. & keeping the home fires burning both on the Hill & down at 331. Tell Chip I ran into Verle Harris up here; she is working for the Am. Red Cross, & asked to be remembered to him. Keep an eye open for a table model radio for me, will you please Joe. "All the best. Wal."

Copy of a letter from Gladys:—
"1st Avenue, Warrawong, Monday March 27, 1944.
Dear Mum, We received your letter from Nyngan last week. We were sorry to hear about Florrie being ill We already knew, as Phyllis had told me the Friday before I got your letter. We were down (to Sydney) about Jack's tax, so went out to see Art & Phyllis; but Phyllis & Doreen were ready to go to her Mother's for tea. We only stayed about ten minutes, & then went with them to her Mother's to see Art, as he went there from school. We stayed about 5 minutes, then went to get our train. She said she had a letter from you, so she told me all about it. We hope Flo is well by this, also Bill, Robert, & Dad & your- self. We hope you are tip-top & enjoying your holiday. We are all real well. There's no news here to tell you about, so I'll say ta, ta to you with love from Jack, the children, & not forgetting myself. Kiss Robert for us all. Excuse note, as I've just finished washing, & have a dirty house to clean & tea to cook. Glad."

Copy of a letter from Fred:—
Dear Joe, I've, & Kids, Sunday again, & a wet afternoon, but this morning I availed myself of a trip for a swim in the sea. It was wonderful in, but we only had about one hour in the water, which is 5 or 6 hours too little with water as nice & warm as it is here. One month ago we went for a full day, & mug-like, I was first in & last out; it's only about 1 week since I stopped peeling. No, I'm glad to say that you're not right. We must be contented with the main & most important topics. Maybe Art can put you right, as I think he should know a little about it. Speaking of Art: I had a nice letter from him a couple of days ago, which I must answer this afternoon too. I had intended writing to Nyngan, but now that you say
that the prodigals are back I won't bother. It seems a short month ago since they left. I hope that it wasn't too long & tiring for them. How do they & I've & the kids look? & what about yourself? It took I've to tell me that you were not too well & had been round to Mr. Evans again. Did he do you any good? I hope so, anyhow. You know since I've been in the army I've learnt one thing, & that is that the less you do the more respect you get, & that if you won't work nobody wants you to. Take things a bit easy—you'll find that you get on just as well. I'm tacking on a few ounces a week & am feeling real good. I do about 3½ of the work I did in civil life, & am by no means spending all I earn, I have a good job in a safe place, & if it wasn't for you people liking me to be about I'd be quite content to let things stay just as they are. Thanks for all that you have done, & I know will try to do, but it's a big thing, & people you have to deal with I'm afraid don't know the meaning of the word humanity.

I'm sorry to hear of Billy Burgess' demise, & if you see Mick just mention it to him, will you? I see in one of the papers you sent where an auctioneer was trying to sell a mercer's business, & I wondered if it was that owned by Jack Millington's late potential father-in-law. Poor old Boof's yard will no doubt be awash in heavy rain now that you have blocked off the get-away. Wal wrote to me when he got back from his first trip, saying that he was pleased with the look of the yard down home, & that he thought that you & Ivy were responsible for the mowing. Thanks; I suppose it was you two, but it must entail a lot of work to look after the both. How's Ivy's little vegetable plot? I do hope she is getting some results. Your letter wasn't opened by the censor; have mine been cut about lately? If it has I may be able to cache it in some other way; not that I can see why it should be hacked about. Wal seems to be getting ahead, doesn't he? Some day he should be something, shouldn't he? You seem to be sending plenty of papers on to me—³ on Friday. I like the Herald (Newcastle) best of all, I get from it the local news. I think I'd better shut up now; & remember, Joe, don't work too hard & make yourself crook bothering about things too much. Best of luck to everyone. Fred."

Copy of a letter to Mum from Daphne:-
#128 Bull Street, Mayfield, 10-4-44. Dear Grandma,
Thank you very much for your letter & also the postal note which I will cash as soon as possible. How do you like dirty old Nyngan? Not too bad, I suppose, as you are staying a long time. I saw aunt May the other day, & she asked me when you would be home. We are all fit as fiddles
down here, & I am sorry to hear Aunt Florrie is sick. I hope she will soon be well again. It is Easter Monday, & Dad had to go to work to-day. He had Friday off, & in the afternoon we went to Warner's Bay & Spear's Point. I suppose Robert is a big boy now & not such a limp. I hope. I can just imagine him talking to Grandfather as he takes him for a walk. Nothing unusual has happened down here, so there isn't much I can say. Thanking you once again, I remain your loving Granddaughter Daphne.
Copy of a letter from Jose:-

26 A Bull St., Mayfield, 12-4-44. Dear Mum, Dad, Bid & Bill,

We received your letter to-day, & note you intend returning on the 18th & 19th. That is what we have been waiting for, as we didn't know whether to send your cheques on or not. We expected you home, of course, last Wednesday, & Ivy went down & dolled the place up a bit in the expectation of your return, but when you didn't turn up we concluded that you had decided to stay until the Easter. I hope you will soon be quite o.k. again, Bid. What's the use of going to Nyngan to get sick?.

We are glad to hear that everyone else out there is doing quite well, Bill included. It must be a relief to you to be free of your "puffs". Keep it up. We also had another letter from Fred & 1 from Wal., but did not forward them on, as of course we expected you home.

We reckoned from Fred's account of his present station it must be on Goodenough Island, but of course the details were very obscure & so we could only guess; but as you say, he seems quite happy & contented. We are all well here—Ivy's throat is quite well again. Both she & I went to poor old Billy Burgess' funeral last Monday at Toronto cemetery. He took a stroke on the Sunday morning. It rained very heavily while we were there, but there was a very nice following. You will certainly find it very cold when you return, as the winter has certainly set in here this last couple of weeks, so you will need to wrap up well after you cross the mountains. I will forward a couple more papers on, but will hold the cheques unless you specially wish them being sent on.

I don't think there is any very important news to write of other than the grass down here will need my attention before you come home, as it has got out of bounds again. Give our love to the bonzer kid & accept the same for yourselves.

Yours Jose."

Copy of a letter from Mrs. Morris:-

86 Chapel Street, Lakemba Thur. 20-4-44. Dear Old Mary,

You will be wondering what has become of me, but, Mary, one thing & another I could not make up my mind to try & write. You will see I am home once again & I feel well in myself, but you will be sorry to know I will always need to use the crutches. My leg did not knit, but I can get about the house but must be careful not to bump or knock it; but God is good to me, & I am pleased that I can get about the house. I am well in health, thank God. Pa has been in hospital very sick, but is home with me. Between us we can get the place & I can do the cooking with Pa's help. Maggie comes over a couple a week &
gives the place a good clean up. She is a good girl to us; also her husband. Well, how are you? I hope you are well; also your dear partner; also Florrie & her husband. Is he keeping well? Also baby, & how & where are your soldier boys? Our boy is still in Bathurst. Won't it be lovely when the war is over & the men home once more? I hope all the rest of the family are well. Eve & her family were up at Tuggerah for 3 weeks. Went home last week. What lovely weather we are having. The rain done a lot of good, & the sun on top should do good. Dorrie is still in New Lambton. She is such a little woman. So love from Maggie, Bill, Pa, & myself. I will say cheerio.

From your old pal, E. Morris, xx.

Copy of a letter from Fred:--

Australia, Sun. 23, April, 1944.

I suppose by now that you are home again & glad & sorry too to be there. It's a pity that Flo has to live so far away, but according to Dad's report on Bill's health it seems to be well worth it. You both seem to have had a good trip; & I was glad to learn that you went first class & had sleepers for at least some of the way. I can just picture Dad as soon as he saw the garden. I'll bet he grabbed the pick & went straight for the weeds, & got roared up for staying out weeding for too long. I was happy to read that you split up the journey a bit & stayed overnight with Art, but I never expected to hear that you bothered looking Grace up; but Grace was the best of them all as regards the both of you, wasn't she? I'll bet that Flo had a picnic with the kid when you went away. I must apologise for not writing last week. I have no excuse other than that I had no news -- & none to-day either -- & that I just never felt like writing. I suppose that you've been imagining that all sorts of things were wrong with me, but the fact is that I'm doing real well, & can put up with the army more since being here than at any of the other places in which I've been. The other day I happened to see a "Woman's Weekly" dated December 25, & on page 15 were some very interesting drawings. If you could beg, borrow, or steal a copy & put this page away for me I'd be very glad. I think that Joe should find it very instructive too. I know that you'll do your best. Thanks. I think that I told you about getting a letter from Art, & one letter as an answer wasn't sufficient (not after 12 months) so I have the second episode (epistle?) besides answering Glad's last, but I'm waiting for something of interest to happen first, & this morning I had a nice letter from Wal. These with a few from the chaps I've known make a fair bit of answering for me; but until I feel more like writing I'm afraid that they'll just have to wait. I know that this is a poor sort of an effort, but after a fortnight without any I feel sure"
it will be welcome, Fred.

P.S. The Sallys have had these cards printed & given to us, so I'll drop it in, but why they think anyone needs it to remember I don't know.

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To MOTHER

THROUGH all the changing days of life.
One thing remains the same:
The priceless gift of Mother's love.
The sweetness of her name.

FROM Fred

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Copy of a letter from Florence:—
"Box 15 Nyngan, 26
4-44. Dear Mother & Dad,
I was pleased to get your letter & to know that you had arrived safely, also to know that you had a good trip, & that Art & Phyllis were there to meet you. It's certainly the best way to travel such a long distance.

All your worry about the house was useless, Mother—well, that was fine, Charles certainly needs full marks for having everything so spick & span. Robert was pretty boisterous on the station & cried for a while after the train went, but quietened down after I took him to the shop opposite & bought him "Pitty tuff"—his old favourite lemonade. He seems all right now. I don't think he frets about you having to go, but he still builds trains nearly every day to go & see you at Christmas. He has collected every brick, big & little, from all over the yard, every piece of tin & iron & junk that he can find, has them piled up in front of the wash-tubs. I had to clear a place for standing room yesterday. Haven't heard anything more about the snaps, Dad; Bill called at Mr. Finnemore's the other day, but the place was deserted. Have you bought Robert's shoes yet, Mother? If you haven't—don't—but get a pair of white sandals, size 9, & they will do him for the Summer. Bill took his tan sandals & had them repaired; so with his black ones for best he should have enough to do him for the winter. If you have got them just send them over & forget about the white ones. I have made him 2 pairs of overalls & a jumper since you left, we are well here, Robert & I. Bill is in Bourke & is a bit "chestnut" but may be all right when he returns on Saturday. There is no need for you to worry one bit about me; I am O.K. again, & we are not short of cash. The hospital bill would hardly break us, anyway I had a second bill from them the other day for 15/-, so that is pretty cheap when you consider that I had ten visits.

It's pretty cold here usually, but the days are beautifully warm. I am glad you were warm enough on the train. Don't m
make a special trip to send the rug; I am not needing it.
Has Mrs. Rees been to see you yet? They went over to Newcastle on Saturday's train, so will call in & see you within the next 3 weeks. She said she would probably ring you first. I suppose you are looking forward now to Jack & Glady's visit. It is lucky that his holidays were postponed. I have just written to Dool, & must write to Amy & Olive while his majesty has his afternoon nap. Cheerio. Love to all, including Ivy, Jose, & the kids. Florence.

Thur. May 4, 1944. This morning I had an injection in my left arm from a new sister at the Newcastle O.R. Hospital. I called at the Co-op. store & tried to buy a typewriter ribbon, but could not. I may get my old ribbons renovated at the store for 1/3 each. To-day we received the following letter from Walter:

"Rosebank", 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 2-5-44.

Was glad to know that the wanderers were safely back hom again, & I was surprised to hear that the Nyngan trip lasted six weeks. You probably went there just at the right time to give Flo the help & company she needed after being sick, & it is good to hear that she is nearly o.k. again. I can quite understand Dad's liking for the place & Mum's relief to get back to "good old Mayfield" again—certainly one could hardly expect the same lawn at Nyngan which Mum could enjoy, & Dad regard as just something to be mowed. I'm afraid I also am one for the green, grass & rather more water than the West is able to offer. It was good of Art & Phyllis to get to Central so early in the morning to meet you; & I hope they & Jack & Glad were able to spend last week-end with you.

My own May week-end was spent at the old spot, Currumbin, & I was able to thoroughly enjoy the swimming & sun-baking, which is not too severe at this time of the year. Apart from that my spare time is spent in playing golf, or doing little odd jobs on the car, or in my room. The car is still in good nick, & I have just had new clutch springs fitted. My room is becoming rather attractive. I think I mentioned it being 16 x 16, & Mrs. Jones has just dyed a carpet-square for me. I also have my own hot & cold shower, so that I have every convenience. I am very busy on the job here now, as the right-hand man is on leave for a few weeks, but generally we are beginning to see some daylight through the pressure of work. Cheerio. All the best. Wal."
We also received this letter from Florence:

"Box 15 P.O. Nyngan. 1-5-44. Dear Mother & Dad, This is just a note to thank you for returning the rug & sending all the goods along with it. Robert got more fun out of opening the parcel than he did on Christmas morning, when "Santa" came. I think you could see the way he treasures those marbles—takes them to bed with him every night. To-night he was too tired to collect them off the floor, so he asked me to get them & put them in his bed so that he can look them over first thing in the morning. He is like a miser with his gold. He thought the lollies were real good, too, Mother. He found those as soon as we brought the parcel home, but he didn't find the chocolates in the book until the next day. I heard him calling out "look, look", as he does; & he was very excited to find the chocolates tucked in there. The shoes suit beautifully; they are not too heavy, & will do for the summer; so forget what I said about the white shoes. You both have had some strolling about town to do with so many orders to carry out. Bill is reading the book ("Soviet Strength") & enjoying it. Mr. Rees is still in Newcastle, so he hasn't seen it yet. The seeds will come in handy too. Our little garden is doing fine. It won't be too long before we are able to use the spinach & lettuce. It's good to know that your garden is in such good order. I am sending the £ 1 that you left for Robert, to pay for the shoes. It will be a good birthday present for him, even if it is a bit early. The weather here is marvellous—the mornings cool, & the days clear & warm. Rain is badly needed, though. Our daily supply of fresh milk now is only 1 pint. There is no feed for the cows. We are all very well. Bill is well again after his slight attack, & everything in the garden is lovely. Hope you are all well. Love from us all. Florence."

Mon. May 8, 1944. Last Saturday we were visited by Mr. Rees who is on a holiday with his wife & children from Nyngan. He borrowed the following books of me:—"The Story Of Modern Science", vol. 1.; "I Found No Peace".; "Why Brittain Is At War"; "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists".; "Papuan Wonderland".; "Foreign Devils In the Flowery Land".; "One World".;

To-day I received the following letter from Mr. Finnemore:—

"Bogan St., Nyngan, 4 May 1944. Mr. J. Cooking, Your letter to hand. Thanks very much for your efforts in trying to obtain papers & chemicals. I think your only chance in obtaining any would be to try at the Kodaks shop only. Thanks for the information regarding enlarger. I will get in touch with a few of my photo pals & see what I can do for you in the matter. If I
prospective buyer I will let you know at once. I have not forgotten those snaps you asked me about as soon as I can obtain a film. Mrs. Finnemore is back home again, I am very pleased to say; she returned home this week, & I have started back to work again after being away for nine weeks with that broken wrist. The weather has turned exceptionally cold this past day or two, I was developing a few Yilm films to-night with the temperature down to 50 degrees, which takes the pleasure out of this kind of hobby. Thanking you once again for your attempts in getting papers, Yours sincerely J. Finnemore.

yesterday I went to Islington Park, thinking that there would be a political meeting there at 3 p.m., but there was none. Josie, Ivy, Daphne, & the boys came on Sunday morning. To-day I got a load of pea-sticks near Dodd's fence, & a load of manure. I sowed a row of broad beans. Lovely weather yesterday & to-day.

Sat. May 13, 1944. Last Thursday, the 11th, I was seventy-seven years old, as I was born on the 11th of May, 1867 at Kadina, South Australia. Florence sent a pound note, & Gladys gave me a 10/-note, & Bill Purdy sent a congratulatory telegram. I went to Newcastle last Thur. & got an injection in my right arm. I bought some poppy plants & some dianthus & carnation seeds at Woolworth's shop. Jack brought Gladys, John, Adell & Alma in his car from Warrawong, Port Kembla, on Wednesday. They stayed until yesterday, when Mr. & Mrs. Witheridge came by train from Sydney with Phyllis, Art & Doreen. Jack, Gladys & the children went on then to Raymond Terrace.

Copy of the letter from Florence:-
"Nyngan, 8-5-44: Dear Mother & Dad, Well, I hope all the worry about the shoes is over now. Dad's "Do it now" system didn't work that time, Mother, but the shoes you sent are real good; so don't treat him too badly. Many happy returns of the 11th, Dad. I tried to get something for Robert to send to you, but it is pretty hopeless here, as you know, so I am enclosing the money for you to buy your own birthday present. Try to buy something with it so that you won't have to answer to the "pension robbers" (as you politely call them) for it. Perhaps you could get those elastic-sided boots that you have wanted so long, I could get them here, but it's better for you to try them on. As usual there is not much happening here. We are pretty well except Bill, & he has an infected hand. It just started with a pimple, & his hand has been very much swollen. He went to the doctor yesterday & it has improved a bit since, but I think that he will have to have it operated during the week. Otherwise he is well, & has just "toothed" off to Bourke. Little dog "Spot" died on Friday. Bill had arranged
With the policeman here to shoot Mum on Sunday—she was such a picture of misery. Robert didn't worry much; he had been kept away from the dog for so long that he doesn't miss her. Did Glen & Jack come? It's good to know that they didn't make the trip while you were over here. I would have felt pretty guilty if you had missed them. How are they all? I suppose the nippers were very excited as usual. I often think how I would like some of them, or the little Bull St. ites over here for a while. It would do them good, although their parents would be bored if they had to make the trip, so I'll have to wait until they grow up enough to be able to travel alone.

So you will be seeing "litt Dorween" at the week-end— I wish I could see her too. I suppose she will be a little toddler when we see her again. Hope J is quite O.K. again & that all the family are well. Robert has just got up, so writing is over. "Do you ever hear anything about Ethel or aunty Violet? Cheerio. Florence."

May 16, 1944. Yesterday afternoon Mr. & Mrs. With ridge left here to return to Marrickville, & Art went to Newcastle with them. I gave Mr. With ridge a copy of "Soviet Strength"; & a "little blue book on "Hints on Writing Poetry". Art is helping Ivy to re-cover Jose's Ford car inside. I posted a letter to Mr. J. Seward, Melbourne, for a list of his microscopes; & one to Florence with a pound note from Mum for Robert. I gave Mr. With ridge a letter to hand to the editor of "Common Cause" in Sydney. Last Saturday Jose showed Mr. With ridge Art, & Keith around the Steelworks, while I stayed & watched the car at the gates. Mr. Quiggins, who played in a band or orchestra with Charlie, invited me inside the watchmen's office, & I stayed there near the Telegraph & rear the Telegraph. I also talked with Mr. O'Brien, who worked with brother Jack at the works when it started in 1913. Gladys & Jack called in this morning on the way to Newcastle. They have left John, Adell & Alma at Raymond Terrace.

May 18, 1944. This morning I paid the telephone bill at the post office & went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from sister Corbett. On the way home I got some strong ammonia; potassium hydroxide; carbonate of ammonia; oxalic acid; phosphate of soda; & iodide of potassium from Vic. Stevenson, but did not pay for them as I have to get some other reagents from him yet. Arthur, Phyllis & Doreen left for Sydney yesterday afternoon. This afternoon Jack, Gladys, John, Adell, & Alma called in on their way home to Warrawong, Port Kembla. I have sent to Mr. Seward for a list of his microscopes.
Mon. May 22, 1944. Cold & rainy. Yesterday Mum received the following letter from Mrs. E. Morris:

"56 Chapel St., Lakemba. My dear Mary, I did feel sorry for Florrie to be so sick, & especially in a strange place. Is it a good hospital? However, I am glad she is getting better, & it was nice for you & her father to go up & see her; it would help her a lot, & it was nice for her husband to have you there. Does her little boy keep well? & is her husband better now he is up there? I do hope so. It was a long trip, was it not? but it was nice to go & see your dear daughter, & I wish her the best. Well now, Mary, I hope you are real well; & the change might have done Mr. Coe a lot of good, & a change for you. Have you heard from Fred yet? & where is he, also Charlie? My word, this war does hang out, & what a lot of deaths, & plenty more I suppose before it is all over.

What is the weather like at your place? We are getting some nice rain; it will do such a lot of good. Our garden looks so nice. Pa does not get much time; he does the work, & I can manage to do the cooking. Maggie comes over a couple of times a week & gives the place a good doing. She is a splendid girl, but she does not get good health. Bill was home 3 weeks from work. He was very sick, but does seem a bit better now. Well, now Mary & Tom are coming over to Doll's place for their holidays. It should be a nice change for them. So now best love from Maggie & Bill, Pa & myself. I will close wishing you all the best & hoping Florrie is real well! I will say cheerio from your old friend, Eliza Morris."

Ivy brought down this letter which Fred sent to her:


Dad's birthday on Thursday, & Mothers' Day next Sunday, & again I'll be home for neither; but apparently they are both looking after themselves as much as possible, so I'm more or less content. Poor a few days this week I've had a bit of a change -- sent down to the port to work on a 56 ft. boat, installing an engine & minor repairs. Boy, was it hot? Down in a hole with no breeze & the sun coming straight down. If I'd been out in the rain, I couldn't have been any wetter, but it's over with now I'm glad to say.

That paper I asked you to get was more for your benefit than mine, as it should settle your queries & ease your minds a bit. In one of the papers sent was Bill Burgess' funeral notice, & it said that Mr. & Mrs. Mick were invited. I didn't know he was married. Is it to his cousin Rita, or who? & how long ago? I'll endeavour to send a copy or 2 of the local rag, "Guinea Gold", & let you see the only news we ever
get other than an occasional listen to the wireless. The kids seem to be popular next-door, but I can’t quite understand your reluctance to have them taught gratis. To me it seems a friendly gesture on the neighbour’s part; but then you would be more or less obligated to them in the future, wouldn’t you? I was glad to read of you taking Dad to the procession. I suppose he worried the speakers a bit with questions. I’m afraid I must confess to the same failing too. Recently once a week we have been given a Current Affairs Bulletin, actually a pep talk for those who expect everything for returned soldiers, but as I see it, things will be no different than after the last war. We all know that politicians live on promises they have no intention of keeping—still it sounds good, & there’s a mug born every minute. It’s more than I can do, though, to sit quiet & see it all lapped up by wishful thinkers.

I am sorry to hear about auntie May being sick. She’s not a bad sort if you take her the right way. For want of something better to do I’m still seeing plenty of pictures practically every night; some extra old, & some I don’t think have been shown yet in Sydney.

I must apologise for not writing so much lately, but things about me are stale news now, & it’s getting increasingly harder to fill the paper. I don’t think there’s any more to write of other than that I’m o.k. & haven’t caught any dogs’ disease. If you are improving under Evans keep up the good work, & don’t forget what I told you about working so hard. Look after yourself; don’t forget. Fred.”

Monday 22nd, continued.

To-day I received the following letter from Mr. Seward:


Mr. J. Cocking, 331 Maitland Road, Mayfield West, Newcastle, N.S.W. Dear Sir, We are in receipt of your letter of the 15th inst., but regret at the present moment we have no microscopes available. We are expecting in about 6 weeks a shipment of new American microscopes (Spencer) focussing Abbe condenser & iris diaphragm, triple nosepiece, 2 eyepieces, 2 objectives, mag. about 500 x. Case. Price approx. £ 45.

1/12" Oil immersion for bacteriology £ 15: 10:- approx.

Secondhand instruments come in from time to time, so if you could possibly give us some idea of the instrument you had in mind or the price you intended to pay, we would be pleased to advise you when a suitable microscope came to hand. We would mention that you should be fortunate in obtaining a
microscope to suit your purposes elsewhere, we carry large stocks of microscope slides on all subjects, & quite a stock of accessories. Yours faithfully N.H. Seward Pty.Ltd.

P.S. Should you be interested in a new Spencer microscope, we would suggest you book one in advance, as we are only getting a limited number, & quite a few are booked already. Sales tax 12½ per cent. extra unless medical student."

There was also enclosed a circular with a list of selected books, namely:— "In Search Of Australia" by P.J. Hurley. Price 12/6. Postage 9d.


"Let's Watch The Birds." by W. Percival Westell. 13/3. Postage 9d.


"Orchids For The Amateur." 8/6. Postage 6d.


"The Magic Spear." by W. T. Hill. P. 1/-p. 3d.


We received the following letter from Walter today:

"Rosebank", 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 18-5-44.

Dear Folks, Glad to get the last letter of the 7th & to know Flo is O.K. again. I suppose you have quite settled down by now, & am pleased to hear of Chip's help with the house while we are away. The news of Aud Magner's engagement was very interesting, though not altogether unexpected, as she spoke of that chap when I last met her. I must write to her as soon as I can. As regards the dying of the carpet, in my room, Mrs. Jones made a pretty good job by laying it out on the lawn & wetting it thoroughly with the hose, then brushing the dye over the whole of the surface, & wearing gloves to protect her hands. She informs me that a woman a few doors from us does her carpet regularly this way & even goes over the flowers in the pattern by brushing the correct colour on with a tooth brush. There is no need to fear my so falling in love with the room as to be dissatisfied at home, because it is still in Brisbane. Nor need you fear my being overworked, because I thoroughly enjoy being busy, & after the right-hand man returns from leave next week I will be able to relax, even though
I have just had another rise to £598 plus living allowance. I have also the big advantage of being practically my own boss. So things are not so bad.

Jack Giles arrived here from New Guinea on Tuesday, & after spending the night with me I saw him off on the train for his leave in Sydney yesterday morning. Ian McLaren is also again here after being on leave at Byron Bay, & I am to play golf with him next Saturday. Golf is, in fact, my chief recreation nowadays, but balls have to be very well cared for & conserved, as they are impossible to buy.

I see you were expecting Jack & Glad when you wrote, but I thought they had spent Easter with you. Would be glad to hear any news of them; also, of course, of all the others in any case. Please tell Joe I got the "Review"—he sent, & thank him very much. I think that just about clears up the news from Brisbane at the moment, as I have not heard from Fred recently, so will say cheerio.

I have a few snaps which I could send you except for the fact that it is impossible to get more than one print taken at present. M.O for £5 enclosed.

Thur. May 25, 1944. This morning I got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell at the hospital. I inquired the cost of sending a box weighing 25 pounds from Waratah to Nyngan, & was told it would be 10/6. I took an old parasol skeleton to Christie's shop in Newcastle to be covered with black. It will cost 15/5, & will be ready in from 6 to 8 weeks. I paid a deposit of 6/6. I paid Mrs. Watts 4/- subscription for Mum & me to the Old-Age Pensioners' Association. I bought some snapdragon, candytuft, & nemesia seeds for Mum at Woolworth's. Rain last night & this morning. I have written a note to Mr. Finnemore re the buyer paying 10/6 freight on the enlarger. Yesterday I received the following note from Mr. N.J. Finnemore:

"Bogan St., Nyngan, 21 May. Dear Mr. J. Cocking, Re that enlarger you wished to dispose of. Well, I am pleased to say that I have a buyer for it, if in good working order. So if you will pack it up & send it on to Mr. Purdy or me, & I will pay Mr. Purdy that £5 you wanted for it if it opens out satisfactorily. I am sorry to say I have not been able to get a film yet, but am still trying. If you can get a 116 film in Newcastle it would certainly speed-up things as far as taking those views you require are concerned. Yours sincerely, J. Finnemore."

Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence:—

"Nyngan, 23–5–44. Dear Mother & Dad, We were pleased to have Dad's letter & to know that you & all the crowd are well. What
a great time you have been having with so many visitors. It's
good to know that Doreen is such a nice baby, and the main thing
is that she lets Art & Phyllis get their sleep. That seems
a pretty important thing to me, & I suppose it will be to Art
who has to study so much. How is Pip these days? You nev-
er mention him, & I am always intending to write to him, but
haven't started yet. I hope to have a letter from Dool to-day.
It was mail day yesterday, but it seemed down rain yesterday,
& so I shall slip down soon if it keeps fine. It is very cl-
oudy to-day again. The farmers should at least be happy now, as
we had some good heavy rain last week, & it rained almost con-
tinuously yesterday. Robert is asking questions all the time,
so it's hard to concentrate, but if I don't write to-day you
will wonder what is the matter. You will be lucky now if I
can get to the post-office. A shower is coming, & the ground is
so slippery already. Bill often slips in the mud. He came in
yesterday morning & I had to take a dish of water to the edge
of the verandah & wash his hands after he had fallen. His
clothes were covered. Anyhow we brushed him up & he went on
his way -- rejoicing? I don't know about that. I think it was
too wet for Bill's peace of mind. His hand is almost right
again now. The " pimple " turned out to be a carbuncle, & he
was visiting Bourke hospital 4 times daily for treatment last
time he was there. Dr. wanted him to stay in, but he has had
a bit too much of hospital life in his time, he says, but he
didn't want to lose work, I think. The inspector was relie-
ving the man at Wellington who had a poisoned hand.
The perchloride of mercury, Dad, didn't " do the trick " I went
& got that straight away, but it was no good. The chemist (Ker-
nibone) was about 1/2 hr deciding whether he would let me have
it at all, & kept saying over & over again, " It's very poison-
ous, you know; we don't like to, & don't usually sell it to
ordinary people. " I was getting a bit tired of waiting & see-
ing him with the stuff in his hand & not selling it to me, & so
I said, " I am not thinking of killing myself -- you needn't be
afraid of that. " Anyhow, that must have decided it -- he pas-
sed it over. I must be a miserable-looking object after that.
Mr. Larkin (the Flop, as Mrs. Callinan calls him) says that it
is either bi-chloride or perchloride; so that may set your mi-
nd at rest -- either is right.

Well now, let's change the subject. Thanks for the £ 1
Mother; you are robbing yourself there, but I have been asked
not to return it, so I won't. We are going to start a bank-
ing account for young Robert William; so look out: he may be
rich some day. He is very well, as usual, & is getting
fat & rosy. Bill & I are well, too; so everything in the gar-
den is lovely. Bill went to Bourke yesterday. " Cheerio.
The weather looks a bit brighter, so I'll toddle down & post
this in time for to-day's train. Love from Robert & Florence.
P.S.
I am sending a snap of Robert over, but it's just for you to see. I can't get any more printed yet, & I want this one for his book. Don't think I am mean, but it's hard to get any photographic work done here at present. When I can I'll give you one for keeps.

We have also received this letter from Fred:-


Today is the first time since being here that I haven't had to unstick the envelope. Usually we only have them for a day or so before the moist, muggy atmosphere seals them. It has hardly rained now for about 3 weeks & the weather is like midsummer in Newcastle. Read in the local rag of sleet falling in Sydney & snow in Kiandra, & as it's only May yet, apparently winter is coming early. I hope it doesn't get too cold for you or Dad. When you write to Flo & the others tell them that I haven't forgotten them, but things here, although interesting, have become commonplace, & until I can write of something worth while I'll just be content to let you or Joe know that I'm o.k. Yesterday afternoon for the first time since I used to go to the lake I had a game or 2 of tennis, but although I expected to be a bit stiff, to-day I feel like a boy. I sent the promised papers during the week. Let me know when they come, & if you'd like some other copies.

The other day I was fixing the bench-vice & had occasion to reach underneath to drive 3 or 4 clouts, & about 1 minute after I stood up a real itchy rash broke out on my chest & shoulder. I went over to the ambulance station & had a soothing lotion applied, but they told me I should come back after when the doctor was there. After he had asked me did I ever have asthma or the like. He said I was allergic to something or other, & that it would go as fast as it came, (which it did). As far as I can see, the something seems to be the dust from a spider's web; so in future I'll try to give them a wide berth. There are 3 young, well-set-up natives outside with red hibiscus in their hair, & what looks like big yellow chrysanthemums threaded through the necklace they wear; & while most don't look either clean or nice, I can't help being struck by their neatness & cleanliness. This seems about the lot.

FRED."

Wed. May 31, 1944. I have received the copy of "New Guinea—the Sentinel", & the following note from Seward:-

457-459 Bourke St., Melbourne, May 25, 1944.
Mr. J. Cooking, 331 Maitland Rd., Mayfield West. Dear Sir,

We thank you for your letter of thre 23rd inst., & will keep your inquiry in mind. Should at any time we come across an instrument which we think will suit you, we would
be pleased to send you full particulars. You should be able to get a fairly good microscope for that price (£10 or 12) one which would give you a good range. However, you would not be able to view bacteria.

To do so an oil-immersion lens is required, which nowadays sells for about £15-10-0. We have sent forward a copy of "New Guinea—the Sentinel." Thanking you, Yours faithfully, N.H. Seward PTY. LTD.

I finished reading the new book yesterday. Last Sunday I returned the book entitled "Eye-openers", by Le Brun, to Jose. Lovely weather. Mum went to Newcastle yesterday & visited Mr. Evans, who is trying to cure the lameness in her right leg. She bought some feltex carpets or mats at Booth's shop.

This (Wed.) afternoon I received the following note from Mr, Finnemore:

"Bogan St., Nyngan. Dear Mr. Cocking. Your letter to hand, & I happened to see the chap who is taking your enlarger, & whilst not liking the extra cost of the freight, suggests going 50-50 with you in the matter of the freight. If you are not agreeable to this, let me know, but send the enlarger in any case , & I will fix things this end, Yours sincerely J. Finnemore."

The number of the enlarger is 31173

Fri. June 2, 1944. Yesterday I went to the hospital & got an injection from sister Grenell in my left arm. On the way home I bought a postal note for one pound for Mum to send to Arthur as a birthday present. This morning Charlie went to Newcastle & paid insurance money for Fred at the Colonial Mutual Insurance company's office in Hunter street. I took the enlarger in the billycart to the Waratah railway station, & paid 3/6 for freight to Nyngan, for Mr. J. Finnemore. I posted a letter to him this afternoon. Lovely weather. We received this short letter from Fred to-day:-


I intended writing this morning, but was prevented by having to do a job, but as it's 2 weeks since I last wrote I'm doing it to-night. Yesterday we had to vote here, & although I know that I wasted my vote, I put Deacon, then the other fellow, then Cameron, the dud, who I have no doubt, will win.

This time we did have something to go on, for a little pamphlet was given us containing the platforms of the different candidates, also the candidates in the different electorates. The weather lately has been hot & dry, but it's raining now &
seems as if it will keep.63. Your reference to Art’s Ma-inlaw is very interesting, especially now. Apparently you & she would be quite good friends if you lived a bit closer together. It's getting increasingly harder to have anything to write about, so I'm not writing to anybody but you, but just so long as you know that all is o.k., that's all that is necessary, isn't it? I'm sorry that I can't do any better than this. Hoping that all is as it should be, FRED.

Tues. June 6, 1944. Last Saturday morning I went to the Mayfield public school & got new coupon books for myself & Mum. Today Mum has gone in to the Store to rectify a mistake in her bill for the new carpets. Charlie returned from Glenoak last evening & brought a rabbit. Lovely weather. Last night Art & Phyllis telephoned to Mum to thank, last Sunday pound that she sent to Art. They are all well.

Mon. June 12, 1944. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection from sister Grennell. I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- for my & Mum’s subscription to the Pensioners’ association.

Yesterday Bill Purdy, Florence, & Robert spoke to us by telephone from Nyngan. They said they are sending a case of oranges to Waratah station for us. They are well. Last Tuesday we received the following letter from Florence:

"Box 15 P.O. Nyngan, Sunday 4th June 1944.
Dear Mum & Dad, Well, well, fancy the son-in-law writing; wonders never cease, do they? Suppose you know why I am writing— to thank you for my birthday present. It was very acceptable, thank you, & I have already bought myself a wallet with it. Well, you should have stayed in Nyngan—the weather is beautiful. I’ll bet it’s raining there now. Just the same, I would not mind being there at present. I saw Mr. Finnenore the other day & he tells me he is buying the enlarger from Dad, & that it will be sent to me to give to him. That will be o.k.; I will fix it up for you. The wife is now taking over. You know her, of course....

First of all I must answer your question, Mother, —the mauve flower you mean I think is lantana, although you don't men-"
tion why you want to know. About the alarm clock—tell Charlie that if no one else needs it we would be very thankful for it. Any time will do, thanks, Charlie. You will both be interested to know that Mrs. Barrow, whom you met on the train, has a baby son, born last Monday. This is their 7th child, all the others (girls) have died before they reached the age of 3 months, except of course, the one you saw. We were speaking to Mrs. Cook to-day, & she is hoping that her husband will get a transfer in the next few months; so I suppose we shall have another moving job then if we can get that house.

My chip now. That will make our 6th move in four years. Anyway better than paying rent. You know Woolley’s slogan—"Keep moving" & we seem to be taking their advice. I’ll let your daughter continue now...

This letter seems to be a combined effort. Thanks for the news of Pip & Dooll, Mother. I was wondering what was the matter, but your letter explained. The information about the carpet is good too; I might try that later on when I have the grass next door to lay it out on while I do the job. I have had your letter put out in a safe place all day so that I could answer it to-night, but now just when I want it I can’t find it, but I hope there is nothing in it that requires answering. The "little bloke" is always writing to Gumma these days. He is always looking for a pencil & paper. This is a later of age than the train, although he still has that too. Hope that you are all well; aldo Jose, Ivy, & the nippers. Our love to them all & to yourselves of course, Florence." P.S. Bill’s wallet is a little beauty.

F.

This Monday morning I posted 3 papers & "New Guinea—the Sentinel" to Fred. I have previously sent him "An Outpost in Papua", & a large map of New Guinea.

 Tues. June 13, 1944. This evening at 5 I received the following in telegram from Fred: "Do not look door tuesday night expect me. Fred."

This was sent from Brisbane, & was lodged there at i p.m. to-day.

Mon. June 19, 1944. Last Wednesday morning Jose met Fred at the Waratah railway station & brought him home by car. Fred has 28 days leave, but has to return to Brisbane at the end of his time off. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm from sister Grell. Yesterday afternoon Mum & I went by bus to Birmingham Gardens & walked up to the Wallsend cemetery to attend the burial service of Mrs. Batty, Jim Pettigrew’s sister. She was buried in the presby-
terian portion of the cemetery, which is on the lower side towards the South. None of the pettigrews from Dapto were at the funeral, as they were not notified to attend. Mum & I returned home with Violet Sheldon, May, & George Sheldon in his car. On the way home he stopped at Mrs. Lewis-ham's house in Sandgate, & the women had a long chat.

Last night Florence & Robert came unexpectedly from Sydney. We expected them to arrive to-day. They are well. This morning I went to the Newcastle station for Florence's port, but it had not arrived. I bought a 6d. picture book at Wool-worth's, & 6 penny sheets of transfers at Wilton in Mayfield.

I have sent a note to an advertiser in the Newcastle Herald, who wants to buy a button accordion, offering to sell him mine for two pounds. Cold West wind.

55/- for the accordion in 1926.

Last Saturday we received this letter from Walter;

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 15-6-44. Dear Folks, You are doubtless by now enjoying Fred's company, as he passed through here last week-end, & I unfortunately missed him, due to the fact that I spent the 3 days at a guest house in Montville. Evidently he got his long- awaited leave at short notice, & I must assume that he is well, judging from your extracts from his last letter. 28 days is a good spell, & I know he will make the most of it -- wouldn't mind being down there myself. Things must surely be like old times with so many visitors lately, & it is good to know that you are all O.K., as I am. There seems to be a crazy idea brewing in Melbourne to send me down there to take over the design of a mail-handling plant for the G.P.O. in Spencer street, but it is a few months off yet; if it does eventuate, & I'm afraid I'm not going to be very enthusiastic in taking a Melbourne job. Had a couple of letters from Marj. lately in which she inquires for you. She has not been very well for some months, with the result that she has at last been able to get clear of her job on medical grounds. Following a short holiday, she will be looking for another job more congenial & attractive than factory life. However, she is at the moment highly delighted in being free once again. There is little other news; the job is quite pleasant & interesting, with not so much rush as previously, & I am practically a free lance in my role as Designing & Interviewing Engineer.

Naturally all eyes are on France at the moment, where the outcome is so momentous, & where we are all looking forward to an early conclusion so that ourselves & others can return to normal living. Yet how fortunate we in this country have been! 'Cheerio. All the best, Wal."
Thur., June 22, 1944, Mrs. Freeman came yesterday from Newcastle & paid me £ 2 0-0-0 for my accordion. This morning I went to Newcastle & got my usual injection, in my right arm, from sister Grenell. I promised to get a copy of "The Socialist 6th Of The World" for Mr. Evans. I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- for the pensioners/ Association. I bought a copy of the "Socialist 6th" for 1/-.

Yesterday I received the following note from Mr. Finнемore:-

"Bogan St., Nyngan. Dear Mr. Cocking, I received the enlarger about a week ago, & am pleased to say it's in quite good order, & suitable, I think. I had no trouble in assembling it. And will give Mr. Purdy the money as agreed. He was coming around to-day, but has not turned up yet. I am still without a roll film, but will not forget your wishes when I do. I suppose you have not been lucky enough to get me any printing papers at all yet. Yours sincerely J. Finнемore."

Yesterday I received this letter from Mrs. Webster:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr. Redruth, Cornwall. 15th April 1944. Dear Mr. Cocking, Must going to answer your letter received a week or 2 ago. I should have written before, but been laid up with the bursting of a vein in my leg. Thankful to say I'm on my feet once more & well in body. Father had the flu at Christmas, & he had it so bad that he never properly recovered. It left him weak, & now the warm weather is coming we hope he will soon pick up again. So our Christmas wasn't quite so bright as it would have been; but there! we're thankful to be alive. Lots of people—young & old—have passed away here in our village this winter. We have no raids; we're left very quiet so far. We had our Frank home for 10 days; he is well, & his wife & little Joyce nearly 3 years old. Last October she had a little brother, but sorry to say he was still-born—a lovely boy. Poor Frank was in a way, as he looked forward to a boy, & he was a perfect boy. Fred's wife had a boy born on the 9th March—a fine healthy boy. The other one, Gerald, will be 14 this month. They came down & spent last Monday with us. They're all very proud of the new baby—he is really wanted. Some dear babies are not. Glad to hear your grandson is so well, & his Mammy & Pa well. Our Myra has been well since she left Bristol; it nearly killed her up there. The bad air in the works, long hours, & the food not like home. She lost her colour & fat. Now you would be surprised to see her looking so well. However, her own air is quite healthy here by the sea. Frank is stationed in London at present. He says he has plenty of good food & a very nice battery all comfortable. They were in Herts
at Sheffield, not very special—no fires, & it's been very wet & cold up to just now. Dear Mr. Cocking, I do hope you & Mrs. Cocking are feeling better by now, & all the others well.

I had a nice letter from my cousin David Tabb since I wrote. He had to go from his house owing to war conditions. He is living now with his brother & wife in Melbourne. He told us a young man called on him from Cornwall, named Tabb, who is with the merchant navy, & who came to Australia, & who thinks he is a cousin. I think it must be my cousin's son from Truro, or grandson. Anyway, he promised to call again should he come their way. Lots of people are meeting relations over here from different parts.

Now dear friends we trust that you are safe & well, & we send you our very best wishes for all your family. Oh, I nearly forgot: Kathleen; she is still well & happy at Falmouth with Canon Roxby & family—very nice people—just like home. They're always willing for any of us to stay the night if we go there. Myra spent last week-end there with Kath, who is always glad to have her sister with her.

I see you have lost your brother. Poor dear gone to the Home above where I trust we may all meet in happy fellowship with our loved ones; then the troubles of life will be ended. Many dear mothers will be glad to meet their dear boys who have fallen in this war; it's all heart-breaking.

Father & I join in kind regards. Shall be glad to hear from you again. H.B. & E. Webster.

Fri. June 3, 1944. Cold & rainy. Florence got her hair dressed yesterday. Fred has re-polished the oval table. I have to go to Newcastle again today to see a doctor about having a blood test. I answered Mr. Finnemore's letter yesterday.

Common Abbreviations Used In Prescription Writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABBREVIATIONS</th>
<th>LATIN</th>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a a . . . . . .</td>
<td>am a</td>
<td>Of each in equal parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a c . . . . . .</td>
<td>ante oitum</td>
<td>Before food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add. . . . . . .</td>
<td>adde</td>
<td>Add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ad part. dolent.</td>
<td>ad partem dolentum</td>
<td>To the painful part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ad lib. . . . .</td>
<td>ad libitum</td>
<td>As much as desired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alt dia. -------</td>
<td>alternus diebus</td>
<td>Alternate days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alt hor. -------</td>
<td>alternis XI horis</td>
<td>Alternate hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alt noct. -------</td>
<td>alternis noctibus</td>
<td>Alternate nights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aq.---------</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aq. dest.------</td>
<td>aqua destillata</td>
<td>Distilled water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.i.d.--------</td>
<td>bis in dia</td>
<td>Twice a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c --------------</td>
<td>cum</td>
<td>With.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cochl.--------</td>
<td>cochlear</td>
<td>Spoon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.m.-----------</td>
<td>cras mana</td>
<td>To morning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS.

**LATIN.**
c.n.------------------cras noote------- --To-morrow night.
dil.------------------dilutus-------------Diluted.
dur dolor.----------durante dolora---- Whilst the pain lasts.
fl.------------------fluidum------------- Fluid.
ft.------------------fiae ------------------Let there be made.
h.c.----------hora decubitus----------- At bedtime.
h.s.-------------hora somni----------------- At sleeping time.
mitt. --------------mitte -------------------Send.
M. ------------------miscce----------------- Mix.
N.B. ------------ nota bene ----------------- Note well.
oc.m. -------------omni mane---------------- Every morning.
purt. vic.---------puritis violeus------In divided doses.
p.c. -------------pos5 citum---------------After food.
p.r.n.--------- pro re nata. ------------- When required.
q.d. or q.i.d.-------quater in die.----Four times daily.
q.s.-------------quantum sufficat -------Sufficient quantity.
Quo. hor.-------quaque hora.------------Every hour.
Quotid.---------quotidia.--------------- Daily.
sine ------------- sine-------------------Without.
s.s. or S. or Ss -------semia--------- A half.
s.o.s.------------si opus sit.-------------If necessary.
stat. -----------statina ----------------- Immediately.
sum. ------------sumendum--------------- Let it be taken.
t.d. or t.i.d. -------ter in dis sundum--Let it be taken thrice (daily.

Ut dict.----------ut dictum -- Let it be taken 3 times daily (as directed.

Wed. June 28, 1944. Last Thursday I got my usual injection from sister Gre nell in my right arm. I wrote a letter to Walt, but did not finish it until Monday last. I went to Newcastle on Friday & saw a doctor who gave me a card to get a blood test. I returned last Monday & got the blood taken by a sister in the pathology department. I caught a cold in my head last Sunday through sitting out in the yard in cold wind. Ivy cut Roberts hair & mine last Saturday at her house. Today I have received the following letter from Mr. J. Finnamore:

"Bogan St., Nyangan, 26-6-44. Dear Mr. Cocking, Your note to hand today re films. The number I require is V-116, but if you can get 120 or 620, films as well at any time, I can make good use of them. The paper I require if you can get any is bromide paper, anything from postcard to the larger sizes. Also, if you can get any Velox paper 116 size at any time I will be grateful for it. I paid Mr. Purdy the money last week for the enlarger. Thanking you in anticipation for the film, yours sincerely J. Finnamore.
P.S. Get as many films as you can, thank you."
Fri. June 30, 1944. This morning I finished writing the following verses for "Common Cause":

**ADVICE TO MINERS.**

When you descend in mines depend
On winding ropes in tatters,
And count not lives (except to wives)
As anything that matters.

In smoke & gas your days must pass
Till mining days are ended,
But hold your breath -- don't speak of death
When in a gage suspended.

Though work you must in heat & dust
Where Safety is a stranger,
Do not complain nor move again
To rid yourselves of danger.

Continue on as you have gone
To earn your blood-stained wages
In bords & stopes, & swing on ropes
In unprotected cages.

Though ropes be worn, abraded, torn,
With broken strands in patches,
Do NOT demand nor make a stand
For modern safety catches.

In days of yore you begged for more
Security when riding,
But Fat said "No!" So let it go,
And meekly down go sliding.

There on the brink of death just think
Of winning football matches;
Don't ask your Boss to suffer loss
Through buying safety catches.

To sate his greed toil on & bleed,
But never get disgusted
With breaking props & crashing "tops"
Although both lungs be dusted.

The rope that broke was not a joke,
And it will not be funny
When cages fall & murder all
To save a little money.
Your lives are cheap; for Fat must reap
In collieries extensive
His profits vast, as in the past,
And "catches are expensive".

Where such are used & not abused
The ropes need not be stronger,
And Fat would gain, for they remain
In use a great while longer.

When falling rocks crash down in blocks
And mutilate you miners,
Sir Fat, of course, feels scant remorse,
But widows are repiners.

Though falls may kill be patient still;
Where winding-ropes are rotten
Let not one word EX re risk be heard;
Let safety be forgotten.

Let's win the war, of course, before
You move to ride securely;
Until we win, to strike is sin,
So wait, & act demurely.

Till that is won each mother's son
And ev'ry mother's daughter
Should work away to speed the day
That ends the world-wide slaughter.

To Common Cause. Rejected.

Yesterday Florence received a money order for five pounds
through Bill from Mr. Fin nemore. I did not go to the hospital
yesterday as my cold was too bad, but it is much better to-day.

Sat. July 1, 1944. This morning at about 3 o'clock Jose &
Fred left Waratah by train to go first to Warrawong, &
then to Marrickville to see Art & Phyllis & Doreen. They
intend to return next Monday. On the 28th I posted a
letter to Sean Hewlett Johnson with copies of "Soviet
Strength" & "The Socialist Sixth Of the World," verses
which I suggested that he could publish in the prefaces
of future editions of his books bearing these titles.
Yesterday I posted a copy of "Advice To Miners" to the
editor of "Common Cause." Rain again to-day.

Mon. July 3, 1944. Last night Jose & Fred returned f
from Warrawong & Sydney. They saw Jack, Gladys & the 3
children, & inspected the coke works at Port Kembla.
They saw Art, Phyllis & Doreen at Marrickville. Art & Phyl are coming up to see us next Saturday. Rainy to-day.

Sun. July 9, 1944. Last Thursday I went to hospital & got an injection in my right arm. Sister Grenell told me that my blood-test showed some improvement. I gave Mr. Evans a copy of "The Socialist Sixth Of The World", on my way up to the hospital. I paid Mrs. Watt 2/- sub. to the Pensioners' Association.

In the afternoon I went down to the tram terminus at Mayfield to get a certificate from Dr. Opitz, but he did not come. I went again last Friday & got a certificate from him.

Arthur came home from Sydney by train on Friday night & stayed here until 3 o'clock this afternoon, when he left with Florence & Robert, who will go straight on from Sydney to Nyngan. Fred is to leave for Brisbane next Wednesday.

The weather is cold & rainy again to-day. Ivy gave Robert a blackboard & stand, & gave him some marbles & a drawing-slate. Phyllis & Doreen did not come because of the wet, cold weather. Art took back his big book entitled "How And Why."

I have written to "R. or Mrs. Filmer, of Toronto, in reply to a notice in the paper that he or she wanted to sell 2 microscopes & hundreds of slides. Florence cashed the money-order for five pounds that Mr. Finnemore paid Bill for me.

Frank Cocking came to see Fred early in the week.

Tues. July 11, 1944. Yesterday we received this from Walter:-

"Rosebank" 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 6-7-44.

Dear Folks, I was delighted to get Dad's long & informative letter last week, & must apologise for being so long in replying, but there was so little news that I have been waiting for some to accumulate.

It was news to me—& very pleasing— to know that Flo & the young feller have been down with you. Evidently they like to get down to Mayfield, especially with the prodigal at home, & I can well imagine their lack of enthusiasm in returning to Nyngan.

What a lot of visitors Fred's presence at home must have caused! I can understand him feeling the cold after being in New Guinea, but things have probably been a little better in Brisbane, for we have had settled rain almost continuously for over a week, & many days have been quite cold.

The week-end before last I spent at the home of a chap I know at Eagle Heights, Tambourine Mountain. This proved to be a very nice & picturesque place, & the weather was sufficiently cold to induce me to take some long & enjoyable walks, the scenery being very reminiscent of Katoomba.

Reference to the calendar indicates that Fred should be
due here again in a few days, so that I can confidently expect
to see him shortly & give him the use of the spare bed in
my room. I am somewhat surprised in not having, as yet,
having to return to Townsville on general inspection, nor
have there, of course, been any further developments con-
cerning the Melbourne job. In reply to Dad's query re my
status here, I am nominally under the direction of the Mech-
anical Engineer, but he & I get the same salary, & he allows
me almost complete freedom of action, & looks to me for all
overall design.
Was very pleased to have Dad's thoughts on so many subjec-
ts, covering the hereafter, the advantages of the rolling
stone, his hopes for medical science & post-war advancement,
the incorrect way of feeding a ferret, his admiration for
Man's handiwork, his continued interest in the microscopic
world, his optimism in the early ending of the war, & most
important of all, the real strength of our family ties.
On each of these items I could write quite a lot; suffice
then for me to say that I am generally in agreement on all
points, & on some with more enthusiasm than others.
As regards post-war developments, Dad, I would refer you
to the post war discussion group publication, which can be
obtained free from the Dept. of Post-War Reconstruction, box
168 Canberra. We have started a discussion group here, & co-
siderable interest has been developed.
Thanks again for your excellent letter. I began to think
Mum was ill. It seems I have just about covered everything,
& if the Russian progress keeps up at this rate it mightn't
be too long before we're dancing in the street. Anyhow
we'll keep hoping. Cheerio. Wal
You never seem to need money, but I'm sure either you or Flo
can take the £5 (enclosed).

This afternoon I received the following letter from Filmer:-

"158 Brighton Ave. Toronto.
J. Cocking. Yours of the 7th instant. The small scope I have
have sold. The good one is available. It is a Swift make
one with A & B. eyepieces, two objectives Nos. 3 & 6 & an
extension tube. By means of these six ranges of focus can
be obtained. The objectives are Leitz & Vetzler make, &
the No. 6 objective (about 1/5 focus) is the best lens
that I have seen. I use a small electric lamp, 4 or 5 volts,
fed by a small transformer, & it is a treat to use. It could
be lighted by a car battery. I never use the 240 volts un-
der any condition. It would not be safe. The lamp is attac-
hed to the scope so that the slides are in focus without
adjusting the mirror. The price is £20. With the scope 50
Mon. 17 July, 1944. Last Wed. (12th) I went by train from Newcastle to Toronto & paid Mr. Filmer twenty pounds for a microscope made by Swift, & gave him 10/- for slides to be sent later. I had to wait at Toronto until 2.45 p.m. for a train to Newcastle. Mr. Filmer gave me a little book entitled "On Mounting Microscopic Objects", & I paid him 2/6 for a large book entitled "How To Work With The Microscope", 520 pages by Lionel S. Beale. It cost 21/- new. Mr. Filmer also gave me about 60 slides. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. I bought a packet of onion seeds at Woolworth's, & a book on gardening to send to Florence. At the same shop I bought 3 small books entitled "The Kingdom In The Pacific", 150 pages by Frank H.L. Paton; "The Telescope", 144 pages by the hon. Mrs. Ward; & "The Rising Tide", 132 pages by H.L. Jensen. (1909.) We have received this letter from Florence:

"10-7-44, Dear Min., Just to set your weary heart at rest I am writing to let you know that we arrived home safe & sound to-day. We had a very good trip over. Bill met us & took us over to Mrs. Rees' place for dinner, then Robert & I stayed for a while, & then Mrs. Rees came up here & had a yarn. Bill had got the bath-heater installed this afternoon, the plumbers were just finishing off the job, so we all had afternoon tea together. It's good to have the trip over, although Robert behaved fairly well. Bill had got the house all nice & clean, so that was a pleasant surprise too. Robert is invited to Barry's party on Saturday. Grace (Rixon) was at Waratah station yesterday when Art & I arrived (she had been home for the week-end) & she travelled down with us. I met my new cousin George Rixon for the first time. Uncle Johnny & Till were there to see Grace off. His 80th birthday was celebrated on Saturday, & Grace said they all had a grand time. Tell Dad Mr. Rees is still reading the books & will definitely return them when he has finished with them. Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence."

I have received 64 slides from Mr. Filmer. Mum has sent a letter & a money order for £2-10-0 to Florence, & I sent the book on gardening. This morning Mum sent a letter to Walter.
Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection from sister Grenell. On Tuesday, the 18th, the following notice appeared in the Newcastle Herald:—

"Cocking. In loving memory of our dear father, father-in-law and grandfather, Robert Rowe Cocking, who passed away July 18, 1943. Inserted by Jim, Ethel, Douglas and Marjorie."

Last Saturday I went again to Newcastle & bought 2 packets of bromide paper for 3/6 for Mr. Finnemore. I tried to buy an ounce of Canada balsam in Newcastle, but could not. I also tried to buy small cover-glasses for microscopic slides, and failed. At Mayfield I bought the balsam & ordered a box of cover-glasses. Mum went to Mrs. Longworth & ordered a new set of teeth. We have received this from Fred:


Dear Folks, I haven't been back long enough yet to know what the address is here, but this will let you know that I'm settled down again, just about where I expected to be.

I haven't long ago parted from Wal, & I expect to see a good bit of him in the future. I found him playing tennis with about a dozen other men & girls from his office, & as I didn't want to interrupt his game & leisure too much I never stayed very long, but went & saw a football match. I've since had quite a good tea & am now using the time to train time writing to you. Wal seems to be expecting a letter from you, but when I told him everything was right at home he seemed more contented. I missed seeing him again when I first got here— he was out inspecting a job somewhere, but I left word at the office telling him I'd been there, & to expect to see me. I had tried to ring him previously, but as I hadn't been told that the number had been changed, all I accomplished was to waste my 2 pennies. I don't know if he gave it to you yet, but it's F. 56, anynow.

The 2 days that I've been here are fairly warm, but nights are just as cold as down there. They tell me that it's only stopped raining since I've been here, & I suppose that you're getting
sunny days too now that I'm not there. This morning I got 4 letters, 3 bundles of newspapers, a map, & what seems to be a small book. So far I've read only the letters, but as it's Sunday to-morrow I'll be able to have a look at them. Wal wanted me to play golf with him to-morrow, & although I declined this time I may possibly go with him next Sunday. I'll write again when I can let you have my new address, but a letter to the old one will still find me.

FRED.

Mum is making a new dress for herself today (Wednesday 20th) we received the following letters from Florence & Walter:

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 24-7-44. Dear Folks,
Fred contacted me while I was playing tennis on the 15th, after which he was transferred to Redbank near Ipswich, & he again met me last Saturday, & was able to sleep the night in the spare bed in my room, which Mrs. Jones prepared for him & which he pronounced "perfect". He returned yesterday to Redbank, but expects to be transferred to some laundry unit, & he will give me details as soon as he knows. He appears anxious to get back to New Guinea, as he regards it as the best "ooc" he ever had, & he is rather fond of the warm weather. However, he expressed himself as being quite happy to spend a month or 2 in Brisbane, even though it is such a dead hole.

I have been certified as medically o.k. for the Superannuation Fund under which I am to pay XX 18/- a week, & will be entitled to a pension of £ 5-10-0 a week when I retire, or if earlier incapacitated. In connection with this, I would be obliged if you would send up my birth certificate by registered mail at your convenience. I will also be pleased, Mum, if you could send up my white shorts from the loughboy. By the way, I forgot to answer your query regarding the dyeing of carpets in my last letter. Mrs. Jones told me that she mixed the dye a bit stronger than mentioned on the packets, but otherwise as directed, that she made up 3 packets of "princess" dye for my carpet, which is 8 ft. x 7 ft., to make sure that she wouldn't have it patchy. Other comments from her were given in my earlier letter.

Pretending that I knew nothing of the proposal to send me to Melbourne, I have told the Chief Engineer in Melbourne that I am prepared to accept a job as senior engineer in the Northern Territory, but I don't anticipate for a moment that he will listen to me, as it is pretty definite that he has me earmarked for that job down South.

Things are just the same as usual here, & I am keeping very well, turning the scales at 10-13, & not suffering from colds since using drops which were prescribed by a local.
specialist. Fred gave me all the "dope" on Dad's "yes" vote, & Joe's "yes" vote, but I haven't yet made up my mind. 
Cheerio. WAL.

Here is the letter from Florence:-
"Oct 15, 23-7-44. Dear Mother & Dad, pleased to hear from you again during the week, even though it was a "good riddance to bad rubbish" letter. Anyway Min, I know you want, & perhaps we did give you the pip, but next time I won't cowl, or better still won't leave the "golden west" in the winter time. I wish it were possible for you both to spend the winter out here, the climate is ideal. It seems as though it was Santa Claus week again for us; Robert certainly thought so when he parcel arrived the other afternoon & he opened it & found the box of paints & the lollies. The money, Mother, is a bit over the fence. It seems pretty unfair for me to accept so much from you, but you said that you will be offended if I send it back, so there is nothing else for me to do, & say thank you very much. I will buy a nice chenille dressing down with it if they are still procurable. Thanks also for the good wishes for the 9th. I forgot all about it myself until I was about to board the train at Waratah, & when I thought out the date I decided I must wish myself many happy returns. It wasn't a bad day either—good trip down. You say I didn't give my impression of George (Rixon); well it was pretty hard to form one in about 2 minutes, but the main impression I had of him was that he was bubbling over with good humour. I lost sight of him & Grace before we gave our tickets in, so they must have got away in a hurry. Thanks for the gardening book, Dad; it will be a great help to us if we move; even if we don't we will do more gardening here. Our little garden is coming on well. We are picking spinach, & white turnips, & have used nearly all our lettuce or given them away, & the cabbages are getting good hearts in them. Now the rhubarb is doing fine; also the parsnips & carrots. I think that is all the gardening news for now, but it proves that the soil is all right... We were glad to have the Herald sent over too; & in case you didn't notice it, I am sending a little bit back which may interest you though I have covered the phone number & almost the number of the house, but that is 180. Perhaps if you asked for "information" on the phone & gave them the address they would be able to give you the correct number & it would save a letter, & you would know sooner. 
Sorry about the tablecloths, Min but I think you will find it almost impossible to get them five feet long. The only ones Bill could get for you are 45 inches square, green check material; at 7/3. Neither of us has seen them, so I
can't tell you what they are like, but they are coupon-free.
Robert has got over his tantrums again since we came home,
so everything in the garden is lovely. Hope you are all well
including Ivy, Joe, & the nips. Cheerio. Love from us all.
Florence.
P.S. I suppose you are quite happy now that you have the
microscope, Dad: Bill is looking forward to having a peep
through it when he comes over."

Fri. Aug. 4, 1944. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & got an in-
jection from a sister who knows Florence. I paid the gas
bill for £2-0-10, & then went to Mr. Walsh, the optician n-
ear the bank-corner, & paid him 8/6 for 56 small round gla-
sses to cover microscopic slides. At highes Hill I had my
top eye-tooth drawn by Mrs. Isabel Longworth. On the way h-
ome I met Mr. Stanton & another man, & had a discussion on
the proposed alterations to the Federal Constituti
I went to Newcastle last thursday week & got an injection,
& paid the bill for electricity. At Kodaks I bought a pack-
et of bromide paper to send to Mr. Finnewore, which I will
send to-day. Our son Jack was sent up from Port Kembla
by the B.H.P. company to gain more knowledge, if possible, &
at the Port Waratah coke works. He arrived about a fortnight
ago & stayed a week, but he only slept here one night, & the
company had paid for a room at the great northern pub for
him & a few others who were also sent from Kembla for the
same purpose.
We have received this letter from Fred:--

"450817, Pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G.H., Redbank, Brisbane, 30 July.
As you will notice, I've had another change of address, this
time to a laundry section of the 2/4 general hospital.
The laundry is not working yet, so in the meantime I've been
given a job in the unit post office. My job is the finding
out where the patients go to when they leave the hospital
& re-addressing their letters that come for them.
I may say without boasting that I was given the job because
I'm a good writer. How silly & ridiculous to give anyone
like me a job such as this the way I dislike writing, but
it's a pretty good job sitting down most of the time, & I find
it rather a good change from more active work.
Maybe it's just what I wanted to enable me to put on a few
extra pounds. The grub is easily the best I've had since
being in the army, & so this helps too. I would have written
before only Wal told me he intended to write a week ago, & I
knew that he would mention about my staying there with him
on the Saturday night, & that I was all right then, & besides
I wanted to give you my new address when next I wrote. I
I arrived back where the con. depot is to find that its strength was cut down by about one third, & as this meant that about 70 men had to find another turnout it's quite easy to understand how I came to be kicked out.

Last Saturday night I called on Wal, but he had just left about 5 minutes before I arrived. I wrote him a note & told him that I'd most likely be in next night (last night, Sunday) but again I had no luck, so I left a quarter pound block of chocolate on his table for him, & I have no doubt that he'll understand where it came from. I should have gone up to his place yesterday morning, for I was in Brisbane by 6-45 a.m. & I'd have been sure to catch him, but I knew that he would be going to golf, & besides I wanted to go out to where the con. depot fellows are for a yarn; so I went at about 7 o'clock last night when I felt sure that he'd be home. Maybe he had been home & left again—went to church or something.

I never bothered to knock on Mrs. Jones' door to ask. I did on Saturday night, but not last night, because I don't want to make a nuisance of myself, although she seems a very nice lady. I like her much better than I did Mrs. McArthur.

When I got back I received a lot of letters, parcels, etc., among which was Phyllis' letter & the map & small book Dad sent, but so far I haven't received the other bigger book. I haven't read the little one yet, but will do & send it back home again, but the map I think Wal would like. I understand that Dad has another one like it, so I don't suppose that he will want it sent back besides the books.

I had intended writing to Flo & Joe & maybe to Phyllis & Glad to-night, but I think that as I'm writing pretty well all day, if I write one letter a night for about a week I should have all of it done & once again be square.

There is not near so much entertainment here as in New Guinea, so I'll have more time for writing, & besides even though the paper is crock we have plenty of electric light. I'm once again sleeping in a proper hut—not a tent—and I appreciate it too because the nights here are extremely cold—but the days are beginning to warm up, although I haven't discarded my sweater yet.

How are you & Dad & Chip & Joe & I've & the kids? I do hope that every one is in the pink. Up here they have quite a good idea, for soldiers only, a train ticket is available for a radius of 25 miles around Brisbane for 3/-, & it's good for a fortnight. On Saturday & yesterday I did 82 miles altogether, & as it lasts for 14 days from the 29th of July I expect to easily get my money's worth.

Letters to a fixed southern destination are no longer censored, but I'll let Wal pass on anything which I think may interest you, as I understand that we are in a small way on our honour not to write of some things. This seems about all for now. FRED.

P.S. You will notice that I'm not writing "air mail" now,
think a lot of both of them. I don't think there is any more news except that Robert told me today that when I write I must tell you that he went to see the football when he was in Dubai. Robert enjoyed his week-end pretty well, I think, & his behaviour was perfect. He said he likes all the pretty shops there, & I think that goes for his Mother too. It was good to see some decent shops & something to buy. Cheerio. Hope you'll forgive me this time. Love, Florence."

Sat. Aug. 11, 1945. Last Thursday I got my last injection in my left arm, from sister Grenell. She will leave the hospital next week to get married. To-day the papers are full of news of the Japanese surrender offer. They will stop the war if the Allies do not interfere with their divine emperor, Hirohito. Yesterday I sent a note to Mr. Finemore, & one to Artre binding the Geographic Magazines. Mum gave Jose two pounds for a pair of new boots for me. I visited Mrs. Longworth last Thursday & told her that my top teeth fit very well, but that I never use my bottom teeth because they hurt & because I can manage to eat well without them. I received the following letter yesterday from Mr. Finemore:

"Bogan St., Nyngan, Aug. 5. Dear Mr. Cocking, I hope you are not offended at me for not writing sooner, but must plead guilty to too much photo work. Just to give you some idea of how my little side-line has grown, is to quote the total prints & enlargements only for July, namely 1931. Thanks very much for your repeated attempts to obtain films for me. I am fairly well stocked up on those 1/4 plate films at present, but can still use all the 116 roll films you can get for me. I have been playing around with a net night-light photo, with somewhat mixed results. Am putting in a trial one of Mary who was a flower-girl at a recent debut dance. It's not perfect, but I think I am on the right track with my experiments. I have just got a 1000 watt lamp & have made an adjustable spot-light out of an oil-drum to house it; so here's hoping for the best in the near future. Am putting postal notes for six shillings, hoping this is correct..."
amount. Should it not meet with your outlay please let me know so that I can rectify the matter. The rest of the family are keeping fairly well, except for the usual winter colds. We have a new grocer at P.W. (per-mewan & Wright's), Jack Dunne by name, & he hails from Newcastle; don't suppose you know him. Cheerie & lots of luck. From J. Finnemore.

We have received the following from Arthur:

"15 Charles St., Marrickville, Monday. Dear Folks, I hope Dad has completely recovered from the flu, & that everyone of the local Cookies is o.k. The books & instruments arrived, thanks. The latter will, of course, be treated with due care & consideration, & returned in about 3 weeks time. There has been a bit of bad luck about the books, Dad. No, I haven't spoilt them, but nearly all the bookbinders' cloth at school has been used up, & so I can't bind all the volumes in red. I have grabbed enough to bind another book, though. This, I think, can be saved for binding the last volume, & thus symmetry will be preserved. The only catch is how we'll know when we get to the last. I'd be obliged if you'd send by return mail how many National Geographic Magazines — that is separate books — you have now. I can then work out how to use the cloth — some blind holland I bought — to the best advantage. We'll be leaving here, we hope, on the 1-12 p.m. flyer Friday 24th August. Yours in a hurry, Arthur."

We also got the following from Fred:

"N X 193961, pte. F. Cooking, 2/4 A.G.H. 2nd. Aug 45. Dear Folks, I was very glad to get your letter yesterday, as it seems ages since I had one from you. What you say about Bill Purdy's cousin leaves me staggered. It seems that you mean to convey that Bill had a cousin, one time in the Indian army, but now in the Tommy navy, who broadcast for information about Bill, rang Mrs. Murphy, who, in turn, let you know. Even now it looks a bit involved, doesn't it? You don't seem to have understood what I meant about"
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as I'm told that the time saving is negligible, & I'd advise you to send your letters ordinary post too. Remember that a penny stamp is all that is needed. Fred.

My address now is N 450817, Pte. F. Cooking, 2/4 A.G.H. (Staff), Redbank, Brisbane.

Wed. Aug. 9, 1944. To-day I have been repairing Jose's old Eimshurst machine. We received the following letter from Walter:

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 7-8-44.

Dear Folks, Thanks very much for your prompt reply to my last letter, & for the certificate & shorts which I asked for. Actually, Mum, I thought I had a pair of white shorts at home suitable for tennis, but evidently I haven't, so it doesn't matter.

I haven't seen much of Fred lately, but he called about a week ago while I was out, & left his address as A G H (Staff) Redbank, Brisbane. I was at Redbank this morning in connection with a laundry boiler for the army, but didn't have time to see him, as I was travelling with some army officers. It is possible that this is the laundry to which he expects to be transferred.

Glad to hear of ETMXXIXI EtXXXME John's trip home, & it seems that he might soon have a rise in the Company, although personally I think anyone is better to get out of that show.

I had a letter from Flo last week, & they appear to be doing well out there, also Bill's health would appear to be much improved. There has been nothing of much interest happened since last I wrote. Yesterday I took a few people in the car to Lone Pine, the koala bear sanctuary, & we had a very nice day nursing the bears, having our photos taken, & going for a walk.

No word is yet to hand of any future transfer, but I have in mind making my next holidays coincide with any such move.

The 7th Division are having a big march (10,000 of them) through the city to-morrow, so this will provide a spark of interest for the old place. Indeed it seems that at last victory marches are becoming a possibility in the near future, if overseas news continues in the same strain. All the best, Cheerio. Wal.

Am pleased to get the paper cuttings of Johnny (Rowe's) articles, although I only agree with them in part."
I have received this letter from Mrs Webster:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Cornwall, 26th May. Dear Friends, So pleased to hear from you once more & very glad to hear you & Mrs. Cocking were better. Sorry Mrs. Purdy has been so ill; trust by the time this reaches you she will be enjoying the best of health, herself, hubby, & little son. I've just returned from our Frank's little home; his wife & little Joyce who is 3 years old are enjoying the best of health. They have a nice home, & Frank who is in London on the search lights still is well & comfortable. He is in a large drill hall now, plenty of good food & well cooked, some difference to his last billet sleeping in huts, no fire & it was bitter cold weather. He was very unhappy there, but, thank God, it's made more comfortable now, he has heard, for the poor chaps that's t there. So many of them, I spoke it's difficult to put everything & to find comfortable places for them all, it takes time. I think all are doing their best for the men's & women's comfort.

Well, Mr. Cooking, we not heard of us being shifted out of this part. We are fairly safe, we think & have been lucky so far; no bombs dropped near us to hurt. Been off from here. Trust we will always be so lucky. We are having lovely weather, but need some rain bad. Everything is very dry; a good downfall would do us all good.

Kathleen is still with Canon Roxby & Mrs. at Falmouth. She has been with them 7 years. It's just like home there. They're very nice, homely people—don't treat their maids as servants; & if we care to stay for the night when we are down there they can always give us a bed. I like them for that good reason.

Hyra is at Redruth at the Clegnalf. Works all day work; cycles 4 miles each way, but it has put new life in her.

To-morrow will be Whit Saturday. On Monday Gwennap pit.

I am looking forward to it very much. What a lovely sight on a lovely day — something you will never forget. XXXXX it, & the singing of 5 or 6 hundred is delightful. I should like you to see & hear it. Last year it was rain; & we are hoping it will be fine.

My son Fred has another baby boy since I last wrote. Born on the 9th of March; he's lovely. The only other boy was 14 on April 23— all that between— but this baby is such a treasure to them. He's been brought down 3 times to see Grampa & Granny. Frank's little girl is just as proud of him.

Mr. Cooking, glad to see Mrs. Cocking has had her lip cured. That's fine, & all the others in your family well. Trust they will keep so. I have had my leg or ankle
pretty bad, but thank God, I'm able to move about - grand, & Pa is fine for him; he keeps up a good heart & don't exert himself too much. He turned 76; you wouldn't believe it if you saw him moving about.

We heard your prime minister (John Curtin) speak on the wireless. I should say he is a very fine man; he knows what he is speaking about. And all the others, if they can keep to what they're all planning we people will be better served in the years to come. I think some good will surely come out of all this tumult.

Now my dear friends I must say cheerio for the time with kind thoughts & wishes for health & all that is good; from your sincere friends H.E. & E. Webster.

P.S. I'm expecting a letter from my cousin David Tabb; he is living in Sydney now."

Fri. Aug. 11, 1944. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from a married Sister whose maiden name was Leisham. I bought a 120 film at Kodaks. The day was wet & cold. XX I had a tooth in the lower jaw drawn by Mrs. Longworth at Tighes Hill, & have to go back in a fortnight's time. To day I typed a 3 page letter to Mrs. Webster, & posted it XXXX to her, & the film to Mr. Finnemore. The film cost 1/10 in Newcastle. The weather is cold & rainy. Mum has nearly finished making her dress.

Mon. Aug. 14, 1944. Today we received this from Art:-

"137 Livingstone Road, Marrickville 11th August.
Dear Everyone, First of all Charlie Boland asked me did I know anything about the significance of 19th century unionism & its influence on political thought.
Of course I didn't. Charlie wants it for an essay. Can you suggest any books for him to read, Dad? Next, as you might have guessed, we are going home on the afternoon "flyer" a fortnight to-day (Friday). We should arrive soon after 8. Phyllis is well & happy; the baby is very well & exceptionally happy; I'm pretty pleased because the inspector thinks I'm a bright boy to such an extent that he quotes my achievements with the with the kids wherever he goes; & everything in the garden is lovely. To keep down my avoidupost & to keep the wolf a long way from the door, I've got a job as a gardener. Yes, nurie knocks off 3/6 a week rent in return for my mowing her lawns & looking after her gardens. The nipper now has 3 teeth & a 3 word vocabulary. Being a lazy little hound she won't crawl, although she moves about the floor in some inexplicable manner. Anything else there is to say can easily be said in the week we spend a
at home. Phyllis sends her love. Doreen would if she could. Arthur.
P.S. Phyll would like to cadge a loan of Ivy's high chair if it's sit-in-able & safe. Thanks. P.

Sat. Aug. 19, 1944. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection from sister Grenell. I bought a packet of bromide paper at Kodaks for 1/9 for Mr. Finemore. Yesterday I went down to Dr. Spitz's consulting room, but he did not come. My injection was in my right arm. I am reading a book entitled "Curiosities Of Animal Life; with the recent discoveries of the microscope. 188 pages by an unknown author, published by the Religious Tract Society. Date not stated.

Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence:

"Nyngan 14-8-44. Dear Mother & Dad, Well, how's the world treating you? I suppose you have been looking for a letter before this, but news is generally pretty scarce, so I have been putting it off. Any day we hope to have news that we can go through the fence, as Mrs. Quinn calls it; what I mean is that any day Coos expect to go to Parkes, & we are going to move into their house. Mr. Cook has the appointment, but they are waiting until a man is available for Nyngan which they say may be any day. I think it is likely to be next week. Did Art get the house he wanted? He expected that this month too. We had a bit of bad luck the other night, especially Robert—he tumbled over the back of a chair & fell into the fire. Luckily he put his hand out to save him but that & his arm were burnt. We both rushed & grabbed him out, otherwise he might have been burnt seriously. We took him to the doctor & then to the hospital where they dressed the burn & after 2 more trips up there for dressing I am doing it myself. It is improving, but will be some time before it is quite right again. It doesn't seem to worry him at all & he slept all night after the accident happened, & hasn't lost any sleep since because of it. How are Jose & Ivy & the kids? I hope you have been free of winter colds & ills. How is the leg Mother? Any improvement yet? I had a letter from Olive Worley during the week, & she says her mother wasn't well, but then I don't think she ever has been as far back as I can remember. A letter from Amy just a little while after I came back says that she had a son (Brian), & that her father was dying, so that the letter was a bit of a mixture of happiness & sadness. I went over to Finemore yesterday & saw the photos Dad wanted, so I suppose Mr. Finemore will be sending them on pretty soon. It's pretty hard to concentrate with his Royal Highness here talking all the time. I'll give him a bath & take him out
Dear Mr. Cocking,

I regret very much not replying to your letter before & thanking you for your successful attempts to obtain paper for me. I am enclosing a postal note for 7/6 which I hope will cover your outlay. Thanks for the film also, but the size for my camera is 116, not 1x2, but nevertheless I can make very good use of it, so still keep on trying for any sized paper etc. To save postage keep them until you get a couple or more packets. You need not worry about getting stale as stocks are now of all new stuff. I managed to get a film recently, & am enclosing a couple of prints of the scenes requested by you, & hope they are what you require, if so you can let me know how many 362 etc. Thanking you again for your attempts. Yours sincerely,

J. Finlemore.

I am up to my eyes with photo work, hence the delay.

Wed. Aug. 30, 1944. Yesterday I received this letter from Mrs. C. Jager:

"V.Lune River, Geeveston Private Mail Bag, Tasmania, Aug. 27, 1944. Dear Mrs. Cocking, Your letter of 20 inst. to hand. Thank you so much for the offer of "Red Europe" Thank you very much for your offer. I will be pleased to receive Red Europe & "Red-Hot Europe". Red-Hot Europe I have never read. Yes, Comrade, I am a Communist & have been interested in social things for many years. My family is a Socialist, or rather a Communist family. I would be pleased of any literature you do not need, as I send a lot out & distribute it round. I am enclosing
you 7 2½ d stamps for postage. Your letter was the only one I received in answer to my advert. I had a copy of Red Europe 20 years ago, but my house got destroyed by bush fires 7 years ago & it got burnt. I have tried to get a copy from the book shops without success, but no doubt they had all been seized by the Government when our party was banned. Thank you, friend, for your kindness in offering me these books. I am indeed thankful to you. I shall be able to put up some good arguments for our Socialist Cause, with the facts they contain.

Yours sincerely, Mrs. C. Jager, Lune River, Geelv斯顿
private Mail Bag, Tasmania.

To-day we received this letter from Walter:
"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 28-8-44.
Dear Folks, Having not heard from you for almost a month, I was somewhat surprised to find no letter awaiting me last week when I returned to Brisbane, but was reassured last Friday to know you are all well.
I returned last Wednesday after about a 620 mile drive in a departmental car in the Maryborough & Bundaberg areas, which occupied about a week. I enjoyed the spell away travelling on my own & being able to take my golf clubs for a game at Bundaberg. It appears that most places are more fortunate than Brisbane, so that I was very welcome when I returned with over 12 pounds of bacon for general distribution. Things are definitely improving here, however, & bacon appears to be the only ordinary commodity in short supply. I was also able to take parcels from Mrs. Jones to her old Bundaberg friends, & return parcels from them to her, including some peanuts for growing. On my mention of Dad as a gardener she readily made up a parcel for trialmat Mayfield, & I assume that they will have arrived by now. Fred spent last night here with me after we had dinner together, & he left about 9 o'clock after a couple of games of Chinese chequers. He is still out at Redbank, with no definite indications as to his movements, & he is looking very fit & well.
I was very glad to get the "Review" from Joe before going North, & to see his photograph in it—thanks Joe. Was also glad to hear that all the crowd on the hill are well, & that Art & Phyl were expected to come up for a week. That was a bit of bad luck about the "Nyang kid" as you say, it is very fortunate that Flo & Bill were handy. Evidently Flo is quite O.K. again from the tone of your letter.
Things are still busy here & otherwise the same. I am in good nick & get occasional letters from various fr-
From various friends, Marj & Raymond particularly asks to be remembered to you, Mum. She now has a new job in the Taxation Department in Sydney with a girl friend, & appears to be much happier. I should be down in a couple of months or so. Cheerio. Wal. M.O. £ 5 enclosed.

We also received this letter from Florence to-day:-

"Box 15 Nyngan, 28-8-44. Dear Mother & Dad, Reading over your letter it seems that your main concern is Robert's burn, so I will put your minds at rest first of all by telling you that the burn is o.k. again, & the burn completely healed. Perhaps the scar may remain, but that doesn't matter. It's good to know that all the family are well, but it seems that aunty May & such a crowd belonging to her are having a bad spin. Anyhow, I hope that they are all on the mend again. It's good to know that Art & phyl & their charming daughter (Doreen May) are going home for the holidays— or is it only the week-end? Every other day or so Robert wants me to take him over to see you, but I think it will be more difficult than last year, even if they cut the number of trains again. Anyhow, he seems to be a bit more satisfied these last couple of days & says he will wait till Santa Claus time. Glad to know you have your teeth fixed. I have made 2 appointments: the first time the dentist was away when I called, & the next time he was in hospital, but I think he will be back some time this week; so I'll go & see him again & make arrangements to have my teeth out next week when Bill is at home to mind Robert. It is good to know Dad is getting his teeth out too, & to know that you are much better (the leg I mean.). If Mr. Evans can fix that leg properly he will certainly need a very big feather in his cap.

You will be surprised to know that we haven't moved yet. Mrs. Cook is more impatient than we are even, but a man has to be appointed here first before Mr. Cook can leave. Bill bought a refrigerator in Bourke (kerosene). It's standing on the verandah waiting to be popped in next door. Mrs. Cook has taken the children over to Parkes, & they will stay but she has to come back to do the packing. Did you like the style of the dress? I hope the pattern suited. No, there are no fights next door these days, or if there are we don't hear them. I didn't hear anything about Calinans—only that they moved 2 days before we came back. A policeman who is stationed just out of Bourke has been transferred here & has taken the house. We have the keys, & the other day a carrier called for them & opened up the house & deposited a load of furniture there— new furniture by the way from Marcus Clark's— a bit of Bill's work. Quinns will have to be on their best behavior when a policeman lives
right at the back. Robert has a great time when there is no school. The 2 little girls of Hazelton from across the street are here all day, & often come over after tea with their mother, so he is not lonely. He is with them now watching them in their long "evening frocks". He doesn't miss Nancy, & she wasn't much company for him, anyhow.

Well, I hope you can understand this awful writing, Dad, on this awful paper, but it's all the paper I have in the house (I'll get some to-morrow), & the writing, well it's just me all over-- so I think I have written a pretty long letter to-day-- plenty of time-- Bill has gone to Bourke to-day.

So Cheerio. Keep well. Love from Robert & Florence."

Fri. Sep. 1, 1944. Yesterday I got my usual injection, in my right arm, from sister Grenell. I went down to get a certificate, but Dr. Britz did not arrive. To-day I am sending to Mrs. Jager the following pamphlets:

- Twenty Years Of Soviet Victories, by L. Sharkey.
- Japan's Mein Kampf.

Sat. Sep. 2, 1944. Yesterday evening I paid doctor Opitz 11/- for the coming quarter, & got a certificate for the Gardeners Lodge. He examined my right side & said that the trouble was a sore muscle. I posted the certificate to Mr. J. E. Jones. I received the following letter from Florence yesterday:

"31-8-44. Dear Dad, In answer to your letter the answer is yes. I don't know why I am soft enough to give in, but you always seem to get your own way about everything, & I give in, I suppose just because it has become habit with me, not because I think anyone will be interested in the snaps, or in "my lovely face", as you put it. Seems to me it doesn't take much investigating to know where Robert gets all his smoodging (hope it's spelt properly) qualities from. When he wants us to do a favor for him he calls us "pretty little Mummy" or "pretty little daddy". It's good to know that everyone at home is well, & that "lubly XXX Art little Tilt" & my Doreen (Robert's names) are at home for a while. I have been having trouble for more than a fortnight with boils in my ears, & yesterday I thought it was time I saw the doctor & got a remedy for them. The result was a much better night's sleep; & I am hoping now that this boil that is coming will be the last. It's a very painful bus-

35/8
innes, although I feel quite well otherwise—perhaps a bit cranky & irritable, but nothing more. We haven't any word yet of moving. Did you notice in the street photo that Robert was in front of Cook's gate? Robert is having a great time during the holidays with the 2 girls from over the street. I must hurry now to the post office with this or you won't get it till next week. Love from Robert & Florence.

This morning I am packing up the following pamphlets to send to Mrs. C. Jager:

The Only Remedy For The World's Labor Troubles.
Friendship With Russia Now, by deaf Johnson. Victory Without Debt, by G. Barclay-Smith.
Build Morale, by Lloyd Ross.
The troubled Nations, by Charles P. Wauchop. The Truth About Finland. Speech of Welcome to Foreign Delegates, by N. M. Shvernik. 20 Years of Soviet Victories, by L. Sharkey.
The War & the Working Class, by George Dimitrov. An Encyclopaedia Of pacifism, edited by Aldous Huxley. (Later)

I have sent them this morning for 7th.

I am now packing up the following pamphlets for Mrs. Jager:

Italians In Spain, For A United Front Against Fascism, by R. Palme Dutt.
Stevens & the Slums, by E. J. Docker.
Socialist Russia, by Jack Lindsay.
Communism the Cancer in the Vitals of Unionism, by the Australian Democratic Front.
Communism Is Our Ultimate Aim. Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations & the Outbreak of Hostilities Between Great Britain & Germany on Sep. 3 1939.

Also, in another parcel, the following pamphlets:

The Money-Power versus Democracy, by Eric D. Butler.
The Church Of Rome In Society & Politics, by the rev. Harry P. Reynolds.
No Conscription; the Case Against the National Register. The Revolutionary Crisis Is Maturing, by D. Z. Manuilsky.

I will also wrap up the following Books:

The First President of the Republic of Labour. Tom Mann & the I. l. P.
Hunger, Marxism-Leninism.
Capitalism: Fascism: Capitalism's Bloody Defender.
The Workers' May Day.
I will also pack up the following collections of pamphlets (bound together in one book):—

Scientific Socialism, by F. Engels.

Mrs. Longworth extracted my right lower molar last Thursday after many attempts, & my jaw is sore.

Wed. Sep. 6, 1944. We received this yesterday from Fred:—

"Pte. F. Cowking, 2/4 A.G.H. Redbank, Brisbane, Fri. Sep. 1 1944. I know that I'm much overdue in answer to your last letter, but I saw Wal last Sunday & he told me that he was going to write next day, & that he would mention seeing me & that I was O.K. In future when I call at his place I'll contact Mrs. Jones, because I nearly missed seeing him. He apparently expected me to go there on the Saturday, & left a note saying that he had gone to a suburban ed Milton to see an exhibition tennis match, & that he'd be home between 6 & 6.30 when we could have tea together. When I got there at about 8 ½ to 9 on Sunday morning he was upstairs having his breakfast, & I read the note, & so went away. I went back up there at about 5 o'clock & he was just about to leave. However, we had tea & a bit of a yarn. I never saw him the previous Sunday when he was inspecting a job at Maryborough, & another at Bundaberg. He drove there in the Dept. car, & said that he had a real good time. He was away just a week—Wednesday Wednesday to Wednesday. His job seems to be rather the right—some in the office & some outside.

I clean forgot all about the wireless set for Jose, but I'll ask Wal about it next time I see him, but I doubt if he'll want it now with his shift in the offing. A bloke has just come in wanting to play me table tennis, but I told him to go & read something for a while. Didn't Jose take a good photo in the "Review"? His was the best of them all. If he could have a good enlargement of just himself taken from it it would be quite a good likeness. Since I last wrote my carpenter mate has been shifted to a different unit & I now have the carpenters' shop to myself. They reckon on making me the unit carpenter, which carries another 2/- a day with it, but until things are finalised I don't put much faith in it, but I've at lea—"
Last been taken out of the laundry; you know I couldn't see myself folding blankets & washing tablecloths. He was no different from the rest; once he knew that he was going he just didn't care, & let the work pile up, but I've just about got things as they should be, & soon I expect to be able to relax a bit. Although I've been working about twice usual army speed it is still only about a \( \frac{1}{4} \) of what I did in pre-war times; so I'm not likely to lose any of my 11 stone 1 lb. that was a fortnight ago. The weather is beginning to warm up, & it won't be long now before I discard my fleecy-lined singlets, but I **don't** want to risk a cold snap yet. Art & Phyllis should break the monotony for you while they are there, & I suppose that you'll have to watch Doreen on the back steps. Art will be doing more than the usual amount of skite, & there won't be a word in the dictionary that she doesn't know or can't say. I read your last letter to Wal, & was glad to know that Flo had the house next door. She seemed to have her heart set on that place, didn't she? I must write to her some time, but I don't seem to regard letter-writing as very important while I'm in the country; so when I'm lax in letter-writing you can take it as a good omen. I have attempted to answer the letter I got from Jose today, but this seems a good effort, so I'll save his up & answer it later on. How is Dad going with the microscope? Is he satisfied with it, & can he make his own slides yet? By now he should have half his teeth out. I do hope that they are not causing him too much trouble, but I'll bet that he'll find his false ones queer for a while. Let's hope that if they are that he'll persevere with them until he gets used to them, when I don't doubt that they'll be a big advantage to him. This seems about all. So long. Fred.

Sun. Sep. 10, 1944. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & had an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. I went to Mrs. Longworth at Tighe's Hill, but did not get a tooth drawn because my gum was very sore & my jaw was aching. On Friday I paid Mrs. Longworth £ 12-12-0 for a lower & upper set of teeth which I am to get later. She gave me some stuff to put into my sore gum. Yesterday I almost finished making a bench to hold my big enlarging camera on. Charlie went to Glen Oak yesterday. Mum planted out 26 tomato plants yesterday.
Fri. Sep. 15, 1944. It was pension pay-day yesterday, & I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. I bought 2 packets of Canadian Wonder beans at Woolworth's, & 2 small drills at a shop that sells bicycle parts. I called at Longworth's house, but as my gum is still sore Mrs. Longworth would not pull another tooth until next Thursday. I could not buy any paper or films in Newcastle. At the bicycle shop I copied the following numbers from a drill-gauge:—

Half inch; 7/16; 5/32; 7/64; 1/8; 9/64; 5/32; 11/64; 3/16; 13/64; 7/32; 15/64; 1/4; 9/32; 17/64; 5/16; 15/32; 31/64.

I consulted doctor Opitz in the evening, & got a certificate for the lodge, & a prescription for medicine for my sore right side. I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- sub. for the Pensioners' Association, & gave Benny Broadfoot 20 cabbage plants. I have received the following letter from Mrs. Jager:

"Lune River, Geeveston private Mail Bag, Sep. 9, 1944.

Dear Comrade, Your letter to hand. So pleased to hear that you are a Socialist. I share the same ideas as you regarding the Curtin Government. No man has the right to conscript human life; & strange all Democrat Government conscript life, but severely leave alone Wealth. I read "Red Europe years ago & was impressed immensely by it, but I must admit not near so much as I have of late years, as I think as we grow older we become more aware of the misdoings & failings of those who hold the reins of Power Government & who rule us.

No, I am not a farmer's wife. My husband is of German descent, born in Australia of German parents, naturalised of course. My husband is a good, hard-working citizen, reared a good, honest family of clever boys & girls 20 in number, & I can assure you we were shunned, pushed, crimined & framed for no other reason than that we had a big family & would not see them starve without a fight. My husband had a sawmill which himself & family worked hard for years, & worked at. He worked 14 to 18 hours a day & ruined his health. Now he is not well enough to work, but being a good scholar & clever he always puts up an argument in favour of our Socialist Cause.

We are fishermen now. My husband has 2 big boats, & when he & the boys are not well enough to go out with them to catch our fish for a living, although it is a hard job, dangerous & arduous, it is interesting; & at the present time it's a fairly good paying game. But our coast is dangerous & rough with submerged reefs all round the coast—however that's part of the game.

Thank you so much for the books. No, I am not an R.C., in fact I do not know a church to uphold & act my relig-
A MARRIED MAN.

"Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long",
The poet wrote, but women know
Too well the poet's wrong.

A married man detests all debt;
At poverty he rages;
And longs for things too hard to get,
Whatever is his wages.

He wants great power, place & pelf
To come at his direction;
And --though he is no saint himself--
Wants feminine perfection.

And wants bile on this whirling sphere

Indeed, while on this whirling sphere
His wants, like weeds, are growing:
He wants a heaven while he's here,
And Heaven when he's going!

He wants a home--devoid of strife;
A bride who is nice Ibookmygg,
And, more than all else, wants his wife
To be well-skilled in cooking.

So, if in harmony you'd dwell
And mould him to your wishes,
Just feed the hungry beggar well
With love & well-cooked dishes.
Dear Mum,

We had a mighty fine time down the South coast, and both Phyll and the Nash stood up to the journey very well.

Phyll is now quite strong and looking forward to showing you our new bub, but NEW DEVELOPMENTS HAVE MADE IT UNLIKELY THAT WE WILL BE HOME THIS WEEK END.

The woman from Merewether doesn't like our place, but an old lady from Adamstown thinks it is the answer to a widow's prayer. IF we can get the agent to agree to our swapping with a non-teacher, and IF Sheill from Wellington is prepared to take over the residential cum rathouse that the old lady from Adamstown owns, we may eventually land in Wellington, but I think the difficulties will prove insuperable.

When are we going up to see you? Hanged if I know. The best thing we can do is to give you a ring the day before we do go.

Sorry I can't be more definite.

All our love,

Arthur
"Do unto others as I would have the others do unto me. My god is love, the world my country, & all therein my brothers & sisters—red, yellow, black & white are all precious in his sight.

Thank you, comrade, for "Red Europe" & "Red-Hot Europe". They haven't arrived yet, but no doubt the next mail will bring them. Thanking you again & assuring you of my grateful thanks, always yours faithfully Mrs. O. Jager.

I have also received this letter from Walter:

159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 11-9-44. Dear Folks, Although you may now have found the original copy, I am sending further directions regarding the peanuts. I spent last week-end at Currumbin again, & had my first swim of the season. Fred evidently didn't call, as I left him a note for him. He left a query from Joe concerning a radio, but as my movements are still very doubtful I think it would be foolish for me to still try to get one—thanks all the same, Joe.

It is no surprise to hear that Art's baby is a good kid, for she certainly took the honours the only time I saw her, & quite a good-looking kid too. News of young Robert's recovery from his burn is very good, but I was sorry to hear of the death of Muriel Oone, who was a very solid, friendly sort of lad. The news would come as quite a shock to Flo. Clive will certainly appreciate being able to visit a private home to have a talk.

Dad appears to be taking the tooth-extraction business very slowly, but both his health & appearance will be improved when he can get his new set of "sparklers"; & I am very pleased that he is having the work done, also that Mum's teeth are so satisfactory. As you say, Mum, Christmas is almost on us again, & there is some prospect of the war in Europe being over by then, which will be a big relief. It seems almost incredible that I have been in Queensland 18 months. My chief has been on leave for the last couple of weeks, but is due back this week. There is still plenty of work to keep me busy, but I am not working any overtime now. Cheerio. Wal."

To-day I posted 2 more books to Mrs. Jager yesterday. To-day I wrote a letter to Mrs. Jager & enclosed a copy of "The Socialist 6th of the World" verses.

To-day (Friday) we received this letter & 1 pound from Flo:

"Nyngan Wed., 13-9-44. Dear Mother, Many happy returns of the 17th. I hope you have a happy day on Sunday. Robert says to send you a "kit" for your birthday. Hope you & Dad are well,
also the rest of the gang. We are all ok. My ears are almost right again. It's a month yesterday since the trouble started, so it's just about time. I had my teeth out last Thursday and am happy to know that's another unpleasant job over, although it seems worse thinking about it than having the teeth out.

I thought I told you before that the Callinans went to Sydney. This place would be a bit too hot for her with the reputation she had regarding her treatment of Roy. The policeman has moved in—been there over a week, already his wife & I are good friends. She called here a couple of days after she came, & nearly every day since she is in at least once. In fact they were both here last night with their little girl & stayed for a couple of hours with me. They have a pretty child about 6 months younger than Robert, & they have great fun together with the bike & the car. Mrs. Young wanted me to "show her the town" this afternoon, but as the shops are closed we have postponed it until Friday. They have been stationed 70 miles north of Bourke—only 16 people in the town or village. I suppose I should say to her this seems a fair sized town. No doubt you were surprised to have a visit from Olive one. I certainly was to get his letter & to hear about poor Muriel's death. She would hardly have been 39 I think—a bit too young to die with a growth. I must answer his letter after this. Have you had any news of Dool (Fred) or Pip (Walt) lately? I can quite easily understand how you hated missing that car-ride, Mother, but never mind; travelling won't always be so difficult as it is now. The war news these days is pretty good, so when all this trouble is over there will be more trains & more petrol. Cooks haven't any word yet of when they have to move, so we too must be patient. I would like to be in there.

The garden is a picture just now—has been for weeks past, & every day Mrs. Quinn or the girls take a large bunch of flowers from there. Mrs. Cook is still in Parkes. If we can have a garden almost as good as Cooks I'll be very happy. Those little paper daisies grow out here, Dad. I'll send you one as a sample, & you can see if they are the same as used to grow over in South Aus. in your time. It's just about time I finished up this letter, it's the first, & I have 3 more to write—one to Amy, Olive & Clive, so I say cheerful. Love from Robert & Florence.

Can't see anything here without coupons to send you, Mother, so buy something with the enclosed (£1).

P.S. Mrs. Cook has just arrived home & says that they will move on Saturday, so now I must get busy. Bill intended bringing a visitor from Bourke for the week-end, I must ring & ask him to postpone it until we are settled.
Sep. 19, 1944. Yesterday Mum went to the out-patients' department & consulted Dr. Arnold, who told her that he will probably give her a clearance next April. I got a letter from Mrs. Christina Jager, which follows:

"Laune River, Tasmania, Geoveston Private Mail Bag, Sept. 13, 1944. Mr. Josiah Cocking. Dear comrade,

Four parcels of books arrived safe. Thank you so much. I can assure you they will be used to further the Socialist Cause. Mr. Jager is a good scholar & has many converts to his credit. He, up to the present time, has not been beaten on a Socialist argument. Red Europe is a very reliable proof of what was & what has turned out to be the last parcel of books received, which you have carefully bound."

Tom Mann Hunger & Marxism -Leninism. I will take care of them & use them to the best advantage. I can see you are a sincere Socialist & 100 per cent. for real Democracy, by the careful care you have taken with your Socialist books.

Again thanking you for your kindness to me in helping valuable literature for our cause. Best wishes, Comrade.

Fraternally yours. Christina Jager."

Yesterday was our Charlie's birthday, as he was born at Wallsend N.S.W. on Mon. Sep. 18th, 1905. Mum gave him a wallet with pound note in it, & I gave him 3 copies of paling's Song Books. To-day Walt sent, from Newcastle florists' shop, a box of flowers & ferns to Mum. He must have ordered them from Brisbane.

Following is a letter to Joe & Ivy from Fred:

"N 450817, Pte. F. Cocking 2/4 A.G.H. Redbank, 13 Sep. 1944.

Dear Joe, Ivy, & Kids, I haven't seen Wal since I last wrote home so I haven't asked him about the wireless, but I am going in on Friday & will ask him then. I called at his place last Monday week; after his work, but he wasn't home, so I left a note telling him about it; maybe he has written to you by now about it.

It is just 10 days since I last wrote home, on your birthday it was, & although I intended to I forgot to mention it. Mum's & Chad's are just on due, so wish them the usual for me. Mum told me about Clarice & auntie Violet being sick, but in a more recent letter that I read (one sent to Wal) she said that they were much better. Clarice is my pick of them all, & I do hope by now she is quite O.K. again. I'm glad that you got the glass in & that's it's such a success. I knew that anyone as capable as you wouldn't have any difficulty. Just for curiosity what did they sting you for it?"
To-day I received a pix & another paper—a woman's publica-
tion it was, I can't think of the name. It was sent to
the con. depot. I haven't had the book that Dad sent yet,
but it would seem that there is still a chance that it will
be delivered too. I hope so, anyhow. I have sent 2 or 3
change of address cards to different places, & can think
of no more to do to get it. Art & Phyllis have been &
gone by now, I suppose. I hope they had a good time, & I
know that everyone was glad they were there. How is the
kid? (Doreen). She'd be popular with everyone, I bet.
Is the Water Board's tank finished yet? & is the pressure
in your taps what it should be? I suppose they've rushed
its completion with Summer coming on. I'm still keeping
well. I've had a bit of a cold, but it's practically gone
now. The day before yesterday I went in a staff car with
3 sisters & one of the doctor bosses to Toowoomba (80 m-
iles away) to have a look at a plaster room at the ortho-
paedic hospital there. It was a real nice trip, through pa-
rt of the Darling Downs. I'm supposed to duplicate the
room for the turnout at some future date. I'm pretty well
settled in now, & get on well with everyone. How is ev-
ery one getting along? Has Dad had all his teeth out, &
has Mum her new ones yet? Flo was lucky enough to get
the house next door; she seemed enthusiastic about it when
home. You'll soon be having another exam: don't forget
to pass it & get your picture taken again. I won't start
another sheet. Fred.

Tues. Sep. 26, 1944. Last Thur. I went to Newcastle & got an injec-
tion from Sister Grenell. I tried to drill at the Co-op. store, but could not. I sent a book to Mrs. Jager,
& bought a packet of paper for Mr. Finnemore. I have now
posted 2 packets together to him, & ordered 10 prints of
Florence's house & Canonbar street, Nyngan. To-day I re-
ceived the following letter from Mrs. Jager, also a snap
of her fishing yawl "Parrapa", Lune River, showing portion
of branch creek called Ti-tree Creek; & a portion of Lune
River district, with a part of Jager's fence in the view.

"Lune River, Geeveston private Mail Bag, Tasmania, 22 Sep.
1944. Mr. Josiah Cocking, Dear Friend, Your very inter-
esting of to hand. Yes, thank you, I received Red Europe
3 days after my letter to you. Thanks a million for same.
It would indeed (be) a wonderful piece of work if by any
legal method Red Europe could be reprinted. Mr. Jager was
only speaking of the same thing a while back, & he intends
to approach Mr. Maebun? , our Communist leader in Tasmania,
to see if it could be reprinted. I received all books sent, thank you, & I am very pleased with them. Mr. Jager took 5 of the pamphlets you sent with him to Hobart this morn-
ing. He is going up to put our fishing boat on the slip for painting before the new shell-fish comes in.

Good for Mrs. Cooking! She is one of the real women & mothers; & to my mind no greater compliment can be paid
to a woman. No, I do not think it was because my husband was of German descent that conditions were made hard for
us, for every large family group is so treated in Tasmania.
The fact you may gain or understand us mothers in Tasma-
nea Child & Mother Welfare Center, & a Mrs. Watherwerth? , head of it, is very reliable & sincere worker for our
Cause. She recently visited Canberra with a deputation of
very necessary for mother & child, to wait on the prime
Minister. But to our disgust & amazement, honest-to-goodness
John refused her an interview on so important a matter as
child welfare. One would have thought that even had John
Curtin had to have granted 15 minutes of his lunch-hour
it wouldn't have hurt him, more so in these times when they
are so concerned for an increase in the birth-rate for
Australians. Thank you very much, friend, but I have the
Socialist, Sixth, & Soviet Strength, & "Act Now"-- one of
Dean Johnson's earlier books. I did a lot of writing prior
to this war. I had over 500 pen-friends all over the world,
including Germany, Italy, Japan, Bulgaria, -- in fact all
our big enemy countries as well as our friendly ones. I
found Japanese lovely pen-pals, as I did Chinese, but when
war broke out, of course letters were not permitted to be
sent; & I can assure you I got a fair bit of Socialist lit-
iterature round like that. Then the war came to Communist
papers & books, police searched peoples' homes & ransacked
every corner. When a police officer came to me & said "Have
you got any?" I said "No, not at the moment on me." But
I sent a big lot away by post last week to different
people; & I reminded Mr. Johnson--the trooper-- as soon
as I got a fresh supply of "Act Now" I would send him a
copy, as I thought in our claimed so falsely Democracy
he should read one. By next mail I mailed him my own copy.
He read it; for, some time after, I met him, & he declared
it contained things that, had it not been written by a man
of God, he would not have believed it.
Thank you for the poem; it's very nice & so very true. Why
not get those verses published? I am sure they would go
a long way & do a lot of good. You certainly seem a good
poet. I will enclose a couple of snaps of Lune River & 1
of our fishing boat. My daughter is going to Hobart in the
morning for her holidays, & I have asked her to see if she
can get you a few snaps of Geavenport. Geavenport is not
really a very important town; it's really the Southern
end of that very fine apple land— the Huon district, where apples are carted into the river by the thousands of bushels, & into the bush to rot, while apples still are a luxury to the average Tasmanian child. One friend of mine, 3 miles from here, carted to the tip 4000 cases of some of the finest apples ever grown, for this man has stayed home to produce first-class fruit. At Langley? 25 miles south of Hobart, & 50 miles from here, £ 900 worth of cabbages were given to cows. The growers were not permitted to sell to any civilian. The Government paid for them by the ton & ordered the cattle to be turned into the cabbage-patch. Tons of dairy butter was fed to the pigs because there was not sufficient coupons to buy it. After a few months dairy butter makers ceased making it & fed the new milk warm from just from the cows, while the city was going short of milk, & people horribly short of butter. These are some of the fascist happenings in Tasmania in 1944. I doubt if it could happen in a Fascist country. They, to my mind, are not so Fascist to their own people. However, some day the war will end, but I dread to think who will win the peace. Do you happen to have that book, "Australia Limited"?

I have been told it's a winner for our Cause, but so far I haven't been able to get hold of it. I will now draw this to a close with best wishes to Mrs. Cocking & family.

Your's fraternaly Christina Jager.

Thur. Sep. 28, 1944. Yesterday I received 10 photos of Canonbar Street, Nyngan & Florence's house there—5 of ea each— & this letter from Mr. Finnegore:

"Bogan Street, Nyngan, 23 Sept, Dear Mr. Cocking, Am sending you the balance of the photos required by you. I did not see Mrs. Purdy, but was taking them to Mr. Purdy a couple of days ago, & he said to send them on. I must thank you again for your efforts to obtain photo papers for me. No doubt they are hard to obtain. I am managing, however, to keep all my customers going, & am being asked to take on new ones of other towns around. Strange how one's name gets about without advertising. Mrs. Finnegore is pretty well, except for a cold. The little girl is in Sydney having treatment at the Far West Home at Manly. I am feeling good, but a little tired, working all day & half the night, but all for a good ending. I trust & hope, anyway. Best wishes to you all from the Finnegore family."
THE MODERN BABEL.

Sir—I am an ignorant old navvy, and what I don't know would fill the free library which Newcastle will have when the crows come home; but I have picked up a few pebbles on the shore of the ocean of knowledge, amongst them being the proper way to pronounce the English language. I know the correct sounds of the consonants and vowels, especially the letter o, in words like "so," "go," and "no," in which it has the musical tone of "doo" in the tune "Sol-fah of Miss Glover; so when I sit at night to listen to the radio I am filled with curiosity to know why the managers of broadcasting stations tolerate announcers who persistently, wilfully, and maliciously, corrupt the language. It is bad enough to suffer the moans and groans of crooners and the dying wails of those singers who have unfortunately fallen in love, but it is maddening to endure the linguistic mutilations of those speakers who make the language a babel of mis-pronunciations and mis-ejectations. If some announcers ever say the Lord's Prayer they probably say: "Ah Fathah which art in heaven" (ow as in cow) be Thy name. They kingdom come. They will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Art into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

I would not be surprised to find that the angels are much amused when they overhear it.

Why do these corrupters behave in that ridiculous manner? What has the "o" done that it should be treated as a pariah in the family of vowels? The "o" in words like "so" is very carefully robbed of its dought sound, and is degraded to cow as in "now," while now is transformed to know. This may be due to ignorance, pride, or both, but it is no evidence of superior education. Well educated speakers do not corrupt the language. Churchill, Roosevelt, Curtin and Menzies never say "Here's the news;" they do not call a flower a fish, nor speak of a shower as though they meant the Shah of Persia. Announcers and others should remember that they are, by their verbal antics, corrupting the language of thousands of Australians, and are inaugurating an era in which a Pure Speech Act will be needed to enable us to understand one another.

Australia is destroying its forests, wasting most of its rivers, loosing its Sunday rest, and now is in danger of losing the purity of its language. At present the people of Australia can easily understand each other, but if this stupid process of speech-degradation continues we shall, like the citizens of ancient Babylon, be unable to do so.

"NAVIJO."
he did, but it is a plain navy, & I wanted something with a stripe. Naturally I had to take it after his trouble in getting it, & it is good double weft serge, but don't take it just to oblige me, as I will have no trouble at all in disposing of it. I simply thought I would give you the first option with no coupons. You needn't be concerned about any hassle at Currumbin, Mum; I can assure you there is nothing like that about it. I was glad to hear the good news about Flo. what with her new house, flower garden, & refrigerator; also the end of Mum's visits to the hospital, which was evidently something of an ordeal. It's not easy to write between snatches of conversation with Fred, so will wind up. M.O. £ 5 enclosed. Yours Wal."

This is from Florence:--
"29/9-44. Dear Mother & Dad, This letter is a bit slow, but I am trying to get the routine the way it was previously—by that I mean that I like to get your letter during Bill's week in Bourke, & so if you get this letter next week & then answer it the following, or the end of next will do it will be better. It's pretty good to find some letters in the box the week that I am alone. Perhaps I shouldn't say alone, seeing that I have Robert, but he is either at Mrs. Young's or Mrs. Hazelton's most of the day—stays there for meals occasionally, so he has that roving spirit too, that used to worry his Gumma, in me. Well, Mother, it's good news about the lip; it's fortunate you had it seen to when you did. I saw Mr. Finnemore the other day, Dad, about the photos, & he said he had sent them on the previous day's train. They moved it to another house last week, so they have been pretty busy too. We are very pleased about our move—had everything fixed in a week—& had the Rees family up for tea on Sunday night also Liz-Verle? from over the road. Mrs. Rees was here again yesterday—her usual visit during Bill's week away. Mrs. Young was here too; in fact has been here most of the week while her husband has been over to Cobar. They are moving down to the police station on Monday week. This Monday will be a public holiday here, & all the shops will be closed because of a special children's day being held in the park. It will be mostly for the children, but there will be races etc. for adults, & I think it should be a good turnout. Bill is taking the day off; he is very enthusiastic about it, as the Australian Labor Party is arranging it all. On the 14th October is the Methodist Fair in the town hall, & the men are having a mannequin (hope it's spelt correctly) parade. Bill is being dressed in bridal clothes in one act, & being pushed on the stage in a pram in another—a great big fat baby complete with
bonnet & dummy & all the trimmings(I can just imagine Duffy (Daphne) laughing when she learns this). Well, it should be good,& the people here turn out well to all that's on. I was told of a good thing the other day,Mother,& as "Mortsein" says,"When you're on a good thing," etc., so I'll give you the tip. I'd like to send you a bottle of this polish, but I am afraid it would break, & so I soaked the labels off,& am sending them & the directions--the label to tell you what to get ("No Rub"), & the directions to tell you how good it is, & I have tried it & found it real good. Just follow the directions, especially about the flannel or woolen material for applying, & you will like it too. It's a lot better than polishing in this hot weather. Has Pip (Walter) come home yet? I wouldn't mind if he had time to take a run out here. I haven't much more time to write; Robert is dressed & is getting impatient & dirty, so I had better hurry & get out or I'll have to change him again. Cheerio. Love to the Hilly-Billies & yourselves. From Robert & Florence."

This morning I posted a note to Tribune office re what is meant by "militant verse"; also a paper to Mr. H. Webster. Rain. Mr. Fuller, who lived near us, has died of heart disease at the Mater hospital. His widow is a school-teacher.

Wed. Oct. 4, 1944. To-day we received the following letter card by air mail from Fred:--

"N 450817, Pte. F. Socking 2/4 A.G.H. Redbank, Brisbane Saturday 30 Sep. On Thursday night after I'd had tea with Wal I waited until he had written home, & I have no doubt, he told you about my being crook for a few days from a vaccination. However, I'm full of beans again & have been back on the job again since last Monday. My first day off work was my day for going to Brisbane, but I felt too sleepy & tired, so did nothing but sleep all day-- in fact I never bothered to have anything to eat for 24 hours. Dad should be able to tell you what it feels like, but I think it affected him much more than it did me. I'm sitting in the carpenter's shop to write this-- there are 3 good electric lights, & no piano with the inevitable mug trying to play-- in fact a perfect place to concentrate. I also have for my own use a white enamel buckets & a good hot water supply. I soak my washing in the buckets overnight, ring them next morning, & hang them up in the shop, so I have no bother watching that it doesn't get pinched. The grub here is still the best yet. To-day's meals are typical: bacon & eggs & burgoo for breakfast, roast meat & vegetables with apple pie &
custard for dinner; & rissoles & peas for tea; so you can see that there's not much chance of my going hungry, is there?. It seems from my yarns with Wal that he is likely to be in Brisbane for some time yet; he is being saved for Melbourne, but they are not just ready to start there yet. I wouldn't have minded if it had been me instead of Olvie One. The weather should be much better than it was when I was home last.

I read your last letter to Wal, & was glad to know that Flo's boils were nearly better. The policeman living over the back fence should make her sleep better. She gets bluffed pretty easily, doesn't she?. Dad seems to have been fortunate in his choice of a dentist: she apparently has an awkward job, but is taking it in easy stages so as to cause him the least inconvenience; not like the usual dentist who whips them all out just to get the dough quicker. How are your own new teeth?---still a good fit & causing no trouble, I hope. How is Chip, & Jose & his family?, & is Clarice up & about again? The flowers should be out now & the grass growing too fast, & the trees should have small fruit. Has the wind blown them nearly all off again? Try to watch that Dad doesn't work too hard in the garden. He never knows when he has done enough, does he?. But now his microscope should keep him in the house a bit more. Fred."

Sat. 366X Oct. 7, 1944. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister Grenell in my left arm. I posted a book to Mrs. Jager. I bought 2 small drills in Newcastle, & bought 8 packets of flower seeds to send to Florence. I posted 6 packets to her without a letter. To-day I soldered an earth-wire to my microscope lamp. Yesterday Mum & I mowed the grass at the front & back, & I sowed some onion seeds. To-day I finished writing the following verses:

How To Rob & Fool A Nation.

I. If you would dupe the nations who Are landless, toolless, wealthless too, I'll tell you simply what to do To gain your base objective.

2. Declare to them that they're as free As kookaburras on a tree Who fill the bushland full of glee And merriment infective.

Encourage them to brag about "Their" continent of debt & drought, And eulogise each youthful Scout Who marches in regalia.
Lest wage-slaves should begin to think
Of liberty, encourage drink
Till they in stupefaction sink,
Though wink at spiritless mourners;
Build boozing-shanties in the ruins
To stupefy bucolic clubs
And place enticing, ornate pubs
On ev'ry city corner.

Grant licences to human swine
To dope the people with toxic wine
Lest they, in rebel-groups combine
In village, town, & city.
Be sure to foster ev'ry sort
Of sissy game, or manly sport
On vulgar field or stylish court
Till all become nit-witty.

Make so-called statesmen talk & drink
Where their fraternal glasses clink
While homeless, houseless voters sink
To further degradation;
Give those impostors ample pay
To waste the country's wealth away
While letting social evils stay
To plague the benighted nation.

To still in greater power grow,
Control or own each picture-show
And press, whence floods of falsehoods flow;
Own radio-broadcasters;
Control the churches & the schools,
And use all agencies as tools
To make & keep men abject fools
Who nourish idle masters.

Control & own the money-banks:
Class all the Communists as cranks,
And Socialists as mountebanks
Who'd shout from stage or steeple
That land, like air, should all be free
In ev'ry clime, from sea to sea;
And all a nation's wealth should be
Possessed by honest people.

Encourage ev'ry slave to bet
And hope that he will sometime get
Another's cash, without regret,
And think himself quite clever.
Just follow this time-honoured plan,
Then all you shameless Robber Clan
May rob & fool each working man
And keep him poor for ever.

Thur. Oct. 12, 1944. Payday. This morning I went in & got my usual injection, in right arm, from sister Grenell. I met Mr. Evans there, & Jim & Ethel Cooking in Hunter street. I could not get photo. paper nor films, but was told to come next Saturday morning. I tried to buy a drill at the Civic Tool shop, but could not get the size I want. I went down to Dr. Opitz's consulting place, but Mrs. Giles told me he would not be there this evening. I posted "East Of Suez" to Mr. Jager this morning. Jim brought me from the Coliseum shop to 133 in his car. I have copied the verses on the last page (101) for the Tribune & Common Cause.

Fri. Oct. 13, 1944. To-day Mum received the following Letter from Mrs. Morris:

"56 Chapel Street, Lakemba, 9 Oct. 1944.

My Dear Old Friend, I received your ever-loving letter, & I am glad to hear you dear self was well, but so sorry to hear about your dear old partner. I do hope he will be feeling a bit better. He is like Harry-- sick on & off all the time. What a pity for them, after all the hard work when they were young. But God's will must be done. Of course years are on them, also; we must hope that they will get stronger in the warmer days. I do hope the family are all well. Did Florrie's husband get better in the dryer climate, & is she better herself? Where did Fred go to? It was nice for his brothers to come to see him, also Florrie, & they also would see you all; & how nice to have them all at home.

I do hope the war is soon over. What a long time it takes to get on the right side & win the war. I forgot to ask how Mr. Cooking got on getting his teeth out. You said it was a tuff job for Mr. O. He is a big age--77, but his health may be better when he gets rid of them. You said, Mary, you always had to work hard. So much to do; & we did not have all the easy times when we were young. I always had to work like you, but I was happy. You were also happy when able to. What was there for us, ? God will help us, so we must pray & ask him for his blessing; I can't get on without him. You say, Mary, you are 70, & I am 72. My poor old leg is a bit stronger, so glad to say, & my health is good, thank God. Pa is on the mend I am sure. Maggie was sick for a long time, but she does seem to be getting better. Bill is well. I am glad you saw Art & his wife."

3546
I received the following from Mr. Finnemore:

"Bogan St., Nyngan. Dear Mr. Cocking, Thanks very much for those papers & film received yesterday. Please find the value of same enclosed (7/8') Of course I will still take all you can obtain for me. Since writing to you last time I have moved into a better house with lawns & hedges around it. Although at present wild & neglected at time of writing, it will be very good when fixed up, & I will have a much better dark room etc. Summer is here with us now, as it's been very hot here lately, & no rain for ages, much to the grazier's disgust. Mrs. Finnemore & the kids are well, & we all hope you & yours are likewise. Thanking you for kindness in obtaining papers, Yours sincerely J. Finnemore."

I cashed the postal notes for 7/6 & 2 penny stamps, this evening. I consulted Dr. Spitz & got a certificate for the lodge, & a refill prescription for medicine from him.

Warm weather.

Sat. Oct. 14, 1944. I went to Newcastle this morning & bought a packet of bromide paper for Mr. Finnemore. At the Co-op. store I met Bob Bannister & his wife, Edna, nee Davies, with their young son. I bought a pair of soles & heels & a tube of Maclean's tooth paste. I took Florence's coloured enlargement to Bernard's to buy a frame, but will have to call next Thursday for it. Hot weather.

Sat. Oct. 21, 1944. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. I bought a packet of onion seeds & 2 packets of French beans seeds at Woolworth's. At the Communist bookshop in Newcastle I bought a pamphlet entitled "Marxism & the Individual", 32 pages, by the very reverend Dr. Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury. Price 6d. I also bought a pamphlet called "A Reply To Father Ryan", 32 pages, by L.L. Sharkey, president, Australian Communist Party. Price 4d. The 3rd pamphlet I bought
"Hyngan, 16-10-44. Dear Mother & Dad, Before I start anything else I must say thank you Dad for sending over the flower seeds, but you need not go to all the trouble of walking from the hospital down to the shopping centre to get them, as the shops here have a good supply now, but I did appreciate the thought all the same. It's good to know that you are having good weather over there—it's worse than I ever imagined it could be here, & perhaps you heard an account of the cyclone out this way. Cobar especially has had a bad time; & judging by all the iron that is needed for repairs there, it would seem as though every house was minus its roof. The dust here started on Saturday & it's been pretty thick, too, but to-night it is raining enough to lay the dust, so perhaps we can clean up for the next dust storm. The News said to-night that it had been dusty all day in Sydney too; so it seems that there was plenty to go round. I hope you escaped, anyhow; but, as old "Banj" said—or was it Henry Lawson?—That the country folk have pleasures that the town-folk never know. It seems to me that the only pleasure we get in Summer is cleaning up.

Well, now I think that is enough growling for the present, & I'll tell you about a pleasure that we really did have on Saturday, & that was going to the fair. You remember that I told you about the men dressing up—well, the show was very good. Bill made a very good bride; & later on was dressed as a baby, complete with a huge dummy, & was brought on to the stage in a pram arranged for the occasion. They do things in a big way for their fair; & between the afternoon & evening session they had a poultry tea which included jellies & trifles & all the trimmings. I saw the hall set out, & it looked like as if a banquet was on. They catered for 200.

Well, I am glad that Dad is getting his teeth fixed up, & with his new suit & tie he will look "bonza". Yes, Mother, we received the paper with all the news in it—very sad news about (nurse) Harris. She was one of the finest people I ever knew. Thanks for sending it over; I forgot about it last letter. Mrs. Young moved a week ago down to the police station, but will be up pretty often, I suppose, once she is settled. I went & saw her on Friday, but she still has a lot to do. Mrs. O'Callaghan has a daughter; it will be 2 weeks old on Wednesday. They were delighted about a girl in the family. Poor little Noel.
Mr. Josiah Cooking,
331, Maitland Road,
Mayfield West,
Newcastle, N.S.W.

Dear Mr. Cooking,

Your letter of the 1st October, 1944, requesting that the meaning of 'militant poetry' be clarified, has just been forwarded on to us by the 'Tribune.' Thank you for your interest.

The central theme of the anthology which we are preparing is the democratic struggle of the Australian people against an often inimical physical environment, poverty and injustice. This will embrace all forms of the poetry of protest, and the poetry that celebrates the dignity of the common man and the victories of the people.

In its application to the literary arts the word 'militant' is nowadays generally understood as signifying a close and vital awareness of contemporary realities and an attitude of mind that is aggressively in favour of the continual extension of democracy in all aspects of social life. We can find no single instance in history where democratic and progressive people have ever attempted through the medium of literature 'to incite wage slaves to shoot their masters on sight,' or have desired to do so.

For further information we might refer you to that very brilliant essay 'Poetry Militant' by Mr. Bernard O'Dowd, recently reprinted in his Collected Poems. Our use of 'militant' is identical with that of O'Dowd, who is, you will agree, still forefront in Australian letters.

We shall look forward to hearing from you further.

Yours sincerely,

(Muir Holburn)  
(Marjorie Pizer)
has a pretty rough time, doesn't he? I am glad it wasn't a mastoid. The trip to doctor Watkins won't do any harm anyway, it might rid him of some of his earaches; & speaking from experience I should know how painful that can be. My ears are a lot better. They were giving me a lot of trouble until a week ago, & Bill rang Dubbo to see if I could see a specialist down there, but seeing that it was only Tuesday when he rang, & the doctor was only in the town on Saturdays, I couldn't stand the pain, so went back to the doctor here, & he altered the treatment. Since then I have been much easier, & a boil has come on my shoulder, but they are not nearly so bad "out in the open". I hope Noel is well again by now, & that all the rest of the family are o.k. How is the leg, Mother? Is it right yet? It's time I closed down now. It's pretty cold tonight, & news has run out. Cheerio. Love from us all, Florence.

Art & Phyllis rang last night, & said that Doreen was not well. She is teething. Art wanted someone to go to the lost property office at the Newcastle railway station & ask for a small port that he left in the train when he returned to Sydney last Aug. 31st. So I went in this morning & inquired about it, but was told that it would be taken out at Sydney. If anything is left in a Newcastle-bound train it is sent to Sydney after being in Newcastle 4 days. This afternoon I wrote a note to Art, telling him what I had done. Mum included a Warsaving Certificate for one pound payable in seven years' time, & has taken it to post on her way to a Salvation Army fair in Mayfield. I could not get any paper nor films at Kodak's today. At the Civic tool shop I bought a drill gauge for 5/9. It will hold drills ranging in size from half inch down to 1/16 of an inch. Beautiful weather today.

Mon. Oct. 23, 1944. To-day we received the following letter from Walter:—

#159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 20-10-44.
Dear Folks, Fred has just left me (9-30 p.m.) after spending the evening here with me. We generally play card games or Chinese chequers etc. & have some soft drink & cake when he comes, & he seems to enjoy the break from camp life. Of course during the day he goes to the pictures or otherwise enjoys himself until I knock off.
Very little of importance has happened since I last wrote, hence the delay. Last week-end I went with Reg. David, who is known to ? Jack & Fred, to Scarborough down on the coast of Moreton Bay, & this week-end we intend going to Coolongatta etc. Having read the letters sent from both Mum & Joe, I am able to keep in touch with everything, & it is
good to see that everybody, excepting poor little "Fatty" Noel, is keeping o.k. However, I am pleased to see that he too is back at school, & evidently over the worst of his troubles. That's the stuff, Noel! Work is still very busy & we are interested here in latest developments with the A.W.C., involving the resignation of Theodore & the transfer of Lionel Price to the job of Assistant Director in Melbourne. Hope that the garden is looking as well as ever, & Chip still keeping the lawns in trim. You never told me if those paw-paws ever grew! I sent the material for Dad's suit down, which I hope has safely arrived, & is satisfactory. Please don't worry about the cost of it, as I am very glad of an opportunity to give Dad something which he needs. I am afraid he is generally neglected at birthdays & Christmases, at least by me, but only because I am usually at a loss to know of anything which he could use. So "Many happy returns," & "Merry Christmas" both at once, Dad.

The news of Flo's move to the better house is very welcome, also all the tit-bits about the church fair. That will be real Wild Westerners when I see them again. Thanks also for the cutting regarding Berries. I still haven't decided when to take my leave. Yours Wal."

Wed. Oct. 25, 1944. This is the anniversary of brother Bob's birthday. To-day I received a typed letter from Muir Holburn & Marjorie Fizer re the projected anthology of Australian militant poetry. We also got a letter from Phyllis:

"137 Livingstone Road, Marrickville 23-10-44.
Dear Mum & Dad, Your letter arrived this afternoon together with the War Savings Certificate for Doreen. Many thanks for same. Doreen is indeed a lucky little girl, & if she could I am sure she would say a big thank you to you both. She has quite recovered from her sickness, & is her cheery self again. I think the castor oil did the trick, & only wish that I had given it to her when she first took ill. She has 9 teeth now, which is quite a big jump from the three she had only a few weeks ago.

Regarding Arthur's port, I think he has done everything humanly possible to trace it—but to no avail. This is the whole sad story:—Last Wednesday morning he left home with the typewriter in one hand & his port in the other. The port contained 12 month's written notes belonging to one of the chaps at the University, & which Arthur intended copying word for word. We had on the Tuesday night spent at least 2 hours on them & had got about half way through them. These were also in the port, plus a
a writing-pad. Arthur alighted from the train at Campsie, as the train disappeared from view he realised that he had the typewriter— but no port. He instantly rang Bankstown station, which is the terminus, & asked the guard there if he would mind looking in such & such a compartment & behind such & such a seat where the port. would be found. The guard promised he would, but failed to do so, saying later on that he did not have the time. Arthur then boarded a train bound for town, & there waited until the particular train concerned arrived, but when he explored the compartment the port had gone. He then rang each station along the line, asking if it had been handed in, but with no result. The Lost Property Office was then contacted, & we have been in touch with them regularly. Arthur then wrote out half a dozen notices to the effect that his bag was lost & all that it contained therein, & gave one to each of the boys who lived between Campsie & Bankstown, telling them to tack it in a prominent place on each platform. The loss was then advertised in Saturday's Sydney Morning Herald & in to-day's (I have enclosed the cuttings).

On Saturday evening we went around to Mum's for tea, as it was Doreen's birthday, while we were there the phone rang here about 8 o'clock. Mrs. Rowe answered it, & a man's voice was heard to say that his daughter had found a case on a train, but when he was asked whether we could contact him by phone he rang off. Apparently it was someone having their idea of a joke, as although we waited in all day yesterday hoping to hear again from them, he failed to ring again. He did say, however, that he was ringing from Lidcombe; so last night Arthur went there with about half a dozen notices in his pocket asking the chap to ring again. We haven't heard anything up to the present moment, & I fear we've given up all hope of ever seeing the port or the contents again. Arthur feels very bad about losing the other chap's notes. It was hard enough losing his own. In fact it may make all the difference as to him passing or failing in the exam, which is only about 3 weeks away.

There is one bright spot in the whole thing, however. The lecturer in the subject concerned at the university has promised to lend his notes, which he assures us may be unintelligible, but between us we may be able to fathom it out, & then everything in the garden will be lovely.

I think you will agree that everything possible has been done to regain the property lost; & indeed the saints could do no more.

Apart from all these trials & tribulations we ourselves are keeping well. A few weeks ago I was in bed with a septic throat; Arthur was chief cook, bottle-washer & baby-washer.
for the day. After he had given me my lunch, given Doreen her's, had his own & washed up, the time was 3-30 p.m. It was the one time he was glad that Doreen wasn't a twin. Mum & Dad are enjoying good health, & Dad is looking forward (impatiently) to the long-promised evenings so that he can take Doreen out in her pram for an evening stroll. You mentioned, Mum, that you intended buying a piece of material to make crawlers for Doreen. I would rather you didn't, thanks all the same, as Summer is here & she will soon be wearing her sun suits, of which she has four. Wait until next Winter, & by then Wal will have been down & have given his low boy the promised Spring clean. Then we shall see what we shall see. I must close now. I intended writing a few pages, but have instead written a whole budget. Our fondest love to you all, not forgetting the Bull street-ites. Phyllis.

The advertisements enclosed are as follows:-


Thur. Oct. 26, 1944. I had my injection as usual this morning at the hospital, & bought the following pamphlets at the Communist bookshop:--"The Basic Wage", 12 pages, by Tom Wright. 2d. "Why You Should Join The Communist Party.", 14 pages by Len Donald. 3d. "Dialectical & Historical Materialism". 20 pages by Joseph Stalin. 4d. "Soviet Trade Unions", 8 pages by Doctor Maurice Dobb. I took my suit-stuff to tailor Liebman at Mayfield tram terminus, & he measured me for a suit, which will cost eight guineas & 20 coupons, & will be finished by Christmas. I bought 2 hanks of 4ply twine for Mum. Warm weather. This evening I posted a letter & 3 packets of Velox 116 paper to Mr. Finnemore.

Friday, Oct. 27, 1944. This morning I wrote the following Limerick as a second verse to one published in to-day's "Newcastle Herald":
If your girl friend again becomes gay
And as sweet as the flowers in May,
With her smile most divine, thank B3409,
And order her wedding bouquet!
I will post this to the Manager of Newcastle Flower Shop,
239 Hunter street, Newcastle.
Sat. Oct. 28, 1944. Today I wrote a note to Maix-Holburne about Australian poetry & enclosed "pensioners". I have typed copies of "A Millionaire's Pension", "Anzac Troops", "What Is An Empire?", "The Workers", & "Way Blooms Should Be Audacious"; to send to him later. Yesterday I paid Ted Liebman, the tailor, 1 pound deposit on my next suit. To-day I went to doctor Opitz' place but he did not arrive. film

Wed. Nov. 1, 1944. Last Monday I consulted doctor Opitz about my vertigo. He said that it may wear off. He gave me a certificate for the Gardeners' Lodge. Mum paid me 2 pounds, & still owes £ 5-12-0. To-day we received the following letter from Florence:

"Nyngan 27-10-44. Dear Mother & Dad, How are things? Sorry to hear of Dad's giddy turns. I hope that you have asked the doctor about them, Dad. If not, will you please just to please me? It's a good to hear that everyone else is o.k., & that your leg is improving, Mum. Well, you will be surprised to know that Bill has given in at last & consented to me having a boarder. A young girl (21 the day before she came) has been here with me since Monday, & it's great having company while Bill is away. Her name is Valerie Cole, & she works in a bank here. We get on very well together. She had to stay at the hotel before, & she thinks it is marvellous to be in a home. To-night she brought home about half a dozen packets of seeds—said she would like her own special garden. I went to Young's yesterday afternoon; took Robert to Beverley's 3rd birthday party & he had a real good time. This is his second party now— he went to Barry's in July. When I arrived home Valerie had the hoe & was getting into the garden for her life. She has made a great improvement to the front of the house. We should have had her when— we came—I wouldn't have been half so miserable. Anyhow, I don't think it will last long either, as she has applied some time ago for a transfer. Yes, Mother, I talk to Mrs. Smith although I don't know her really well, but she seems very nice—a bit reserved, perhaps, but she is certainly a lot better than the woman who lived here before us.

We have very good neighbors now. Mrs. Hampton & I are good friends (our old place). She is only very young & has 3 kiddies. She had been pretty ill with kidney trouble when she moved in, & doesn't seem really well now.
She has had kidney trouble since she was 12. It seems as though you are getting in early with your Christmas cleaning, or is it late Spring? I hope we can get home at Christmas; the weeks will soon go by. The trains are the great problem these days. Sorry to hear that poor little Doreen is not well. Let me know when you write, how she is now, will you? Yes, you told me about Hazel Sheldon's baby; it must have been pretty horrible for her. No, Mrs. O'Callaghan didn't leave her boy & go to hospital. Her baby was born at home, & she had a woman in to mind the place. The woman is still there. Mrs O-- doesn't look well at all. Don't be too long in answering; I would like to know about Dad. This idea of us having a boarder doesn't mean that you can't come over when you like; we still have room. Cheerio. She is home now so must finish up. She is a long tongue, & I can't talk & write too. Anyhow news is short. Good night. Write soon. Love, Florence.

Thur. Nov. 2, 1944. This morning I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. At the Communists' hall I bought the following pamphlets:-

"An Introduction To Marxist political Economy", 22 pages.
"Work Among Women", 13 pages by J. B. Miles.
"Mrs. Rosamond was here to day with Ivy & Joyce, the daughter of Jim Rosamond. Frank Terry-- Daisy Rosamond's husband came later & too Mrs. Rosamond up to Nabiac to visit Daisy. Joyce works at Stevenson's shop in Mayfield.

The priest that I met at the waiting room of Dr. Oppitz sent me the following pamphlets from the monastery, Mayfield:
"The Fight For Red Trade Unions," 32 pages by Ralph Whittaker
"Red Glows The Dawn," 37 pages by Michael Lamb

Sun. Nov. 5, 1944. Last Friday I went to Newcastle & consulted a doctor. He gave me a card to get a blood-test at 10 o'clock to-morrow. I bought "The Constitution Of the Communist Party" at their bookshop in Hunter St., for 3d. Mrs. Longworth was holidaying last Thursday, so I couldn't make an impression for my new teeth until next Thursday.

Mon. Nov. 6, 1944. This morning I went to Newcastle & had some blood taken for a test. I bought a copy of "Marxism & the Individual", by Hewlett Johnson. 6d. for Benny Broadhead. To-day we had this letter from Walt:-
159 Gregory Terrace 3-l1-44. Dear Folks,
It is a fortnight since I wrote, & as on that occasion Fred has just left me. He & I had dinner together & have been talking here since. I gave him Dad's last letter to read, & he was surprised to see that Mum was expecting him to write, because he was waiting for a letter himself. I have been to Redbank Hospital a couple of times recently (including yesterday) & have called on Fred at his shop. Dad's letter was full of interest, & I was pleased to know that the suitings was o.k.; also glad to see the snaps of Nyngan. I can't imagine how you were able to give me the 2 prints in these difficult times; so let me know if you haven't got copies yourself—in which case I'll return them. There has been very little of particular interest happen here since my last letter. Things are still as busy as ever. Am able to enjoy a game of tennis every Saturday afternoon; & the week-end before last I went to Southport for a swim. pleased to see that you are all keeping well. I will write longer next time. Cheerio.

Wed. Nov. 8, 1944. This morning Mum went to Newcastle to buy some clothes for herself. The following letter came from Mrs Morris:—

"56 Chapel St., Lakeemba 6 Nov. 1944. Dear Mary. Just a few lines to say I received your ever loving letter. Although we have not much to write about I love to hear from you. I do hope your dear partner is feeling much better. Did he finish getting his teeth out? they always seem to be a trouble. I hope you are well; also all the family. Pa is well; also myself, so glad to say. My poor old leg gets very tired these hot days; but never mind, while I can get around I am very lucky indeed. Maggie & Bill have been up at Lismore for their holidays. Maggie was not well for some time. She does seem as though the change will do her good. Bill is well. Our lad is still away. Like yourself, we do wish the war was over & the boys home. How is Florrie? Did her boil trouble clear up? They are such sore things. So pleased her husband is feeling so much better. I had Eva & the 2 girls down for the week-end; it was lovely for her to be able to come & see us. The girls are growing. Dorrie has one boy; she lives at New Lambton; she is not very well. So now, my dear old pal, I must close. Best love to your dear self, & remember us to all. From your ever-loving old pal E. Morris."

This afternoon I wrote a letter to Mrs. Jager, & prepared the following verses to send to Muir Holburn, Melbourne:—

Fred the following telegram to-day:
"Wednesday first division no car, Fred. 3-23 W."

My left shin is sore again, so I have fomented it & put a plain bandage on. Cold westerly wind.

Fri. Nov. 10, 1944. Fred came home about 5 o'clock on Thursday morning. He is well, & has 24 days leave of absence. Then he has to return to Brisbane & Redbank. Later he expects to move to some other place, possibly India. I got my usual injection in my right arm from sister Gr nell. At Tighes Hill I had an impression taken by Mrs Longworth for my new teeth. In the evening I went down to Opitz's waiting room, but he did not come. That was yesterday. Yesterday morning I got the following letter from Mr. Finnemore:
"Bogam St., Nyngan. Nov. 5.
Dear Mr. Cocking, Many thanks for the papers sent on, & am very grateful to you for your continual attempts in obtaining papers. It is certainly a trial in obtaining enough materials to carry on. Yes, certainly, buy all the enlarging paper you can; it does not matter what size is, but the bigger they are the better I shall be pleased. With regard to the half plates, I can now obtain enough for my requirements, but cannot say the same for colour films. I was lucky enough recently to obtain those chemicals you tried to get for me in Newcastle. Do you ever do any photo work yourself these days?
The weather here is getting rather trying now with the temperature climbing etc. Some nights I feel like giving it all up, especially when it's hot, & one puts water out to cool, only to get dust blown in just when you are ready to use it. Am enclosing postal note (5/6) to cover cost of papers. And again thanking you for your kindness in getting them for me, Yours sincerely J. Finnemore."

Sat. Nov. 11, 1944. I went to Newcastle yesterday after I had been to Mrs. Longworth. She tried on my new top teeth & told me to come back next Tuesday. At the hospital doctor Cruse told me that my blood test showed that I had gone back a little, & that he would raise my injections of liver extract to 2 cc for 2 months, & that...
he thought my dizziness would be cured. I bought a "Wide World Magazine" for May, 1944 at Wilk's shop, Mayfair West for 1/6. Fred has gone out to order paint for our house. I bought a packet of 116 paper for Mr. Finnemore yesterday.

Mon. Nov. 13, 1944. This morning I posted a "Sun" paper to Harry Webster, & Mum has taken a packet of paper & a roll to post to Mr. Finnemore. I planted out about 100 onions this morning. Fred is putting fly-wire on our doors & windows.

Tues. Nov. 14, 1944. This morning I went to Mrs. Longworth & she took an impression on my lower teeth. I bought 2 ounces of ammonio-citrate of iron for 1/6 at Stevenson's shop. I tried to buy "The March Of the Godless," a pamphlet by Robert Simpson, but could not. Hot weather. Charlie bought a new electric switch, & is putting it on. Fred is painting in the front.

Fri. Nov. 17, 1944. Yesterday I got my usual injection in my left arm from Sister Grenell, but she gave me 4 cc's instead of the usual 2 cc's. I bought a book entitled "Zobe" for 2/6. It consists of 141 pages by David Simpson. He contends that no man nor body of men can bring peace & prosperity to the earth, except Jesus, the Christ. He argues that divine revelation reveals that God has a plan which is gradually being applied to world affairs, & that that plan will be in full operation when Jesus returns & destroys all of his enemies. It seems very strange to me that Jesus will destroy sinners whom he came to save. I think that it would be far better to educate & train sinful people to be wise & good instead of suddenly becoming a follower of Hitler & Mussolini. I think David Simpson is mistaken, for Jesus told the ancient pete to "Put up the sword," & that those who take the sword shall perish with the sword. The book is a kind of religious lie, for it admits that its characters are fictitious.

We have received the following letter from Florence:

"Box 15 Nyngan, 13 -11 -44. Dear Folks, Well, it's good to know that everything in the garden is lovely. & that Dad has found the cause of his trouble. I hope he is o.k. again now, & that everyone else is well. Bill & I are all right, but Robert hasn't b. been so good. He has had a very painful eye, due to
a sty becoming infected, but it is almost right again now after a fortnight. The flies don't seem any more numerous here than there, but they are more dangerous.

How is the weather here? The dust here has been blowing for days here; & yesterday & last night were terribly hot. Everyone in the town, it seems, was tired to-day. I couldn't sleep until after 3 a.m. until I got up & had a cold shower.

Today has been dusty, & it's much cooler tonight.

It would be great if we had rain—we haven't had any for months. Despite the drought our garden is coming on pretty well. Valerie rushes to the hose as soon as she comes home in the afternoons. She has her own little plot & seed-boxes & is very proud of them. WE have most of the zinnias & marigolds up & coming on, Dad (remember the seeds you sent) & are waiting until they grow a bit to transplant them to the front garden.

Will you thank Mrs. Murphy, Mother, for the recipes she sent for the ice-cream? I have already made it & it turned out pretty well. Yes, you told me about Art's bad luck—I hope he is able to borrow the notes, or he will be a sad lad. It's good to know that Doreen is well again.

You will laugh when I tell you this—Robert was asking me this afternoon if he could have a party for his birthday. I said yes, he could; so we went on deciding who we would like to come. When we came to the end of the list he said "and Jimmy Cookun".

I afterwards found out that he meant Jim.

He says the most unexpected things at times, & is often talking about his trip over there. It's only 6 weeks to-day till Christmas, & we shall be there the week before if we come. I mean Robert & I will be there before Bill leaves Bourke on 24th, so we'll arrive on Christmas Day.

Well, there isn't much news, & I am pretty sleepy, so I'll say cheerio till next time. Love from us all, Florence.

P.S. Bill says to tell you, "Don't eat all the Christmas puddin' before he arrives."

To-day I received this note from Ted. Liebman: "Please call for fitting by return."


Mon. Nov. 20, 1944. This morning I posted "Zobe," by David Simpson, to Bill Purdy, & a Sun to Harry Webster. My left leg is very sore. I have received the following letter from Mrs. G. Jager:

"Lune River, Geesestone Private Mail Bag, Nov. 15, 1944.

My Dear Friend, Your letter of 8th to hand. Thank you for writing. I am sorry I did not acknowledge your letter &
have been ill with the flu. I got a severe attack & was in bed for a fortnight. Then my doctor ordered me away for a month, but I only stayed away 3 weeks; & oh dear! I must apologise to my friends, for I did neglect my pals. But I feel sure they will forgive me. How interesting that priest's interest in H. Johnson's "Socialist Sixth". Now wonder Hewlett Johnson's faith was broken after going into Russian affairs. Joseph Stalin put Christ in action. He did not preach him & keep his work & demands from acting. He sees God's earth was used for God's people, or the part that was entrusted to his care. Darwin has been proved to be right. God exists by man's mind to make him. Man made God, not God man. Man evolved from a one-celled being, or thing. I would very much like to have a conversation or correspondence with the priest. If our world to-day claim to be Christian—well it's time we dropped it & adopted some sane logic. If we can call ourselves Christians, well, I am thankful I am an agnostic.

When we look at the destruction, murder, & crime committed, & blessed at the font, parsons & priests alike bless war & warmongers. Church & religion has kept the world back centuries, & has kept people back. I consider the only God there is is love, & be kind & do good, & take the Golden rule, & you have Christian action—Christ's very own law. My dear friend, no law that can feed & clothe & keep in decent circumstances can be wrong; a living for all. Hewlett Johnson saw that the so-called professors—parsons & priests—are a set of profound hypocrites & believe in God only when & where it suits them.

I am 55, & have met several ministers, & so far I have met religious ones, but not Christians or Christ's obedient servants.

Fancy Christ blessing a man who kills his brother-workers to protect the rich man's property & make gold & millions for him. Christ was dead against rich men; so where do we come to? Yes, it's easy to understand; the church is against Russia because parsons have to work their allotted time. There has been so much printed against Russia for with communism coming into power the church can see an end to itself. I think myself that we have been kept in submission by church & parson long enough, for their own personal gain, & not a god at all. I do not believe in a personal God. I believe places & things evolve. Sun, rain, & air will produce life. Life came from a one-cell organism & grew from that to man. The olden day prophets of learning made god to frighten the less-educated, & keep them in submission by fear. We hear of our soul, but in what locality in the body body...
does it dwell? If it is in the body what form does it take on? & what does it live on? Does it live from substances taken in the body? If so, how can it survive after death? & what power has it to propel itself to the garden of life?. But of course there are always two sides of any argument.

Yes, thank you Pal, I take the Tribune. Yes, I can buy Communist literature in Tasmania or Hobart. The Communist party has rooms where they hold meetings every week; but there is quite a lot we cannot get here. If you ever come across "What You Want To Know About Russia," I wouldn't mind a copy. I have been told a firm in Launceston prints a lot of Southern snaps of Ham ? Geevesto ? & surrounding districts. I am going up there for a few days next week to have my eyes tested, as they are becoming very weak & I'll have to wear spectacles.

Well, my friend, thank you once again for all you have done to help me. I'll do all in my power to further the Social Cause in all places I visit. Hoping yourself & family are well, as mine are, & myself recovering, Yours fraternally Christina Jager.

Monday continued: The sky in the west is full of smoke & red dust which completely hides the sun. The weather is hot. Fred is painting the western side of our house.

Tues. Nov. 21, 1944. To-day I wrote a 5 page letter to Mrs. C. Jager. The weather has become cool & the dust & smoke have been blown away. A little rain fell this morning. Fred is painting th backmof our house.

Wed. Nov. 22, 1944. This afternoon I went to Mrs. Longworth & she disinfected my gum & told me to call to-morrow. Fred is painting still, but has given the outside of the house one coat. To day we received this letter from Walter:

"159 Gregory Terrace, 20-11-44. Dear Folks, I am just having an easy night at home in my room (which Fred knows so well) after a very hot day here, which has had us all "half dead." However, it is now cooling off & we are expecting a very welcome storm. Evidently Fred arrived home safely, & I hope he too is taking things easy & is thoroughly enjoying himself instead of spending too much of his time working about the house etc. The others of us can do that. I have been making inquiries for accommodation down South for my holidays, but apart from reckoning on being home on Christmas Day I have no further plans made. Last week I went on inspection to Oakey for a couple of days.
Oakey is 16 miles past Toowoomba, & I was very pleased to be able to get a glimpse of Toowoomba, which fully lives up to its glowing reputation, & stands at a height of 2800 feet at the top of a steep climb from the valley below. I only wish I had been able to spend more time there, so I suppose I had better make more inspections. Unfortunately Oakey is a dump of a place, & evidently came into existence as a rail centre for the surrounding wheat-growing districts. My impression of Oakey are probably complimentary when compared with those of the young air-force chaps who are stationed at the new aerodrome there, but it is in fact our biggest single project, our mechanical work being worth nearly £20,000. I probably struck it at its worst, because although icy cold in the winter, these tableland areas are just as hot in the summer.

I notice that at last Dad has been able to get his impression taken for his teeth, & the sooner the whole of that job is cleaned up the better. Let's hope he will be quite o.k.a. by Christmas. I am also hoping that Jack, Glad, Flo & Bill, also all the kids, will be able to come up for Christmas, it being quite a time now since I have seen them. I take it for granted that Art & Phil will be there, otherwise I'll see them in Sydney. Unfortunately there will be little other attractions about Christmas this year, there being practically no presents available, no facilities for travel, & "the Christmas spirit" too hard to cultivate under present conditions. Still, winging won't help things along, so we'll certainly make the best of it, & I daresay there'll be something in the stockings if it's only a few spuds. Cheerio for now. Wal.

Mon. Nov. 27, 1944. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell; I bought 2 pamphlets—"Stop This Fascist Propaganda," & 16 pages by Ralph Gibson (4d); & "Stalin the Man," 9 pages by S. Purdy, 2d.

I went to Mrs. Longworth, who syringed my sore gum to make the blood return to it. On Friday I went to the Co-op. store & got our share book. I went to Longworth's again & Mrs. Longworth syringed the gum again. This morning Mum has gone to the Co-op. store to get a missing plate. I received the following letter this morning from Muir Holburn:

"Australian poetry, 0/o The Guardian, 129 Elizabeth St., Melbourne, C.1, Vic. 24th November 1944.

Mr. Josiah Cocking, 331 Maitland Road, Mayfield West, Newcastle, N.S.W. Dear Friend, Many thanks for your 2 letters & for the enclosed poems all of which have arrived safely. I feel that it will be possible for us to make a selection from those poems which you have already sent us, but that if you have any others that you would particularly like to su-"
bmit for consideration, we should be very pleased to receive them.
We hope to have the manuscript of our anthology completed in about 2 months, but research into the files of old journals such as the Tocsin & the Bulletin in the eighteen nineties involves a considerable amount of time & energy. It is hoped too that the book will be on sale to the public for about three or four shillings, no more, so that it will remain within the purchasing range of the majority of the people. Yours fraternally, Muir Holburn Marjorie Fizer."

Wed. Nov. 29, 1944. To day Mum took off the old bandage because my left shin is sore, & she put on half of a bandage. Fred has to return to Brisbane or Redbank. He will leave home next Sunday.

To-day we received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 27-11-44. Dear Mother & Dad, We were pleased to have your letter & to know that Dool (Fred) was home again, but you didn't say for how long. When I got the news I very much tempted to go down & ring up & ask him to come out here for a while, but I thought he would be home for such a short time I had better not try to rob you of his company, & it's not very pleasant out here at this time of the year. We had a letter from Phyllis a couple of days before yours, & she too was complaining about the heat & dust; so it must be pretty general.
The last few days have been very pleasant, though, much cooler & no dust, due probably to the fact that we had a thunderstorm, very little rain, though, only 14 points, but it was a great relief to hear it patterning on the roof. Hope Dad is feeling better now, & that all the rest are O.K. I told you I would be home before Bill, but I am not quite sure of that yet; it depends a lot on the train service then. It will be much easier if I wait; but the question is whether I will get room on the train if I do. So don't make up your mind until you see us.
Bill says "Thank you, Dad, for the books you have sent over recently". But he hasn't read them yet. He has been pretty busy, & he will when he gets a chance. I hope the teeth are all right. I suppose, Dad, you will find it pretty hard to get used to them at first, but they will certainly be an improvement on the old ones. I am afraid that I may have to come over without mine. The dentist here thinks that I shouldn't get them before Christmas, but likes people to wait 6 months instead of three; but I don't think that will prevent me from going home. If I look an old granny I can't be worried. Despite the drought our little garden is coming on.
119.

Well, but we don't spare the hose & spoil the garden. Good vegetables are so scarce that I will be glad when we can rely on our little plot. Well, news is scarce; but Mother says she doesn't mind as long as we write & tell her we are all right— & we are all that at present. I have no pain in my ears nor my back now; I feel better than I have for months, & Bill is well, & so is Robert; so we haven't any complaints. Cheerio. Our love to all including the hill-billies—.

Florence."

Mon. Nov. 4, 1944. Fred left for Brisbane yesterday afternoon. Jose took him in his car to Newcastle. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. I bought a packet of velox paper at Kodak's shop. I went to Mrs. Longworth, who put my top teeth in, but as my gum is still sore she took them out. I have to return next Thursday for them. I bought a copy of the song, "Beyond The Sunset" & gave it to Jose.

Last Saturday I voted, for the first time, for candidates for election to the greater Newcastle council. I also voted against allowing the council's parks to be used for sports on Sundays. Mr. Purdue & Mr. Stevenson were elected for the North Ward, & there was a majority of votes against Sunday sports. To-day I have copied the following for Muir Holburn:-

What Socialism Is Not; What Is Socialism; What Is Capitalism; Be Extreme; Sleep On & Take Your Rest; The Infernal Sack; Foolish Man; New Year's Nonsense; Six Hours; We'll Take Our Own Again; Let Old Craft Unions Be Forgot; The Soldier's Lament; The Wage-Slave's Life; To Social Parasites; A Shirkers Life; Empire Day; Do You Know ?; How To Rob & Fool A Nation; I Wonder.

Thur. Dec. 7, 1944. This morning I got an injection from sister Grenell. I paid £2-12-0 to the Colonial Mutual Life Insurance company for Fred. I did not call on Mrs. Longworth, as my gum is still sore. This evening I got a certificate for the Gardeners' Lodge from doctor Opitz. I have got the verses named above ready to post to-morrow with a note to Muir Holburn & Marjorie Pizer. Also a film that I bought to-day, & the packet of paper that I bought before for Mr. Finnemore. The film cost 2/1, & the paper 1/9. Lovely weather. Our peaches are all falling off the trees through the drought, but the nectarines & mulberries are staying on.

Yesterday we got this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 4-12-44. Dear Folks,

Well, the same old room is having the Brisbane contingent
of the Cocking family again, for Fred called on me this afternoon & is to stay the night here with me. He is looking very fit & well & seems to have enjoyed his stay at home better this time. As it happened, we were both travelling last night, because I only arrived back from Bundaberg at 7 o'clock this morning after having spent since last Thursday up there. I am still happy when able to go to Bundaberg, because it is possibly the most attractive town in Queensland nowadays. Actually I gave myself the week-end off, because after spending the whole of Friday which was a very wet day, about the drome, I relaxed & enjoyed things including a swim down at Bergara, the coastal resort. Nothing exciting has happened here in Brisbane of late, & I haven't yet made arrangements to go home, but expect to do so to-morrow. It is possible that I will leave here on the 23rd, but things are still rather in the air. Perhaps you could ring Johnny Rose & tell him that that if he can get a booking at "Strathavon", Wyong, after Christmas, that I will be in on it with him. I fell on my feet to-day — a girl at the office had a dozen golf balls sent her from the States, & she let me have the lot for the price of the customs duty — just 15/-.

You've no idea how domesticated I'm getting; I have made a bookshelf for my room & painted it, & have also started to put some pictures on the walls. Fred is due to go out to his job again to-morrow, & appears to have developed into a seasoned & nonchalent traveller, which is very different from the Fred of 10 years or less ago. Possibly I will have time to write again before coming home. Cheerio for now. Wal.

Friday Dec. 15, 1944. Yesterday morning I went to the hospital & got an injection in my left arm from Sister Grenell. I have to see the hospital doctor again on the 6th of next Jan. about my dose of liver extract. At Kodaks I bought a 116 film (2/1); & at Selfridge's I bought a 9d. picture book which Mum is to give to Boreen. Bill Purdy spoke over the telephone from Nyngan to Mum last night about visiting us with Florence & Robert. Yesterday afternoon I visited Mrs. Longworth, but as my gum is still sore & swollen she could not put my top teeth in. I took the following letter up to Ivy late in the afternoon, & she cut my hair. It is from Florence:

"Nyngan, 11-12-44. Dear Mother & Dad, We were pleased to hear from you again, even though, as you say, your letter was not cheerful; but at least we know that you are both fairly well, & that Dad hasn't been having his dizzy turns. That's something to be glad about, Min. Anyhow, I hope by this time that you are feeling happier again & have quite
We had a fright last Saturday. I took Robert to a birthday party in the afternoon, & he had a convulsion while we were there. The party was at the police station (Freeman's), so we were able to get the doctor straight away. He took us up to the hospital straight away, & Robert stayed there overnight. He is not too bad now, but told Bill he had eaten some grapes over at Hazelton's; & Mrs. Hazelton told me the grapes are just ripening; so we think that was the cause of the trouble. He hasn't been quite so well as usual for some time past.

We find it hard to get him to eat, & have asked both doctors & the can't find anything wrong. So we have come to the conclusion that it must be the weather that causes him to eat so little. I hope our few days over there helps him a bit.

While I am on the subject of going over there, Mother, I must tell you not to worry about the meat problem. Bill has ordered 2 fowls & a turkey, & we are quite sure about the fowls, but not quite sure about the turkeys. Valerie has been trying during the last few weeks to get one for us to take over, but has had no luck.

Do you want me to cook the poultry & take it over? If not we can have it frozen & sent. I think this is the best & safest way, but it's for you to decide, & I know how you like an old-fashioned hot dinner on Christmas Day.

I do hope we can get the turkey; it should get you out of all your difficulty. I had a letter from Olive Worley during the week, & she said that she had spent the week-end up there with Ivy & Jose, & what a good time she had had; but you didn't mention it. Bill has just come in, & he says that he will have to know before he goes to Bourke on Monday about the poultry, so that it can be sent to the freezing works; so we will be phoning you some night about it: don't get a shock when we do.

Will you ask Ivy if she will buy Robert's Christmas toys for us? I suppose she will gasp & think it is a pretty tall order, & I wouldn't ask her if I could get it here & we were here for Christmas Day. We wanted to buy him a koala bear, but can't. He says he wants a doll; & seeing that it's too silly altogether to get that for him, I thought the bear the next best thing. We have sent away & can't get it; so if Ivy sees a bear that is worth the money (£ 1), will she get it for me? or a wheel-barrow next preference? (Bill & Valerie are talking just to worry me, & don't know what I am talking about) & if she can't get either, will you ask her just to get several smaller things so that he will know Santa has visited him. Tell her not to worry, because whatever she can buy will be better than I can get here. He has, besides his car & bike, an elephant, a horse, 2 rabbits, a dog, a boat, & several books: so toys like cars, so things like that should interest him.
He doesn't play with his felt toys at all; perhaps he may with a bear, though. Anyhow, I'll be really pleased if she can get something for him; but tell her not to worry—anything will make him happy. That phone call will probably be on Thursday night. Cheerio. Hope that you are well. Our love—Florence." (One pound was enclosed.)

My Journey.

I shall go to meet my Mother
And my Sister, Son, & Brother
Who have vanished in the distance
Where vast multitudes have gone;
For I know by intuition,
Revelation, & tradition
That they all shall have existence
Whilst each eon passes on.

When my journey has been taken
I believe I shall awaken
In a Spirit World of wonders
More mysterious than this,
And, continually learning,
I shall be for ages yearning
To avoid all single blunders
And enjoy more perfect bliss.

There, in time & space unbounded,
I shall find myself surrounded
By my beloved ones & relations
Who have come from Earth afar
To reside in shining mansions
And explore the vast expansions
Of God's limitless creations
Where the happy angels are.

There, with wisdom much augmented,
Many incidents lamented
As calamities, distressing,
Which were never understood
When in ignorance benighted,
I shall see when clearer-sighted,
Were instead my greatest blessings
And designed to do me good!

I shall comprehend the reason
Why in each succeeding season
Each to-day & each to-morrow
Yesterday (Thursday) I brought home my suit that was made of the stuff that Walter gave me. I paid Mr. Ted Liebman, the tailor at Mayfield, seven pounds eight shillings, the balance due of £8-8-0. The suit fits me nicely. To-day Ivy has been shopping for Florence. My left leg is still sore.

Fri. Dec. 22, 1944. Last Friday Art, Phyllis & Dorcen came from Sydney; they will return next Friday. *Yesterday we got the following letter from Fred :-

"N450 B17, Pte. F. Cooling, 2/4 A.G.H. Australia. Sunday 17 Dec. 1944. I was lucky coming up here, as there were only 2 of us in the train compartment until we got to Casino for breakfast, so I slept very nearly as well as I'd been at home in bed. The train got in at about 11 o'clock in the morning, so I went & saw Wal that afternoon & stayed at his place for the night. I went in again & saw him last Saturday, & left my watch with him to be repaired. Chip told me that the movement was loose, & I think this was the trouble as when I went to wind it up I had to give it a few turns back ward first before it would wind up. Wal has a friend, a watchmaker, so I left it with him.

Yesterday I asked my mate in the shop to call on him, but, although the watch was finished, Wal wouldn't or didn't pass it to him. I forgot all about it or otherwise I would have given him a note. I suppose the reason why it seems so important to me is that I'm a patient in the 128 A.G.H., but why I can't understand, because it's only a trivial thing that's wrong. The first diagnosis was shingles, the next herpes. Anyhow it's just a series of little water blisters forming a patch, no bigger than the size of a wooden match box, on my leg. I've been in now for four days & it's practically all gone now. In about one or 2 days I should be discharged. I want to be before Friday, anyhow, because Wal's holidays start then, & I want to see him before he leaves for home. He should be able to cover a fair bit of ground in 26 days, shouldn't he?

As proof that there's practically nothing the matter with me, last Friday the Red Cross took a bus load of us to the pictures in Ipswich; & I could have gone to a picnic at Redcliffe to-day if I'd wanted to, but picnics & mucking about never appealed to me.

Has Johnno made up his mind to be home for Christmas yet? Flo & Art & Phyllis should all be home when Wal gets there; so it looks as if the house will be full for that week-end. It doesn't seem that I'll ever be able to get a card to send this time, as I've heard some of the fellows saying how hard they are to get. I don't want to go into town to see Walt while I'm still a patient, because, so that none of us can get drunk or in bother while out, we are given
a white shirt & strides that a coolie wouldn't wear, a real bright blue just like dungarees, & hotels are forbidden to serve anyone wearing them.

You know that I don't kid myself, nor am I very fussy how I look, but these things are terrible. If I'm not discharged before Friday, though, I'll just have to pocket my pride & go, dungarees & all. Have Dad's gums healed sufficiently for him to get his teeth in yet? & if so, how much trouble are you having with him, both to understand what he says & to restrain him from taking them out?

While I was away one of the fellows working with me wanted to learn how to sharpen saws, so he had a go at the lot of them. Chip will be able to understand what sort of a job I had to make them cut again. This was about all I did before going into hospital, so you can see that for the last month or so I haven't done anything hardly. This seems about all now. Have a good time for Christmas. F Fred."

The following letter also came from Walter:--

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 18-12-44. Dear Folks,
  we have been having some pretty hot weather up here, though probably no hotter than you have had. When I come home at night I change into shorts, which are much more comfortable. Fred didn't come into town last Saturday, but he sent word to say that he was getting treatment for hives or some sort of heat rash on one of his legs, & that he would see me this week. It is evidently not serious, as he is still on the job each day. This will be my last letter before seeing you—— as things stand at present I am intending to catch the 11-10 train next Friday, which will get me to Waratah early on Saturday morning. However, priority for annual leave is very poor, & if I fail to get this train I'll wire you. In any case, don't go to any bother, about meeting the train, because I'll be able to pick my luggage up later in the day at the station. I am disappointed in not being able to buy anything here even worth bringing home as presents. but of course you'll understand.

Yesterday I spent down at Bishop Island with a crowd from the office, on a very nice boat, & had a really good day. but have got a bit of a red face & sore back to-day. Glad to know you are all well. Cheerio till the week-end. Wal."

Art posted 2 films to Mr. Finnemore yesterday. They cost 2/1 each. Yesterday I got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. I paid 2/3 for a 9/64 drill at the Civic bike accessories shop. I did not go to Mrs Longworth as my
gum is still too sore to have my top teeth put in. Last evening I went down to doctor Opitz's consulting room, but he did not come. This evening I went again & got a certificate from him for the lodge. My dizziness has gone. I have to go to the hospital on the 6th of January, but not next Thursday.

Christmas Day, 1944. Yesterday Bill, Florence & Robert came from Nyngan, all looking well. John Rose was here yesterday & gave us some music on the piano. Phyllis & Charlie & Bill also played & sang. Mum received the following sad letter from poor Mrs. Elia Morris:

"140 William Street, Earlwood. 21-12-44. My Dear Old Pal, Well, I can't write any news to you as I am heart broken. My dear old partner passed on on the 7th of this month, & my word it is very hard when it comes & you are left. We were very fond of each other; & since I met this accident I understood what to do for me. He was really very good to me, & he was quite ready to go & take the long rest God had prepared for him. I am with Maggie & Will; they are very good to me. Maggie is not very well, & I am only fair. I do try to settle down & wait for the time when God will join us together in the Home above where there will be no parting & no more sorrow. I will now close, trusting you are all well & your dear husband much better. So wishing you all the best, From your old friend E. Morris."

This morning I found that I had received a new "Mentmore" fountain pen from Robert, & a packet of lollies from Ivy.

Wed. Dec. 27, 1944. To-day I received the following letter & postal note for 8/- from Mr. Finnemore:

"Bogan St., Nyngan. 21 Dec. 1944. Dear Mr. Cocking, In wishing you & yours the season's greetings, I do so from the bottom of my heart, as there are not many people who would take the trouble to try & obtain photo items for anyone else, like yourself. The film you sent was like manna from Heaven, & got me out of a bad hole recently. Am enclosing payment for it & the papers previously sent. Nyngan has been enjoying beautiful weather of late; dry windy days with a week-end special every Sunday in the shape of a dust storm, which, as you can guess, makes the women folk real happy, especially as far as washing the clothes is concerned. Also you can imagine how helpful it is for photo work. Still, I guess it will rain some day if we can wait long enough for it. So again many many thanks for the material sent. Best wishes from J. Finnemore."
Mon. Jan. 1, 1945. Last Thursday I went to Mrs. Longworth's place & found that she was ill. As my gum was swollen she could not have fitted my teeth if she had been well. I previously went to Newcastle I bought a film & a packet of paper for Mr. Finemore for 3/6. I posted them to him later; also a short letter. I also wrote a letter to Mrs. Morris in reply to her letter of the 21st. Last Thursday I bought a pair of rayon mock-seam stockings for Florence, 4 handkerchiefs for Phyllis, 4 for sister Grenell, at Woolworth's, & a song book with music at Selfridges for Daphne. Last Friday I bought a pair of socks for Bill, & 2 handkerchiefs for Jose at Frih's shop. A boy stole 2 ladies' handkerchiefs off the counter, which Mrs. FFrith had put out for to buy for Ivy, but I got 2 others of the same sort on Saturday. I gave Bill the big dictionary that Mum gave me some years ago. I gave Arthur the book entitled Soap Bubbles, & I am going to post "Progress & poverty" to him. I gave Keith & Noel 2/- each, Son Jack, Gladys, John, Adell, & Alma have been here 2 days, but to-day they all went to Raymond Terrace. Jack has gone from there to Sydney to-day, as he has to work to-morrow. Walter has been at home about a week, but he is going to Sydney very soon to see friends there. Lila Pettigrew & her husband have separated in anger, they may be divorced later.

Florence, Bill, Robert, Daphne, Noel, Keith, Ivy & Jose have gone by car to Belmont to-day. The weather is hot, I bought another 9-64ths drill for 1/9 at the Civic bike shop last Thursday. I have been making a little muddle for the Murphys but it is not quite satisfactory yet.

Mon. Jan. 8, 1945. 1945. We have received the following letter from Fred :-

N 450877 Pte. F. Cook, Unit or Group 2/4 A. G. H. Australia 31 Dec. 1944. The last day of the year, so I better answer your last letter, so you won't be able to say that you had to wait till next year before I answered it. I had a very quiet day, asleep in fact & been listening to the wireless until now-- 8 o'clock. Christmas Day & Boxing Day I spent in the same way, but I've been into town a good few times in between. The weather, I think, is the reason for this lassery, because it's as hot as I've ever struck & the hottest days we had when I was at home last were cold by comparison. We've had 2 or 3 wild sorts of storms lately with the usual blowing down of tents, but the one I was in stood up o.k., but leaked like a sieve. Luckily after about 1 hour it was all over & with the blanjets turned off dry side down there was no inconvenience. Most of the other chaps have gone down to the beach for 10 days, & although when it was first projected I would have liked to go; I'm glad now that I was left behind.
because by all accounts it's anything but a picnic down there, & instead of being a well-earned bit of recreation, it's nothing but a training turnout.

No, it wasn't the bit of work I did which put me in hospital, & it's got me tricked just what it was because out of 4 doctors, I had 3 different diagnosis, but they seem to agree that it was the same type of germ, as shingles, & as we'd just shifted over to old & dirty tents it seemed that I picked it up for some previous occupant.

They've all been cleared up now so there's no reason for my getting another dig's disease. Wal has told you by now, I suppose, that I was discharged on the Wednesday before he left, & now all traces of it have disappeared. Although we had turkey, pudding & ice-cream for Christmas Day's dinner, it wasn't near the feed that I had last Christmas, & everyone seemed to be disappointed with it, & e expected much better, especially as we're so close to town. To-morrow, I've been told, they're going to make up for it, & give us, for New Year's Day, what we never had for Christmas. I'm still plodding along at the usual job in the same old way & place, & expect to be for some time to come yet. Did Wal roar you up for not stopping me while I was at home? I never let on I'd done it, to him, & when he got home would be the first he knew of it.

I suppose now he has been the suit-length made up, & seeing it looks so nice that he's a bit sorry he didn't get measured himself. Still, he can get another, & it was your only way of getting Dad to get one: -- wasn't it ?

What sort of a holiday time did you have? Who were at home? & who are still there? It's too much to hope that Wal is still there, I expect that he stayed the usual day or two, & then went off some where, nbut, but are Flo & Bill & Robert still there? He & the Hillybillies mucked up a bit together, I'll bet: but a bit of noise is nothing, is it? especially when it's only youthful exuberation, & if all goes goes to make up the spirit of Christmas, & I know you'll be sorry when things quieten down again.

How is everyone? & all the different families?

Thanks for the calendar & blotter.— I'm using it now, & should be able to know the date in future, instead of having to ask whenever I want to write. Being in hospital was not irksome, but was rather only just a good spell.

How did Art get on over his lost papers? & how did he seem to think he did in his last exam. If he still skittering about Doreen, & is she still the nice, popular little kid she used to be? or has she developed into the misaone sta ge yet. All the best in the coming year. Fred.
Mum has received from Mrs. Morris the following message on a card: "With sincere thanks. Henry Morris died 7th December 1944. Aged 72 years. Mrs. Eliza J. Morris & fam sincerely appreciate & thank you for your kind expressions of sympathy in their recent bereavement. 56 Chapel Street Lakemba."

Wed. Jan. 10, 1945. Last Monday I went to Newcastle & had some blood taken for a test. At Kodaks I bought a packet of paper & a 116 film for Mr. Finnemore for 3/10. This morning I have packed 2 films & the paper to send to him. Gladys, John, Adella & Alma returned from Raymond Terrace last Monday, but John returned to that place on the same day. This morning Mum has gone with Gladys & the girls to Newcastle for the day. They may visit Violet Sheldon, who is in ward 2. She was brought in ill from Belmont. Yesterday I received the following letter from Mrs. Webster:

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr, Redruth, Cornwall, Oct. 10th, 1944. Dear Mr. Cocking, Your letter of the 10th of August reached us last week. Should have written then, but had no glasses: away repairing & I can't get on without them. At any rate, we were pleased to see you were all well at the time of writing, as it leaves us, thankful to say, as there is some sickness about. The weather has turned rough & very cold. Our girls are unhappy. Kathleen is at Falmouth with the Canon; the other girl been with them 30 years, so it speaks well of them. Father spent the day there yesterday: went in time for dinner: they made him very welcome. Myra is at Redruth still. Lots of the other girls been sent up country, but she's still there. Sorry you couldn't understand the name of the works— it's Clymex, where they make munitions. She has been on the navy guns; now they have a new contract. She gets on fine with her work. Frank has left London 3 weeks. He was sent to Norfolk, then last week they were to be moved somewhere else. We haven't heard from him since; poor old boy, he is, like all the others, fed up with it. He came home for 8 days when he left London. His wife & little girl are fine. The baby boy has died; but Fred's wife has a lovely boy 9 months old. The other boy was 14 when Isaul was born. Yes, we all love children. I'm going to try to get the book ("Soviet Strength") in Redruth. I've not been for a few weeks, but will have a try Friday, our market day. Yes, we got the 2 papers— thanks very much. I have just received a letter from David Tabb; he's be-
en sick in bed 3 weeks. He is in Melbourne now: had to go there away to the war. He says his wife is sick now; not seen the sailor-boy since. Perhaps something has happened to him. Just heard of one of our young men from the village been killed in Italy. Left a young widow & 2 boys; another has had a leg blown off, married, with one child: dreadful to think of.

Oh I do hope it will soon be over, & that we don't have any more wars. They're no good. Yes, we've been lucky, no harm has befallen us as yet, & we're here in the old homestead still. Pa was borne here, & 12 other little ones before & after him. The young people get frightened to hear of so many babies. Then Gran. Webster lived until eighty seven years old. Now they don't want more than 2. I say it's a good thing for the children -- they don't half look after them.

I not heard from the Chinnocks since their mother died. I wrote, but never got any more letters -- not knowing us, I suppose -- thought it useless to write. Just had one boy staying with us from London. He was here 2 years with us; now in an engineering works. He was evacuated out of London in the beginning of the war. Yes, those robot bombs are dreadful. Frank had to run ever so many times into the shelter. Well, Mr. Cocking, if ever you see your way clear to come this way we will see you shall have a good time. Now we all join in sending you our best wishes. As ever, your friends E. & H. Webster"


To day, Man, Jan. 10, I received the following from Florence:

"Box 15 Nyngan, 5-1-45. Dear Folks, Here we are back in Nyngan once again after a real good holiday, thanks to you all over there. Bill keeps on wishing he were back there, but I am pretty contented now that I have had the break, even though it was short. We had a good trip down to Sydney on tuesday -- went around the shops until about 12 & then Pip left us. We went over to Manly & spent the afternoon, & then we met again at Art's place & had tea. Pip & Aub Caddow came to the station with us. Everyone I have met since we returned has told me what a horrible Christmas they spent out here. Christmas came in the middle of several days of dust storms, so we were very lucky to escape. It is very hot to-night, but the weather hasn't been too bad the couple of days we have been home. The Hazelton children got away & Robert is pretty lonely even though he spends some time with the girls next door he doesn't think they are nearly as good as "his Beila".

The Youngs came up last night & he stayed up till 10
o'clock playing with Beverly. He has asked me several times since we came back to take him back to Gumma's, so he must have enjoyed himself there too. Well, there isn't much to tell. I talked so much while I was at home that it would be impossible to scrape up any more news, so I'll say Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

Thur. Jan. 11, 1945. This morning I bought a film at Kodak's for 2/1. I got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell. On the way home I bought a bottle of sarsaparilla in Mayfield, & a condolence card for 6d., to send to Dorrie Purdue (now Mrs. John Shaw. Her husband died suddenly in the Waratah Colliery. They lived in the house that brother Jack & I built on Billygoat Hill, where Hill & High streets converge. A little rain fell to-day. My right eye is nearly well again. I posted 2 films & a packet of 116 paper to Mr. Finnemore, & a copy of "The Socialist Of the World" to Mrs. Webster. The postage on the book was 4½ d., & the registration was 3d. I have made 2 windlasses & put one in Murphy's yard & one in Taubman's yard to wind up their garden hoses on.

Sat Jan. 13, 1945. Last night we received the following telegram from Florrie Duley:
"Dad died this morning. Funeral to-morrow 2 p.m. Florrie 4-51 p.m." This morning Charlie replied by telegraph: "Deepest sympathy. Impossible to attend. Writing." Jose is taking Ivy & the youngsters up to Daisy's place at Nabia to-day. I met Norma Griffiths' mother this morning for the first time.

Thur. Jan. 18, 1945. This morning I bought a packet of 116 paper & a 116 film at Kodak's for 3/10. I got an injection from sister Grenell, who told me that my last blood showed a great improvement. I went to Mrs. Longworth's place at Tighe's Hill, She had a look at my sore gum & tried the teeth in, but they will not fit yet as the gum is too much swollen yet. She gave me a bottle of iodine to paint my gum, & lent me a book entitled "The Trial Of Mussolini". Mum has gone to Newcastle with Ethel to see Violet. This afternoon I got a certificate for the lodge from doctor Opitz. I posted 2 films & a packet of paper to Mr. Finnemore on my way home. They cost 3½d postage & 3d registration. The cost of the films & paper at Kodaks was 5/11. The "International Geographic Magazine" came to-day from America. Violet Sheldon is in a very low condition. Last night Walter left us again, after being back from Sydney for 2 days, to return to Brisbane. He
had tea here with us & Miss Esme Sattler of Mayfield.
I have received a letter from Muir Holburn & Marjorie Pizer
the proposed Anthology of Australian Militant poetry.
It is opposite to page 130.

Mon. Jan. 22, 1945. This is a very hot day. We received the
following letter from Arthur:-

"Post Office, The Entrance, Friday, 19-1-45 Dear Folks,
As we're not connected with your place by telephone, I thot
ought I had better send you a letter. Nothing much has hap
pened so far. After a week here our total catch is one fish,
one cold in the back, & one in the head, & Phyllis' Dad, Lucky
man, has made the other 2. Despite our lack of success as fi
shermen, however, we have had a pretty good time here.
The country round is rich in rugged beauty, & the town, un
like many holiday resorts, has all the amenities of civi
lisation - electric light, fish-shops, scrumptious prawn
shops, cafes, a picture show etc, etc. The weather hasn't
been too bad, although it has been showery pretty well every
night. Yesterday the weather seemed perfect, so we decided
to take a drive to Terrigal. It's a beautiful run!
Dad knows Terrigal pretty well, I think. I suppose he has
climbed the "Skillion" as we did. Doreen has had a couple of
swims, & is browning up nicely. The rest of the party (except
as mentioned before) is in excellent health & spirits.
The swimming school went off all right. Only 2 kids of my
eighty odd failed to learn, & only one of these persevered
with the lessons, leaving only 1 who was a complete failure.
The other blokes had results about the same as mine, so
200 odd kids of the Enfield district can now swim, where
none of them swam before. Next year (I mean this) I'll get
in early & try to wangle a swimming job in Newcastle.
Phyllis sends her love; the Witheridges regards. Arthur."

Art also sent a series of pictures in colour:- 1, Toowoon
Beach, The Entrance; 2, Long Jetty, Tuggerah Lakes; 3, At
Long Jetty, Tuggerah Lakes; 4, Surf Pavilion, The Entrance;
5, Tuggerah Lakes, The Entrance; 6, Sunset, Tuggerah Lakes,
Long Jetty; 7, Blue Bay, The Entrance; & 8, Surfing at Main
Beach, Entrance.

Last Sat. Mr. Falconer came & took home our wireless set
to repair it. He brought it back on Sunday. He charged £
2-7-6, as he had to put in 2 new valves. I paid him, as Mum
had gone to Newcastle with Ethel to see Violet Sheldon in
the Newcastle hospital.

Wed. Jan. 24, 1945. To-day I received the following letter
with a ten shilling note, a postal note for 4/- & a postal note for 4/6, & 1/- in 1d stamps from Mr. Finnemore. The letter was registered. It is as follows:

"Bogan St., Nyngan, 23-1-45. Dear Mr. Cocking,

I suppose you must think I am never going to pay you for films etc. sent. Really I must plead pressure of work, especially the photos, as I have done well over a 1000 prints sent the 1st of the month, apart from enlargements, developing roll-films etc. I am forwarding half of your order (for 3 prints of Nyngan railway station with train arriving from Sydney, & 3 of the station with train coming in from Cobar or Bourke) with the snaps (of station with train coming in from Sydney). Hope it will meet your purpose; if not, just let me know, & I will take it from a different viewpoint. This was one I had by me, as I have not had a chance to take them yet as per your wishes. The weather here still remains very hot & dry. Am enclosing cash (19/6) owing to you; & many thanks again for your trouble. Yours sincerely J. Finnemore;"

Wed. 24th continued. We also received the following from Florence & Bill:-

"Nyngan, 21-1-45. Dear Mother & Dad, We were pleased to have your letters, & even if it was a sad one as you say, from my point of view at least, it would have been much sadder if it had been about Bill. I can imagine how upset you were, Min, & relieved when you found that the death wasn't so close home after all. I suppose everyone is selfish when it comes to things like that. At the same I was sorry to hear about poor old uncle Jim (pattigrew). Auntie Violet, too, seems in a bad way, & things seem pretty hopeless for her, but I think that death would be preferable to the life she has had in recent years.

Now to a brighter side — It's good to know that you are both fairly well. Hope Dad's cold & bad eye are better. I was pleased to see you looking so well when we were at home. It was a pity that you couldn't have a little break down the South Coast though. Why don't you trip down now that the Christmas rush is over? A couple of weeks would do you both good; it's so beautifully cool there.

The pepper & nutmegs are a Christmas present, Min (next), & the price of them won't make us go bankrupt. Mrs. Smith next door is Roy Smith's sister; & was very interested the other day to see Addie's photo. Mr. Smith from next door was taken to hospital a fortnight ago to-day with rheumatic fever & will be there several weeks yet. He has a transfer to the Bank of New South Wales (Bank Corner, Newcastle), but of course that will have to wait until he is well again. The
Mr. Josiah Cocking,
331, Maitland Rd.
Mayfield West,
Newcastle, N.S.W.

Dear Friend,

Many thanks for your two letters and for the enclosed poems all of which have arrived safely. We feel that it will be possible for us to make a selection from those poems which you have already sent us, but that if you have any others that you would particularly like to submit for consideration, we should be very pleased to receive them.

We hope to have the manuscript of our anthology completed in about two months, but research into the files of old journals such as the Tocsin and the Bulletin in the eighteen nineties involves a considerable amount of time and energy!

It is hoped too that the book will be on sale to the public for about three to four shillings, no more, so that it will remain within the purchasing range of the majority of the people.

Yours fraternally,

(Muir Holburn)  
(Marjorie Pizer)
man from there is being transferred to here, & they are exchanging houses. Ludlow is the new comer's name. We inquired about buying Smith's house here, but it's not for sale. It's a lovely place inside, & would have been the ideal place for us. Robert is much the same since we came back; he's had a sore eye, but that is much better now. I started him on a tonic yesterday, & we are hoping for an improvement soon. He lost a fair amount of weight lately, but that seems common with the kiddies in the West in Summer time. Beverly is taking this tonic & is getting fat; so we have great hopes for Robert. He likes it; so that is the worst obstacle over. Well, it's getting late & news has run out, so I'll say Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

P.S. We sent a note to Wal, also some golf balls. Bill.

Thur. Jan. 25, 1945. This morning I cashed the 2 postal notes at Mayfield for 8/6. I got an injection from sister Grenell, in my left arm, & afterwards inquired at the main hospital about Violet. I was told that her general condition is the same, but she is more comfortable. I bought a 3d bottle of red ink, a 3d bottle of gum, & 3d packets of French beans at Woolworth's shop. At Kodaks I bought a 116 film for 2/1 for Mr. Finnemore. I went to Longworth's & returned "The Trial Of Mussolini" 82 pages by "Cassius", which I have read. I gave Mrs. Longworth the pamphlet entitled "Stop This Fascist Propaganda", by Walter Gibson. The temperature today is 100 inside, Pah. Yesterday Charlie brought home young Ray Searle,11. He is from Glenoak & is 11. He had supper with us, but was too shy to stay here to sleep, so Charlie took him to his mother, who was staying in Mayfield.

Wed. Jan. 31, 1945. Last Monday I wrote a letter to Art & asked him to send some sarsparilla. Yesterday we received the following letter from Walter:

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 26 1-45. Dear Folks, I arrived back uneventfully last Thursday, & haven't written earlier because nothing of any importance has transpired since my return. There was a fair amount of work waiting for me, as my chief went to Melbourne on Sunday, so I have been kept fairly busy. Fred didn't call in last Saturday morning, so I expect he will come to-morrow, unless he has been moved. A letter came from Ele & Bill to-day, also a box containing 5 golf balls from Bill. It shows how precious they are when he had to pay 5/- each for them out West. They are new balls, but may prove to be perished. My room was nice & clean when I came back, & I have borrowed one of Jones' 2 wireless sets."

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while Mrs. Jones is in Sydney. Brisbane's chief item of news this week is probably the capture of Everard for the 2 Yank murders. As regards the war news, things at last seem to be approaching a climax on the European front, so Dad is probably well satisfied with our "country.

Last week-end I played some strenuous tennis & golf, & I'm going away for the long week-end to-morrow afternoon to Burleigh Heads on the South Coast.

I hope you are all well, & that the Bull Street holiday had a good time. The weather has been very hot & steamy, I wouldn't mind if I was back on Newcastle beach. Cheerio, Wal."

We also received this letter from Gladys:-

"Lst Avenue, Warrawong. Dear Mum & Dad,

Yes, here it is at last, not before time says you. I know you have heard about uncle Jim (Pettigrew) passing away: Lila has left her husband since last August; she's in Wagga; she's left for good, so Florrie Duley says. I hope you are all tip-top. We are all 100 per cent. Dell passed her primary Final exam. I'm busy buying her new clothes. She's starting at Saint Mary's College on the 5th of Feb. Fancy her in 1st year: we can hardly believe it. The nuns made a big fuss of her when I went in to enrol her. They thought she was very clever to pass at ten years old. Well, I've skited enough I suppose, I'd better cut short. Love from Jack & the children, & not forgetting myself. Glad. xxxxx."

This afternoon we received this pencilled note from Flo:-

"Nyngan 29-1-45. Dear Mother, I only discovered the other day that I had brought your ration book home in my bag. I hope you haven't been worried about it. This isn't a letter, I forgot all about ever having it. This isn't a letter, it's just an explanation, but I will write during the week after I have received your next letter. Perhaps I may be as busy this afternoon. Bill is off to Bourke to-day.

Everyone here is well. Robert is looking & I think is feeling much better than when I last wrote although the heat has been a bit of a trial last week; over the 100 mark every day, from 107 & 112 some days. Hope you are all well. I'll say cheers till later in the week.

Love, Florence."
We are only just in receipt of your letter written early December, and the attached manuscripts. We understand that this delay in arrival was due to some unavoidable mis hap at the Guardian office for which we desire to apologise.

Many thanks for the new poems which we are perusing with great interest. We shall of course return all MSS to you that we are unable to use, and you shall certainly receive a copy of the anthology as soon as it appears. This may not be until June or in fact the date of publication cannot be predicted as it is subject entirely to the fluctuations and vagaries of paper shortages and the situation in the printing trade. However of course doing all we can to see that unnecessary delay is eliminated.

Again, many thanks and with all good wishes.

Yours fraternally,

(Mr.) A. H. F. Leath

(Miss) Marjorie Pizer
SHELDON.—The Relatives and Friends of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. SHELDON, of 8 Walsh- 
screen, Mayfield, are invited to attend the funeral of their beloved wife, mother, mother-in-law, and 
grandmother, ALMA VIOLET SHELDON, to move from the Salvation Army Hall, Victoria-street, Mayfield. This Afternoon, after service commencing at 1.30 o'clock, for the Crematorium, Beresfield.
JAMES MURRAY, N.D.F.D.A.
2218 Funeral Director.

SHELDON.—The Relatives and Friends of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. COOKING, Mrs. G. MORRIS, Mrs. and Mr. F. ROBINSON, Mr. and Mrs. J. GIBSON and FAMILIES are invited to attend the funeral of their beloved sister, aunts, and aunt, ALMA VIOLET SHELDON, to move from the Salvation Army Hall, Victoria-street, Mayfield. This Afternoon, after service commencing at 1.30 o'clock, for the Crematorium, Beresfield.
JAMES MURRAY, N.D.F.D.A.
2218 Funeral Director.

SALVATION ARMY, MAYFIELD.
SHELDON.—Soldiers and Bridesmen of the Salvation Army are invited to attend the funeral of their beloved Sister, ALMA VIOLET SHELDON. See family notice. Bridesmen please bring fastening. Corps Officer MAJOR COMBS.

P.A.P.S.A., WARATAH LODGE.
SHELDON.—The Officers and Members of the above are invited to attend the funeral of their beloved Sister, ALMA VIOLET SHELDON, wife of Mr. G. Sheldon. Further particulars, see family notice. W. P. Friend, W. M. E. Powell also.

WREATHS AND FLORAL EMBLEMS at all hours. Phone B1868.
NOYES 884, Hunter-street West.

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