

FROM 7th FEB, 1945
to AUG. 7th, 1947.

cils.

Thurs. Oct. 17, 1946

"FREDDY TAKES A CHANCE

FINE PERFORMANCES BY TOWN
ARTISTS

Despite the inclement weather on Monday night last, quite a large crowd turned up to the Nyngan Town Hall to witness the three-act play presented by local artists in aid of the funds for the War Memorial Swimming Pool.

This is the first time that local talent has been put to the test on the stage, and the players are worthy of commendation.

It would be hard to single out any of the cast for special mention. Miss Gwen Warren played her part easily and without mishap, while Mr Munro, who, also produced the play, proved himself versatile and worthy of bigger things.

Now that entertainment of this nature has been instituted into Nyngan it is to be hoped that public support will keep it functioning.

The players were Mr J. Munro, Mr W. A. Purdy, Miss Eileen Leary, Mr G. B. Flashman, Mr J. R. Brand, Miss Julie O'Brien and Miss Gwen Warren.

The overture and music throughout the show was supplied by Mrs W. G. Cowled (piano), Miss L. O'Connor (violin) and Mr C. Coleman (violin).

Wed. Oct. 30, 1946

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES.—PROBATE JURISDICTION.—IN THE ESTATE of ROBERT ROWE COCKING late of Mayfield in the State of New South Wales Retired Steel-worker deceased Intestate. APPLICATION will be made after fourteen days from the publication hereof that Letters of Administration of the Estate of the abovenamed deceased may be granted to JAMES COCKING and ROBERT COCKING the sons and next-of-kin of the said deceased AND that the usual Administration Bond shall be wholly dispensed with. All persons having any claim against the Estate of the said deceased are requested to forward particulars thereof to and all notices may be served at the office of the undersigned. R. S. ADAMS, Proctor for the Applicant, T & G. Building, Hunter-street, Newcastle. 22

MY DIARY.

L.
JOSIAH COOKING.

Wed. Febb. 7th, 1945. Last Thursday I went to Newcastle after paying Mrs. Watts 2/- for the pensioners' association, & got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. At Kodaks I bought a film & a packet of paper, for 3/10. Mrs. Longworth extracted a small fragment of my tooth in the left side of my top jaw, which fragment was the cause of my gum being swollen for so long. It is right now. Mum went to the Newcastle hospital last Wed. to see Violet Sheldon, but found that she had died at about noon on that day. On Friday Mum & I attended a mourning service at the Mayfield Army citadel, after which Jose took us in his car with Ivy, & Audrey & don Harrigan to Beresford, where we met Alex. Debinson, who lives at Cessnock. He is now an old-age pensioner. We also met Frank Cooking & his wife Ada. There was a large number of people at the funeral, there being 10 motor-cars full, & the mortuary hall was filled. Violet was cremated. Eva Gibson--Violet's sister-- was very much distressed. I forgot to get a certificate from Dr. Opitz on Thur. & Friday, so I went down yesterday, but the doctor did not consult. I went again this afternoon I got a certificate. Some one stole our letter-box on Monday night, so I have made & painted another one, & will probably put it on the fence to-morrow. Mum visited May to-day. The allies have taken the city of Manila from the Japs, & Berlin is likely to be attacked by Russians soon.

Sat. Feb. 10, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm from a strange sister, as sister Grenell's mother was to be cremated that day. I bought a packet of ~~fixing~~ a 116 film at Kodaks for 2/1/. Mrs. Longworth put my top teeth in, but they do not fit properly yet. She is going away for ten days holiday. Yesterday we received the following from Florence:-

"Nyagan 7-2-45. Dear Mother & Dad,
I can't find your last letter, so I hope that I won't omit to answer any questions you may have asked in it. anyhow, I do remember that everyone was o k, including Jose, Ivy, & the nippers -- glad to know that they had a good holiday. We are all well. Robert seems better than he was, although he is getting another s

style & is fairly cranky with it. The traveller has left Dubbo, & Bill is willing to go there if he has the chance, but that remains to be seen. He left at Christmas time, & we only heard to-day, so I suppose that another man has already taken the job.

Sorry to know that aunty Violet doesn't improve: it's good to think that they put her into hospital. Mr. Smith is still in hospital & expects to be for another week or two; & so their transfer has to be postponed. He had noticed originally to start over there on the 12th of Feb. It is probable that Valerie will be transferred shortly to Parkes-- he home town-- but she hasn't had any definite word yet. If she goes I will try to do without a boarder, but if it gets too lonely I won't find it hard to get another. We have become

very used to Valerie now & like her much better than we did. Her mother sent her a large case of grapes to-day, & she has been distributing them all over the town. We have another green grocer call now -- that makes 3. so we are well off in that direction. (Wonder of you are listening to this debate to-night on the housing shortage? it's quite interesting, but I find it hard to concentrate.

We haven't heard from Pip (Walter); Is he still in Brisbane? Verla came home on Monday, so Robert is very pleased & will be his old happy self again when his eye is better. I suppose the kids there look well after their holidays. I am sending this little slip out of the paper -- thought it may be Ivy's neighbour. There isn't any news, so I'll close now hoping that you all keep well & happy. Love from us all.

Florence."

(The "slip" contained the photo of private J. Lockett & Miss E. Robson, & is as follows:-

"...myself, but church in the present form is not very interesting, & needs something to brighten it up.

Private J. Lockett, Newcastle: I'm greatly in favour of beer in churches. Any parson who can get beer these days will fill his church. As long as there's no cover charge, everybody would be agreeable to have a few pots in the church grounds. "Religion needs some reviving, elixer, & the man who thought of liquor has hit the idea."

Miss Elaine Robson, law clerk, Lakemba: I don't like

the idea of bars in churches.. It would only be men who would go to church if they had drink available. They wouldn't bother about the service, but would spend all their time in the bar. If they start drinking in churches it will mean the end of religion as we know it. They may as well revise all the hymns & sing them to swing while they're at it."

We also received this from Phyllis & Arthur:-

"137 Livingstone Road, Marrickville, 6-2-45.
Dear Mum & Dad, Thanks very much for your letter received a couple of mornings ago. We are glad that the parcel of clothing arrived safely & that the material needs of various members of the family were satisfied. Doreen, we are pleased to say, is slowly but surely recovering from her attack of whooping cough. Unfortunately, I have caught it from her, & although I have only a mild attack of it, the cough is very troublesome, & keeps me awake during the night. I don't think Arthur gets very much rest either, because as soon as Doreen manages to get some sleep -- off I start with my cough. We have both had medicine from the doctor, which is very good & cuts the phlegm. Doreen is also receiving the whooping cough injections & has had 3 up to date. She will be given the last one on Friday, & according to the doctor the attack will gradually abate, & in about a week's time there will be little or no sign of it at all.. You will be interested to know that we have sold our car. For quite a while now we have considered the idea of selling it; & on Saturday morning Arthur read an advt. in the paper, which stated that a certain ~~XXX~~ Mr. Wells of Matraville wished to purchase our particular type of car -- so he answered the advertisement. To-day a young air-force lad & his wife called to inspect the car, & being satisfied with same, paid us the pegged price for it (£ 161) in cash. We are thinking of waiting until the war is over before buying another car, & then we won't have to contend with petrol rationing priorities etc. Anyhow, I for one would like to own a house before a ~~XXX~~ another car. Arthur's friend Charlie

Boland is the proud father of another daughter. His eldest child is six weeks younger than Doreen. (No wonder he failed in his university exam.)

You can tell Ivy that Doreen thinks more of the doll she made her for Christmas than any of her toys.. She kisses & cuddles it & carries it around with her all day.. The bonnet has been mislaid, so the poor old dolly is looking very bald at present. I haven't very much room left. I mustn't forget to tell you that Doreen is walking. She started taking a few steps on her own about a week ago, but now is quite steady on her feet.. In fact she is a little bit like her cousin Robert (Purdy) inasmuch as she runs away from me when I try to dress her. If she didn't have the whooping cough I'd drag her; but I try to prevent her crying as much as possible, as it starts her coughing as soon as she does. This is all for now, folks,. Cheerio for the present,. Love from Arthur, Phyllis & Doreen."

Sat. Feb. 17, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister Grenell. She looked very sad through losing her mother. I could not buy a film nor papers at Kodaks, but I exchanged the large Bible that I bought at Fairless' shop for Mum for 23/3, & got a much smaller one for 15/-. To make up the difference in cost I took a copy of "Prospecting For Gold", 288 pages by Ion L. Idriess, price 5/-; & "Onward Australia", 270 p. by the same author; also "A Woodwork Bench Notebook", 38 p. by F.S. Haywood, 1/9. That amounted to 10/9, so I had to pay 3/- more. As Mrs. Longworth is on holiday I did not go to her place. In the evening I took my last new coat to tailor Ted Liebman to have it made smaller. I got a certificate from doctor Opitz. Our pensions cheques did not arrive last Thursday, & have not come yet. Early in this week Mum put a Viscopaste bandage on my right shin, which is sore again. The left shin is about right again now. I have been repairing Jose's Winkhurst electric machine all the week & have not finished yet.

At Hunter's I bought a pamphlet on "How To Operate the "Cal" Slide, Rule" for Jose, for 1/6.

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Thur. Feb. 22, 1945. This morning I went to Newcastle this morning & got an injection from sister Grenell. I could not get any paper nor film at Kodaks again. At Mayfield I cashed the 6/- postal note that Mr. Finnemore sent to me; also the £ 5 money order that Wal sent to Mum yesterday. Yesterday we received the following letter/ from W & I X & Florence:-

"Box 15 Nyngan 19-2-45. Dear Folks, It was good to have your letter & to know that everyone there was o k, but we were sorry to hear about phyllis & Doreen. Of course we hope they are on the mend again by now. I suppose that you are glad the summer is about over, Mother; it's not too bad here now the worst of the heat is over; to-night is lovely & cool. "e had a thunderstorm on Saturday night -- it's such a rare thing to have rain out here, but from March we get more rain. Our neighbours have gone. Mr. Smith came out of hospital on Friday, & they left on Sunday in Mr. Brand's (minister) car. They will be living in Hamilton. We both feel a bit envious of them, but we know that it's an impossibility for us to leave out here. The job in Dubbo is taken; the boss said the present man applied for the job years ago; so it seems you have to speak early for it. Anyhow, the man may not last ten years as the previous one did. In the meantime we will be happy enough here; it's much better now that we have made friends here. Bill continues to keep in perfect health; Robert has put on weight & is looking better. At present his eyes are all right, but he was having styes all the time, so we are giving him tablets (4 a day) & rubbing the eyelids with ointment, -- are hoping that this treatment will fix him up. I am as well as ever, so there are no complaints this time, Glad to know that Dad has his teeth; I hope they are satisfactory by this time. The dentist here has been away, but I heard he is back, so must go & see if he will make mine now. Bill was away last week when your letter came, but he will go & see Mr. Rees during the week about the books. We haven't collected the others yet. Well, Dad, with a letter box like

that size you need only to collect your mail once a week. Well, as Art says, "No news is good news", so I'll close now. Love from us all. Florence."

Yesterday I received the following from Mr Finnemore);-

"Bogan St. Nyngan, 18 Feb. Dear Mr. Cocking, Many thanks for films recently sent; please find payment herewith. (6/-). I am enclosing a snap I took of the Bourke train coming in. It's a mixed train west of Nyngan, hence the goods trucks in front of the passenger coaches. I took it against the sun. In spite of sheeving the lens, the sun somehow tricked me. Will take it again at first opportunity. Hoping you will bear with me the delay, but am leading a very full life at present, working all day & doing photos at night-- done over 500 prints last week, & nearly as many this week. Thanking you again for your trouble. Yours sincerely J. Finnemore."

The following letter came from Walter:-

" 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane 17-2-45.
Dear Folks, It seems a fair while since I have written home, so I am including this job with a few others that have been waiting for a Saturday afternoon. Since last writing I had an excellent week-end down at Burleigh Heads on the Anniversary Day holiday, & have also been pretty active otherwise. I had the bad luck to strain my back a little bit at tennis last Saturday, & it has been fairly painful, but it is now almost completely well. I am avoiding tennis & golf this week-end just to make sure of it. Fred is to call to see me this afternoon. I am enclosing a snap which was taken of him in his working clothes outside the carpenter's shop at Redbank. Mrs. Jones is due back from Sydney next Tuesday, but in the time of her absence I have been well looked after as regards breakfast & the cleaning of my room by a sister of Mrs. Jones' nurse, who is down on a holiday from Bundaberg. To-day I bought her a box of flowers for her trouble. Some British navy work has

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now appeared in the office, & we have been kept very busy as usual. However, due to the improved war situation, there is talk of a reduction in staff, so I hope they pick on me to be transferred back South, although I'm afraid they won't. The weather here has been very hot & humid for the last week, & everybody is in a lather of perspiration; otherwise things are fine, & I hope the same goes for all of you. Yours Wal."

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

"N X 193961, Pte. F. Cocking 2/4 A.G.H. Australia.
9 Feb. 1945. Dear Joe, Ive, & Kids,
I'll not be satisfied until I get the "Review" with your name & maybe photo in it for your exam. What sort of pass did you get? & have you finished now, or have you another year to go? I thought the Curly had her big one last year, but apparently it's not until next year. What sort of pass did Art get? Wal told me he got, so he thought, a distinction, but didn't seem to know much about it. He, too, should finish next year, & then I'll only have the kids to skite about. Mum told me that Dad only had a sty, but it seems that it must have been something worse on account of it going black. Was it his good or bad eye? I suppose that the typewriter & microscope have been collecting dust in the past few weeks. Anyhow, I hope by now that it's just a memory & that he & everyone else is o k again.
I was sorry that I never called on Wal the Saturday morning after he arrived, especially when I knew about the nectarines. However, I had tea & a yarn with him last Saturday, & expect to again to-morrow. What sort of time did you have at Daisy's? You seem to like the place. Is Keith a better swimmer than you yet? & if so, do you think that I should give him a lesson or two in bragging; although I wouldn't be surprised if he could teach me a thing or two. How is ~~the~~ Ive?; I haven't heard much about her lately. I haven't written to you since I've been back, mainly because of nothing happening that's interesting, & Mum says only that "the Hill crowd are doing

all right". It's taken me a lot of thought to decide whether to let them know about my new number, but I don't like not letting them know everything that happens, & telling them the truth always. When you take this down to them I know that you'll explain to Mum my reasons, & also tell them that I'm not a bit sorry for changing over. Also that I think that it is the best thing that I could have done from an entirely personal point of view.

Mum seems to have the urge to send me something again. If there was anything that I wanted I'd let her know, because I know that she'd get some satisfaction

from being able to send it to me. Any time I do want something I'll let her know, but I have everything I need, thanks. The picture show is just over, so I'll go & have supper with the chaps who have been. If I don't go now I'll get none. So long. Fred."

To-day, Feb. 22, I bought 2 pounds of sal-ammoniac to put my old battery in working order again.

Mon. Mar. 5, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection from a strange sister, as sister Grenell is having a month's holiday. I bought a film at Kodaks. I went down to get a certificate from doctor Opitz, but he was absent. In the morning I paid the Pensioners' contribution. Last Friday I got a certificate from Opitz, & 2 pounds of sal ammoniac from Vic. Stevenson for 1/10 per pound. My battery is in working order again & the broken wires are repaired. To-day I have been making a new letter box out of an old eildrum. Jose returned from the Mater hospital yesterday after being there a few days & having his antrums cleared. He will not be fit for work for a week or more. My right eye has had another sty, but it is in the right hand corner. It is now getting well again. I have used argerol as a remedy.

Some days ago we received the following from Arthur:-

"137 Livingstone Rd., Marrickville, Thursday, Dear Folks,

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ever with Wal too before I wrote & told you, but what finally decided me to let you know was the fact that I wanted you to be able to know that what I write, whether good or bad, you can rely on me to tell you "fair dinkum".

I had a very interesting letter from I've through the week, & I only wish I could do half as well. At last I can tell you that I am being well fed, & that there's nothing wrong with me. I don't know whether Wal told you that he had strained his side, or not; it was nothing much; he never missed any work, but it was sufficient to stop him from playing tennis. However, last Saturday he was quite o.k. when I saw him, & he was running around the court like a 2 year old.

Ivy wrote about some car. Wal had brought to see their place, so I suppose that he had her home too: you never said anything about her, & although he read I've's letter he never said anything about her either. Why all the secrecy? I'm still waiting on details of Art's exam, & a copy of the "Review" about Joe.

Yes, we had a pretty creek sort of a storm-- 7 in fact-- with trees & tents being blown down, but there was no report of it in the local rag, so I suppose the details are forbidden. There is very little news here at the best of times, & now that we have so many prohibited topics it is becoming increasingly hard to write.

If I've hadn't told me about Marj & the Yank I would have known nothing, for Wal never tells me much.

I was sorry to hear about aunt Violet, but somehow, no matter what happened, or happens to George, I can't help but feel that he's earned everything with interest. He's still getting benefits from it, & if he's ever wanted to he'll do the same thing again.

The weather here is extra hot & humid, with a storm every night or 2; but, as you know, I'm in a good building with no trees near enough to fall down through the roof, as they did to 3 or 4 other buildings.

This seems about all for now. I hope that Dad's teeth satisfy him, & that he doesn't have them in his pocket more than in his mouth; & that the creek weather you're having isn't making your leg ache. It shouldn't be long now till you get weather that suits you.

Fred."

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Tuesday Mar. 6, 1945. We have received this from Flo.:-

"Box 15 Nyngan, 28-2-1945. Dear Mother & Dad,
I received your letter to-night telling me of Jose being ill, & Valerie went straight back to the post office & booked a call for 8 p.m. . After waiting for the call for about an hour I came from the phone box very disappointed at not being able to hear Dad speaking, & I don't think he could hear me very well, but I hope that I heard well enough to understand that Jose is on the mend. Mother's letter is written on the 26th, so I thought that in these 2 days there would be some change, I sincerely hope, for the better, but write often while he is there, will you? & let me know how things are. It's pretty horrible being so far away when anyone is ill; & especially your little par, Mother, about people being glad when you take your last ride. It doesn't help to cheer one up: surely you don't believe it.

Regarding Dool; well, that is a bit of a blow to you, but you will get more accustomed to the idea as time goes on, & he will have very little chance of ever being in the front line. Anyhow, the war may be over before he is ever sent away again. We had a letter from Pip, & he said that Dool would be there for months (Brisbane) so try not to worry about it because all the worry in the world will not undo it, & you will only make yourself ill. I heard Dad say on the phone that Ethel was sick; that was the only thing I heard clearly. Don't forget to tell me all about it when you write. I hope that she is well again by the time you receive this. We are all well; so you haven't any worry on that score. Robert is looking good; no more styes I'll give you the name of the tablets he is taking at the end of the letter; they seem to be doing their job. He went to Verla's birthday party to-day & had a good time. Mrs. Young & Beverly were up for tea & went down to the phone with me. Mr. & Mrs. Rees ~~W&M~~ & family went down on Tuesday's train for 3 weeks holiday, & are calling over to see you. Mr. Rees returned the books, Dad. I will send that particular one on to you. Did you say that we could keep the others--- if you did I must say a big thank you, because they are lovely books; but if you didn't say it I'll send them on to you.

I don't expect to have Valerie here much longer; she has joined the WRANS, that is the navy, & hopes to be a clerk in that branch, & if she is rejected there she is going to apply for nursing at Prince Alfred hospital. She had a letter from her boss who is on holidays in Sydney, & he wants her to try to withdraw her application, & he will try to have her transferred; so just which one of the 3 will be her fate I don't know, but she is tired of Nyngan & would do almost anything to get away. He may be here some weeks yet, but it won't be too long, I think, she is making so many moves to get out. It is good to know that Phyllis & Green are almost well again. I had a letter from Olive during the week. She is on holidays at Kateomba. She said she was talking to Art recently. It's not hot here, Mother, You should try Nyngan; the weather is great just now. We had some good rain on Monday. Well, my paper has run out, so I'll say good night & cheer up. Love, Florence." The name of the tablet is "Tinoxid."

Mum has received this letter from Mrs. Morris:-

"140 William St., Earlwood, March 1st, 1945.

Dear Mary, Well, Mary, here I am trying to write you a few lines. I do hope that Mr. Cocking is quite well again. How did he get on with his teeth? I trust you are well, also all the family. I must ask how did Florrie, her husband, & little boy get on; are they better? How is your soldier boy; is he still in Brisbane? Our lad is away up North. The war does seem better, don't you think? It will be grand when it is all over & we have won. Well, Mary, it is very hard for me to write these few lines to you. You would get a surprise when you get word of my sad loss. No one knows what it is only those who have been through the same trouble. Poor Pa passed away very easy. He was only sick for a couple of weeks. Maggie had him out of bed each day to wash & change him & freshen up the bed so as he could rest comfortably. She even had him out of bed a few hours before he passed away. He went off smiling & never moved. He said he was tired & wanted a long rest; so God took him home to rest; & I must

prepare to follow him. He has just gone a short time before me, & I will be waiting to follow on. I am glad to tell you Maggie does seem a little better, & we hope she continues to improve, for she has not been well for a long time.. Bill is well, so glad to say, & of course you will know how I feel. Maggie & Bill have moved me over to their place. The cottage where I lived belonged to them. It is sold now, it was a lovely little place all on one floor, but Maggie said I could not step by myself, especially with my bad leg. She is a wonderful daughter to me, helps me all she can. Bill is also a good chap & would not neglect me. So now, Mary, with love from Maggie & myself, kind regards from Bill, I will close. From your old friend E. Morris."

This afternoon we received the following from Wal:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 2-3-45.

Dear Folks, News of Joe's sickness is rather disturbing, & I hope by now his condition has shown a marked improvement. His entry to hospital for proper treatment is reassuring, but I would urge that he get specialist attention, as it appears that the trouble in diagnosing the trouble, & time is valuable.

The photo of Fred need not be returned -- he simply asked me to send it on to you. I expect him to see me again to-morrow, & he may play tennis with us in the afternoon. He came up to the game last Saturday, & I invited him to play.

I was glad to get your news of Art, Phyllis & Doreen, also Flo. Bill, & young Robert. News that Doreen, Robert & ZZZZ are doing well, also that Dad is getting on well with his new teeth, were very welcome.

I have a new typewriter ribbon for Dad, which I hope will be the right size, & which I will send down when I get a chance. I am also returning home my birth certificate, which has served its purpose in connection with the Superannuation Fund, & can now be put away in safe keeping again. Thank you.

Since my last letter Jack Giles has again been in Brisbane & spent some time with me. I also had a letter

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from Esme Sattler who asked to kindly be remembered to I took Reg. David to golf last week-end & taught him all I knew about the game. I had dinner at their place on Sunday evening, & Mrs. David told me of her visit to Bob's last year. etc. She is a very friendly & hospitable person, very much like Mrs. Bobs. We were going on a fishing trip down the Bay this week-end, but the boat on which we were going has been commandeered for a month by the C.S.I.R. for a survey of sea weed. That's about all the news for now. Thanks for the birthday present. It just happened to arrive when I was a bit short of ready cash to pay for a broken axle in the car. Cheerio. Wal."

Sun. Mar. 11, 1945. I got my usual injection last Thur. I could not get any film or paper at kodaks. We have received this letter from Art & Phyllis:-

137 Livingstone Rd., Marriokville, Tuesday (6th)
Dear Folks, Thanks for the coupons, Mum; I used 22 of them to buy a pair of pants & a shirt. I can do without a sports coat until after June, so I didn't get a coat after all. We didn't buy that block of land at Sylvania because it was too bushy, but we hope to purchase a block at Hurstville to-morrow. I'll tell you about it if & when we really do get it. After about 3 weeks we'll no longer be living here. We have the chance of a house, then, for a period of at least 6 months-- may be till the end of the war, so we are taking it. More of that, too, when we have actually moved. I'm sending 2 old suits to-morrow night to Waratah, as before. We both hope that Joe proves to be o k. No doubt his condition is due to being over health-conscious & over interested in quacks. Now that the doctors have their hands on him they'll probably fix him up pretty well. The hour is pretty late, so I'll close now, but you can expect quite a long letter (which I'll get Phyllis to write) in the very near future.

P.S. Thanks very much, Mum, for the promise of a tea-cosy. I'll accept with pleasure, the one you have made, as even though you think it paltry compared with yours, I'm sure it will be much nicer than the one the

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one I have at present. The next time you write to us you will be addressing 2 property owners. We have purchased a block of land at Hurstville on a delightful spot, in an elevated position --countrified yet handy to bus or train. We will draw a detailed map later on & send to you As regards to the house we are moving into, there are 3 bedrooms, & the rent is only 25/- per week. You will both be able to come & stay with us for a long holiday. More about that in next letter too. I am anxious to return your ration book as soon as possible Love from us all. Phyllis."

Fri. Mar. 23, 1945. Since my last entry I have been making a Daniell cell of copper wire, so I have neglected my diary. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & got an injection in my left arm, as it is the back week. Sister Greenell was not back from her holidaying. I could not buy any paper nor film at Kodaks, but I bought 16 yards of copper wire & a packet of pinousion flower seeds at Woolworth's, & some poppy, plants at another place for Mum. Yesterday week I had an injection in my right arm. I could not see the doctor at Mayfield in the evening, nor on Friday, & I forgot to go down for a certificate on Mon. Tues. & Wednesday. I went last evening, but the consulting room door was shut & a notice on it said that doctor Opitz would not be there. I got a certificate this evening. Jose is still off work, but expects to start again next Monday. He lent me a book entitled "The Surgeon's Log; Impressions Of the Far East," 302 pages by J. Johnston Abraham, with 8 illustrations. 1914. I have read 243 pages. It belongs to Mr. Sweet, a neighbor of Jose's. We have received the following letters from Gladys, Walt, & Florence. This undated, is from Glad.)-

First Avenue, Warrawong, Saturday. Dear Mum. Your letter to hand, for which I thank you. We are pleased to hear that you & Dad are well. We are all well here also. I hope that Jose is his old self again by the time you receive this letter. It's not much good being sick. Remember me to Ethel when you see her, & tell her that I hope she is soon well again. It's blowing as usual today. Dell brought home her certificate

for her exam she passed last year. She got a credit pass. She's doing real well at school. I've put in a slip of paper: I thought that Dad might like to see it. I don't know if the Cookings mentioned in the slip are relations or not. There's no news here to tell you about, so I'll say good bye - 7 best of luck to you all. Fromus all here. Glad." P.S. Haven't seen the Depto crowd, so don't know how they are."

The second letter came from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 9-3-45. Dear Folks, Must apologise for being so long in writing, but there has been practically nothing to write about, & I felt at ease after hearing the good news of Joe's improvement. I would also be pleased to hear of Ethel's improvement. News of Elsie Whitten's death is very unfortunate; & I am afraid, too, that it was Netta's son who has died. He was a nice little kid, but I have heard it suggested that Netta & Charlie were rather inclined to neglect him in favor of the business, although that seems hard to believe. Your mention of Dad's eye getting better makes me curious as to what was wrong with it. I hope he hasn't been neglecting it again. His health should improve now if he is able to get along well with his new teeth. Fred was with me again last Saturday & is looking very fit. We had dinner together, & I was very much interested to read a letter from Daphne, which was well constructed & made very pleasant reading. Good work, "Curly"! Jack Giles has just arrived back from Townsville, this time on his way South to pick up another ship. He is spending the night here with me, & will leave in the morning. The weather here has cooled off a little & is now quite pleasant after having been very trying for some weeks. Queensland's climate is pretty good, taken all round. Reg. David is wanting me to go to Bundaberg with him at Easter, but it is a long way for 4 days, & I am inclined to stick to my original intention of going to Burleigh Heads, to which place I may be able to take the car (about 60 miles). I sent Dad a typewriter ribbon, which I hope arrived safely, & which I hope fits. Cheerio. Wal."

This one is from Florence;-

"Box 15 Nyngan 9-5-45. Dear Mother & Dad,
We were glad to have your letter, also one from Ivy on the same day, telling us that Jose was at home & very much improved. We hope by this time he is quite well again. If you have lost the name of the tablets that Robert has been taking, here it is again-- Tinoxid-- the directions are on the bottle. I think Dad should take them too. Besides taking the tablets, I rub Golden Eye Ointment on the lids at night, & his eyes improved almost as soon as I started the treatment. He is looking very well now, & is getting quite fat. If we don't watch him he would eat all the tablets at once.. The other day he asked me what they were made of. I told him I didn't know. He said, "I lub em Mum; I know they made of water, orang juice, (orange) & jinned (skinned) puppy dogs." So if that isn't a good combination I'll eat my hat. He says the queerest things. Anyhow, on Robert's recommendation I think that Dad should try them & try to guess the ingredients, but I don't think he will arrive at the same conclusion as Robert. His two main thoughts seem to be what Santa Claus will bring him next time, & when will he go to see Gumma & Dad again. We had a very nice letter from Mrs. Smith (who lived next door) to-day, & he tells us they have arrived in Newcastle, although it seems as though it will be some time before he is quite right again. He is living with his parents in Bolton street for the present. Valerie has been rejected for the navy, & is going to go to the Prince Alfred hospital to train, if she can, but so far has not been accepted, so it is likely she will be here for a few months; but of course nothing is definite,. As far as wanting to leave Nyngan is concerned, Mother, just now it is a good place to be in, & has been for weeks. The weather is perfect: it would just suit you. The train service to Bourke is altered again, & Bill has to go to-morrow (Saturday) instead of Monday, & will return on the following Friday. He is very disappointed to think he has to spend the week end in Bourke, & of course I am too, but then he will be home one day earlier. We are making a garden again now that the hot weather has gone. When we came home from Newcastle our garden

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was ruined; so we haven't bothered about it until now. Well, it's close down time. I must answer Ivy's letter to-night. Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence."

Sjn. Ap.1, 1945. Sister Bone, who is in sister Grenell's place while she is on holidays, gave some patients an injection last Thursday, but as sister Bone had to attend an urgent case a nurse gave me my injection. Mrs Evans from Speers Point was present after being off ill for about a month. I could not get any paper or film from Kodaks. I bought 2 packets of onion seeds at Woolworths. I went to Mrs. Longworth & she took another wax impression of my lower teeth. I did not pay Mrs. Watts as pensioners were paid on the Wednesday as last Friday was Good Friday. Jose Ivy, & the youngsters have gone by car to Nabiac to stay with Daisy & Frank Perry. Jose had his antrums cleared again before he left here. The war news indicates that Germany is about beaten, & Japan is being bombed by the Yanks & the British. Yesterday was a cold, rainy day, but to-day is sunny. I got a certificate from doctor Opitz on Thursday evening & posted it to Mr. J.E. Jones.

We received the following letter from Florence :-

"Nyngan 21-3-45. Dear Folks, We were very surprised to know that Jose was still off work, & if he has to take any more time off tell him to pop in the train & come to Nyngan, a good old quiet town, no excitement, no noise, no anything much, but he could have a good quiet rest & a change. The trains run every day to & from Sydney, so there is no overcrowding now. Anyhow we would be glad to have him, & the change may do him a lot of good. In fact both he & Ivy could come, but I don't think that Ivy would take the trip, she seemed pretty definite about that when I spoke to her about it once before. Now--many thanks, Mother, for that pretty tea-cosy; it's beautiful, & I am very proud of it. I haven't find any of the faults you mentioned so it has an A 1 mark. I had forgotten all about

it, & Bill was just as anxious as I was to see the contents of the box. It was a pleasant surprise, & came in very handy for our "party," as Robert called it, to-day. He told several of the neighbors that we were having a party to-day; & when they asked him if it was his birthday he said, "No, it's Daddy's & Mummy's". It was our wedding anniversary, as you know, but of course he couldn't understand that. I must tell you a little funny bit about him-- He always listens to the kindergarten session at 9-30 a.m., & he had the song a bit mixed this afternoon. He was lying on the floor singing "Chug, chug, chug, I'm a little mug", instead of "I'm a little tug. It sounded a bit queer to me, seeing that he is such a shrewdie. He has a nice little boy at the back to play with now -- Brian Ossler-- Mrs. Simpson's grandson. You will remember Mrs. Simpson with the old felt hat. She is a queer old thing, but I think she is fond of children. Robert spends a lot of time there. It's good news about Art, isn't it? He must be pretty sure of staying in Sydney for a few years. Have they been home since Christmas? It would be a good idea for you & Dad to go down for a while. It's time you had a bit of pleasure: you couldn't have much when we were younger.

Mrs. Young hasn't been well lately. She played tennis one night last week, & the next day she fainted twice, so she went & saw the doctor, & he said it is heart trouble. The same thing happened a little while ago, & she went to doctor Forbes, & he said the same thing, so she has to take things quietly. Her mother is coming from Inverell to spend a holiday with her; so I suppose she will be here next week. Mrs. Young comes often-- was here on Sunday & is coming to-morrow. She is very nice, much younger than I am-- only 26. Mrs. Rees is back, but I haven't seen her yet. I wonder why they didn't call. It's my letter-writing night, so I'll finish up. Love to the bill-billies. Hope Jose is soon o.k. again. Don't forget to tell him. Love from all. Florence."

We also received this letter-card from Arthur:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, Wednesday (28th).

Dear Folks, This is just to show that we haven't

forgotten you. As you can see, we have been in the throes of moving furniture. Our new joint is a semi-detached place, not as classy as "Nursies", but good enough for us, & a little bit cheaper. One of us would have written to you sooner (we moved on Monday) but Fred Wheaton, who is now in Sydney, took up much of our time. We are not going home for Easter, but you, Mum & Dad (& Chip too if it comes to that) are invited to our place after Easter. We have tons of room. You can come when you like & stay as long as you like. Think it over. Arthur."

Wed. Ap. 4, 1945. Yesterday I received 2 letters; the first is from Mrs. E. Webster, Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, & is as follows:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Cornwall, Jan. 23, 1945. Dear Mr. Gocking, Many thanks for paper received: 2 more come to-day. We have enjoyed reading them. Hope you got my letter with best wishes for the Christmas & New Year. We had a quiet Christmas, & not too bad with regard to food. We didn't bother about the eating-- we wanted it peaceful & with this dreadful war over as soon as possible. Lots of our young men from here have lost their lives & left little children fatherless. Our Frank is training now for overseas. He is in Surrey. Poor boy, we don't know when we will see him again. And Fred is laid up; he has had rheumatic fever; been in bed 10 weeks; but glad to say he is getting better. They have a lovely baby boy after 14 years. Frank's little girl Joyce is not very well. She is a lovely child, & a big girl to her age. Hope your little grandson is well. We have lots of children poorly around here. The weather been very bad this winter, very cold, & lots of frost, wind, & snow, & we can't stand up to it, leaving out the children. We all have been seedy. Hope you & Mrs. Gocking are keeping fairly well, & all your family. You must excuse this short letter: I have broken my glasses, so I'm doing my best without them. We wish we could see the end of this dreadful war, but we really think the end is not far off; thank God for that.

It worries every one of us. I'm glad to tell you my ankle has healed: it made me worry; I was afraid I

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 should not heal it. Now it has gone, & I feel so much better in health. Father has been fairly well all the Winter. Our girls are very well. Myra is near home; that's something; she can get to her work on her bike. Kathleen is still at Falmouth: she is well & happy-- it's home to her. Not heard from my cousin for a long while now; hope he is o k. We are grateful for the Russian help; they are doing grand work: we can't be grateful enough for their help. Your verses you sent were fine; we have read them over many times: they are good. Now Mr. Cocking I must hurry to catch post. We send our kindest regards to you & Mrs. Cocking. We remain your sincere friends H. & E. Webster."

The other letter is from Mr. Finnemore:-

"Bogan Street, Nyngan, 30-3-1945. Dear Mr. Cocking, I am afraid you must have a very poor opinion of me for keeping you waiting so long for these prints you asked for; but it's been rather awkward, as I had to do it during my dinner hour. I had intended waiting until to-day to do it, but was asked to take some snaps of the new Nyngan ambulance, & of the speakes at the handing over of it, & had the one negative left over. I still owe you a little, but will add it on next time. I have just managed to get hold of a $\frac{1}{4}$ plate Graflex camera in good condition. So can I impose on your time again when you go to Newcastle, & get you to try to obtain for me the following films: No. 8 S 151 at 3/- (it's a roll film); 1 dozen cut films $\frac{1}{4}$ plate, super X X or Hyperpan. I would be very grateful if you could obtain either of the above, or both of them. You can get several lots if it is possible. You need not bother them any more for papers, as I now have a reserve of about 3000. Thanking you once again for your past kindness in getting materials for me. Yours sincerely J. Finnemore."

Jose, Ivy, & the children returned from Nabiac yesterday evening. Jose is much better. I typed a 4 page letter to the Websters to-day.

Thur. Ap. 5, 1945. This morning I posted a letter to the Websters & one to Mr. J.E. Jones re the sick pay from the Gardeners' lodge. I had an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell, who is back from her holiday outing. I bought a packet of epicure beans at Selfridge's, & a sixpenny bunch of stocks XX. At Kodaks I paid 9/6 for a 2 dozen packet of out quarter plate films for Mr. Finnemore. This afternoon I paid fivepence halfpenny to register & post the packet. I bought a 2/- copy of "Soviet Strength" to send to Mrs. Webster. I sowed the epicure seeds this evening, & helped Mum to dig the ground to plant her stocks. Mum went out in the car with Jose & Ivy this afternoon. The doctor has given Jose another week off work. I lent Ivy ten pounds to day, as Jose has not been paid since he left work, but his pay for the full time is waiting at the office for him. To-day we received this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 3rd April 45. Dear Mother & Dad, We were pleased to have your letter at the week-end: it was choc-a block full of news this time; although the news of Jose isn't so good. It's a pretty usual thing for nasal cases to be pretty lengthy affairs, so don't worry about it; he will be o k when Dr. Watkins finishes with him. It's good to know that Art has moved: it's hard to imagine them away from Nursie. How is Dad getting on with his new teeth? I haven't got mine yet: I keep postponing it. Such a lot of people have difficulty with the lower set that I am a bit hesitant to try them, but one of these days I'll make the appointment. How much do they cost? The dentist here charges 24 pounds for a full set. I was wondering if you get it cheaper over there. How did you spend Easter? Did anyone visit you? We had a pretty quiet time. Valerie went out into the country, as there is nowhere to go to in town; so we stayed at home most of the time. Valerie is not sure where she is going, nor when, but a new chap (Newton) is coming this week, so she is expecting a call to the WRANS, or nursing, or if both of them fail she will be transferred. We had Mrs. Young's mother up on Sunday: she is very nice, & I am going with her & Mrs. Young for a hike to-morrow afternoon.

We have our new neighbours (Hollands), but don't know them very well yet. Haven't been to the Rees' yet since they returned. What bad news it was about Netta Hooker's boy & Elsie Witten. They will both be badly missed. Did Netta have any other children ? Bill says tell Jose not to worry about the carburettor until he hears from him again. I mentioned the name of the chap that is coming to the bank here; thought perhaps Mrs. Murphy might know him; he is from Galargambone. Well, it's time to close down. Isn't the war news good ? Cheerio. Love from us all to all the clan. Florence."

Sat. Ap. 7, 1945. To-day is cold & rainy. We received this letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 pte. F. Gocking , 2/4 A.G.H. Australia
3rd April 1945. I fully intended to write to you on Easter Friday, as I did last year, but for the last few days I've had a cold -- practically better now-- but it made me feel so dull & stupid that about all I've been good for lately is sleeping, & I've had plenty of opportunity over the holidays. I only went into town for 1 day, & things in there are extra quiet. Wal went down the coast for Easter; he left Thursday night & was due back last night. I had 2 days off & would have gone down myself only for feeling so lethargic. When we went to town we intended to have a feed & go to a show, but most of the restaurants were closed. The only one open was a Chinese joint, & only Chow menus are cooked. I'd been warned by Wal that they are all takes, & now I know how right he is. Four shillings for a bit of boiled fowl & a bit of half cooked onion. Next time I'll starve. Teatime we did all right, however, for we found an ordinary one open & did o.k. for half a dollar. I'm still plodding along, doing enough to keep me happy, & not enough to make me lose weight; & in a day or 2, when I've completely lost this cold, I expect to be full of beans again. I'm sorry to hear about Ethel being not too good. She thinks a lot of you, & Dad, so she's o.k. by me. Did she go to the hospital, & did they do her any

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good ? Now that Dad has his teeth he should look like a young bloke again. I suppose that Wal has told you about Reg. David. I have met him a couple of times & have been impressed by him on each time. He's a real decent sort of a bloke, & he reminds me very much of Johnny Rose. He's just as boisterous, but he's not like Johnny is, always telling you how he's going to give dough away, & taking people down at every opportunity.

He's always asking me ~~if~~ if there is anything that I want, & wanting me to meet his parents, but I tell him the same as I tell you that there's nothing that I want. Still, I appreciate him for asking me. I was real worried about Joe being crook, & don't know for certain yet that he is better & on the job again, but think that he must be, as I've heard nothing to the contrary... How is everyone down there? I suppose that the change in the weather has given most of you colds, but I know that you'll be better suited with the colder weather. Has Dad had any blood counts lately? He should be due for one soon. It's terribly hard to write; no news, & if there was I wouldn't be able to write about it, so I'll have to finish up. All the best. Fred."

Sun. Ap. 15, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. I could not buy any Hyperpan films from Kodaks. I bought a packet of drum-head cabbage seeds at Woolworth's. I paid Mrs. Watts a shilling each for self & Mum for the Pensioners' Association. George Millars wife was buried at Sandgate last Thursday. She had been ill a very long time & had almost lost her reason. She & George have been in the Salvation Army for many years. Jesse is gradually getting well, but the doctor will not let him go to work yet. The papers report the sudden death of president Roosevelt. The Russians have taken Vienna, & the European war seems to be very nearly ended by the defeat of Germany. Last Friday Art, Phyllis & Doreen came from Marrickville & stayed with us until this morning, when they caught a train at ten to ten for Sydney. They are all well. I received the following note from Mr. J.E. Jones:-

"Grand United Order of Free Gardeners of Australia,
Rosebud Branch, No. 23. Secretary's address: 19
Warrah Street, Hamilton..

Bro. J. Cocking. Dear Sir & Bro. Re your note of the
fifth of april I may state I overpaid you on the 5/-
scale & I have held payment until it righted itself.
You are now on the 2/6 per week scale during the period
of your illness, & will be paid monthly. The next
payment will be due on the 25th of April, & it will be
only necessary to forward a certificate once per qu)
arter. I am sorry not to have notified you earlier,
but I have been very busy & unable to do so.
Yours J.E.Jones, secretary."

Last Thursday evening I got a certificate from doctor
Opitz, & posted it yesterday. Charlie mended Arthur's
wrist-watch, but could not repair Phyllis' watch. I have
cleaned & reconstructed a baby's swing-chair, & will
give it to Mr. Eastaway. Daphne has been given a ladies'
bicycle as a birthday present, as she is now 16. The
Geographic Magazine for March has not arrived from Am-
erica yet.

Last week we received this letter from Phyllis:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville 8-4-45. Dear Mum
& Dad, It is raining cats & dogs to night, too wet to
go to the Sallies,, so I thought it would be a good op-
portunity to write to you. I am so sorry that we did
not mention the fact that the tea-cosy arrived safe &
sound, but my better half will have to be blamed for
the omission (I have been told to say that). We were
pleased & proud to receive your kind gift, & when Arthur
said he intended writing home I told him to be sure to
thank you very much for the cosy., but, like most men,
he remembered to forget to mention the most important
thing of all. He is duly penitent & I have forgiven
him, & hope you will forgive him too. We would like
very much to come up & see you next week-end. There
are two reasons, (1) Arthur is feeling a little home-
sick as it is quite a while since he saw you both.
(2) We may not be able to see you at all during the sc-
hool holidays in May, as the University lectures conti-
nue right through the school vacation.; & as this is
the final year he is rather keen on attending every

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lecture. Still we will be seeing you from time to time, even if it is only for a week-end now & then. .

We are all keeping well. especially Moreen. She is full of life & is quite a little girl now. She has a new winter rig-out consisting of a dusty pink coat with beret to match, & Mum is making her a new frock of the same colouring. She really looks a lot older than she is, although I think it is because of her long hair, as it is nearly down to her shoulders. Quite a number of people have asked me if she is 2 years old, & she is not yet 18 months.

I am disappointed that neither of you are able to come & stay with us for a while, as we have quite settled down in our new home. We just do as we like & whenever we like. I told Arthur that we'd be able to have a fight now & again without the danger of anyone "listening in". but we just can't find anything to fight about. The house itself is not half as nice as the one we left. The back yard is very poky, & the breakfast room is papered with a very dirty coloured paper. The bath room, we seldom use, as the bad enamel has nearly all been chipped off; but we are on our own & that in itself is worth more than sharing a mansion with anyone else. Doreen has just had her last injection for diphtheria. She has had no ill effects at all from them. Some kiddies are, I believe, very ill after the vaccination, but our young lass has been very lively, if not livelier after each needle.

I can't think of any more news just now. Our kind regards to the hill billies. We are so glad to know that Jose is making satisfactory progress as regards to his health. Tell Charlie that there is a little job for him (if he will be so kind). Arthur's watch has refused to function since I boiled it in the copper among the rest of my clothes-- & my watch is just as stubborn. We will bring both with us & leave with him. Lots of love, then, till the week-end. Arthur & Doreen send hugs & kisses. Phyllis."

Su, Ap. 15 continued. Last week we got this from Wal:-
"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 10-4-45.

Dear Folks, Since last writing I have had letters from

Flo. & Joe, but have been too busy to do much writing. Last week-end was a normal one, except that the presence of Jack Giles in Brisbane kept me pretty busily occupied. He has now gone again, this time heading for the Phillipines. Ian McLaren wrote to me the other day, & he too is in the Phillipines. Easter week was, of course, spent down at Burleigh Heads with 4 other chaps, as planned, & we had a really good time. Next week-end I am planning to go on a fishing trip down on the Bay, & I am hoping that Fred can join us.

News of Art moving came as a surprise. I assume he hasn't moved very far from the previous house. Was also surprised to hear of the sale of his car. Joe's trouble seems to be hanging on for a long time, but this is o.k. if the trouble is finally rectified, as the rest will do him good. I was particularly pleased to learn from his letter that the 2 gallon ticket was so useful just at the right time, & I will do my best to send an occasional one down if possible. My broken car-axle, Joe, was caused by starting the car running backwards down a hill out of the garage. The battery was fairly flat, & I had done the same thing several times before, but the steel eventually fatigued. It cost me £6-4-0; so I have learnt my lesson. Of course in any gear of lower ratio it would have been all right; but I was particularly fortunate in getting a free tow by the R.A.C.Q., & the car back on the road the same day.

So Daphne is sixteen! Amazing! Best wishes, Curly & the Dead-end kids, not forgetting my old sparring partner. I was pleased to hear that Dad's eye is better. (I never did get to the bottom of that.) , also that his teeth are satisfactory. Cheerio for now. Wal."

Mon. Ap. 23, 1945. I got my usual injection from sister Grenell last Thursday. & she told me that she had asked the doctor about giving me the double doses of liver extract, & he said she could give me the original dose of 2 cubic centimetres. I could not buy any paper nor film at Kodaks. I bought a bundle of peppy plants for Mum, & a packets of greenfeast dwarf peas & a packet of persley seeds. Jose is not well yet, & the doctor (White) wants him to be operated on, but Jose is unwilling to have it done. He had to see the doctor again to-day.

We have received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan (15) 18-4-45. Dear Folks, How is Jose? I hope he is o k again. I am a few days late with this letter, perhaps, but I have the knitting craze & have almost finished a jumper for Robert--mvery nice it is too despite what they say about self-praise. My next job is one for Bill; he is a bowler now & of course must have his cream jumper. His tu mmy isn't quite big enough yet, but that may develop as time goes by. He is looking quite well as usual & it's a very rare thing for him to have to take a tablet for his old trouble. He looks so well that I sometimes think that he will never have it again; but a trip to Newcastle upsets that theory. We got our new neighbours Easter week, & they seem all right, but not like Smiths. There is always plenty of noise in there now, but that doesn't worry me; I like to hear neighbours around, especially at night, when Bill & Valerie are out, as they are now.

We tried Robert out at church on Sunday night, & he was fairly good although he was pretty bored during the sermon & wanted to go home several times. After church Mr. Brand invited me to have a "cuppa" with them. Mr. Rees & 3 other chaps were there too, so he certainly tries to welcome people to his church. He is very nice (I think you met him) & is very popular here. I went to the Ladies' Aid, & they handed me the treasurer's job. They only have meetings fortnightly, & to-morrow it's an American tea, so I'll have to find out what gift I can take. You would be glad to hear from Deel (Fred) again after so long. It's good to know that pip (Walter) has found Glad's cousin, & I'll bet he enjoys the outings in the yacht. Valerie is still with us, & it is very indefinite for how long. She is still waiting for her call from the hospital. I hope you go to Art's place: it will be a good change for you both. I hope Art & Phyllis intend coming here in August; or are they putting their savings towards buying a home. Art must have pretty definite ideas about being kept in Sydney, or he would hardly buy ground & intend later to build.

There isn't much news that I can tell you: it's much harder for me to find news for you than it is for you

writing from home where I know people. If you want news of Robert I'll give you that he is still a cheeky little mischievous scamp, but still very lovable. Verle is moving to a house down near the school on Saturday, & Robert cried to-night when he heard us speak of it; but really he won't miss her very much now as so much of his time is spent with Brian Ossler at the back of here. Robert is always "boss" when they play. Brian is such a quiet little placid boy -- very pretty, & Robert is such a wild kid, not so pretty as he was, but he always has that expression that he is just looking round to see what mischief he can find. He doesn't wander away now, except to Brian's, so that is one of my troubles over..

I got a nice brown frock the other day, but it was too big, so I took it along to a dressmaker to-day to have it altered. You may remember me telling you at Christmas time about ordering a pair of shoes made to my measurements. Well, they came last week, after five months. They are cleverly & comfortable, even though they haven't any particular beauty about them. £2-15-6 they cost, so they should be good. I was wondering if a pair would be good for you, Min, seeing the trouble you have with shoes. They have a lot of customers here, & their main complaint is the length of time they wait for the goods; but I think they are all satisfied with the shoes when they do arrive.. Well, it's close down time. I can hardly keep my eyes open. Good night & cheerie. Love from us all. Florence."

Fri. p. 27, 1945. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & got my usual² injection from sister Grenell, who is to be married in 2 month's time. I promised to give her a little wedding present. I bought 2 small drills at the Civic shop. At Mrs. Longworth's I got my bottom teeth. I am now finished with going there, unless something goes wrong. Mrs. Longworth wants me to visit her in about 3 month's time to see how the teeth are working. Brother Jack & May visited us on Wednesday. Berlin is almost surrounded by Russians, & its fall is almost certain soon. I bought a packet of Velox 116 paper at Kodaks for Mr. Finnemore & sent it away yesterday. I paid Mrs Watts 2/- for the Pensioners Association. Yesterday we received

the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 F. Cocking, Pte. Unit or group 2/4 A.G.H.
Australia 22 April 1945.

I've been waiting for Art's new address, & I've just entered it in my little book so that if I feel like writing to him some time I'll know where to send it. I'm glad that he has shifted to a place where he can please himself more as to what he does, & although the nurses there were quite all right I'll feel more like going to see him whenever I'm in Sydney, & I think that you'll feel more comfortable when you go too.

I read your last letter to Wal yesterday. Joe must have been pretty crook when he was at his worst, seeing that he hasn't started work yet; & I suppose that he's worrying his head off now that he is away for so long; but, as you say, the spell won't hurt either him or the B.H.P. The worst part of it is that he missed starting Tech., but there's always next year, providing of course that he does start again., I've always noticed that once you stop doing anything it's much harder to start again than it is if you'd kept right on going. Still, it should be worth the extra effort, as he only has 12 months to do. I'm sorry, but I did not meet the chap you ask about. I just do my job in the shop all day & seldom go near the wards. If I'd previously known him I may have seen him wandering round, but to me he'd be just another stranger. Last week-end Wal & Mr. Jones & Reg. David went in a launch down the Bay somewhere, & they wanted me to go too, but I couldn't arrange it. I was congratulating myself on not going, because it rained here, but yesterday they told me it was a real good day & not a bit ~~watny~~ rainy or cold; so I missed again. You may possibly have Reg. to see you in a week or 2, so don't be surprised if he rings you up, or even if he just blows in. He left here yesterday & is going to Melbourne, where he expects to be for about 2 weeks, then he's coming back to Gosford, & from there to Newcastle, Wal has given him a lot of phone numbers, & Johnny Rose's is one of them, so if he & Johnny roll in some day

don't be a bit surprised. I'd give a quid to see them together, because they're very much alike, so you can expect plenty of noise if they do go to

see you. I had a bit of a windfall this week, £ 21-14-0 in back money, & I'm getting the extra 2/- a day : 28/- a fortnight. They still owe me 6 pence a day for about 14 months, but it will take around 3 months before I get it, I suppose. I had some money that I hadn't drawn before, but last Wednesday I took the lot-- £ 43-- & yesterday I gave £ 35 of it to Wal, who I suppose will send it home.. Use it all if you want to, although I don't suppose that you will. If you don't need it Chip will, I'm sure, put it in the bank, but if he wants any of it I hope that he won't be afraid to use it..

Nearly everyone seems to have gone out to-night, so I'm here alone, for a wonder, so I'll catch up on some of my other letters; some I've been carrying around for about 3 months. If they'd only go out a bit more I might be a better correspondent. I'm completely rid of my cold & am feeling real well, & hope that you & Dad are o k & looking after yourselves properly. Fred. "

I also received the following from C.E. Muir:-

"Eye Culture . Better Eyesight Without Glasses. Head office : St. James Building, 107 Elizabeth St. , Sydney. Dear Mr. Cocking, What you want to know is, can Eye Culture improve or restore the sight. DEFINITELY IT CAN & at the same time give instant relief from discomfort such as sore, tired, aching or burning eyes, headaches & pains, eye-strain, glare etc.

You know that almost every function of the eyes is controlled by muscles. Well, the whole trouble is positively caused through those muscles & the tissue of the eyes being congested, strained & weak.... You know that other muscles of the body will respond to physical culture; well so do the eyes respond to eye culture.

The first thing I teach is how to rid thee eyes of strain & congestion. .This relieves any discomfort. You then learn how to use the eyes without glasses or strain, & finally how to restore the elasticity & strength of the tissue & muscles so that they work in harmony & function normally. This means that very soon --usually a few weeks -- there's definite improvement in the vision which steadily becomes more pronounced.

So you can see there is more in eye culture than just doing

eye exercises. One thing I want you to understand, though; there are no appliances, drops, or drugs of any description used on the eyes, so they cannot possibly be harmed. Eye culture is just a simple, natural method of eye muscle training easily carried out in one's home & even at work. You fit it into your daily routine of living. I will advise you what my fee will be for the complete Eye Culture instructions when I receive the enclosed information form with all questions answered & with as much additional information as possible. This full information is also necessary so that I can diagnose your case & prescribe accordingly Yours faithfully
C.E. Muir."

(Answered Sun. Ap. 29, 1945.)

Sun. Ap. 29, 1945. To-day I have written a note to Mrs. Webster & enclosed C.E. Muir's letter & literature on Eye Culture. I also wrote to Muir telling him (or her) what I have done. Jose is not well enough to resume work yet.

Mon. May 7, 1945. Last "ednesday we received the following letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 24-4-45. Dear Folks, Nothing very exciting has happened since my last letter to you, except, perhaps, the fact that they have discontinued the living-away-from-home allowance which was formerly paid to all of us who were sent up from the Southern States, but the 3 of us who are affected in our section have protested, & I am using it as an argument in an effort to be transferred back to Sydney although the present pressure of work makes it difficult to imagine how they could manage without me. In any case the whole question has now been referred to Melbourne. Mr. Jones (where I live) & Reg. David accompanied another chap & me down to the Bay on a fishing trip the weekend before last, & we had a very enjoyable time, catching about 100, & each returning with about 15 lbs. of fish. Fred came to see me on the Saturday, but could not make the trip. He also saw me last Saturday & gave me £35, which I am forwarding on to you to be banked for him or used as required. To-morrow is Anzac Day, &

I have planned to have a swim & a game of tennis, but the weather looks rather dull to-night, although generally speaking the weather here is very nice lately. I see there is still a bit of bad news from down there in Joe's trouble still hanging on & in Mrs. Millar's death. A bright new pot of paint on the news is just about due now, so you'd better rake up some new cars or weddings or something. Evidently Art is settled down in his new home, I presume still in Marrickville, but I am wondering if he will have to move again shortly when the people come back. That's good news about Daphne getting a bike-- I bet she's thrilled to bits, & I'm sure she'll look after it well. Hope you are all well as we are..

P.S. The money order is made out in Mum's name as usual. Wal."

Last Thursday I got my usual injection in my left arm from sister Bone, as sister Grenell was away. I bought 24 small bolt-nuts at Woolworth's, but could not get any films or papers at Kodaks. I paid the Gas company £ 1-1-4, & got our book at the Co-op. store. I banked Fred's £ 35 at the Commonwealth Bank, Mayfield. His deposits amount to £ 206-10-0 now. I have made 2 ironing stands --one for sister Grenell as a wedding present. The doctor told Jose that if his temperature remains normal all next week he will let Jose return to work. The war in Europe is nearly ended.

Thur. May 10, 1945. This morning I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- & went to Newcastle. I had an injection in my right arm from sister Bone. I gave sister Grenell an ironing stand & a little black tin box to hold reels of cotton on & buttons in. At Woolworth's I bought 3 2d packets of broad beans. At Sorby's I bought 4 dozen coppered split rivets for a shilling. At Dawson's I bought 2 twopenny bundles of steel wool. I paid 2/6 at a bookshop for "Gregory's 100 Miles Round Sydney."; & at Wicks' I bought a "Presbyterian Cookery Book of good & tried receipts", for 2/6 to give to sister Grenell as a wedding present.

Yesterday May Cocking was ill in the Fettercairn hospital with gall-stones. To-day she is at home, but is ill still. This afternoon Mum has gone to see her. To-day

we received the following letter from Florence :-

"Nyngan, Sunday 6-5-45. Dear Mother & Dad, It's good to know that Jose is on the mend again: it's been a long time since he first took ill, but I hope by now he is feeling pretty fit. I have had a pretty quiet week-end. Bill went to Bourke yesterday & Valerie went out into the country, & has just returned to-night, so I have had a pretty easy time, but it has been not so lonely somehow. I've had a good fire going all day, & Robert is very good company now. (I must tell you before I forget, it's raining hard here, it's such a novelty). Anyhow, to get back to the subject of Robert-- when I told him this afternoon that I was going to write a letter to you I asked him what I would say, & he said, "Tell Gumma & Dad I lub em berry much", so that's his message to you. I am so mixed to night that I find it hard to keep to one subject. Valerie has upset the quiet of the day with her account of her "bonza week-end". She is very excited just now, & had a farewell party out there last night. She leaves here next Saturday & joins up with the WRENS on Tuesday, that is of course if she passes her medical test, which I think she easily will if appearance goes for anything, & she never ails anything. I will certainly miss her, & so will Bill. We both understand & like her better now that we know her better. The young lad from the bank who is taking her place wants to come here. He is such a nice, quiet boy, his first time from home, (only 16 I think), but it's a bit of a nuisance always having to be in to get meals just when other people want them; so I will try to get used to being alone again. This is only the second cold day we have had this year so far. The weather has been like Spring-- it's beautiful. We are still wearing Summer clothes, except for a cardigan first thing in the morning. I have wished often lately that you were, but of course it may be just as good over there, although I heard on the wireless that Newcastle had plenty of rain. It's good news about the war, isn't it? Surely it won't be too long now before it's all over. I am disappointed about Art & Phyllis not coming, but I suppose they are happy, so it doesn't matter. I'll see them all at

Christmas, I hope. Robert is not pleased about Peter Taubman visiting you at all; he thinks you both belong to him exclusively, & he doesn't want any other little boy butting in. He still has his little friend Brian at the back here, & it's pretty hard to keep him at home. How is Ethel (Cooking) these days? The last I heard of her was that she was in hospital months ago, but I never heard that she got well, or if she still has heart-trouble. Well, it's time I closed down. Love to all-- Florence."

In the cookery book that I intend to gave to sister Grenell I have pasted these verses :-

TO SISTER GRENELL.

Please don't imagine nor suppose
That I presume you're one of those
~~XXXXXXX~~ Unskilled (although good-looking)
Young maids whose minds are too obtuse
To learn the proper way to use
Ingredients for cooking.

My purpose isn't to impart
A knowledge of the useful art
Of roasting or of carving
A Christmas goose, or joint of meat,
Or making something good to eat
When hubby comes home starving.

That useful knowledge you possess;
But books are handy, none-the-less,
To aid the recollection
Of right components for a cake,
Or proper times to boil or bake,
Or make a sweet confection.

So take this book, & bear in mind
That even martial men must find
The best of married blisses --
A wife as gentle as a dove,
A tidy home, sweet peace & love,
Ideal meals --& kisses !

.....
To June & Mary: 2-2-1952

36.

As addendum, let me mention
That if you would shun contention,
And respect & fond affection
Of your husband you would keep,
Don't indulge in angry railings
At his real or fancied failings,
But just whisper your objections
In his ear --WHEN HE'S ASLEEP !

A MARRIED MAN.

Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little ever,
The poet wrote, but women know
The poet's wrong, if clever.

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

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

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-looking,
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 & tasty dishes .

To June & Mary - 22.2.1952.

Notable Dates Of European War

1939

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Germany invades Poland.
- 3 Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand declare war on Germany.
- 17 Soviet troops enter Eastern Poland.
- 29 Germany and Russia partition Poland.

NOVEMBER

- 8 Attempt to assassinate Hitler with time bomb in Munich Beer Hall.
- 11 Russia invades Finland.

DECEMBER

- 17 Graf Spee scuttled

1940

MARCH

- 12 Russo-Finnish peace signed

APRIL

- 9 Germany invades Denmark and Norway.

MAY

- 10 Germany invades Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. Churchill replaces Chamberlain as Prime Minister.
- 15 Dutch Army capitulates. Germans cross the Meuse.
- 28 Belgian Army capitulates.

- 30 to June 4: B.E.F. evacuated from Dunkirk.

JUNE

- 11 Italy declares war.
- 20 A.L. arrives in Britain.
- 22 French Armistice with Germany signed.

JULY

- 8 German attack French fleet at Oran.
- 19 H.M.A.S. Sydney sinks Baitolomeno in Oran.

AUGUST

- 8 Battle of Britain begins.
- 24 German bombed for first time.

SEPTEMBER

- 15 Bomb raids on London begin.

OCTOBER

- 26 Italy invades Greece.

NOVEMBER

- 12 Italian Fleet attacked in Taranto Harbor.
- 14 German "blitz" on Coventry.

DECEMBER

- 9 British offensive in Western Desert opens.

1941

JANUARY

- 31 Tobruk captured with 25,000 prisoners.

FEBRUARY

- 6 Benghazi captured.
- 18 Australian troops at Singapore.

MARCH

- 28 Italy loses five warships at Battle of Cape Matapani.

APRIL

- 3 Enemy reoccupies Benghazi.
- 6 Germany attacks Yugoslavia and Greece.
- 11 British and Australian forces in action against Germans in Greece.
- 27 Germans enter Athens.
- 30 Withdrawal of Imperial forces from Greece completed.

MAY

- 20 German airborne attack on Crete begins.
- 31 British forces withdraw from Crete. Armistice signed in Iraq.

JUNE

- 8 Free French and Imperial troops enter Syria.
- 22 Germany attacks Russia.

JULY

- 12 Russia and Britain sign mutual assistance pact.

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Armistice signed in Iran.
- 2 German attack on Leningrad begins.

OCTOBER

- 29 Russians announce withdrawal from Kharkov.

NOVEMBER

- 14 H.M.S. Ark Royal torpedoed and sunk.
- 18 Imperial forces begin offensive in Libya.
- 19 H.M.A.S. Sydney sunk with total loss of personnel.

DECEMBER

- 8 Russians recapture Tikhvin.
- 16 Germans retreating along entire Eastern front.
- 24 British retake Benghazi.

1942

JANUARY

- 29 Rommel takes Benghazi.

FEBRUARY

- 12 Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prince Eugen escape from Brest.

APRIL

- 14 Laval returns to power in France.

- MAY**
- 16 Germans capture Kerch.
 - 26 Anglo-Soviet Treaty signed in London.
 - 30 1130 R.A.F. bombers raid Cologne.

- JUNE**
- 21 Tobruk falls to Germans.
 - 23 Russians fall back at Kharkov.

- JULY**
- 1 Germans reach El Alamein.
 - Germans capture Sebastopol fortress.
 - 17 Russians withdraw in centre Don section.
 - 25 Germans cross Don at Tsymyanskaya claim Novocherkassk.

- AUGUST**
- 12 Churchill arrives Moscow for conversations with Stalin.
 - 19 Nine-hour commando raid on Dieppe.
 - 22 Brazil declares war on Germany and Italy.

- SEPTEMBER**
- 2 Stalingrad threat accentuated. Germans claim forces penetrated to Volga north of the city.
 - 25 Russians launch counter-offensive north-west of Stalingrad.

- OCTOBER**
- 25 Eighth Army opens offensive in Egypt.

- NOVEMBER**
- 3 Axis forces in Egypt begin retreat westwards.
 - 3 Allied landing in French North Africa.
 - 11 German troops enter unoccupied France.
 - 20 Benghazi falls to Eighth Army.
 - 22 Russians announce offensive opened from north-west and south of Stalingrad.
 - 27 Germans enter Toulon. French warships in harbor scuttled by crews.

- DECEMBER**
- 16 Russians open offensive in middle Don area.
 - 24 Dantön assassinated in Algiers.
 - 24 Main German forces in full retreat from Kotchukovo.

1943

- JANUARY**
- 14 Roosevelt and Churchill meet at Casablanca.
 - 23 Tobruk entered by 8th Army.

- FEBRUARY**
- 2 Remaining German forces at Stalingrad capitulate.
 - 3 Mr. Churchill arrives at Tripoli.
 - 6 Gen. Eisenhower appointed in command of North African theatre of operations.
 - 25 R.A.F. begin "round-the-clock" bombing.

- MARCH**
- 12 Viazma occupied by Russians.
 - 21 Eyzigorod captured by Russians.
 - 29 Gabes and El Hamma occupied by 8th Army.

- APRIL**
- 7 Offensive opened by 1st Army in Northern Tunisia.

- MAY**
- 7 Tunis and Bizerta captured.
 - 13 Axis forces in Tunisia surrender.

- JUNE**
- 11 Pantellaria surrendered.
 - 12 King arrives in North Africa. Lampedusa surrendered.
 - 13 Linosa surrendered.
 - 20 King visits Malta.

- JULY**
- 10 Sicily invaded by British, Canadian and U.S. forces.
 - 25 Mussolini resigns.
 - 26 Martial law in Italy. Fascist Party dissolved.

- AUGUST**
- 4 Orel captured by Russians.
 - 23 Capture of Kharkov by Russians.

- SEPTEMBER**
- 2 Roosevelt and Churchill meet in Washington. U.S. raid on Marcus Island.
 - 3 Italian armistice signed.
 - 8 Italy surrendered to Allies.
 - 10 Italian fleet at Malta. Rome occupied by German troops.
 - 5th Army captured Salerno.
 - 14 French troops land in Corsica.
 - 17 Russians capture Bryansk.
 - 19 Churchill returns to London. Evacuation of Sardinia by Germans.

- 25 Smolensk and Roslavl fall to Russians.
- 29 Full armistice signed by Italy.

- OCTOBER**
- 8th Army occupies Naples.
 - Corsica liberated.
 - 7 Russians cross Dnieper. 5th Army takes Capri.
 - 12 Agreement with Portugal for use of Azores.
 - 13 Italy declares war on Germany.
 - 18 Hull and Eden in Moscow.

- NOVEMBER**
- 6 Russians take Kiev.
 - 22-26: Cairo Conference (Churchill, Roosevelt, Chiang Kai-shek).
 - 28 Teheran Conference (Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill).

- DECEMBER**
- 26 Scharnhorst sunk off North Cape.

1944

- JANUARY**
- 22 Allied landing south of Rome.
 - 28 Relief of Leningrad after two years' blockade.
 - 29 2900 Allied planes drop 3000 tons of bombs during 40 hours over German industrial cities.

- FEBRUARY**
- 25 Germans evacuate Vitebsk in White Russia.

- MARCH**
- 4 Battle for Ukraine begins.
 - 9 "Greatest fire raid of the war on Berlin." 1000 bombers and 800 fighters used.
 - 19 Germans march into Hungary.
 - 20 Germans begin evacuation of Crimea. Pierre Puchean executed.
 - 23 Nazis enter Rumania and take control of strategic points.
 - 27 Russians reach Rumanian border.

- APRIL**
- 9 Russians enter Czechoslovakia.
 - 10 Odessa evacuated by Germans.
 - 22 Badoglio forms new Cabinet.
 - 28 Reds fighting on Finnish front.

- MAY**
- 11 Allied 5th and 8th Armies open a concerted offensive in Italy.

- JUNE**
- 4 Liberation of Rome by Allied forces.
 - 6 Allies land in Normandy.
 - 21 Russians take Viborg, Finland.
 - 22 Russians make new drive in Poland.
 - 26 American troops enter Cherbourg.

- JULY**
- 3 Russians take Minsk.
 - 9 British troops capture Caen.
 - 10 Soviet troops enter Lithuania.
 - 19 Leghorn falls to Allies.
 - 20 Attempt to assassinate Hitler with high explosive fails.
 - 29 Russians capture Bialystok, Dvinsk, Rezekne, Stalibai, Lwow, and Stanislawow.

AUGUST

- 4 Allies break into Brittany.
- 5 Russians take Leningrad.
- 7 Allies enter France.
- 9 Allied troops 187 miles from Paris.
- 19 Front established in France. St. Malo.

SEPTEMBER

- 1 German line pierced in Italy.
- 3 Brussels captured.
- 6 Fighting for German border.
- 13 Le Havre surrendered to Allies across Dutch border.
- 14 Soviet troops reach Sofia and Warsaw.
- 20 French and Belgian liberation of German-occupied areas.
- 23 German line broken.
- 24 German line broken.
- 25 German line broken.
- 26 German line broken.
- 27 German line broken.
- 28 German line broken.
- 29 German line broken.
- 30 German line broken.

NOVEMBER

- 15 Loop of Soviet armies round Budapest.
- 17 General advance towards Rhine.
- 20 Four armies on German soil.
- 22 French troops reach Rhine.
- 24 Strasbourg falls. Macedonia liberated.
- 30 Russians 150 miles from Vienna. Bulgaria granted armistice.

DECEMBER

- 5 Civil war in Athens.
- 6 Advance in Southern Hungary reaches Lake Balaton.
- 12 German counter-attack between Saar and Aachen.
- 26 Churchill in Athens.
- 28 Germans reach Meuse: Ardennes bulge.

1945

JANUARY

- 1 German withdrawal from Ardennes bulge begins.
- 12 Russian offensive starts from Vistula line.
- 20 Lodz and Cracow captured.
- 24 Hungary granted armistice.
- 24 Zhukov reaches Oder, opposite Berlin.
- 29 Attack on Stettin.

FEBRUARY

- 8 Oder crossed at Frankfurt and Gdansk.
- 13 Budapest falls. Zhukov captures Stettin.
- 16 Armies of Konev and Zhukov meet.
- 19 General Montgomery announces "the last round."
- 20 Goch taken.
- 26 Three-pronged attack on Rhine.

MARCH

- 6 Rhine reached between Cologne and Dutch frontier.
- 7 Americans cross Rhine over Remagen bridge.
- 20 Saar surrounded.
- 23 Von Rumpstedt sacked by Hitler.
- 26 Four bridgeheads over Rhine. Six armies crossing.
- 27 German defences on Rhine collapse.
- 28 Eisenhower announces German line broken.

APRIL

- 1 Ruhr sealed off.
- 9 Red Army takes Koenigsberg.
- 16 Allies reach Czechoslovakian border.
- 22 Russians enter Berlin suburbs.
- 25 Russians and Americans meet at Torgau.
- 28 Mussolini executed.
- 30 Himmler reported to have offered surrender.

MAY

- 1 Hitler's death announced.
- 2 Berlin occupied.
- 7 Unconditional surrender signed.

Last Saturday
I went to New-
Castle

& bought
a set of num-
bered punches
to stamp figures
on metals (6/-)
& a big ratstail
file (1/6) at
Sorby's shop.

At the Civic tool
shop I bought
small drills for
7/6. I also bought
40 small split
rivets at Sorby's
for 1/-. Last
Sunday brother
Jack's wife died
of gall disease.
Yesterday I went
to Jack's house
in Myola street
to see her & the
family, & met

Til, Pearl, Grace, Bert, Frank, Al,
Ay's sister Eva (Gibson), Lionel
Carpenter, Vera Cocking & her mar-
ried daughter Beryl Williams, &
her 2 children. May is to be buried
in the Salvation Army portion of the
Sandgate cemetery this afternoon.
Jose started to work again yesterday.

COCKING.—The Relatives and Friends
of WM. JOHN COCKING, of 11 Myola-
street, Mayfield, are invited to attend
the funeral of his beloved wife,
FLORENCE MAY COCKING. Funeral
Tuesday, from Salvation Army Citadel,
Victoria-street, Mayfield. Bandsmen
please bring instruments. Further
particulars, Tuesday's issue.
JAMES MURRAY, N.D.F.D.A.
Funeral Director.

Monday, May 14, 1945.

A Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of the late Gertrude Elizabeth Bird will be celebrated this day at 7 a.m. at the above church.

COCKING.—The Relatives and Friends of Mr. WILLIAM JOHN COCKING, Mr. and Mrs. BERT COCKING, Mr. and Mrs. ALF COCKING, Mr. and Mrs. FRANK COCKING, Brig. and Mrs. G. RIXON, Mr. and Mrs. L. CARPENTER, and FAMILIES, Miss TILL COCKING, and Mr. CECIL ROBINSON are invited to attend the Funeral of their beloved Wife, Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother and Great-grandmother, FLORENCE MAY COCKING, of 11 Myola-street, Mayfield, to move from the Salvation Army Citadel, Victoria-street, Mayfield, This Afternoon, after service commencing at 2 o'clock, for Salvation Army Cemetery, Sandgate, via Waratah Station.

JAMES MURRAY,
Funeral Director.

8103
COCKING.—The Relatives and Friends of Mrs. G. MORRIS, Mr. and Mrs. J. GIBSON, Mr. FRANK ROBINSON, Mr. GEORGE SHELDON, Mr. JIM COCKING and Mr. BOB COCKING and FAMILIES are invited to attend the Funeral of their beloved Sister, Sister-in-law, and Aunt, FLORENCE MAY COCKING, of 11 Myola-street, Mayfield, to move from the Salvation Army Citadel, Victoria-street, Mayfield, This Afternoon, after service commencing at 2 o'clock, for Salvation Army Cemetery, Sandgate, via Waratah Station.

JAMES MURRAY,
Funeral Director.

8103
SALVATION ARMY, MAYFIELD.
COCKING.—Officers, Soldiers and Bandsmen of the Salvation Army are invited to attend the Funeral of their late Treasurer, FLORENCE MAY COCKING. See family notice. Bandsmen please bring instruments.

8104 Corp. Officer, Major COLLYER.
SNOWDROP LODGE NO. 12, FREE GARDENERS.

COCKING.—The officers and members of the above lodge are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of Florence May Cocking, beloved wife of Bro. John Cocking. Please see Family Notice.

W. J. BEETON, R.W.M.

Tuesday, May 15, 1945.

The British Overseas Chinese Allied Expeditionary Force, on D Day—L. to r.: Lt.-Gen. Omar Bradley, A. Robert Gen. Eisenhower, Field-Marshal Montgomery, Air Chief-Marshal Sir T. Leigh-Pemberton





Supreme Allied Expeditionary Force, on D Day—L. to r.: Lt.-Gen. Omar Bradley, Adm. Sir Bertram Ramsay, Air Chief-Marshal Sir A. Tedder, Gen. Eisenhower, Field-Marshal Montgomery, Air Chief-Marshal Sir T. Leigh-Mallory, and Lieutenant-General W. Bedell-Smith.

41.

Sun. May 27, 1945. Jack, Gladys, John, Adell & Alma have been spending the last fortnight between us & Mrs. Bobs at Raymond terrace. They all left here by car yesterday morning. I gave Gladys an ironing stand, & Charlie gave Jack a big clock. Jack Gave me a new book entitled "Explosives", 139 pages, by John Read. It is a Pelican book. I gave Jose a brass drill gauge to hold drills & nail-bits. Jack bought a packet of quarter plate cut films & a packet of Velox paper for me as a birthday present. They cost 10/1, but I paid him for them & sent them to Mr. Finnemore. Last Thursday I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- as it was pay day. I went to Newcastle & got an injection from sister Bone; also one on the Thursday before,. Since my last entry we have received this from Wal:

"159 Grotory Terrace, Brisbane, 16-5-45. Dear Folks, Doubtless you have been very relieved & pleased to hear of the end of the war in Europe since I last wrote, for which we will all feel very thankful. However, there were no signs of jollification in Brisbane, & only a few thanksgiving services to mark the occasion. I bet we'll "let our hair down" when the Jap war is over, though, & I only hope I am down South again for the fireworks. I didn't see Fred last week-end, but he was in good nick when I did see him, & I understand that he has been changing camp. I spent the week-end before last at Burleigh Heads again-- this time with 5 other chaps, & we had a great time. I was able to get enough juice to take them down in the car, which made things much more enjoyable. Next week-end a party of us are going on a fishing trip down in the Bay, which also promises well. The work has become very busy again just like it was in 1943, but I am getting a separate office built for myself near the drawing office, & this will make conditions more pleasant...

Most of my time is still spent playing tennis & golf, with an occasional swim, & I think I am getting a bit heavier. I have just come home after playing a basketball match on the Y.M. gymnasium floor, this being one of several such matches in which I am scheduled to play.

There is no finality yet regarding my efforts to go south, but the pressure of work seems to preclude any such move for some little time. We have been having excellent weather here prior to this week, but now the cold westerlys have started to blow, & most people are complaining. They are early this year, & probably won't last long. This reminds me of clothing, & in this matter I may be able to help any of you with some coupons if you are short, so let me know. I was very glad to hear that the news on the home front was better last week, particularly in regard to Joe, & I will look forward to hear of further progress in your next letter. Art & Flo are evidently o.k. too, & I assume that Chip is also, but there seems to be very little news from the Kembla crowd. I hope that Dad is over his "teething" troubles by now, & that you, Mum, are still as hale & hearty as ever. Cheerio for now. Wal."

Sunday continued. A few days ago I bought a second hand book for 1/6 entitled "Frances E. Willard", at a shop near Ingall street, Mayfield. Miss Willard was a very active worker against the brutal drink traffic & other evils, for she was a true Christian. I do not know of one infidel or Atheist who helped her in her noble work. Charlie has built a fowl house & put 20 fowls into it, but as feed is very scarce on account of the great Australian drought he has had to kill some of the roosters, & may have to kill all of the fowls. Last Sunday night Mum & I went with Ivy & Jose in his car to aunt May's memorial meeting at the Mayfield citadel. Nearly all of the Cocking clan were present.

THE BARN CRY
Page 6
19, 1945

MRS. ENVOY MILLER, MAYFIELD
Sister Mrs. Envoy Miller, who was transferred to Mayfield Corps twenty-one years ago, has heard the Master's "Well done!" For the past eight years her faith in God was steadfast, notwithstanding her field of labour was largely confined to her home. For over fifty-four years Sister Miller had been a Salvationist, including fifty years of Local Officership. The funeral and memorial services were conducted by Major Collyer, the Corps Officer, when tender tributes were paid to Mrs. Miller's deep loyalty and devotion to God. Major and Mrs. Snellgrove (R.), Commandant and Mrs. Wright (R.), and Mrs. Major Drylie (R.) assisted the Corps Officer at all services. The Envoy, who has so patiently ministered to his beloved helpmeet during her long illness, is being comforted by the prayers and sympathy of a wide circle of comrades and friends, many of whom have been helped by the life and ministry of Sister Miller. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of death I will fear no evil," was part of Sister Miller's favourite Psalm. She left the assurance that she was going to "dwell in the House of the Lord for ever."

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Sat. June 2, 1945. This morning I took a big flathead up to Ivy & then took all of her coupon books & cards down to the public school & exchanged them for new ration books & coupons. Last thursday I got an injection in my left arm from sister Bone. At Sor by's I bought a 9-32 drill for ~~2/2~~ 2/3. At Kodaks I bought a packet of 11b paper. . Yesterday we received the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961. pte. F. Cocking 2/4 A.G.H. Australia, Monday 21st May. To-day we have just been issued with a Christmas hamper from the Comforts Fund, & this paper & pencil were in it. There are no pens or ink available yet, so it couldn't have come at a better time. I hope that it will not be indecipherable by the time that you get it. This parcel is if anything better than the last one ~~XXXX~~ I got, & was sent by a man & his wife from Maryborough. I have purposely not written to you for the last few days because I wanted the letter-card I sent to Ivy to get there first. This place seems better than the last island I was on in every way -- better climate, cooler, & not so much rain -- more open & flat country, & above all, much less disease & skin trouble. The grub, although all tinned, stuff, has the last few day got much better, & there's plenty of good stuff to eat in the canteen. The only fly in the ointment so far is the lack of water, which is pumped from an artesian river. This is a real coral island. There's anything up to 3 or 4 feet of top soil, & then hard coral, so maybe there is an excuse for them not putting more well points down. We catch a fair bit of rain in tins off the tent, & so get enough to get by on. Although we are camped practically on the beach, no one has been game so far to go in for a swim on account of wild tales of coral snakes which are supposed to kill in about 10 minutes; & until I find out about them properly I'm not going to risk it anyhow. I suppose that you're wondering now what I'm short of & what you can send me, but with the exception of an occasional local Herald & maybe the "World's News" I know of nothing that I want. I'm feeling real good & quite

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contented; & if it wasn't for knowing that you're not too happy at my being away again, everything would be o k. I was glad to get your letter & know that everyone was pretty good, with the exception of Jose, but he too seems to be improving, although by now I'll bet he's disgusted with himself & fed up with everything. When I get the opportunity I'll write to Flo & Glad & maybe Art, & then I'll be able to tell you some news from Warrawong. I haven't time to write more, but don't forget the postage now is 3d air mail, & the same penny ordinary. Fred.

Sat. June 2 continued. We also got this from KX Mrs. Webster:-

Q" 15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Cornwall, 28th March 1945. Dear Mr. Cocking, Many thanks for your good book you so kindly sent us : we are reading it just now started. Book & paper came together. We are having delightful weather. The gardens are full of Spring flowers. We have had a lot of rain through the winter, & very cold weather, but we are thankful to say we have been spared from air raids; nothing has harmed us, so we are lucky people in Portreath, & our children have been the same so far. Poor Frank has been sent to Belgium. He says he is well & has good food & good beds. They're billeted in a large house there & get the daily papers, & have a wireless set, & get all news from home & abroad. He is on guard duty. Our son Fred has been laid up 6 months with rheumatic fever. He looks very frail. He goes to hospital 4 days a week. The girls are fine just now. Myra is here, her works being closed down, so she has started to Spring clean. Everything has to shine for her.. Kathleen is all about the cooking. She says, "Bother the cleaning; let's have some to eat!" We hope your people will be wise enough to save the water instead of letting it run to sea. They're in a bad place at Saint Day for water. The old man with his horse & cart gave up, & no one to take his place, so there has been some fuss about it; & also at Chacewater, not far from St. Day..

Some time ago the Council had water laid on not

far from St. Day, so the people thought they would soon be getting it, poor things, & it would only take a few hundred feet of piping to put it into St. Day, but the Council wouldn't hear of it; but they know enough to put up the rates on all of us.)-- what for we are not allowed to know, only we know we get a summons if it's not ; but I think the people are waking up a bit now. Fancy paying 2d- for every bucket of water, & millions of gallons running to waste every day. How long will it last, I wonder. And fields of cabbages rotten in the fields, & broccoli too. We have to pay 8d. & 9d. for one. People have not the money to buy. Some are lucky to have them in their gardens. We're beat this year: I am afraid we have no ~~essentially bad fortune~~ till it like we belong to. Harry has been very bad with his heart since I last wrote, & with his back. I hope you & Mrs. Cocking are better by now, & all the rest of the family well. Not heard from my cousin David Tabb as yet. He is busy, I expect. The barbers home here are just the same -- the few that's left. The young men are all gone. We're delighted with the news (of the European war & think it will be all over soon now, thank God. But what a slaughter of human lives, lots gone from around here, lovely young men. Now I must hurry for post. We trust you may have a peaceful Easter. With kind regards to yourself & Mrs. Cocking, as ever your sincere friends, Harry & Emmie Webster. P.S. Thanks once more for paper. One day 4 arrived: the postage was correct, only delayed. We enjoy reading them, then pass them on."

Mum has also received a short letter from Mrs. E.

Morris:

Tues. June 5, 1945. Yesterday we received the following letter from Arthur:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, Friday. Dear Folks, The trousers arrived o'k, thanks. We usually manage to leave something behind, but whatever we forget it will not be Doreen. Mrs. Witheridge, yours truly, & the nipper are likely to be seeing you on the Friday night before the king's birthday, i.e. 15th June. This isn't certain, though, because Payllie's mother

may leave the wollen mill & take on a job at Newington college pretty soon. If she does she won't be able to get 4 consecutive days off. In that event I haven't yet decided whether I'll take Doreen alone or not. I'm positive I could look after her indefinitely, but she needs so many changes of clothes that I'd have to lug a pretty bulky suitcase besides carrying out 2 stone jumping, squirming, wriggling writhing daughter. Phyllis is well & sends her love: so am I & so do I. The nipper is bonzer, & everything in the garden is lovely. To-morrow & Sunday I'll be issuing ration books, So Phyll will spend the time with her Mum & Dad. I think Phyllis' Dad must have been giving the nip some coaching while we were away, for now if we ask, "Whose little girl are you?", she chips "Papa's", (meaning Grandpa's). "Would you like to live with Grandpa?". "Yes." "Whom do you love best?". "Papa". The little brute! Those kids to-day at lunch time found a tin in a lane-way. They thought the tin contained soap-flakes, but actually there was some caustic soda in it. They tossed it from hand to hand, & didn't worry much when some flakes got on their faces. Pretty soon, though, their skin began to sting. By that time they had arrived home for their lunch. They told yheir parents what had happened, but the parents did nothing about it. By the time they had finished their lunch their dials were v-ery sore & their eyes were stinging. One kid had a little more nouse than his mates. He grabbed the tin & broke a sporting record back to school where he sought me out. As soon as he showed me the unlabelled tin I recognised the caustic, found the 2 other dopes, & treated them all with acid. The boss wasn't on the premises, so I took it upon myself to send the nips to the ambulance station. The ambulance man said that I had done all he could do, but it might be as well if the kids went up to the hospital & got some ointment. Off they went. They arrived back at school about 3 o'clock, by which time their eyes had stopped stinging, & their faces, although a bright lobster pink, merely felt uneasy. It's luck the poor silly cows didn't blind themselves. And they're the sort of dopes I have to let handle chemicals. !

Phyllis' Dad has borrowed Dad's National Geographic Magazines & is highly delighted with them. If Dad can

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get hold of some blind cloth, or similar material, I'll bind each volume into a proper book so that eventually he will have a properly bound set. I'll pay for the stuff if Dad can get it, but I can't get any round here. For English "Homework" I have to write a page of description of some place or scene. That's going to be pretty easy for me, for I can see every pebble round Kikabel school, & hear the grasshoppers as they hit the roof at Gin Gin; yes, & smell the dust at both places. The only trouble is, if I write as I feel, the lecturer will think I'm overdoing it, because, he'll reckon, nowhere is as bad as what I'll describe. We do hope your lip is better, Mum,. If it's not you should plague the doctor until he fixes it. We hope, too, that Dad, Chip, & the Hill Crowd are well. Yours Arthur."

Yesterday I got this letter & postal notes & stamps for 14/- from Mr. Finnemore:-

"Bogan St., Nyngan, June 1st. 1945. Dear Mr. Cocking, Many thanks for those films. Next time you try to get any try to get super XX cut films. You need not get any more Hyperchrome green for a while as I now have about 5 dozen of them different sizes, but I am terribly short of Super XX. I could also do with a few Verichrome film NO. 116 if you can possibly get any at any time. It's simply amazing the number of photos that must be made all over the world. Last week I did 440 in 3 nights, & have done 297 so far this week, as well as 30 roll films, quite a busy side line, eh? Since I last wrote we have had an increase in the family (a girl) & both are doing well. Am enclosing postal note for what I owe you, & trust it is the correct amount owing & am not short-paying you for kindness in getting the material for me. I hope to be going to Sydney next week for a few days. Again thanking you for what you have done for me, Yours sincerely J. Finnemore. P.S. I'm putting in a couple of prints of Nyngan showing the new bowling club & tennis court. If you care to join them together you will have a good idea what it looks like from the top of the water tower."

This morning I posted another packet of 116 paper to Mr. Finnemore.

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Thur. June 7, 1945. This morning I paid Mrs. Watts, 2/- for our pension subscriptions. I went to Newcastle but could not get any films nor paper at Kodaks. I got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. She thanked me again for the presbyterian cookery book, & said that she had tried one recipe. At Sorbys I bought 2 drills for 6/-. I changed the postal notes in Newcastle & paid the Colonial Mutual Insurance £ XI £ 2-12-0 for Fred. I posted a letter to Mr. H. Webster this evening. To-day we received this letter from Glad:-

"1st Avenue, Warrawong tuesday 5th June, 1945.
Dear Mum, Yes, here it is at last. We arrived home safely after having a lovely time with you. We went out to Nellie White & Pearl last Sunday. Pearl had gone out with a girl for a walk, & Jim & Freda were at Wollongong at a football match, so Nellie was on her own. We told her you never got the telegram till 8 o'clock at night, & in future to ring up if they had anything important to tell you. Nellie said she had nothing against you for not coming down, & would tell Florrie when she came home. She's in Goulburn for a holiday. She took Joy & John with her. Lila came home to housekeep for Les, Melville & Vera. Pearl's husband was on leave: he expected to be soon sent away; so he & the boys accepted a ride on a truck into Brisbane. The truck was loaded & Denis stood on the side of the driver, when his haversack slipped. He moved to pull it up further, & lost his footing & fell on the road. When they picked him up he was unconscious, so they thought, They took him to hospital, but he died at 3 o'clock in the morning from a fractured skull, so they said, when they held a post mortem. He died on Mothers' Day, 13th of May. Bob White died at 3 o'clock in the morning too. It was 5 years last Sunday week, 27th of May. Connie left for Brisbane last Saturday on her way to America. We're all tip-top, & hope that you, Dad, & Charlie are also. I'll say good bye & the best of love to you all from all at Warrawong. Love. Glad.xxxxx.
Please excuse this, as I have just finished ironing & am in a hurry to get the tea on."

Wed. June 13, 1945. The weather has been rainy during the the las 6 days, & there has been a big floodnat Li-
~~lism~~ ~~the~~ ~~re-~~ ~~ceiv-~~ ~~ed~~ ~~ask~~ of the town is under water. T-day

To day we received the following letter from Florence:-

"Box 1 5 P.O. Nyngan , 10-6-45. Dear Folks, We were pleased to know that you were all well & that Jose had started work again. Hope that his cold soon clears up properly & he is soon A l again. We are all ppretty well now. I had a visit to the doc last week-end. My back had been troubling me nearly all the time I had that last cold, & it got so bad on Friday that I went at night & saw Dr. Forbes. He said that I had fibrositis, & that if it didn't clear up I would have to have hospital treatment. Anyhow, it has clearee up after a course of M & B tablets & a bottle of medicine. Now I am well again, & so are Robert & Bill. It being Sunday we have had a pretty quiet day near the fire. It's been cold & damp nearly all the week, & raining slightly to-day. We don't have too much rain out here. It seldom rains heavily. The weather has been real good until the rain came, but itz's getting cold now. On the coldest night of the week a man was drowned in the Bogan river. Nobody knows the p-
 particulars, except that he was found next day, & near him were 3 horses & a sulky & a tricycle. I went over to see his widow the day after, & I have seldom seen such poverty. The walls papered with n newspapers, & bare board floors. The townspeople a are taking up a collection for her & her 2 children. Robert is worrying me all the time to tell you that, "Daddy went to Cobar last night & I cried, so he brought me back some old lollies & some pretty lollies." He hates to see his Dad go anywhere these days, especially if he is going down the street. Robert likes to be sitting on the bar of the bike.
 Monday night. I left off writing last night: thought I might think of something more to tell you at a later date, but I still haven't much news. Judging by the wireless, you are having plenty of rain over there. To-day has been cold, but no rain. I got my washing done, & have just finished ironing;

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so now I won't worry much if it rains all the week. We went last week to a social for the Church. They often have entertainments of this sort here, but we don't go out much now; it's too cold dragging Robert out at night. It's hard to imagine Myola street without auntie May; & I suppose uncle Johnny & Til do miss her terribly. I have never heard of so many cards & telegrams as that. Well, it's past my bed time-- hope you all keep well & happy-- Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence."

To-day Keith brought down this letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961, F.Cooking, 2/4 A.G.H. Australia, Sun. 4th June, 1945. Dear Joe, Ive, & Kids, I was more than glad to get your letter this morning to know that Joe was back at work, that everyone else is o.k. I was beginning to wonder how Mum & Dad were, because I've only had one letter from home since I got here, & it was written before I left. As usual you seem to be the mug again, chasing round doing everyone else's work as well as your own. To finish up you'll be making yourself crook again. It seems as if you're going to be like auntie May used to be-- always helping sick people; but if you ever have occasion to give a dose of castor oil don't do it the way she used to, & don't get wax out of someone's ears as she did.

By the way you've written about the lady from Boof's place she seems to be very nice & a good neighbour; so it's the right thing to do, isn't it?

You won't be able to stone Duff out of there when the kid is home, & she'll never be home with next door & the bike to keep her out. She'll certainly cop plenty for not studying & doing her home work.. I was sorry to hear about Pickles. I wondered at his turning in the council, but apparently this was the reason. I'll bet the neighbour on the other side never get the same treatment; in fact I wouldn't be surprised if she hasn't even shown it to you. Anyhow, next time that she moans about the milko rattling the can it will be your turn to tell her how the kid bawls. Be like Mrs. Wallace was about Art. I was glad to hear that Johnno was home. Did you see him this time? Is

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he still putting on the beef ? & what did he have to say about the way he found things down home ? No, I don't remember anything about the Sharpes, but I'll bet both you & Joe burned the midnight oil talking with them. Talking about Dad & his hair-cuts-- I've had mine cut to about half inch long on top. I would have had it all cut off, but I saw one poor cow who did, when I was away, before, & he finished up with a sunburnt skull, blisters & all. I'm going to try to make it grow straight back, & even if it won't it's a bit cooler. It's by no means a novelty to be walking under the palms & have a cocoanut nut drop alongside. I've drank the milk & eaten them until I'm just about tired of them now. The other day I was riding down the road in a truck & saw the first wild monkey. He ran across in front of us ; one of those common ones, about 18 inches high, with a curly tail. The mob here said there were 3 or 4 up a tree just alongside the tent, but although I looked for a quarter of an hour I couldn't see them. It is hard to realize that it is getting cold down there: those swines of Winter westerlies are going to be hard for me to take when I'm home for good. I had a letter from Reg. David with yours. Apparently he didn't call in home. He had an extra good time in Melbourne, overstayed his holiday, & his brother put him in the manpower; so he doesn't work there any more, I want to answer his letter & write to Flo this afternoon if possible, so I won't write any more. The Yanks just took our photo, & my baldy head will be prominent. I don't know if we'll be able to get a copy, but if we do I'll send it home. I'm sending a photo that was taken back in Australia; it's pretty horrible, but perhaps Mum would like it. All the best. Fred."

I have written the following verses:-
The New Cat Language.

Sir, Once again let me complain
Of some broadcasting creatures
Who mar the tongue I learned when young,
And mutilate its features.

Some, day & night, with great delight & manner super-
 Turn years to "yurs"; when this occurs (cilious,
 Would not it make one bilious ?

If years are "yurs" fears must be furs.
 To keep one warm when chilly;
 And if time's "tame" lime must be lame;
 Which makes the language silly !

No cultured man, since time began--
 No Menzies, Ward, or Howells--
 Would call O "eow" like cats that meow,
 Nor maim the other vowels.

What's wrong with O I want to know,
 That it should suffer mauling
 By Oxford hounds until it sounds
 Like feline waterwauling ?

Young boys, I fear, now nightly hear
 (Likewise their little sisters)
 The stilted speech, which I impeach,
 Of haughty English-twisters.

No lettered Lang calls going "gang"
 Nor makes his diction dismal
 Through stupid pride too huge to hide,
 Nor ignorance abysmal.

His speech is slow, as hearers know,
 But free from frills & flounces,
 Unlike the tribe which I describe,
 Who mincingly announces.

Their shower is "shah", & power is "pah",
 While theatre is "thetter",
 And, not content with this, each gent
 Omits a final letter.

Thus air is "ai'", & fair is "fai'"
 To vandals of their kidney,
 While sure is "shaw", & poor is "paw",
 And "Sydney" stands for Sydney.

Besides all this it gives some bliss
 To mangle English daily;
 So war is "waw", & sore is "saw",
 And really is "rallay" !

Some preachers, too, have much to do
 Ere they can sink each mocker
 Of drawls & groans & pulpit-tones
 To Davy Jones's locker.

What moral might or regal right
 Have those highbrow broadcasters
 To bring to naught the language taught
 By erudite schoolmasters ?

Those stilted jays should mend their ways,
 For though I'm but a navvy
 I like to hear, distinct & clear,
 A language I can "savvy".

So, Fie, for shame !, I say ! 'Their game
 Should stop & be forgotten;
 Their stuck-up style is more than vile--
 It's absolutely rotten !

Not used.

Walt:

Fri. June 15, 1945. The following letter came from ~~Elxxx~~

"159 Tregory Terra ce, B risbane 9-6-45. Dear Folks,
 I was particularly sorry to hear of the passing of
 aunty May, as, although she may have been a bit rough,
 & ready ~~xxx~~ in some respects I'm sure she was always
 sincere & did her very best for us all. Not only that,
 I feel that she was very valuable company for Mum & Dad;
 & of course I am sorry too for her own family, who must
 miss her immensely. On the other hand, news of so many
 visitors, including Jack, Glad, Art, the Bob family &
 all the kiddies made good reading, & I hope that even
 with them gone there is still no "moping" on the home
 front. News of Joe's return to work was also very wel-
 come & I was very interested to hear of our budding
 poultry farmers. I wrote a long letter to Fred last
 Monday, & it is my guess that he is at Morati, but the
 censor unfortunately deleted portion of his letter

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which may have given a clue. I felt compelled to mention aunt May's death, as he would have eventually learned of it, & previous silence would then be indefensible. In any. In any case I felt that he should know, & that his worries for home are almost wholly occasioned by the thought that you in turn worry, & it was along these lines that I wrote to him, besides of course giving him the local gossip. Since last writing we have had an almost continuous spell of wet weather here, which started on about the 19th of May when we were down to the Bay on a fishing trip. Things otherwise have been pretty good, & I am well set up in my new office & still very busy.

You will be surprised to know that I had a letter from Ray Bone on Monday, & that he is the manager of Lakerstein's in Camperdown. This firm is associated with the Producers Distributing Society, which is an enormous organisation; the P.D.S. has decided to form a large engineering organisation for the construction of buildings & the manufacture of machinery for itself & associated industries. I was quite flattered when Roy told me he had premised the general manager to contact me & inquire if I would be interested in taking charge of the new project at a salary of not less than £ 800 p.a. At the moment I have not committed myself in any way, but have written for further particulars. However, there is just a possibility that I will be back in Sydney sooner than expected. Next week-end being the king's birthday holiday, we are going down to Burleigh Heads again, but it may be a bit cool for swimming, but enjoyable nevertheless. I hope you are all feeling fit now after your long run of bad luck. "Cheerio. Wal."

We also got this from Phyllis:-

"106 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, 12-6-45. Dear Mum & Dad, This is the last time that we'll be putting the above address on our letters, as we are moving camp again this week-end. The previous occupants of the house are coming back owing to the ill health of Mrs. Rowe's mother. Mrs. Rose senior resides here at Marrickville. She is a widow, & as Mr. Rose was her only child she is wholly dependent on him & his wife in times of

sickness. It appears that the old lady has Bright's disease & has completely lost the use of her legs. She is to undergo an operation at the end of the month, which may result in the amputation of one of her feet.

Mrs. Rose junior feels that it is her duty to care for her mother-in-law although she will be tied down quite a fair bit. The old lady will be coming here to live as soon as she comes out of hospital, as there are 3 bedrooms in this house, & Mrs. Rose will be able to devote more time to her if she is staying under the same roof as the old lady. We will make a temporary home with Mum & Dad. I say temporary because I am optimistic in regards to the house next door to this. The folk there are waiting for a relative's house to be built (building operations have commenced, I believe). We have been promised the house next door, & I feel sure we will be in it before next Summer. Arthur & Mum will not be coming to Newcastle for the holiday week-end, as that will be next week-end & we will be getting settled at Mum & Dad's house. We have decided, however, that it would be better to wait until the August holidays which will commence in about 9 weeks time. Arthur, Mum & Doreen would then travel up together, & Mum stay for a week, which would be quite a change for her. I would look after Dad for that week, & when Mum returned, travel up on my own & stay the last week & return with Arthur & Doreen. If these arrangements would be convenient for you we can make final arrangements at a later date. The English sailor cousin arrived in Sydney again last week. He brought 2 of his pals out one evening to meet Mum & Dad. Dad said it seemed that they were entertaining the British fleet, as my cousin is on a cruiser, one of his pals a destroyer, & the other an aircraft carrier. You can imagine the varied & exciting tales that were told that night. How are Flo, Bill & Robert getting on? I really must try to write to them in the near future. Goodness knows when I'll be seeing them again. I don't suppose it will be at Christmas unless they call in on their way to Newcastle. I am enclosing a recipe which I think you will find acceptable in these days of butter & egg shortages. Mum & I have made the cake a few times, & it has

been a success each time. We baked it in a long cake-tin & it was quite nice cut down in slices & spread with a little butter. It is very much like one of those fruit rolls you buy in the shops. Well, folks, I am afraid there is no more news just now. Give our love to all at home. We are all keeping well, although Doreen is recovering from a heavy cold. Her spirits, however, have not been dampened by it, she is just as wild as ever. Cheerio for now. Love from Arthur, Doreen & Phyllis."

This is the recipe for the Brownie Cake:-

One cup mixed fruit, 1 cup sugar, 2 cups plain flour, 1 cup water, 1 tablespoon dripping, 1 teaspoon carb. soda, half teaspoon spice essence & salt.

Method:-

Boil fruit, dripping, water & sugar. When cool add spice flour & carb. soda & salt. Grease tin, & cook in a moderate oven for 3 quarters of an hour.

Our address in future will be 15 Charles Street, Marringville."

Sat. June 16 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm from sister Grenell, who has not yet gone from the hospital. I could not get any paper nor film from Kodaks. I bought 4 packets of plain flour for Mum, as flour is short. Yesterday I paved the floor of a portion of the fowl run with bricks, & plated out 60 onion plants. Charlie has put a chain in my old silver watch that my father evidently bought of Mr. Rosenberg at Kadina & gave me. The watch must be about 100 years old, but it has not been used very much.

Thur. June 28, 1945. Last thursday & to-day I got injections from sister Grenell. I could not get any films nor paper at Kodaks, but I could have bought photographic plates there. I bought 5 pounds of millet seeds at Noyes' shop in Newcastle for 1/-. This afternoon I bought 2/2 worth of fowl feed from Owens. Yesterday Bill Purify sent me a book entitled "Mer-

chantmen At War." It is "the official story of the Merchant Navy 1939 to 1934."

We have received the following letter from Florence::

" Nyngan 22-6-45. Dear Mother & Dad, When I received your last letter so soon after your reply I had intended to follow your example & answer promptly too, but somehow the time has slipped by & I am afraid it's a bit longer than usual. I haven't felt too much like writing letters this week; my ears have been worrying me again, or I should say that my ear has been. I went to the doctor last Sunday, & he doesn't seem to know much about the subject; anyhow I didn't go back there, & was very tempted to hop in the train & come home & see a good specialist. I was wishing that Bill had been home to talk it over with him. He came home to day, & there isn't much to talk over now, except that what was troubling me is just about right. Something which might have been a boil burst last night, & since the ear has discharged the pain has just about gone. If it does recur I'll probably take the trip to Dubbo, as I don't want another 3 months like I had last winter. Now that that little episode is over all 3 of us are well as usual. Hope you are all still "in the pink." This is our third day of rain, it's very continuous, but it will make our cauliflowers grow: they are very tall, although they haven't any hearts yet. Besides them we have onions, carrots, parsnips shallots, cabbage, & spinach. They are all coming on well. Spinach & turnips we are using. we haven't any flowers out yet, except violas like pansies, but several are in bud. Sorry to hear of the boil, Dad,; if you get too many go & see if the doctor will give you something for them--sulpha diazone (I think that is the spelling) is very good; it cured me of boils in the ears in 2 days; but you must have a doctor's prescription. They are 6d. each, but you only need about 10, I think, to effect a cure. We are still waiting for Fred's letter. Perhaps he is a bit like me & keeps putting it off. It was sad about Pearl White's husband, wasn't it? They seem to have had a fair share of bad luck in recent years I suppose Pearl will come back & live with Nellie again

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I hope Connie Bob gets a better reception than some of the girls going over: they are pretty disappointed according to the papers. Well, Bill has my bath reay, & I hate a cold bath (it's too wet to go hunting outside for more wood) so I'll say cheerio. Good night. Love from us all P.S. Thanks for the tip about the rationed goods. I'll inquire here. Florence."

We also received this from Fred:-

"n X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G.H. Australia.

I am sorry that I have kept you waiting for a letter for so long, but since I last wrote there have been no postal facilities available, hence it was useless waiting. You must have put up some good arguments & a lot of time to get the o.k. to run poultry, & even now I suppose that you get an occasional growl. There would be no use in you sending anything, because, as you say, it wouldn't keep; & besides the grub is on the improve & should shortly be good again. We had real calm weather coming over, & apart from the usual few who knew beforehand that they would be sick, it was a real nice trip for everyone. Wal wrote telling me that aunt May had died, & that you told him not to let me know, but really, although she was a real good scout, it was no shock to me, as she has been sick so long, & if she felt at all well she had to go out, & didn't like being idle a minute. I don't know whether Wal told you about his offer of a Sydney job or not, or that Reg. David is no longer working for his brother. It would be nice for you if he & Wal both finished up working there, wouldn't it? It must have been like Christmas having everyone at home (except Flo & Bill), but you never told me any news about them; but as soon as I get time I'll write to them all & so get their news first hand. It's practically dark & there is very poor light, so I'll finish now & write something decent at the first chance. It's good to know that Joe & his family are well, & you & Dad too. This will at least let you know that I'm o.k. You never said if you got a photo I sent you. So long. Fred."

59.

Fri. June 29, 1945. This morning I wrote a note to Mr. F. J. Finnemore asking him whether plates will suit him instead of films. Cold weather.

Sat. July 7, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister Grenell. She thanked me Mr. Evans for our donations to the collection that was made for her coming wedding. I bought a 5/32 drill for 11/- at Paynter's & 5 lbs. of millet seeds for 1/- at Noyes's shop. I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- & posted the Life of Frances Willard to Robert Purdy. I paid Miss Smith at Giles's // 11/- for doctor Opitz. The papers are full of reports of the death of John Curtin, prime minister. Mr. Ford is now in Curtin's place in the Federal parliament. We have received this letter from Arthur:-

"15 Charles St, Sunday (July 3 1945. Dear Folks, Curley can join the Rechabites as a juvenile, subject to Joe & Ivy giving proof of her age & the fact that she is in good health. As far as I can ascertain from our rule book the cost is only 6d. per quarter, but I don't believe it: I must have misread things somehow. As far as I know the juveniles have regular meetings, & attendance at these would be a good thing to develop Curly socially. When she reaches the age of 16 she can apply for adult membership, which will cost her about 15 bob per quarter. The older a person is (after 16) at the age of joining, the greater the cost per quarter. I joined at 26, & I pay £ 1-3-7. Phyllis joined at 16, & she paid 15/3. The Rechabites seem a pretty fair mob to deal with. You remember when I had the flu in Newcastle the year before last? Well, besides getting my school pay for the week, I received 3/6 a day from the lodge. I feel like the village idiot for speaking so sharply to the laundry people when I was last home. You must feel a bit dopy about it too, but, as you say, Sewell & Wighams & the Newcastle Steam Laundry people are pretty lax in their methods.. Anyhow it's good you have the costume. Your comments on my little sweetheart, Mum, are what I call fighting words. Fancy suggesting that our little girl is so wild that she'd be likely to walk off the train! Oh no, our kids

don't do things like that. Yours might have done that, & other fellows' might, but not ours. Doreen is a good nip, so good in fact that I take her out on my own from time to time. She & I went to Congress together last Sunday afternoon, & she was a little lady! We want to write to Fred; so will you send us his address, please? Thanks. How is your lip lately, Mum? You mustn't neglect it, you know. And how are Dad & Charlie getting on? pretty well, we hope. Phyll & the Witheridges send their love. The nip is in bed, so she won't be sending her's just now. She'll see you next month. Arthur."

This is just a little P S. We are very anxious to buy doreen a doll's pram, but although we have looked everywhere & made various inquiries, so far we have failed to locate one. I remembered just recently that Daphne has a little pram, & was wondering if she would be willing to sell it. I really mean sell-- & not as a gift. Would you please have a little word with Ivy about it? You can let me know in your next letter. I bet poor old Dad was "hauled over the coals" re the missing costume. Never mind; all's well that ends well. See you all sometime in the future. Love. Phyllis."

We also received this letter from Walter :-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane 29-6-45. Dear Folks. When I last wrote we were experiencing very heavy & prolonged rain up here, as you will have read, it eventually flooded Northern N.S.W. towns. However, after some cold Westerlies during the last couple of weeks, we are now having excellent weather, although the nights are cold.

I wrote to Fred a few weeks ago, as also did Reg. David, & Reg. had a letter from him a couple of days ago. As expected, Fred mentioned the fact that censorship had prevented him from writing earlier. He is evidently quite well, but somewhat tired of tinned foods, although he expects that to improve shortly. If you have not heard from Fred yet I'm sure it won't be long before you or I do. Morotai, by the way, is the most Northern island of the Halmahera's. I have had no further information regarding the Syd-

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ney job, except that Ray Bone is getting further details for me. In the meantime, we are to be paid for Saturday mornings in future, & my living allowance has at last been restored. Work is still very busy, though, & to-morrow morning I may go down to Southport to inspect some steam & hot water plant for purchase, in which case I'll probably stay down at the coast for the week end. Five of us went down to Burleigh Heads for the king's birthday week-end, & had an excellent time. You will be surprised to know that the water was very nice for swimming, being by no means too cold. Your last letter was very welcome, particularly as everybody answered the roll-call with "All present & correct, sir." Evidently Joe is his old self again after his long sickness. You seem to have missed my point with regard to Fred -- his chief concern would seem to be that you worry about him. Naturally he would want to know all the news from home, whether good or bad, but as with most people away from home, he is anxious that he personally should cause no worry or anxiety. Anyhow, it's good to hear of everybody being well down there, as I too am. Please let me know if you can ever use some more cash. Enclosed £5. Cheerio. Wal."

Yesterday we received this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan, Sunday, 1-7-45. Dear Mother & Dad, Well, it looks as though the trip home is off for the present, anyway. My ears are not so bad now that I can't wait until Christmas, & unless they do become painful again, I'll wait & perhaps see a doctor over there if this fungus business isn't cleared up. I am pretty certain that it won't be. I don't think the doctor here knows anything about it. I am using an ointment that he prescribed for me, & that, I hope, will prevent any boils, but as for using the drops (rectified spirits of wine) I am afraid that my ears are too tender for that, & I think they will need treatment first like I had last time. You remember he gave me some treatment in the surgery before I used the drops, & I think that I need that treatment again., but I'll leave it awhile because now, as I said before, I haven't

any pain. Long journeys don't appeal to me much this cold weather, & ,as you know, I am pretty hard to put up with when it's cold.; so I hope I haven't got to inflict my presence on you again this winter. It takes Bill all his time to put up with me sometimes. He says he'll send me home to Mother; but I tell him you won't have me: so he has to put up with me because he promised "for better or worse", & you didn't. Robert & I have had a pretty quiet day, or perhaps Robert's day hasn't been so quiet, as he went to Anthony Walker's birthday party this afternoon. That is Robert's 7th since he came out here, & he will be having his own party on Wednesday; so that's a pretty good record. Valerie is away for the week-end, & Bill went to Bourke yesterday. It's a great custom out here to have birthday parties, & of course Robert doesn't like to be left out. We are asking about 14 kiddies: it's just a small affair,, but I think Bill would have liked to be here to see Robert's first party. I had a letter from Mrs. Smith during the week, & she is moving into a house in Kerr street this week-end, & seemed very glad that she didn't have to take the house in Hamilton. I am glad that you got your dress back again, but I can't see how you were to blame for the mistake.. It has been a beautiful day here, but yesterday morning was very cold: it's the worst morning I have ever known in Nyngan. You remember the picture show you went to over here-- well it's for sale at £ 800. Mr. Stallard, the owner, has been ill & in hospital for months, which is the reason for his wanting to get rid of it, but so far I haven't heard of anyone wanting it. Our landlady, Miss Simons, is in hospital, as she frequently is, (with a cancer of the stomach), but this time the doctor gives little hope for her. He thinks she will only live a few months at the most. Well, it's bed time, so I'll say cheerio. -- Love from Florence.

P.S. No, Mother, I don't think the baths affect my ears."

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Sat. July 7, 1945. Continued. Last Wednesday I sold my electric pick-up to Mr. J. Lawson of 61 Roe street, Mayfield, for 25/-. He came on Thursday night & gave me his cheque for the amount. He works in an office at Stuart & Lloyd's, but is expecting to be shifted shortly. Mum's pension & mine have been raised from £ 2-9-6 per fortnight each to £ 3-0-6 each.

Tues. July 17, 1945. Ivy has received the following letter from Fred:-

" N X 193961 F.Cocking 2/4 A.G.H. Australia, 1st July 1945. Dear Ivy, I'm sorry to have to disillusion you about the address. It was written by one of the fellows in that photo I sent.. I had no pen & I wouldn't use his fountain pen, so he did it for me: anyhow the only "fairy locks" would have been a very brunette brunette of the genus known as "boong". As things have quietened down considerably I can tell you, without being afraid that you'll worry too much, that I'm now in N.W. Borneo, but regulations stop me from saying much more than just that. I had a letter from Reg. David the other day & I can't help thinking of the state he was in. You know, I suppose, that he wrote to me while in bed with a boil or ulcer on his shoulder. He wrote it with his left hand, & it would have taken Sexton Blake all his time to decipher it. I haven't heard any more from Wal, & I'm anxiously waiting to hear of any developments about the Sydney show. I suppose that you people are too: it will affect you more than me. I know how he'd rather be there than at Brisbane, & if the manpower don't stop him I think that that's where he'll finish up. I am sending some of the Jap money that was used here: a 10 cent for each of the kids. I have some more of other values which I'll send home to Dad when I write next. Nearly every day there's a stack of locals wanting to barter it or pine-apples & bananas for whatever they can get from matches or tobacco to tinned grub. The trouble is that although we get too much tinned stuff it's always dished up on the plate, & so we never get an unbroken tin to swap; just another instance of having what each other wants, but no way of making a level swap. I got a letter from Joe to-day, & I'm

glad to hear that he's practically o k , but I didn't know that he's been learning how to be a farmer, or that he skinned his heel in the attempt. Keith seems to be a very precocious sort of lad; in fact, if you ask me, he knows more than the rest of you all put together: Wal included,, who although I'd told him previously, had to be told a second time before he'd believe it. Before we'd got off the boat some niggers in canoes came out to meet us & I thought we were going to see some queer looking things. Their heads were practically shaved, but a little patch had been left & was about 6 inches long, but they were the only ones I've seen like that, & now they seem to be fairly intelligent with nothing unusual to distinguish them from any other "beongs". You never said anything about the type or design of the house that Art was contemplating, nor the cost, or who's going to erect it. It seems to me that if he had a yarn to Chip it wouldn't do any harm, or maybe you & Joe could talk it over with him. I'm always a bit afraid that he has Johnno's bad luck, & , like him, will KXcome the proverbial in Johnno's usual language. The photo wasn't a good one, but it did no harm to send it. They're all good fellas & the chaps I work with. The young snowy head, incidentally, wrote the address. This seems about all for now, so I'll finish up. Look after yourself. Fred."

We have received this from Florence:-

"Box 15 Nyngan 10-7-45. Dear Mother & Dad,
First of all I must thank you for the birthday gifts that arrived. We haven't decided yet what we shall buy, but Robert suggests keeping his until we go to Newcastle & then buying a cowboy suit, a tent, & a gun. He was very pleased with the book you sent to-day, Dad, & although he was given 10 picture books for his birthday, he seemed to get more fun looking at the pictures in this one; his main interest is that "Dad sent it." Anyhow, it will come in useful for him later on. Don't blame me for that letter being posted minus a stamp. while I was looking in the box for mail Robert slipped it in the letter box. He always carries your letters down & posts them, but I generally keep stamps

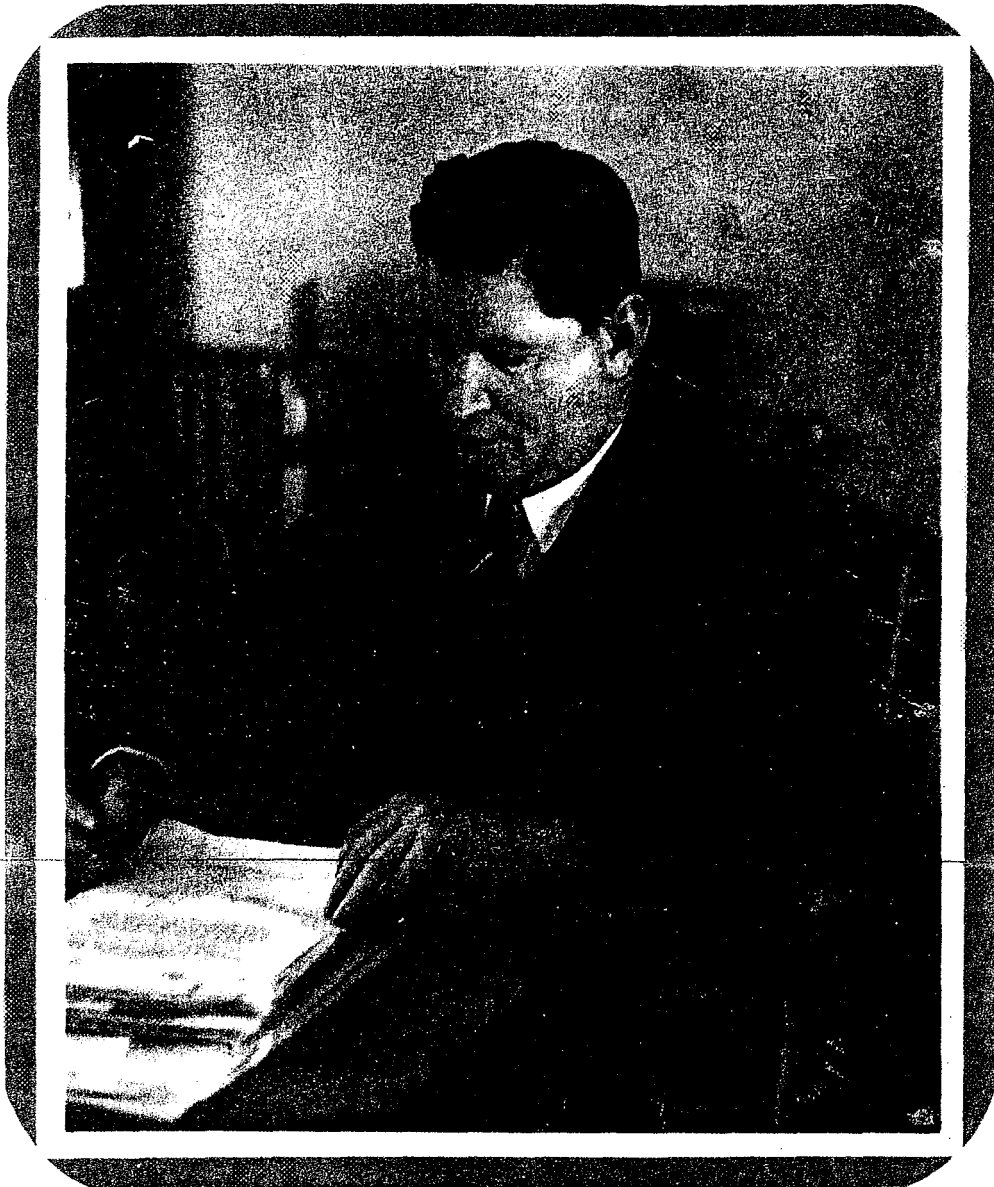
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**J. A. BEASLEY, Minister for Supply
and Development.**

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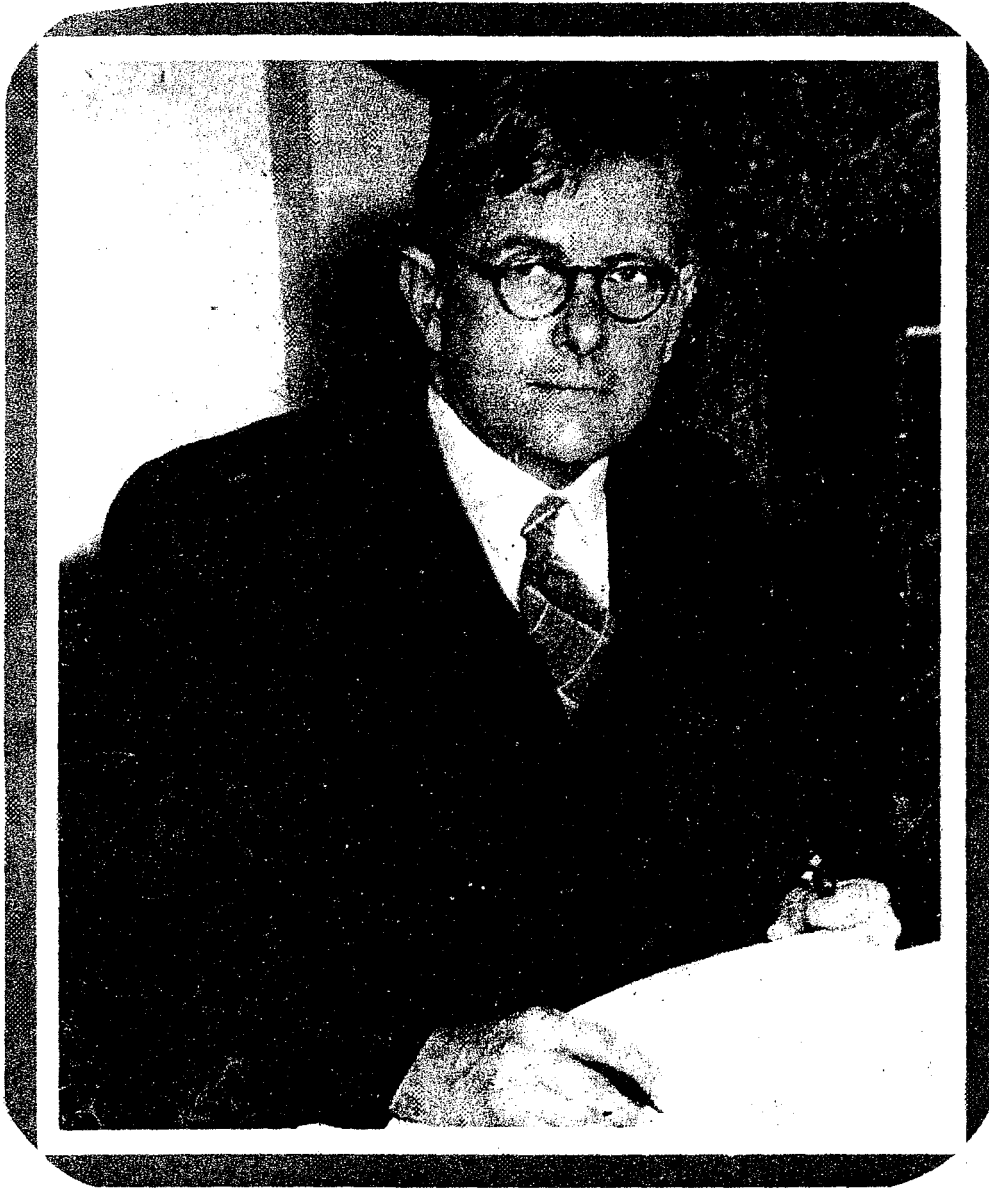


A. W. FADDEN, *Leader of the*
U.A.P. - U.C.P. Opposition

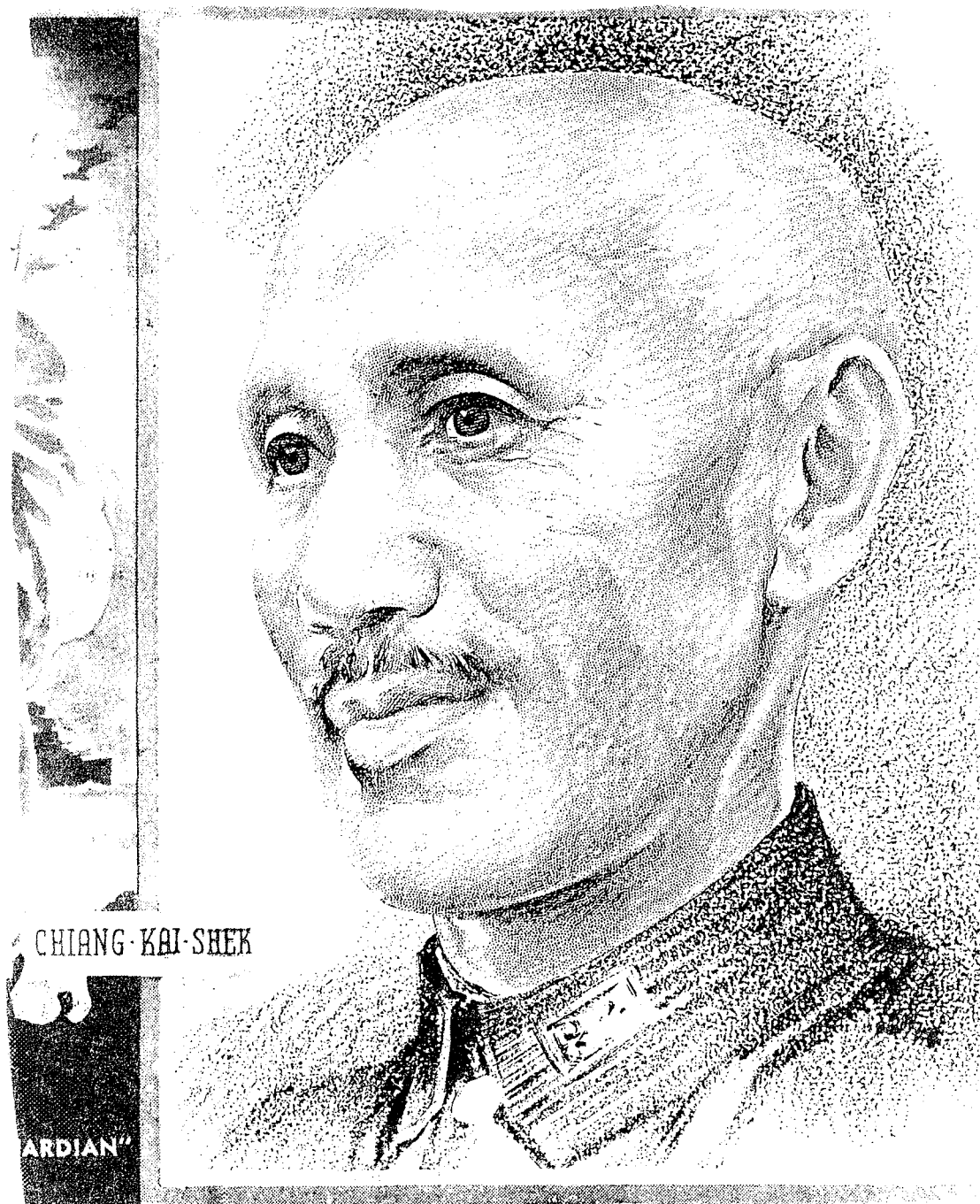
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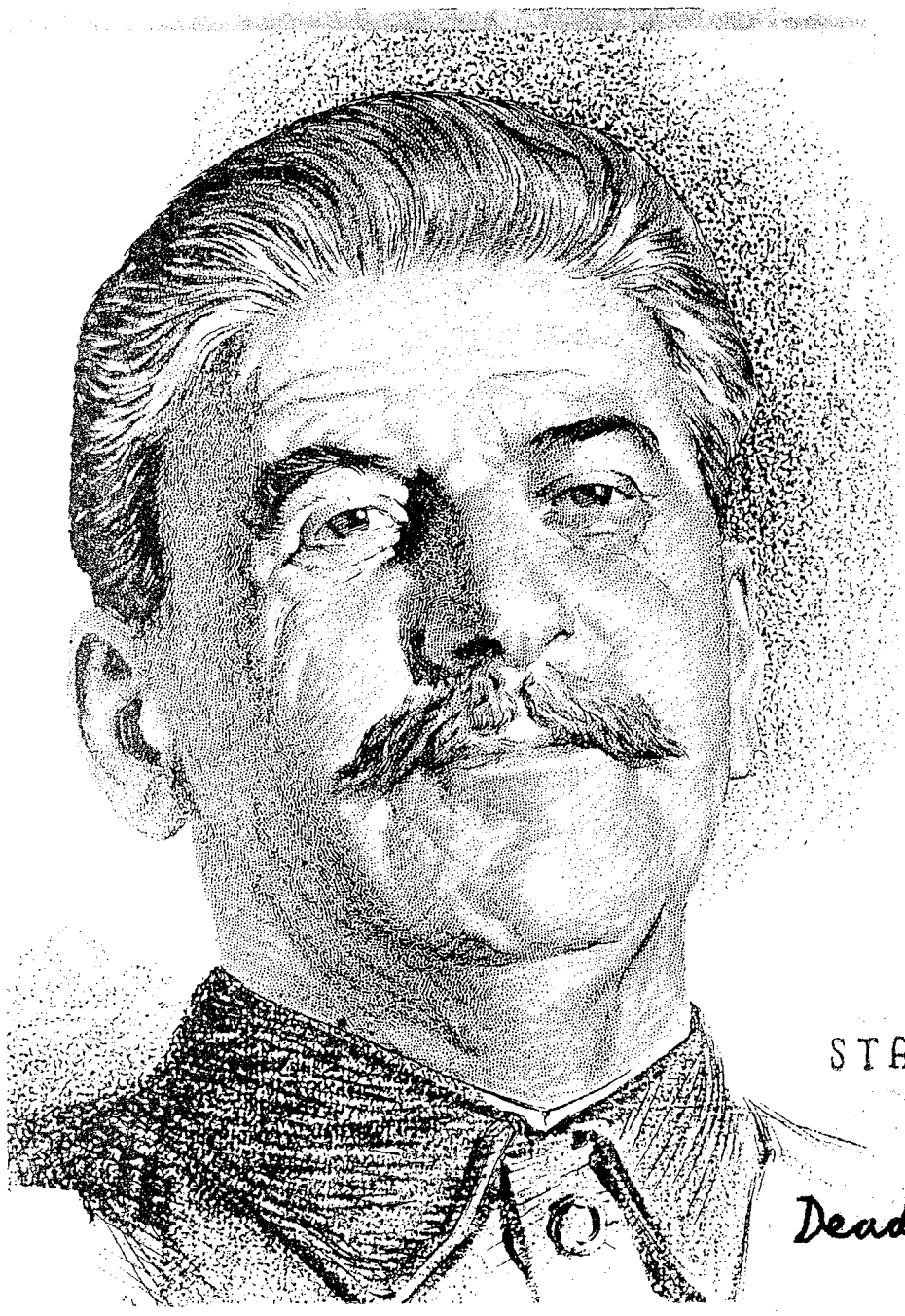


JOHN CURTIN, Prime Minister
of the Commonwealth



**DR. H. V. EVATT, Attorney General and
Minister for External Affairs**



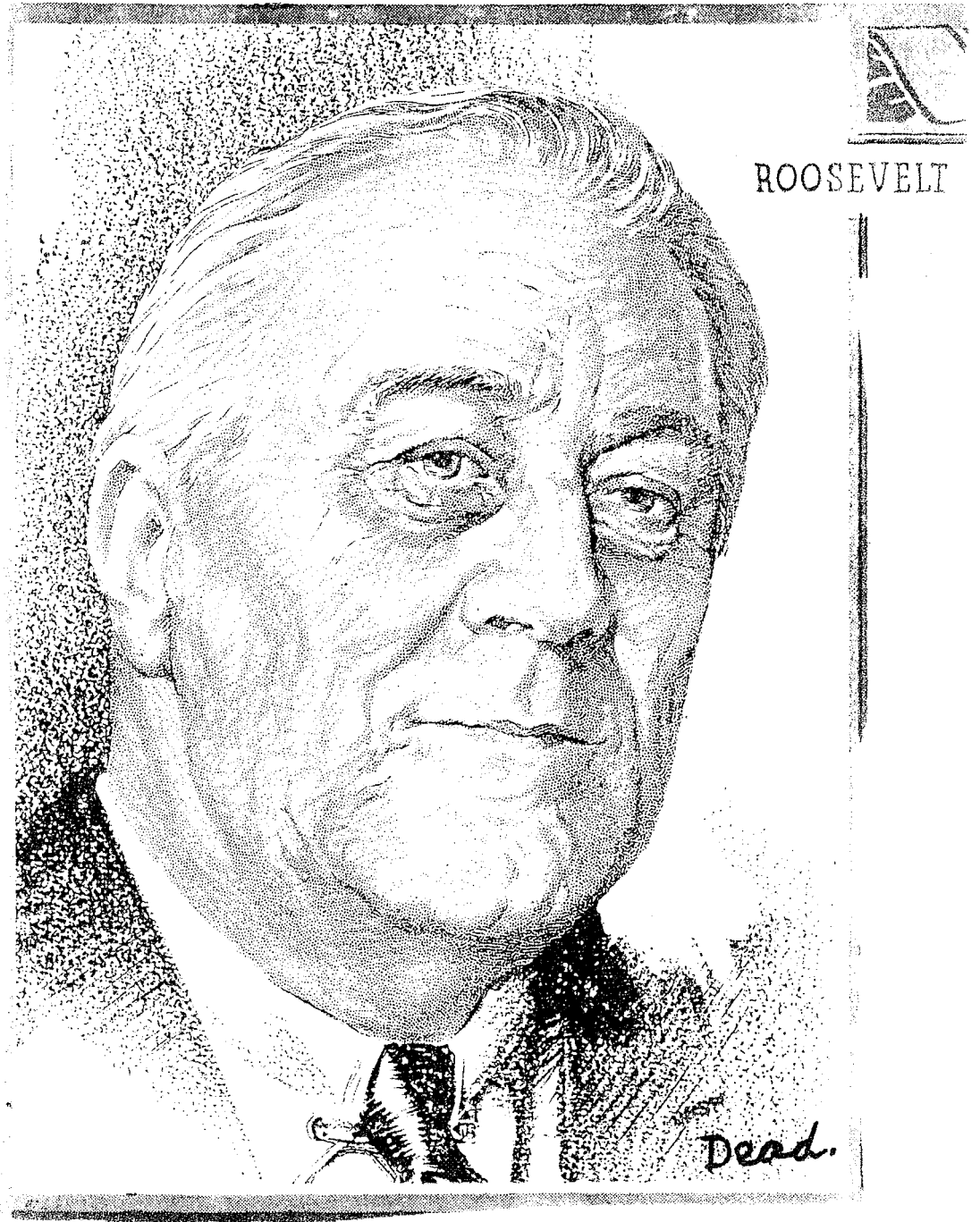


STALIN

Dead.

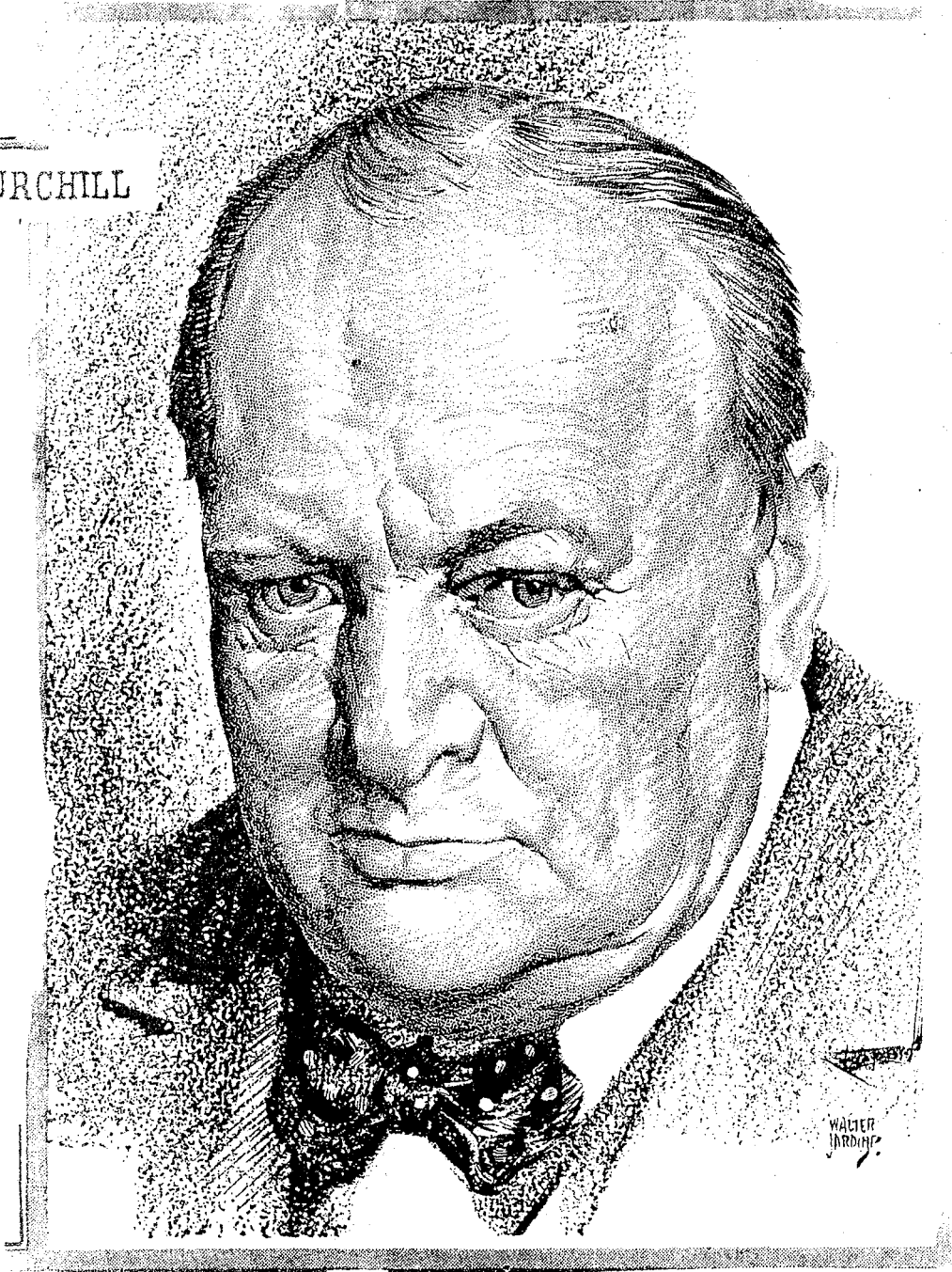
"THE SUNDAY"

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CHURCHILL



here & put them on before I go to the post office, but that day I was out of them, & Robert was too quick for me. His birthday party was a great success. We had a good warm day, & I think all the nippers had a good time. Fourteen there were; only 3 couldn't come. I would have liked to get some snaps, but Valerie couldn't get a film, so we had to miss that part of it. I would have liked to send some over to you. I am sending some over just for you to look at though, you know the conditions now. Even if I did have several prints of each I don't think they would be worth while giving you as they are not very good, but I am sending them over just so that you can see just how full of mischief that young rascal grandson still is. He has good fun now with his bike; he would hardly ride it at all until his birthday. When I would ask him to ride it he would say that it wasn't his birthday yet. Anyhow, now I think that it wasn't just a waste of money. The little girl, I had better explain, is Beverly Young. She is a dear little kiddie, although she doesn't look so good in the snaps. She came up at lunch time on the day of Robert's party & went home the next morning. She will be 4 in October. Bill is out to-night at a practice for a concert that the men of the church are putting on this Thursday night in the Town Hall. There are other items too, but it will be mainly the dialogue & songs by the men, & of course he must go to that. If there is an account in the local paper I'll send it on. We had a letter from Fred the other day. He was well, although I don't think there was any news much, except that he had plenty to occupy his time; certainly enough to be able to enjoy his sleep at night. There isn't any startling news to tell you, so I'll close down. Hope that you are well. Cheerio. Love from us all & many thanks. Florence.

P.S. Had £10 offered me for my wedding dress the other night."

Tuesday continued.) I have received the following letter from Muir Holburn & Marjorie Pizer

"C/o Dept of Post War Reconstruction, 203 Collins St., Melbourne. 11-7-45. Dear Mr. Cocking. We are returning herewith a number of your poems that we will be unable to use. Our work on the anthology has been considerably prolonged owing to the necessity for much additional & careful research. We are hoping, however, that the book will be ready by Christmas & as soon as we have completed our final draft, we shall return the rest of your poems to you. With kind regards, Yours fraternally, Marjorie Pizer Muir Holburn."

The poems returned are:- "I Wonder." "Anzac Drive." "New Year's Noises." "A Good Example." "At The Gate." "Are You Contented?." "The Class-Struggle Continues." "What Is Class-Consciousness?." "Pensioners." "What Is Prohibition?." "What Is An Empire?." "Foolish Man." "We'll Take Our Own Again." "The Workers." "What Is Patriotism?." "Why Bloggs Should Be Audacious." "Be Extreme." "What Is Capitalism?." "What Is Socialism?." "The Soldier's Lament." "What Socialism Is Not." "Let Old Craft-Unions Be Forgotten." "Empire Day." "How To Rob & Fool A Nation." "The infernal Sack." "Sleep On & Take Your Rest." "Six Hours." "Do You Know?."

They still have "To Mothers." "Circumstances Alter Cases." "A Millionaire's Pension." "A Jingo's Jeremiad." "A Collier's Life." "A Wage-Slave's Life." "To Social Parasites." "A Shirker's Life." "New Year's Nonsense."

Fri. July 20, 1945. I went in yesterday as usual & got an injection in my right arm from sister Grenell. I paid Mrs Watts 2/- & now owe only 2/- each for the year. Yesterday week I caught a cold through being wet & cold, but I am now almost well again. This evening I got a certificate from doctor Opitz for the Gardeners's lodge, & posted it to Mr. Jones. Last Wednesday I posted a verichrome 116 film to Mr. Finemore. To-day we received the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking. 274 A.G.H. Australia."

"Tues. July 10, 1945. Dear Folks I can take a hint, & as a matter of fact it does look better. By the time you get this you should already know, from the letter I sent to Ivy, that I'm in N.W. Borneo; & where I was before that shouldn't be hard to work out; in fact by the letter I had from you to-day you seem to know as much as I do myself. Up till just lately we've not had to put stamps on the letters. No stamps available didn't mean exactly that, because although there were stamps there was no Borneo cash; & although we had plenty of a different sort of foreign money we might just as well have been broke. However, the canteen gave us tick, & as there's no other place to spend money we were just as well off without it. It seems strange that although we know the value of the money & how many dollars go to the pound, we just don't seem to know the spending power or value we should get. I hope that I'm not so long away that I'll forget what a "coupla bob" should buy. Being here means an extra 9d. a day; so I'm drawing 9/3 a day: what a phenomenal screw! No wonder "Fat" keeps getting fatter, is it? Don't think I'm moaning -- far from it. I've been in much worse places & lived under much worse conditions. In fact it's very pleasant here now. We have moved out of the tents into a house; a nice clean place, built on stilts, with a veranda about 10 x 12 (where I'm sitting now writing this) & one other room about 20 x 16 where about 6 of us sleep. The workshop is underneath, & we've managed to rig up quite an effective electric light. I just filled my recently acquired fountain pen: it's handy, but it needs a bit of attention. I got it second-hand, but it'll come good -- no, don't send me one. A Chinese, his wife & a couple of kids lived here before us, & although I don't think it needed it, we've sprayed & fumigated it about a dozen times; so it should be clean. I'm in real good nick: nothing the matter with me, & you know how glad I am that every one down there is the same. I wrote to Flo, but she hasn't answered yet, so I didn't know that her ears had been crook again. It's nearly time for lights out, so I'll have to finish, but I have to write to Joe first chance I get; so anything I've missed to-

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night I'll put in it. There's only one thing that has tricked I was terribly surprised to see the monogram on the envelope you sent: either you're getting very loyal or the shortage of everything is responsible.. Still, I was very glad to get it. Thirteen days to get here seems a bit too much, doesn't it? especially when other fellows are getting them in 3 or 4 days. I'll enclose in this a few Jap notes up to one dollar. So far I haven't been able to get a 5 or 10 dollar note, but if I do I'll send it to you.

I mentioned in a previous letter to you how sorry I was to know about aunt May, but actually it never came as a shock, because I'd expected it for some time., knowing how sick she has been lately. Thanks for the air-mail stickers. I have neither time nor room for any more. So long. Look after yourself.
Fred."

Fred had enclosed Jap notes of the following values: One cent; five cents; ten cents; fifty cents; & one dollar. All are printed in English.

Wed. July 25 1945. To-day we received this from Walter-

" 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane 23-7-45. Dear Folks, I am rather late in writing, but there has, in fact, been very little to write about. Life here is quite pleasant, as usual, I am not overworked, I am well paid & I have pretty well everything I need-- so that's not too bad all round, is it? You too seem to be keeping well, which is very nice to know. ; thus perhaps with the exception of Mum's & Dad's sore eyes & Flo's sore ears, all of which apparently have now passed. The weather here is very pleasant lately & I expect that the same applies to Newcastle.

At the moment I am sitting at home listening to a little "Micky Mouse" wireless which Reg. David has kindly given me the use of. Since last writing to you I have had a letter from Fred, & he is evidently quite well & getting very brown. In my reply I impressed on him the desirability of letting me know of anything which could be of any use to him; this would be more convenient than sending things from down there, but

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so far he hasn't asked for anything. However, I expect a letter any day now. Still no news to hand of that new job with P. D. S. in Sydney, but a new chap named Smith (formerly Mayor Smith) has started here & is assisting me., & Melbourne is now seriously considering my transfer. They are also considering putting me on the permanent staff, which I don't mind because I can always leave in any case if I want to. The car has been losing power lately, so I took it to the garage this morning & they may have to fit a new set of rings. Cheerio for the present -- hope you are all well. Yours Wal."

I have finished concreting the floor of the fowls house, & have planted some grape vine cuttings near our eastern fence.

Sun. Aug. 5 1945. Last Thursday week & last Thursday I got injections from sister Grenell, but she is to be at the hospital only another week. On Thur. 6th I went to Mr. Williams' house for the ledge cheque, but the girl could not find it. Mr. Williams brought it a few days afterwards. I got a certificate from doctor Opitz on the 23rd. 20th of July.

Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 30-7-45. Dear Mother & Dad, Now what have you been saying about me? I'm sure it's not very complimentary, so we'll skip it. I'll admit you have had reason to growl a bit: I have been pretty long-winded this time. It's a long story. First of all my ears trouble me pretty often still; so I made an appointment to see a doctor in Dubbo last Friday week. I caught the Bourke train on which Bill was returning, & so the family had the week-end in Dubbo, returning on Monday. Last night was the concert I spoke of, so I thought I would wait & so be able to tell you all about that, & send the local paper over with the account of it at the same time. anyhow, there was no mention of the concert in the paper. By this my ears were pretty painful again & so writing was put aside again. Yesterday they commenced to discharge again & now are pretty easy. The doctor said it will take a long time

to heal them. I wasn't very satisfied with his treatment of them. I think doctor parret understands the trouble better than any of them. We were disappointed that I had not taken the trip home. My eyes had been troubling me for a week before I went down, & he treated them & gave me a pretty thorough test. He said I need glasses; anyhow I have the prescription for them, but I'll get them when I really have to. He seems to be much more interested in eyes than ears although he specialises in both.

Well, the concert was a great success -- the best ever been in Nyngan was the verdict of most people. The concert party will be getting a few trips to the surrounding places to put it on there. The same afternoon that I had made arrangements to go to Dubbo I had a letter from Olive Werley saying that she had been appointed there. Anyhow, I had made arrangements to stay at the "pub", but we went & saw her on the Sunday afternoon. She looked pretty well, & the quarters there is a lovely brick place--looks pretty new to me. Her district, she says, extends right out through Bourke to the Queensland border, & with no conveyance & all their collecting to do, she is pretty worried. She wanted a loan of Bill's car, but I haven't seen it yet since we came to Nyngan. Now I think I have said enough about us for a while. How are you all? I like hope Dad's cold is all right again, & that Jose & Ivy are well by now. I intended giving you a ring tonight, but Valerie had to work back & of course I couldn't leave Robert in the house alone. It's Bill's week away. Thanks for the message re the sailor, Mother, I think Bill will write some day although he doesn't know the name. He got word some time ago that his stepfather had married again, but he is not sure that it is correct. A lad from Bourke visited his people in England some months ago & sent the message home. How are you liking poultry-farming? Do you get out early in the morning & feed the chooks, Dad? You ask about the Rees's, Mother -- no they haven't left here although Mrs. Rees wouldn't mind it if they were transferred to-morrow, but Mr. Rees is quite happy here. Mrs. Rees still comes up every week when Bill is in Bourke. She is very dependable, & we still

Since I left home I've had 2 different sorts of money , & although we may have tons of one sort it's useless in another country until arrangements are made to have it changed. I left Aus. with about £ 8 , & at the first stopping place it was about 3 days we were without having it changed into dollars worth $3/4$ £ each. Then when we got here we were about a fortnight getting them changed into a different sort of a dollar; this time worth only about 2/11. That's why I said that we ticked everything up, & that we may as well have been broke. I've just been forced to shift from the verandah, where I was writing this, because it's raining cats & dogs. It was nice & cool out there, but now that it's raining it's not so bad inside. Where does Dad park these nights ? , in front of the fire, I'll bet . This climate would just suit him, but I think it would be just a bit too hot for you. It's a wonder that Chip or Joe didn't tell you that all you had to do was to ring the Lime & Cement to get a bit of sand sent out. However, you say that it's done now & that it's a big improvement; so everything is right. The other day I had a letter from Flo, & she said she was going to get her ears attended to either at Newcastle or Dubbo. I wonder where she went. I tried to talk her into going down home, as I know how glad you'd be to see her., but she seemed to favour Dubbo on account of it being too cold to travel now. You haven't told me how the fowls are laying, or what sort of peaches you expect to get. The floods you've just had down there should give them a good kick along. There's no need to send a pen, thanks; this one is going good now. Yesterday we again received a Christmas hamper which, if anything, was better than the last. Now that we have settled down I'm more than ever happy that I changed over. I only did it for selfish reasons, & now I'm in a more or less disease-free place, whereas if I hadn't I'd most likely be in a real horrible place like New Guinea. I was only having a shot at you about the envelope: send 'em just how you like, I don't care. I'm sorry to hear about Ivy being sick. It seems that she & Joe take it in turns to be crook; but I'm glad to know that she's much better now, & hope that she's o k again

by the time this reaches you. Thanks for taking care of the insurance for me; I must owe you quids by now; don't forget to let me know if you need any dough at any time: it's pretty easy for me to send it to you. I had a letter from Wal the other day, & he seems to be well & contented. The papers are coming now. I let your air-mail stickers get stuck one to the other, like a dope. Time to finish now. So long. Fred."

Mon. aug. 20, 1945. I did not get an injection last Thursday as it was a public holiday (V P Day) to rejoice over the the surrender of the Japs There was a great procession, 3 miles long, in Newcastle, from Pacific street to the sports ground in Union street, where about 7000 people sang & danced from 8 until a late hour. There were no speeches, but plenty of music. Jose went there, but Mum & I stayed at home & listened to a description of the procession on the radio, Mum has gone to the Newcastle general hospital to-day to make arrangements to have her lower lip examined again to see if the cancer has been quite cured.

We have received the 3 following letters from Florence, Walter, & Fred. This is from Florence:-

"Nyngan 10-8-45. Dear Mother & Dad, Well, how do you like the news ? It's horrible about the atomic bomb, but with it & Russia joining in it shouldn't be long before the war is over. We have had a couple of letters from Fred & he seems very happy & writes very cheerful letters, but it will be great when it's all over & he is home again. If Wal only gets a move to Sydney too all your loneliness will be over. It seems a long year to us without seeing you, & December won't come quickly enough for us, but if we wait long enough it just has to come. You will be pleased to know that my ears are pretty good just now-- better than they have been for months. Bill didn't try to prevent me going home, Mother, he was always asking me to go, but I have a boarder to consider, & board is almost impossible to get here, unless at the hotel. Valerie doesn't like that, I know, although she thought, too,

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that having my ears fixed was the most important thing. anyhow, the trip to dubbo was quicker & it suited Bill too; it's to his advantage to go & see what is in the shops periodically. It's been good company for me having Valerie here this winter. Since she has her boy-friend she is more contented to stay at home; & of course it's better for me the week Bill is away. It's good to know that you are all pretty well.. I hope Jose is too now. As the days get warmer he will be almost sure to lose his cold; so don't worry about it, Min. It's been a pretty cold winter, & it's pretty hard to get rid of a cold in cold weather. I suppose you are looking forward to the Sydneyites' visit. One of these days I may write to them if I could only get their address. You sent it on, but I have lost it. You never say how they like their new home, nor how Art is getting on. Why did he buy ground if he is going to be moving around the country all his life? ,or has he a promise that he will be in Sydney permanently? It's hard to imagine you keeping chooks. How many have you now? I still get my 2 dozen a week, & can have more if I like; so there is no shortage out here. Did I tell you that when we returned from our Christmas holidays Bill ordered a turkey for next Christmas...He tried to get the pig for Easter, but couldn't (always reminds me of you, Min). Anyhow, he is getting in early for the turkey I hope we are all at home this year. Our landlady is out of hospital again, although pretty sick. I went around to pay the rent to-day & had a yarn with her. She has a cancer & is frequently in hospital. Well, it's bed-time, so I'll say cheerio. Thought I had better write this time & let you know I am all right. Love from us all. Florence."

This is a copy of the letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961. Pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G.H. Australia.

Aug.12 1945. Dear Joe, Ivy, & Kids, I was glad to get your letter to-day even if, as you say, there was little news, because ~~XXXXXX~~ no news is good news, & that's the main thing.

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When I wrote home last I omitted to say how I was, because I had another one of those crook backs, & this time found out why. I've been sleeping on a stretcher, like I was out at the lake that time, & apparently the ridges, where it tightens at the legs, cause the bother. Anyhow, it was a blessing in disguise, because I'm the only one with a bed & mattress. The bed was bent out of shape & worse than ever, but a sheet of 3 ply on top did the trick, & now I sleep as comfortable as if I was on the floor. You sent Wal the wrong dope. : it was the Sally's street he wanted to know; not particularly where Roscoe lived. His request should convey something to you too, now that he might be going to a new job. You may remember the school-kids down there collecting dough for a mobile picture-projector, & if so, you & the kids will be interested to know that she's a beauty & shows on our site twice a week. Last night "The 3 Monahans" was on, & but for a few sprinkles it was fine (weather) until we just got back, & then it just poured, but it soaks away just as quick. Last Friday night we got crook information that it was all over bar the shouting, so nearly everyone tried to make good the omission; & we had to warn one bloke that if he kept on biting his nails his arms would finish up at his elbows. We were all a little bit happy, though, & now are expectantly waiting to find out what's going to happen. It wouldn't be half bad, would it, if, as you say, we'll be all home by Christmas? I've still got a lot of ~~fat~~ in old Dot, as you call your car, but more in you; & I'll bet that it won't be long before she's as good as new. I've just had to leave the place where I was writing, because a loquacious cow wouldn't or couldn't shut up. If he'd held off for a little bit longer I'd have finished, & then he could have yapped his head off. The papers are coming through good now, & i've hardly finished one lot before the next ones come. I hope that both I've & you are o k now, & that everyone else is too. I can't settle down to write any more, so I'll finish up. So long. Fred."

The 3rd is from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 15-8-45. Dear Folks,

The war is over ! That is the most important & pleasant news that we have all heard to-day. Ever since last Friday night we have been expecting the news, but the Japs have at least succeeded in holding us in suspense, with the result that Brisbane has been alive with rumours & has seethed with a series of celebrations ever since the surrender was first suggested. Since final word came at 9-30 this morning the main streets have been one mass of milling people, but the carnival spirit has relied almost solely on the younger element, the elder people evidently content with a feeling of satisfaction & thankfulness ; & I'm sure that your own sentiments will be very much the same. We have been very fortunate indeed & as a family have a lot to be grateful for. Most immediate prospects are, of course, of Fred's return, & probably my own in the near future. We will all look forward to putting into effect all those schemes we'd planned for "after the war!" Quite a few things have happened since my last letter, among which may be mentioned the fact that our office has been moved once again, this time to the second floor of the Colonial Mutual building which is next door to the previous building. I am in a bigger office, & I am the only one who profited by the move, as the new quarters are generally inferior to the old. However, it probably won't affect me, seeing that I should be on the move again soon. I was offered a job in Darwin, but declined. Ray Bone wrote to me yesterday asking me to formally apply for that Sydney job, as it had been advertised. The Jap collapse has come more quickly than most people anticipated after the use of the atomic bomb & the Russian entry into the war. Probably the pros & cons of both have been well discussed at the local "tea-table conference", which would have made good listening. For my part, I think that the frightening power of the atomic bomb may serve as an effective deterrent against any further wars. Unfortunately the victory holidays have come at a bad time for me, as my car is still in dock. Although I originally intended to have new rings fitted only, the cylinder wear after 60,000 miles has been such that I am getting them re-bored. This means new pistons etc. All main & big end bearings are being re-metalled & re-bored, & the crank-shaft is being ground. In other words, I am getting practically

a new engine, the cost being about £ 40. It was to have been finished this week-end ,but now the holidays will d delay the work on it , & it is rather a nuisance being. without it. I have been playing tennis & golf as usual & have also had another good fishing trip down to the Bay. I had a letter from Fred on the 6th, & he appears to be quite o k. where he is, except that things are getting a bit boring. Portion of his letter was unintelligible ,as follows:- " It shouldn't be hard to find what you're lo- oking for with the facilities at your disposal." If only I knew what I'm looking for it might make sense.; & I'm wondering if it has any connection with the statem- ent in Joe's letter to the effect that I was asking Fred for Des Stead's address. Certainly I have never asked Fred for this address, nor have I any use for it. Thanks all the same for writing, Joe: your letter was much appreciated, & I hope you will forgive me again for answering in the text of this office. As soon as I get the car back I have in mind getting a week's leave & going down to the coast. This will be vdry acceptable before leaving here, & leave won't be so important when I get closer to home. Your last letter was very bright & cheerful, Mum,-- Congratulations. I hope you are all well & in good spirits. Cheerio. Wal."

Fri. Aug. 31, 1945. Yesterday & the Thursday before, I got injections at the hospital, but could not get any films at Kodaks, Mrs. Witheridge & Arthur brought Do- reen from Marrickville a week ago yesterday, & she went back home yesterday afternoon. Art met Phyllis at ghe station yesterday & brought her home to us to stay for a week or more. Last Monday I paid £ 1-8-2 at the Round-top Bank (of N.S.W.) for next year's "National Geographic Magazine". Art has brought a lot of book- binding material to bind my Geographics, & he is going to teach me how to bind them. We have received the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G. H. australia.
23 Aug. 1945. Dear Folks, Sorry that I haven't written earlier, but lately I haven't been able to settle

down to write. It's got me a bit bothered, now that the war is over, as to what is the best thing to do. Nobody seems to know exactly what is going to happen to us-- whether we stay here or go somewhere else till the aftermath is cleaned up. If I knew how long we would be mucking about I'd be able to work out whether it was worth while applying for a release, & by so doing put myself in the clutches of the manpower & be sent away from home for an indefinite period, or if it would be better to stay in the army for a few months & then be able to tell Danny Reece & his urgers to go chase themselves. However, it shouldn't be long now before we get some inkling as to what's going to happen, ' then I'll be able to do something definite. It seems to me that it would be better to stay here another 2 or 3 months & be finished than to be sent to Darwin or some other outlandish place for 12 months or a couple of years. Since I last wrot my back has got completely right, & I'm feeling extra well; so much so, in fact, that last Sunday I went about 5 miles to a real good sandy beach, no coral snakes or anything else to worry about.

We only stayed in about a couple of hours and spent the rest of the day having a look around. It's a very uninteresting sort of a place no next Sunday we expect to spend most of the day at the beach.

The first letter that I got from Flo worried me a bit; so much so that I wrote to Wal and asked him to write to her and see if that would cheer her up a bit but I've since had another from her and she seems much more happy. No wonder she was so despondent then because her ears must have been giving her jip. But in her last letter she says that the boils burst and that they're "righto" again. I see that you made sure that the "Air Mail" stickers would spoil this time, but it was my fault that they did last time. When I first got them they were quite allright but like a mug I never looked fatter them. It's good to know that your leg is much better and that both you and Dad are not too bad and that you're

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beginning to get a bit of benefit from the fowls. I've written this early to-night because the pictures are on to-night; the music has started already, so I'll go over shortly. It's been raining this afternoon but it's cleaned up for a while although it'll pour again soon I suppose, but that won't bother us because it's worth a bit of a ducking to get out a while.

Thank Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Palmer for the papers for mewon't you?

I haven't time to write any more so I'll say.

So Long,
Fred.

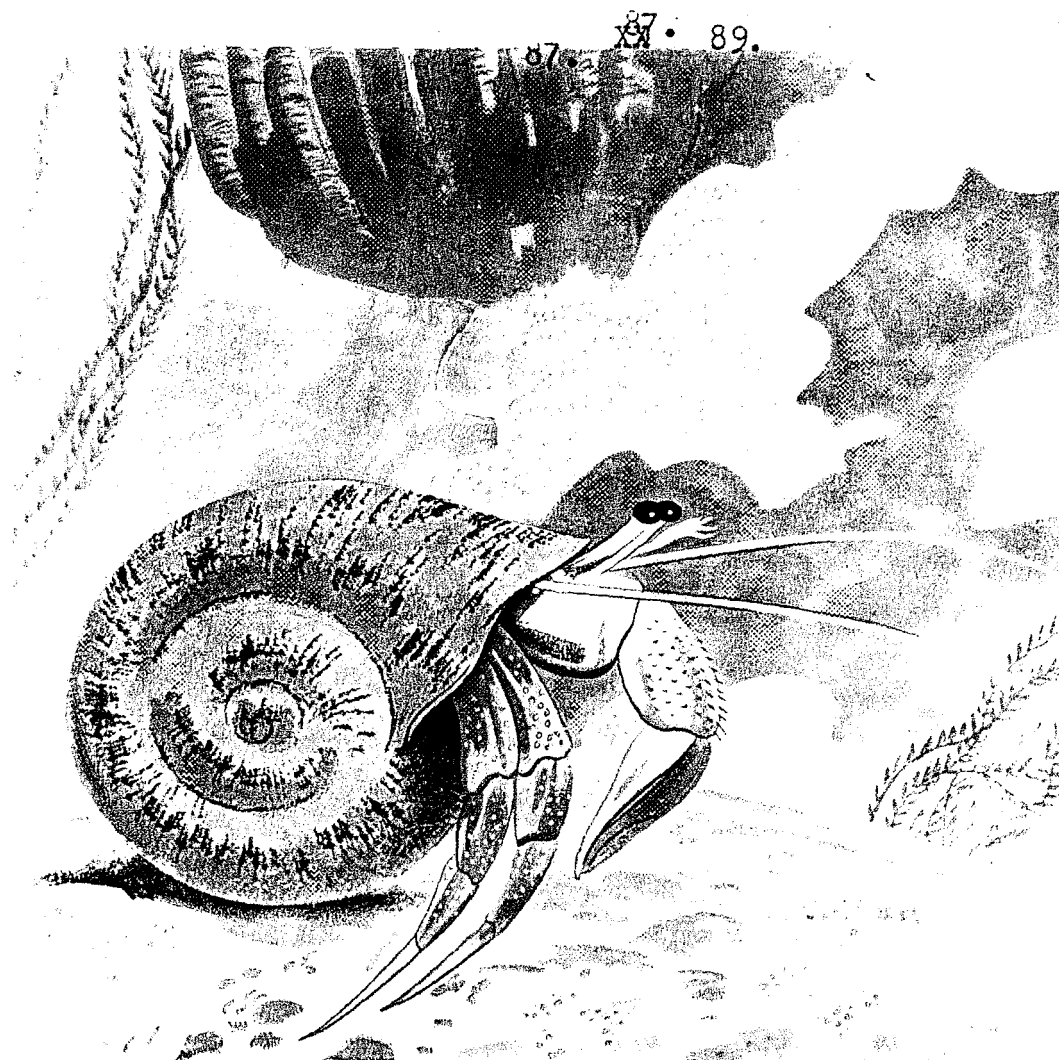
Thur. Sep. 6, 1945. This morning I got an injection in my left arm from a new sister who has taken the place of sister Grenell, who is now Mrs. Ferguson. This afternoon Art, Phyllis, & Doreen left us to return to Marrickville by train from Waratah station. Art has taught me the art of book-binding, & I shall try to bind all of my copies of the National Geographic Magazine. Japan is being occupied by the allies, & Singapore has been retaken by Britain. Many stories of Japanese murder & torture of allied prisoners are being published in our papers. Art & Phyllis have left me the following typed instructions in the art of bookbinding:-

"BOOKBINDING PROCEDURE.

1. Arrange books in correct order.
 - ~~1. Remove cover & keep books level~~, 2. Remove cover &, keeping books level, (preferably in press) make saw-cuts for stitching.
 3. Remove pins & separate sections.
 4. Sew a flyleaf on, & sew sections together. Put another flyleaf on after the last section.
 5. Apply wood glue lightly to the back & allow to dry.
 6. Level & smooth ends & edge.
 7. Loosen glue with warm water, & round book.
 8. Apply "Gripit" to back. On this place muslin & paper.
 9. Paste wall-paper on cover. 10. Paste cover on book, using wires to press a groove in each hinge.
- N.B. In pressing keep covers wrapped in waxed paper. Paste will not dry whilst the book is in the press.

---ooOoo---

We have received the following letter from Florence:-



THE HERMIT CRAB

(Genus Paguridae)

THE HERMIT CRAB has no natural armor equal to the hazards of undersea life. Even age does not harden his skin.

So, as soon as the hermit crab becomes old enough to shift for himself, he seeks the permanent protection of an unoccupied mollusc shell. And he carries it with him always, leaving it only to move to larger quarters as he grows. It is both his armor and his dwelling.

In a way, he is like the average man, who when

he starts to shift for himself, is without armor against financial hazards. But, man, too, can find permanent protection, through life insurance. And that protection can be fitted to him, as he grows responsibilities and income.

Moral: Insure in The Travelers. All forms of insurance.

The Travelers Insurance Company, The Travelers Indemnity Company, The Travelers Fire Insurance Company, Hartford, Connecticut.

xxxx

"Nyngan, 29-8-45. Dear folks, It was a relief to have the last letter from home, & a couple of times we would have booked a phone call, but the nights here have been so cold & wet & the streets so muddy that we kept postponing it & at last -- well the letter just had to come. We were wondering if someone may have been ill & you were waiting until they were better, so that we wouldn't worry. Anyhow, Min, next time speed the letter up a bit. we are pretty stranded right out here & the only news we get is through your letters, except for a couple of letters from Fred, & he can't tell us much, although he did say that Wal was hoping for a move. It's good to know that everyone is well, & especially to know that your lip is completely healed. I didn't know that your hand was troubling you again. I hope that isn't too bad; at least it shouldn't be as tender as the lip. Don't you think it would be a good idea to use plenty of lanoline or face cream to protect these parts, especially now that Summer is almost here? I suppose that a lot of your worries are over now that the war is over. It may not be a year till Fred is home, but even if it is he won't be in danger; so don't be too impatient. I think unless they volunteer for Tokio they should be home for Christmas. Of course that's just what I think, & I don't know much about it. Valerie is anxiously waiting to see her brother who has been a prisoner for 5 years. I think if they keep their promise, that the prisoners will be home in another couple of weeks. She is taking a week off when he does come home, & is going to parkes. The church fair was held last Saturday & it was pretty good. The Rees' have "put in" for a move again & are hoping that it will come pretty soon. Mrs. Rees wants to miss the summer here, as most women would like to, but surely it can't be as bad as last summer -- here's hoping, anyhow. I suppose you have Art & Phyllis staying up there now -- hope they are well, including that little nipper who won't even look at me. She doesn't know yet, I suppose, what a really good aunty she has out here in the dirty West, but some day she'll know me, I hope. Just now it's perfect (the weather) & the garden are beautiful. I'll tell you what we have, & all in abundance, -- Iceland poppies, sweet peas, freezias, violas, & calendula-

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las, & some lovely white flowers (bulbs) don't know their name. The house is like a flower garden just now, & we have a lot more flowers coming on. I wish you were here to share in the lovely cauliflowers; we are using them now. We are using them all the time & we still have as many.. At present I don't have to buy green vegetables. Our cabbage, spinach & caulies keep us going.. This is only for a little time; for in a few months it will be hard to grow anything if it's anything like last year, although a good season is expected, we have had so much rain.

The river is pretty full, & I went down that way on Sunday afternoon to take Robert for a walk. Mrs. Rees happened to be down there, (although I didn't know she was going) & 2 other women that I know, & they invited us to stay & have afternoon tea with them, which we did; & we had a real good afternoon. Robert had a good time. There were about a dozen children there, so he liked his outing.

He was very thrilled on Saturday afternoon at the fair. He went to the pictures with Verla & Bonnie. They had several sessions just for the kiddies, the shows lasting about 2 hours, & they went on from about 4 p.m. till 10. Well, it's time I finished up: it's bed-time, & the writing is pretty terrible; so I won't bore you any more. So cheerio. Love to all. Look after yourself, Min, Especially that hand, & try to remember that you are too thin-skinned, & protect your face with your big hat, & your hands with lanoline. We are all o k. Florence."

Thur. Sep. 13, 1945. This morning & last Thursday I got injections at the hospital from a new sister. Last week

I paid 21/- for a small bottle of "Lantogen C" for Mum's sciatica, & she is taking it according to directions. Yesterday & to-day are beautiful & warm, & my cold is much better. Jap Togo has tried to suicide before being arrested in Japan. about 40 other war-criminals have been arrested. The mikado is still at large, though he is the greatest of the Jap war criminals.

Yesterday I received the following from Mrs. Webster:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Cornwall
31 July 1945. Dear Mr. Cocking, Many thanks for your very kind letter, & for your kindness in sending about my si-

ght, but I am pleased to say that my sight is very much better, & I do think it was my runned down body that made my sight ~~so~~ so bad. I am feeling grand just now in body, & have just had a nice holiday with Kathleen who has been home on leave, so we spent a nice time off to different places every day. So you see I must be well to be able to jaunt about like sixteen. Our Labour Government has gone in at last: we're all rejoicing over it & also the war over. Now the Japs won't be long before they will be cheked. It's grand to feel a bit free from bombs: we have not been hit with them, but they been pretty close to us-- shhok~~our~~ house more than once. Well, dear friends, we trust you are all keeping well, as it leaves us just now. Our Frank is well & hoping to have his leave now soon; been 6 months in Belgium. He says the people are very kind to him, & he has plenty of lovely fruit. We can't see any home here, or very little. Plums should be now: we've not seen any as yet. Our Fred is much better. I think I told you he was ill with rheumatic fever-- now it has left his heart bad. He has to go slow & be very careful. Blood-pressure as well, poor boy. The girls are keeping fine. We have had a rather poor Summer-- lots of rain, but now it seems to be much better. Lovely sunshine. Our little village is crowded with vksitors.

Oh, we got the papers; sometimes 4 or 5 come by the same same post; thank you for sending them. The postage is correct, we not have to pay any more for them. I had a letter from my cousin, David Tabb; he says he is fine & is in Melbourne now living with his brother still busy at his work. See you have had a water famine out there. We have a plenty home here. Portreath is full of lovely water -- we are never hhort. The poor people of St. Day have had a lot of trouble. Their man, who used to fetch & sell the water, gave up some time ago, & there was no one to carry it on, so I don't know how they manage now. I suppose someone has taken it over. What a shame our Council would not go to the expense to lay the pipes so they could get it from the taps like other places. Now this Labour Party will see into it, I hope. We passed through ST? Day last week on our way to Truro

& I was surprized to see how it had been improved. The houses were painted & the windows all looking nice. The people who have had girls & boys war-working in factories have been getting a bit more money, so they have been able to do more for their houses & people-- but fancy no means of buying a garment. Some distressed little place St. Day was when I saw it before the war started; it was awful: so the war has done good in many ways.

Now we do hope we never have any more wars.

We went to Newquay last week, Kath & I, & they have 2 large hotels for wounded men & women; & some awful sights we saw-- blind, arms gone, legs gone-- oh it made our hearts sore to see the lovely-looking young men blinded, poor dears! & for what? we say. We both have enjoyed reading your 2 books you sent us. Well worth reading. We have passed them on now to others to see that they are well worth reading.

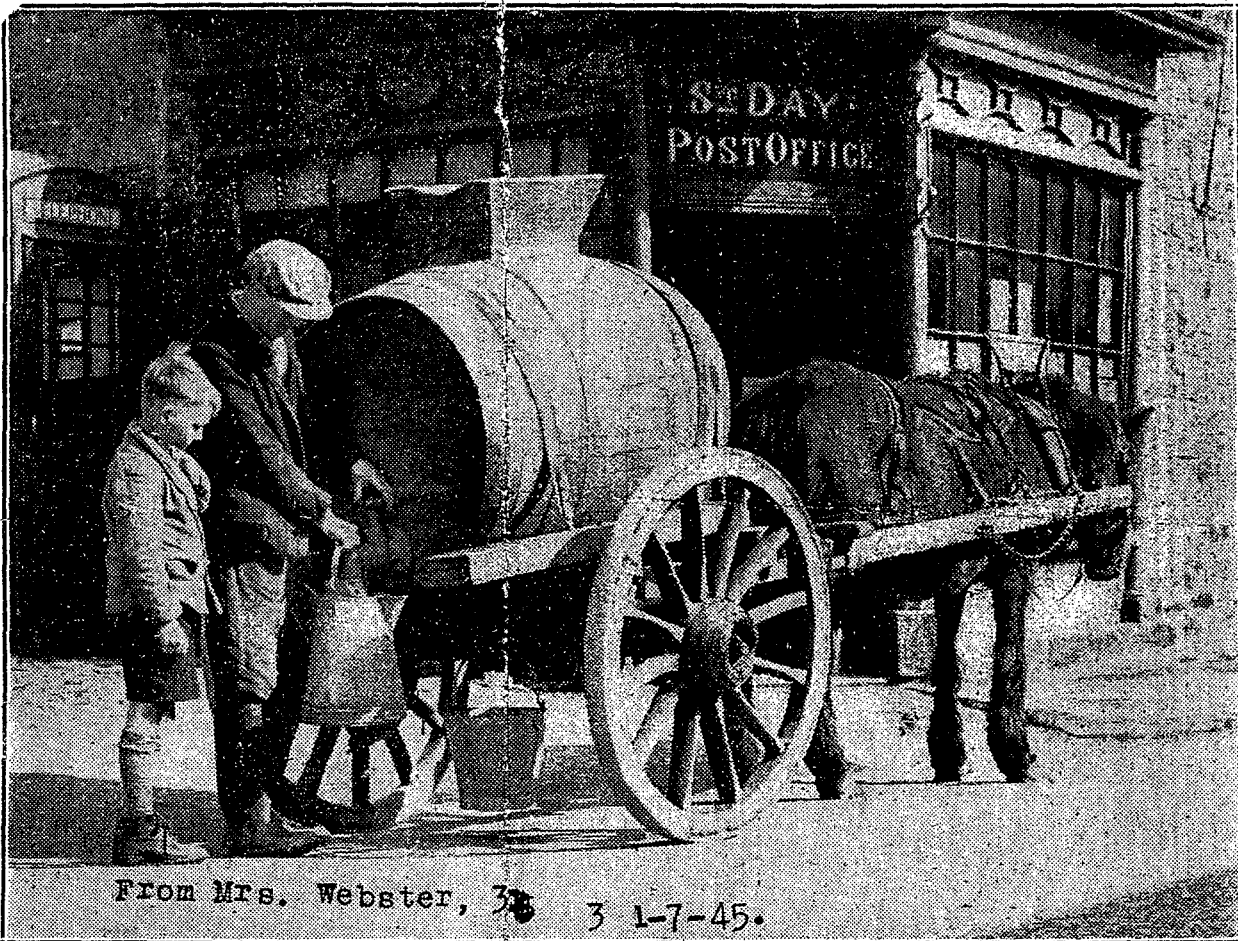
Now dear friends, I want to catch post: only goes out once a day here. My husband & family all wish to be kindly remembered to you & Mrs. Cocking. With kind regards from me. Yours sincerely Emmie Webster.

P.S. I hope to hear from you again soon. Many thanks, but I am, like Mrs. Cocking, keeping to my glasses. As I say, I see much better now."

The letter also contained a view of a St. Day watercart.

We received this letter from Walter to-day:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 11-9-45. Dear Folks, I am late in writing, but have been waiting for something definite regarding my departure, which has not yet come to hand, however. In addition, I have had a sore throat & cold, but these are now almost completely right again. I was pleased to hear that everybody is o k, & somewhat surprised to hear that young Doreen is already 2 years old. I wrote to Fred a fortnight ago, but have not had a reply from him yet, which I hope will give some indication of his likely date of return. Since my last letter Reg David has left Brisbane permanently, & he will probably open a chemists shop in Sydney, Gosford, or Melbourne. In a letter I received from him to-day he speaks of a visit to Jack & Glad at Kembla, & said he had a wonderful



St. Day inhabitants now have to pay one penny a bucket for water, compared with the old rate of three-halfpence for two buckets, because of the rise in the cost of feeding stuffs for the horse.

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time. I also received a letter from Ray Bone last month &, at his suggestion, applied for a job with P.D.S. in Sydney, asking for a salary of £ 1000 to 12 p.a.. No

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word has come from them yet, so it seems that they have found somebody else for the job. We have had a tram strike here which lasted for 9 days & was quite a nuisance, though not so much as far as I was concerned, My car was in the garage, & still is, but I expect to get it back on Thursday, & am looking forward to it. I reconditioned Mr. Jones' old bike, which hadn't been used for 7 years, & have used it to ride to the golf links at week-ends. The work has slackened off considerably since the war ended & many jobs have been cancelled or are in abeyance. There have been several retrenchments, including 3 from our section, but there is very little likelihood any more. I have picked up the outside inspection work of 2 of the Supervisors who have left. Last Saturday morning is the last on which we will be required to work, & we are reverting to a $36\frac{3}{4}$ hour, 5 day week. This is good news, but I could use the week-ends better in Sydney. Eddy Butt, a friend from Tambourine, is sleeping in the spare bed in my room for a few nights, while he is busy on some business in the city. This seemz to be all the news for now, but it's possible that I might be home in 6 weeks or so. Cheerio. Wal."

In addition to the 2 foregoing, we have this from Phyllis':

"15 Charles St. Marrickville 11-9-45.

Dear Mum & Dad, Many thanks to you both for sending the two parcels, one of which arrived yesterday & the other one to-day. We apologise for our forgetfulness & for the inconvenience we have caused, & will try to make amends in the future. Mum said we should be ashamed to show our noses round your way until about 2 years time at least. By that time, she said, we will have a little more sense-- but I doubt it. We were sorry that we missed Ethel & Jim. It looks as if we are meant not to see their house at all, as they are always out when we call. Anyhow, we caught a good train back to Sydney. It was the 2-45 p.m., from Waratah & was practically empty. We had 4 seats between the 2 of us, & we arrived in Sydney just after 6 p.m., which was an hour & a half before the train we intended catching in the first place. So all was well that ended well. Doreen hasn't been very

well since Sunday. She vomited all that day & has been g
gastric ever since. I had to pay my monthly visit to the
doctor to-day, so I told him all about it. He gave me
medicine for her, & I have to keep her off milk foods for
24 hours. I made her some soup for tea & gave her lemonade
to drink, but she wasn't too keen on it. She kept asking
for "meat", & I'm sure she would have welcomed one of
your "famous pies" there & then. Arthur wrote to Jack &
Glad to-night & enclosed one of Doreen's photos. They
will probably get it this week, that is if they are not
in Newcastle. There is very little to say just now, Mum.
Doreen & Arthur send their love, Dad, & a hearty vote
of thanks for the couple of pies you entrusted in
~~XXXXXX~~ our care. Dad said they were all he was told
they would be. Cheerio & love. Phyllis.

P.S. I forgot to mention, Mum, that I arrived home with
one of your towels. It was a cream-coloured one with a
fawn stripe. It was among Doreen's clothes in the draw-
er, & I thought it was Mum's as I know she has one exactly
the same as it. We will send it on to you when we are
posting back your gas lighter."

Thursday continued. Yesterday I finished binding the first
sample of my bookbinding. It is the book comprising the
"National Geographic Magazines" for April, May, & June, 1939.
I intend to bind all of the same magazines that I have,
all that I may possess in future. Art showed me how to
bind them.

Thursday

Sun. Sep. 30, 1945. Last ~~Thursday~~ ^{Wednesday} week I got an injection
at the hospital, & last ~~Thursday~~ ^{Wednesday} I went into Newcastle with
Mum, who had to let doctor Arnold examine her
left hand. He ordered her to have it X rayed, which she did.
Mum did a bit of shopping before we came home in the
afternoon. Last Thursday I had another injection from
a new sister, & went to the office of the Tramway Dept.
to get a card or certificate to enable me to travel by
tram before half past nine a.m., but I was told to go
to the tram depot at Hamilton. I went there & got a printed
form which I must fill & return to the depot. Some

dahs ago I recekved the following undated note from Art:-

"This contains useful & pertinent comments. You might have pointed out that Mill seemed to assume that the workers could gain a new status by becoming, in effect, capitalists themselves, but the trend of labour history, perhaps influenced by Marxian ideas, of eliminating capitalism; not unitz of co-operation, but the complete co-operative society."

Dear Dad. The above is the comment made on my essay; so now you know. How's the bookbinding going? Let's have a report, will you? Arthur."

I wrote a short letter in reply, saying that Mills was not likely to have suggested that all of the workers could become capitalists for in that case there would be no workers left to be legally robbed.

On the 15th we received the following from Florence:-

"Box 15 Nyngan 14-9-45. Dear Mother & Dad, Many happy returns of the day, Mum! I suppose you will be happy to-day with Art & Phyll & Doreen there, or perhaps Art has had to go back. School doesn't commence again here until tuesday, but the train only arrives on monday with the returning teachers. It generally commences on the tuesday after holidays, out in these country places. We went to a nice country place last Saturday with Mr. Brand. Left about 3 p.m. & it was after 12 when we returned. It was a lovely outing, & quite a crowd gathered for tea & the church service that was held in the home at night. Mr. Brand is coming for dinner on Sunday. He is batching while his wife is in Sydney for 3 weeks. The Church of England fair is on to-night, & Robert was greatly upset when I refused to take him. I hope Bill will pop in on the bike & take him to-morrow afternoon. Bill returns on Saturdays now, & so has every week-end at home. We sent a big bunch of poppies along to-night to decorate at the fair. Mrs. Holland next door (Smith's house) is a pretty enthusiastic worker for the C. of E. It's good to know that Doreen improved while she was with you. Phyllis wrote & told me about her mouth. I haven't answered her letter yet, but I will to-night.

We were very pleased to get Doreen's photo. What a dear little girl Doreen has grown. I wonder if she will look at me this time. We will be strangers to all the kids if we stay out here many more years. Perhaps when they are old enough, though, they may come out & visit us. When we get our new house built I hope we shall have plenty of space for visitors.

Well, Mother, it was news to me about your lip. I thought that was healed when you were in hospital last time. Speaking of hospital reminds me of Till. Is she still working there? or does she stay at home & look after uncle Johnny? How are they getting along? Did I tell you we had Ol Worley & her captain out here during the show here the week before last? They came & had dinner with us, but I couldn't have them to stay, as we only have 2 bedrooms. I often think perhaps I might have more visitors if we got rid of Valerie. We went over to the show; there wasn't much to see, but Robert enjoyed it ~~immensely~~ thoroughly, despite the heat & dust that is always part of anything held at the show ground. We had another letter from Fred & he seems o.k., but doesn't expect to get home too soon. Hopes to be home for Christmas, but is not sure, of course. When is Walter being transferred? It will be great when he is only 100 miles away. Well, Min, I have more to write & don't feel particularly like writing to-night.. I hope you won't think the cloth (sent) is silly, but it is the largest I could get, & I thought it would do to use on those occasions when you & Dad are there alone. It should be easy to wash & iron because it won't need starch. Robert often asks me how long now until we can see Gumma & Dad. The time seems long to him, but it's only 3 months now, & that will soon pass. I think Bill should do pretty well now that the war is over.. people are always inquiring about furniture, & sales are improving all the time. I hope it keeps up (Grab all.) I think I would be much more contented out here if we had a better home; & as Bill's job improves the house seems to get a bit closer. . Anyhow, I have a lot to make me happy now. Bill doesn't know what it is to feel ill now, & Robert is growing & is well too, & my ears are better than they have been for a long time; so what is there to growl about except that we are in

dirty old Nyngan, but there are worse places I suppose. Cheerio. Our love to all. Florence."

Note enclosed:- "To Mother, with love & best wishes for a happy birthday & "many on 'em" (as your Cousin Jack husband would say). From Florence, Bill, & Robert. xxx."

Mum also received this from Gladys:-

"1st Avenue Warrawong, Sept. 18th 1945. Dear Mum, I was pleased to get your letter, also to hear that your lip is better. I hope the hot weather fixes your oscia-tica & rheumatism up for you. It's very painful & awkward. Arthur wrote & sent us a photo of Doreen; it is very good of her, I think. She looks very much like the Witheridges I think, more like Phyllis' mother. We're pleased that Dad has got over his cold. Jack gets his annual holidays on the 30th Dec., so I suppose that we will be up to see you all then. I don't think we'll be up before. We are all well just now. John has had a cold all the winter. I think he's going to be like Jack. We're all at him to go to the doctor. He hasn't gone yet; I do hope he does. He came second in his test this time. They're all doing well at school: we're quite pleased at them. I'll say good bye & all the best to you & Dad & not forgetting Charlie & the Cockings on the hill. From Jack, the children, & myself. Glad. xxxxx."

Sun. Sep. 30. continued. It was Mum's birthday on the 17th of this month, & she received some good presents from Florence, Ivy, & Charlie. She has now almost recovered from her severe cold of last week. Mum was born on the 17th of September 1874, but we do not know where, as she has no records of her parents.

Bert Cocking's wife Clarice was operated on for gall trouble a day or 2 ago, but we don't know how she is progressing.

Mum born 1874
1942
1874
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Thur. Oct 4, 1945. Yesterday we received theis from Fred:-

"N X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking 2/4 A.G.H. Australia.

Dear Folks, I had every intention of writing to you on the 18th, your birthday, Mum, but an opportunity came for a chance to see a bit more of the island, so I took it, but came back too late to write that night. One of the jeep drivers wanted someone to go for a run, & the chance of a run was too good to miss. My good resolutions to write since then have gone by the board, so I've had another trip, & on all the other nights there's been pictures on. The rush of entertainment, I should think, is because prisoners of war are coming through here. The hospital is full right up at the moment, but besides an isolated few they are in good nick --so good in fact that we only have them a couple of days & then bung them out to a rest camp. So far we have had few Australians, , mainly pommy & Dutch, but they that are here now came from Australia, & a good few of the staff have met fellows that were P O Ws.. all I hope is that they continue to mome through fast & that they are not in too bad a shape, because when all of them are home there seems little reason for our remaining here. The Pommys are going to supply the garrison here, & their advance is reputed to be already here; so let's hope that they take over everything, lock stock & barrel so that they'll be no hold-up, & that they come in on a walk in walk out basis.

The end of October has been mentioned for the change-over, but I can't vouch whether it's dinkum or not. I only told you this so that the know-alls don't make you too downhearted, but I don't want you to expect me too early either. Everybody seems to expect that we should be home for Christmas, anyway, & if this is so it won't be too bad, will it? Actually, you know, I haven't done too bad: ~~XXX~~ I've had 2 trips, & it seems that in neither will I be away anywhere near 12 months, & besides I've seen a fair bit of Australia too. The censoring of letters has been done away with, so I can now tell you where I am. All we were allowed to say before was that we were in N.W. Borneo, but this was not the exact truth, as actually we were on Labuan Island;

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& you'll understand other things too when I say that the township toes by the name of Victoria. Ask Joe What about Des Stead of Regent St. now. It was more my fault than his, though, for I was a bit mixed up with that new 2 storey house, one up the street on the left from Ora St. corner. poor old Wal mus have thought that I was madder than usual, for he wrote me that Joe had passed on the message, but evidently I had him mixed with someone else. If I hadn't been too shrewd & he had done more reading of the news we may have got somewhere. He seems to be applying for jobs, he seems to suffer from itchy feet, but he always considers well before he does anything, 'one of his applications must come off some time. Joe always says that everything he touches is lucky: let's hope that he is right. Through the last week there's been 2 lots of papers come in. I must have got 20 bundles myself, so they've been stacking up awhile. I don't find anything to go raving mad about in the "Woman", but it was a nice thought on Mrs. Palmer's part; so keep on sending them, & then she'll be happy about it. I've spent a usual Sunday on my back reading them to-day. The grub is coming good here now, with a fair proportion of it being fresh stuff, but the co-oks can't do as good with it as you can. By all reports both you & Dad are looking after yourselves: keep up the good work; & Dad, there's quite enough work for you in collecting the eggs & letting the rest of the yard look after itself. I'm o k. Fred."

Sun. Oct. 21, 1945. Last Monday evening I got a certificate from doctor Opitz & posted it to Mr. J.E. Jones. On the Thursday previous I got a cheque for 10/- from Mrs. Williams in Mayfield East. The latest report is that Clarence Cocking is much better after her operation. Last Thursday & the 2 previous Thursdays I received injections at the out-patients' department of the Newcastle hospital. I was given a piece of Sister Grenell's wedding cake. She is now Mrs. Ferguson. We have received the following letters from Gladys & Florence & Walter. First this from Gladys--

"1st Avenue Warrawong, Aug. 22nd, mDear Mum & Dad,

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Yes, we're still alive, & we haven't forgotten you. We hope you are both well: we are all very well, excepting Jack; he has one of his very bad colds again. Dell came second in her half-yearly test. The girl that got first beat her by point 4 of a mark. It was a grand effort for Dell, we think, seeing she is the youngest in the class: her Dad is very proud of her. John finishes his test to-morrow, so I suppose we'll know how he got on next week. We went to the Brothers' annual concert last night: it was very good. John was very good with his acts. We have paid off our house: we are waiting for the deeds to be fixed up. We may be going to Sydney on Friday, so I suppose we will get things fixed up then. They sent us papers to sign: if we go we'll take them with us. We don't know if we are going up for the holidays or not: if we do decide to go we'll just blow in on you & give you a surprise.. How is Charlie, & Jose & his family? I hope they are all well. I'll say ta-ta to you both. Love from Jack, the children, & not forgetting myself, Glad. xxxxx."

The next is from Gladys also:-

" 1st ^Avenue, Warrawong, 2-10-45. Dear Mum, I hope by the time you get this letter that you are well & got rid of that bronchitis for good. We're pleased to hear that Dad is well. We are all well just now. The weather is very cold here just now, & it rained heavily yesterday. Re the fig-tree that Jack gave you, he says ~~XXXX~~ he thinks that he took it up when he was on his holidays the time before the last holidays, that is last May 12 months. He says Dad showed him how it had grown the last time that he was up there, & that was in May last. I didn't think it was that long, so I suppose Jack is right; anyhow we'll say that he is. There's nothing to tell you about only the old strike. Jack is still working, thank the Lord. It started over at the coke-ovens where Jack works. Love from Jack & the children; also myself. Remember us to Charlie & Jose & ~~XXX~~ his family. Glad. "xxxxx."

The following letter is from Mrs. Eliza Morris:-

" 36 Lett Street, Lithgow 2nd Oct. 1945. My dear Friends, Just a few lines in answer to your ever-loving letter which I received some time ago. Was so pleased to see you were well, also Mr. Cocking feeling much better after getting his teeth out: next thing will get the new ones. Sometimes they are very hard to get used to. I have mine in now many years & real used to them. I was so pleased to hear you was feeling much better, & glad Flo's husband was so well. I am feeling very well myself, & my legs not so bad. I am still using the calipers & the crutches; I suppose I will always need them, but still it is better than not able to get about at all. God help me. It was v-ery sad about Mrs. John Cocking's death. She was such a good woman; & fancy being treasurer for the Army for so many years. She will be missed, but her work on e Earth was done; & when God is ready he will take us. My dear old partner left me 10 months ago on the 7 of this month, & it seems such a long time, but he will be peacefully resting. I told Harry about Fred, but he never seen him when I last heard from him. There are so many of them it would be hard to find one another. It was the best news we could hear when the Japs surrendered, don't you think?. What a cruel lot of people they were: they could not punish our poor men enough; the pain & suffering they went through was terrible; & then to starve them finished it. What will they do with them God knows. They are bringing some terrible cripples home, poor chaps. It will be a long time before some of them will be much healthier: it is vey hard for their people. You will see I am with Eva: she likes to have me for a while, & it is a change for me. Her 2 little girls are growing & going to school. Eva was not well for quite a while, but, thank God, seems a bit better now. Her youngest girl, Jean, is a delicate little mite: trust she will soon be strong. Rae is the other girl's name. I am sorry to tell you Maggie is not vey well, & her husband has not been the best for a while, but is getting better; thank God,. My word it is a cold morning; it might snow, but it is rather late in the year. What a lot of trouble there

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is among the works & the men. What a pity such trouble turns up. So now, best love to all, & best of all to your dear self. From us all & your old Pal, E. Morris. How I miss Pa."

The next letter is from ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~:- Fred:-

N X 193961 pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G.H. Australia, 7 Oct. 1945. Dear Joe, Ivy, & Kids, To-night there's a concert on, it should be a pretty good one too, I've purposely stayed here to write to you, but now that I've started there doesn't seem to be much to write about. Don't think I'm depriving myself, because I was at the picture last night: Laurel & Hardy in "Jitterbugs" was on, & I hate concerts, so I wouldn't have gone, anyhow. Besides, it's been raining practically all day & has only just eased down a bit.. Now to get on with what to me, & I suppose you, is the most important topic-- when do we get home? Up till now nobody expected to get home too early on account of having to look after POWs, but they seem to be finished & there's plenty of vacant beds. Those that are real crooks are being sent back home, & the others are able to be sent out at any time. Besides, there's not many patients coming in. It seems that all of us are just making work for each other. The advance of the Pommy garrison are already here, so, looking at things from that angle, we shouldn't be long. Now the other side-- The old Red Tape has come into its own, & nobody seems to know anything about anything. The bosses are supposed all in Melbourne finding out, & until they find out it seems that we'll be kept here, as I said before, making work for each other. Then again the old excuse of no ships. The 5 year fellows have been kept waiting for about a month just kicking their heels. When they wanted to bring us here they found enough, & I can't help wondering if the authorities are afraid to have too many blokes hanging around in Aust. with nothing to do. We've started on packing up, so once the O.K. is given it shouldn't take long before we're home. If it's too long in coming I'll get in touch with Wal & ask him to find me a job & get out on a manpower release, as much as I don't want to be tied

down again. No, I don't want to work for Bridge again. Wal may be able to fix up a job, through Dick Hugo, for me on the railways repairing country railway stations, or the like. Anyhow, the way I feel at present something's got to happen soon. The grub's good, there's plenty of entertainment, & I'm not doing much work, so really I've got nothing to moan about, but I just don't like mucking about. The point system of discharge is a bone of contention here among the mob. Double your age on enlistment & add 2 points for each month in the army; if single; 3 if married, gives me only 132. The next batch to go are all above 217, so in the normal way I'll be some time yet. So far as diseases being brought home, I don't think there is much danger, for although the sicknesses were the same type, there was much more in N. Guinea, & I never heard of anything coming back from there. Of course the P.O.W. may bring back something. The rest are just back from the concert, so that's the end of writing for to-night. I am O K, even if despondent & unsettled, but I'll get over it. All reports from down your way are good. Keep them that way. Fred."

This letter is from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 8-10-45. Dear Folks, It is some time since I wrote, but I have been awaiting some advice of my transfer, although even yet there is no further news concerning it. I got my car from the garage on the 19th Sept, & with the help of some juice given me by a friend here, I left for Burleigh Heads the next day & had a weeks holiday at the seaside, which was very enjoyable even though I was unlucky in striking rather cold & wet weather at that time. I had to drive the car very slowly as the motor was so stiff, but now after 300 miles of run it is working in very nicely. Last week end 5 of us went down to the Bay on a fishing trip which was very pleasant in yesterday's beautiful warm weather., but there were fewer fishes about ~~than~~ this time than usual. Work is very slack in the office, & for the first time in many years I haven't got enough work to keep me busy, & spend some of my time browsing through text-books, trade journals, etc. In fact several of the chaps have been put off, & we are now down to a very

small staff. There is no good indication as to the future of the department, & speculation is rife from day to day. However, Sydney are anxious to get me back & there is a lot of maintenance work looming here, so that there is very little likelihood of me being out of a job. Now that we don't work Saturday mornings I have more leisure, & the week-end before last I painted out my bathroom with light green waterproof paint, & a red floor, so it looks £ 100 per cent better ~~to~~ X X . This seems to be all the news for now, but I'll write if there are any developments. Hope you are all keeping well & cheerful down there. P.S. Was very sorry to forget to wish Mum many happy returns on the 17th, which I do now, & hope Ivy was able to buy something suitable. Cheerio. Wal."

This letter, faintly written in pencil, is from Florence:

"Box 15 P.O. Nyngan, 11-10-45. Dear Mother & Dad, It was great to have your letter last week-end, & to get your news more clearly than we could over the phone. I was wondering just what was the matter, & had come to the conclusion that you were too ill to write; but it's good to know that you are well again. Also all the rest of the clan. We have lost our boarder. Valerie went last Saturday week & she took her young man over to introduce him to the family at Parkes. They must have approved of him, because two days later she announced her engagement to him. Her transfer is only supposed to be for 3 months, but I wouldn't be surprised if she stays much longer. She is pretty tired of Nyngan, but it seems as though she will have to learn to like it when she marries. Bill's home is about 21 miles out in the bush from here. What a good joke that was about Pip's (Wal's) feet. Every time I think of it I laugh. Anyhow I suppose it won't be long before he is in Sydney, & then he will settle down again & won't need the ammonia, we hope. Bill is in Bourke & returns on Saturday afternoon, & then about 4 o'clock the concert party start out for Giralambone, about 28 miles out, & put their concert on at night.. They went to Tottenham a couple of weeks ago & put the show on there. Bill enjoys these outings, but always wishes he had a car so that Robert & I could go too. Our holidays will probably be longer this year. If we are lucky we

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may get almost 3 weeks over there; so see what you are in for. Robert is always talking about it. Sorry that you were disappointed because he didn't speak over the phone, but he was asleep & we took him down in the stroller, but he was so fast asleep we wouldn't disturb him.. He is very well & growing up fast. There isn't much news this time, but I will try to write a long letter next time. At least you will know that we are all o k. Cheerio. Our love to all. Florence."

Sun. Oct 21 continued. Lately I have been busy binding the National Geographic Magazines together, & have bound all that I had, except those for 1937. As the February number is lost I am unable to bind the Jan. Feb. & March issues for 1937, but I have bound the others for that year. Last Thursday I bought the issue for May, 1925 at a second-hand shop in Hamilton, & was given the issue for an unknown year which contains articles on Tibet, Tokyo, Toronto, the Transvaal, Tripoli, & Turkistan. Mum & Jose went to Birmingham Gardens, near WallSEND, & bought 4 big black hens from Mr. Marshall, for 7/6 each.

Tues. Oct. 23, 1945. To-day I got some old galvanized iron sheets out of the air raid shelter near Taubnman's house. The shelter has been demolished & the sheets are eaten through by rust & are partly buried by the loose clay in the pit. I have finished binding my 3 old volumes of the History Of China by Murray. Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence :-

"Nynge 19-10-45. Dear Mother & Dad, I really intended writing to you, Dad, during the week. Robert said I must write & say thank you for that lovely book, & tell you that he loves you very very much. All his picture books have been cast aside for the new one: there are such a lot of interesting pictures in it for him, & he spends hours with it. Just as well I waited a couple of days before writing, as I can answer Mother's letter which came to day. We didn't think you were mad, Min, & believed you when you said you had written. That was the very reason that I worried, because I thought that you must be ill, when you had not written for so long, & I thought that perhaps you would be waiting until you

were well again, so as not to alarm us. anyhow all is well now, we hope; but don't go getting bronchitis again, & don't worry about Fred; he will have to take his turn, I suppose. I know how anxious you must be to see him, but the time will soon go. Why do you do so much washing in one day?. Wouldn't the blankets have kept until another day? If you make yourself too tired you will have no resistance left, & will be getting sick again. Look after yourself! ;you haven't any bosses, have you, unless Dad has turned into one? Bill was in another concert here last night in aid of the "Far West", & will be in the ambulance concert early next month.. They seem to have a great time-- the men at the church-- one way & another I don't write much about Robert lately; perhaps I am getting used to having him at last: I wondered if I ever would. anyhow, I suppose you do love to hear of him. He is growing, not only taller, but cheekier too, but he is still a great kid, & Christmas is so slow in coming. I am having some new suits made for him now, & he thinks it is a step in the right direction. I made a good job of a house-dress to-day. It's a perfect fit, & I feel encouraged to make something better now from the same pattern. Well, cheer up., Min., the boys will be home one of these days, & then we'll have the fatted calf, or perhaps turkey & pig. Bill has ordered a pig too to bring over with him, so you will have to borrow a "fridde" as Robert calls a frigidaire. Cheerio; it's after 11 p.m. & past my bed time. Bill & Robert are both fast asleep, but I thought I had better write to-night, because if this misses to-morrow's (Saturday's) mail it will not go until Tuesday. Thank you again, Dad, for all the trouble you must have taken to fix that book. Please, Mother, don't worry about me starving now that Valerie has gone. I am still your fat daughter & get plenty to eat. Love from all. Florence."

Wed. Oct 24, 1945. To-day we received the following letter from Walter:-

" 159 Gregory Terrace Brisbane. 22-10, 45. Dear Folks, I must be more prompt in writing after being "hauled

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over the coals" in the last letter, but you know how it is-- the letter is always left until there is some real news to write about. You have given me the "school booy howler" this time, Mum-- ammonia is not much good for the type of itching feet which want to go from Brisbane to Sydney. I had a good laugh over your home remedy. What Sydney job do you mean? . Naturally I'll take one when they give me one, but at the moment the crowd here are trying to hang on to me, even though the people in the Department in Sydney say they want me back. Last Monday they divided the Mechanical Section into 2 halves, one half to be under my control & to look after outside construction, & the other half under Dimmick to look after design. In addition to 6 chaps in the office I also have 24 in the workshop as part of my gang. It all sounds rather crazy, as I've always been a design man & Dimmick is not much good on design, but I think they are quietly trying to work him right out. This is going to make it all the harder for me to get away, but the Chief Engineer is due up from Melbourne this week, & then I'll thrash the matter out with him. My 6 weeks estimate in getting home is already looking sick, though, isn't it? We have moved back on to the 1st floor of the National Mutual Building again, too. Nothing of note has happened since I last wrote; just the usual round of golf, tennis, & occasional shows.. Dad is obviously doing well in looking after the fowls (how many have you, & how're the eggs?; Ivy also tells me of Dad's in binding the National Geographics-- good on you, Dad. So pleased to hear you are all o.k.. I too am in good nick. I wrote to Fred last Monday after having had a letter from him a few weeks before. All the best. Wal."

Mon. Oct. 29, 1945. Clarice Cocking has come home from the Convalescent Home & is a great deal better. The Indonesians are asking for liberation from Dutch domination, but it seems that they will have to fight not only the Dutch but the British too. To-day we received the following letter from Fred:-

"NX 193961 pte. F. Cocking, 2/4 A.G.H., Aust. 19 Oct. 1945. Dear Folks, Good news came in a couple of days ago to the effect that we were to be packed by the end

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of the month & would sail early in November. This has caused everyone to get flat out into it, with more enthusiasm than when we did it at Redbank, & I have 3 other carpenters from outside working with me. Everyone was pretty happy about it all until to-day, but a pretty strong rumour, as yet not official, has been going around that that every one with under 150 points will go to another unit until relieved by the pommies. This makes my 132 look a bit sick, but to-morrow I'm going to see what I can do about it, & my being the only carpenter in the unit might do some good. I hope so, anyway, but if I'm left it's just too bad, & at the most will only mean a month or 2. I'd like to be home by Christmas to see Flo & all the mob again, but if I'm not I understand that we're given 30 days leave with a free rail ticket to go anywhere in the State; so I'll certainly see the lot before Easter. Don't let this knock the wind out of your sails altogether, because even though I'm not home, neither is Christmas here yet, & I still have hopes. Boats are few & far between here too up to date. Most of the fellows to go home either on manpower or services release have been hanging around a month or more because of no ships. However, as I said before, I'm still hopeful, but don't take it too hard if it's some time in the new year before you see me. A "pix" that Joe sent indicated that I'd clean up a few nectarines. I hope so, but if I were you I wouldn't leave the big ones on the trees to get bad. As soon as something definite happens I'll write & let you know. The main thing is that I'm feeling extra well & expect to stay that way. It's good to know that, but for seasonal colds etc, every one is fair enough. You know it's a bit of a pity that I couldn't bring a bit of this climate home with me. While you're shivering we seldom use a blanket until 2 or 3 in the morning, & no one knows what a cold is.. I'm glad to know that this time when I go home it will be Summer. Tell Bert or Clarice when you see them that I'm glad that she's out of the hospital & that everything went o.k. You mention Dad & his book-binding. The last I knew of it he had stopped getting the Geographic: has he started getting it again, ?, or is it the old copies that he's doing ?. I suppose that the microscope & his books

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kept him occupied while the weather was so cold.. Up to a week or 2 ago I couldn't see a glimmer of hope so far as getting across to the mainland, but now the outfit is arranging the 4 of us go over 3 times a week, & I am in the first lot to go. Let's hope that packing up doesn't interfere with it. Borneo has always attracted me ever since I heard of the wild man who's supposed to live there. If the Boongs there are anything like the are here they're peaceful enough, even though they are a surly lot. Just as well Dad was there, or you you would have worried over Wal's feet; but as for putting too high a price on himself-- piffle-- he's worth every brown of it, & besides he has a good assured job, & it's not worth his while to to leave it for any less & run of it not turning out so good. He hasn't written to me in quite a while now, but I think that he's a bit like me & waits until he has something to write about. In the abbreviated newspaper we get daily I saw that among other things the B.H.P. was spending a lot of dough on was a new lot of coke ovens at Kembla. I wonder whether they will mean another rise for Johnno. I've run out of news, & supper is just on ready, so I'll finish up. Look after yourselves & keep your eyes on Christmas. Fred.

I suppose I'm allowed a P.S. too. They've given me 2 ribbons to hang on my manly chest. More rubbish to clutter up a drawer, or fuel, which ? Fred."

Sun. Nov 4, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection from a new sister at the hospital. I interviewed Mr. Pogonowski at his printery in Hunter street, re selling the old "World's News" to the Historical Society. He asked me to bring a copy to show to an official of the society. We received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan, 31 10, 45. Dear Mother & Dad, How are things ? Hope you are "in the pink" & the ants are not worrying Dad any more. Just as well he could laugh about it. I often wonder how your poultry farm is going; it's a good thing that you have some decent-si es chooks now. Do you still have a garden too, or is the back yard

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a poultry run ? Bill is out at practice for an ambulance concert to be held to-morrow night. It should be pretty good, judging by some of the items that are going on. The other day we all went to Beverly's birthday party, & on Sunday we will take Robert along to the children's anniversary. I have nearly finished my third dress : 2 are house-dresses, & I have 2 more to make. I hope to finish the one I am making ready for the concert to-morrow night. How is Jose these days ? Is he completely rid of his cold now that the warmer weather is here ? It will be good when Pip & Dool (WAL & FRED) are home again. I don't suppose Pip will actually be in Newcastle again to work, but at least he will be near enough to come home often. Mrs. Rees is still a visitor here pretty frequently & sometimes brings Mrs. Wright, a new-comer to Nyngan. I called on Mrs. Wright the other day, & the next day took Robert to the pet show at the school, much to his delight. There isn't much news, but I like to write a bit oftener than I did, after that long time without getting any word of home. It seems as though the only way to get letters oftener is to write often. Hope everyone is well, including Ivy who seems to be having a bad spell these days. I have written to Art & Phyll & Valerie to-night, & now it's quarter past 11, so it's bed time. Excuse the queer envelopes, but I forgot to buy them. In fact it's pretty hard to get them at all here. Cheerio. Our love to all. Florence."

Sun. continued. I have finished making a coop, & have set a little black hen in it on 5 eggs yesterday.

I called at Williams' house last Thursday for a 10/- cheque, but the girl did not know anything about it, so I have to call there next Thursday.

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Last Friday I got an injection in my right arm from the new sister. The next day (Friday) I went in again & consulted a young doctor about getting a blood-test, & he gave me a ticket to get one on the 20th of Nov. He also signed the printed form to enable me to travel early on the trams, & I took it to the Hamilton tram depot, but the official there declined to grant a ticket for early travelling, because, he said, "the doctor did not state the latest time at which I could attend the hospital. I bought some watermelon seeds & tomato seeds at Woolworth's, also some tomato plants. At Kirkham's I bought a packet of stringless beans. To-day I planted the tomato plants & sowed the tomato seeds & the melon seeds. Yesterday we received this from Fred:

"N X 193961 pte. F. Cocking, 24. A.G.H. Australia, Nov. 1st 1945. Dear Folks, To-day I was supposed to go to the 2/6 A.G.H. about 1 mile down the road, because of my mere 132 points, but have been given a temporary respite because all isn't packed up here.. I've been expecting to be sent somewhere or other daily, & so never wrote until I could give you my new address. However, I know how you'll be expecting a letter, so I can wait no longer. The said 2/6 has to be packed ready to go home, or so I'm led to believe, by the end of November -- this one by the end of last month -- so you can see that it will mean about 1 month later. It's a bit of luck really that I'm going there, as 60 out of the 70 who were going were sent to another place which has no idea of leaving until well after Christmas. It will be extremely unlikely if I get home by Christmas. I know that you'll be disappointed, but it just can't be helped, & in one way it's better, for, when I'm on leave before I get out, I understand that I'll get a train pass to go anywhere in N.S.W. I'll hop on any train, no matter where it's going, & in 5 or 6 weeks I should be able to spend a bit of time at Nyngan; & there wouldn't be much point in my going there if Flo was not home, would there? The 2/4 should leave in a few weeks, & the new show, if it does leave a month behind, makes it appear as if I'll have the novelty of Christmas at sea. My long-awaited chance of going to the mainland came

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yesterday. We went about 40 miles from here in a snifter launch to Brunei. It was well worth going, & real interesting. The town is about 10 miles up a river, & "boong" fishing villages were fairly thick along the shores & just like Hexham, only 100 times rougher & dirtier, while one opposite Brunei itself is a block of shacks built on a mud flats, & it must be $\frac{1}{2}$ mile square & crammed jammed together. Disgraceful & horrible it is, & as it's of pre-Jap times it would seem that the Pommi-ees are not the uplift to the niggers that we're led to believe they are. . . In the town itself there are some real good houses & clubs where, I suppose, the whites had all they wanted & lived like Kings. The most interesting thing, to me anyhow, was a dilapidated Chinese temple, complete with carvings & lanterns & a big fat Buddha, but the niggers apparently apparently used it as their "club". Anyhow, it was chock-a-block with them gambling for each other's dough., & they seemed to have a fair bit of it too.

The nuisances are back again with their inevitable clatter, so I'll have to finish up or do the block.

Don't think I'm worrying too much about the way things are shaping, for everything happens for the best, to me at any rate, ; & now that I know what's happening I'm more or less contented. When I do get home it'll be to stay, & that means a lot, don't it ?

I'm real well & having a pretty fair time, & glad to know that, with the exception of Ivy, everything is going swimmingly. Write to the same address till I tell you differently. Fred."

Sat continued: Last Thursday I received a 10/- cheque from Mrs. Williams

Fri. Nov. 16, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm. I interviewed Mr Pogonowski re the papers, but as Mr. Gould has gone off on a long holiday Mr Pogonowski could not consult him about buying the papers for the Historical Society. I arranged to call again in a fortnight's time. I have made a chicken-run ready for the chicks that should be out to-morrow week.

Following is a letter from Gladys:-

(My weight to-day is 10 st. 3 Lbs.)

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1st Avenue Warrawong, 31-10-45. Dear Mum & Dad,
WE're pleased to hear you & all the crowd up there are well. We are all tip-top at present.. Last Saturday week we had two car loads of visitors from Sydney, & it was lovely. Auntie Mary, Uncle Peter, Alma, Fred, Evelyn, Reg. & Herb. May & Vaughn (he's back from New Guinea), David from Brisbane, & 3 others you don't know them. There was 12 came up, & the 5 of us made 17: we had a lovely time. The weather is a bit better today; the wind has died down; it was terrible on Sunday & Monday. Jack has a lovely garden this year-- it's a picture. We're picking broccoli, broad beans, peas, spinach, carrots, parsnips, onions & turnips; so it's not so bad, I reckon, for so early in the year. There's no news down here to tell you about, so I'll say good bye & all the best to you all, from us all at Warrawong. Love, Glad. xxxxx."

This letter is from Florence :-

"Nyngan, 11-11-45. Dear Folks, You must admit I'm pretty prompt at answering letters these days. We were sorry to hear that your leg is giving you so much trouble these these days, Mother. If it isn't any better by the time you get this it might be a good idea to see the doctor to have a look at it, & perhaps he will order injections, & they usually help a lot to relieve that pain you seem to have so often. If you have to have a course of injections & have to stay in bed, I will come over & look after the house. It is probable that I will be over some time before Christmas, anyhow. I want to get a set of teeth; & if dentists are as busy there as they are here I will not be able to get them during the holiday period. My ears still give me a fair amount of trouble, & that, too, I want to see about while I am over. By the tone of your letter you are worried about Christmas & the work it entails. Don't worry about it. You haven't, surely, to worry about your family coming home. I am sure they won't worry whether they have "bread & fat" to eat, & the house won't worry them, no matter what it looks like. The main thing is that you & Dad are well; & I would like you to arrange about treatment for your leg, & I can come over while you are in bed. Most likely you will have to rest. Just taking medicine doesn't

seem to help much, & if you see a doctor now you may be all right for Christmas. I suppose you are having a cold spell to-day, & we are here. It's just like winter here & we are all down in the kitchen in front of the fire. The anniversary last week was real good. We went twice on the Sunday Mrs. Young was here this afternoon, & she will probably go over with me on her way to Inverell to stay with her parents until the beginning of April. Anyhow, we don't know when we will be going over, because our dressmaker is sick & cannot make the clothes that she is wanting for Beverly & I want for Robert. The material for Robert's clothes has been there weeks, but Mrs. Power? has been too ill to do anything, & of course we don't know when we will get them; but she sows quickly when she is well, & Bill will call on Tuesday to see her. Anyhow if you need me I'll come without the new clothes & have them sent ~~XXXX~~ on. Hope that Jose is well again: I think that a while out here would help him, but Summer time is a bit severe for a new chum, & I don't think he would appreciate the dust. About Easter time is the time to see the West, but I hope by then his troubles are over. How is the strike affecting him & Jack? Thanks for the envelopes, Mother, Don't worry, because I may be coming earlier. I'll give you a hand with the work & take over if you are not well. Anyhow, let me know how things are going. We may ring towards the end of the week. Cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

We had a letter from Phyllis on Friday, & they were all well & hoped to move into their house about the middle of December. Florence."

This letter came to-day from Walter :-

"159 Gregory Tce., Brisbane, 13-11-45. Dear Folks, Since last writing I have again been by car to Maryborough & Bundaberg, & quite enjoyed the trip, having been able to mix enjoyment with business. I took workmen & tools to Maryborough & left them for a few days to do a job on the R.A.A.F. boilers while I proceeded to Bundaberg on inspections. At the same time I was able to fit in a few games of golf which were very enj-

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able Even now I have no definite instructions about my transfer, although both the Chief Mechanical Engineer & the Director of Engineering have been up from Melbourne, but I know that the transfer is to be effected as soon as a replacement can be made. Dimmock, who has been the local engineer, has been recalled to Canberra, & I have just seen him off to-night. Last week-end was enjoyed at tennis & golf as usual, plus a swim down at Clontarf which was very acceptable. Last night I was one of a debating team at the local Y.M.C. we were fortunate in winning. Mum's letter about the fowls, Daphne's development, & the good health of you all made good reading; & irrespective of the possibility of transfer, I will in any case look forward to seeing you all at Christmas.. I am keeping wonderfully well; & Mrs. Jones says that although I am not getting fat I look more "solid". My weight has increased to 11st. 8 lbs.; so probably Daphne & I will be a good pair. Cheerio for now. Money order for £5 enclosed. Wal."

Sun. Nov. 25, 1945. I received an injection in my right arm last Thursday. Last Tuesday I had a blood-count at the hospital. I bought a 54/64 round drill at the Workman's Tool shop for 6/9. The little black hen that I set on 5 eggs on the 3rd Nov. has hatched 3 black chicks. This is our first hatching. Our apricots are fast ripening & are falling off the tree at the western end of the hut. They are free from grubs. The British authorities are employing Japs to help in murdering Indonesians who are seeking independence from Dutch domination. "There'll always be an England"-- where dirty work is to be done !
We have received the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961, pte. F. Cocking 2/6 A.G.H. Australia, 11-11-45. Dear Folks, As you can see, I've had another move, this time to the 2/6 A.G.H. All those with 180 points & over left yesterday on a hospital ship from -- from the 2/4 I mean-- & from here we could see it pulling out. One bloke with 179 swam after it awhile, yelling to them to throw him a rope : no one obliged, & he was eventually brought back in a launch. Was he moaning ?

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& was the air blue ? This place is supposed to be packed by the end of this month, but I don't know if I'll be lucky enough to go with it. However, we know, don't we, that my turn must come soon; & that's more than we knew 6 months ago !

The carpenter who was here before me has already gone home, so I have taken over now. So far there's been nothing to do, & as long as it stays like it I'll be quite satisfied. I've been here since last Monday, & been in for a (swim) 3 times so far. The beach is only about 150 yards away & has a good sandy bottom, & slopes out very slowly.; the ideal thing for a mug swimmer like me. Thanks for the almanac blotter. I'm still using the one you sent me last year. It also was for 1945. At first I thought this was for 1946 & I took it as being a bad omen so far as my being home before this year is out. Now I regard it as a good one & hope that there'll be no need to send me one for next year. I can only hope that I'll be home for Christmas, but you know as much as I do, so we'll leave it the "lap of the gods". By your letter, Dad seems to be busy. I'm glad that he's not taking too unkindly to the fowls & that he's saving you the trouble of looking after them; & if, as you say, he's doing a lot of odd jobs, he can't be feeling too bad. You say that it's beginning to warm up a bit down there. I only hope that it's still summer time when I get there. I remember the time that I came home before, in the middle of winter, from up where it really is hot. So do you, I'll bet. With the easy time I've been having the last month I should have been 14 stone now. I haven't weighed myself since I left Brisbane, & although I'm no lighter I know that I can't be any heavier either because of the heat. I'm keeping real well, & that's the main thing, isn't it ? I've had a letter each from Flo & Wal for a week now, & I might get one of them answered to-night. So long. All the best. Fred."

We also had this from Florence:-

"Nyngan, 17-11-45. Dear Mother, Your letter arrived last night, & I am not definite yet as to when I

am coming. AS to taking me away from Bill, don't worry about him thinking that; in fact he wants to get rid of me. He wants me to go before Christmas, so that he will not have to come back alone. We have been talking about going over on the 30th, which means we arrive on Dec. 1st, & that will give me plenty of time to have both my ears & my teeth fixed. (We means Robert & myself). If we do go on 30th it will mean that Bill only has a week & a couple of days here to batch; the rest of the time he will be in Bourke. I hate the thought of the trip over, but if I wait until Christmas I may not be able to be fixed up, & then will have to wait until some time in late January to come back. nyhow, I suppose I'll be on the train from here next Friday week if all is well, & that includes Robert's clothes being finished. The train leaves here on Fridays, & so it should not be quite so crowded as on other days. Mrs. Young is waiting now & going a week later, when her husband gets his holidays. Don't make any arrangement with the doctor or dentist yet. I'll let you know definitely when I am going. As to the dentist I want to go to, I am pretty doubtful about that, but you or Ivy might be able to help me there. I was thinking that perhaps Mr. Wells at the Bank (he made my first set pretty good) or Mrs. Longworth. Anyhow, you tell me which you think is the best & cheapest. Out here it costs about £ 20 for one upper set. I hope that they are not quite so expensive over there. Anyhow, I am glad that I haven't to come in the capacity of a nurse. I thought that it meant that your leg was getting much worse. Anyhow, it might not do any harm to have that limp seen to. The Lantogen, as you say, may do the trick. It's good to think your hand is so much improved. I hope that is the last of your skin worries. Dool must have been given a definite date now about his home-coming: it will be good if they start a bit earlier & he is at home, during the holiday period. I want to have my hair waved too when I go over: so with a new wave, new teeth & new ears, I should be much improved by the time Bill comes over. He is very anxious that I am not worrying about sore ears at Christmas; & of course I am too; so if they are cured this time we should all be happy. It's good to know that Jose is better again. I think

that he will have to come to dirty old Nyngan yet to get well-- but when the weather is good. Our love. Florence."

Wed. Dec. 5, 1945. Last Saturday, the first, Mum & I met Florence & Robert on the Newcastle staieon at 5 to 4, & Robert & I waited at the post office while Florence consulted doctor Perret in Bolton st. re her ears & t throat. He said she had tonsilitis & prescribed for h her. Last Monday Florence, Robert & I went to Newcastle as she had to see doctor perett again. A thunders-torm prevented us from going on to the beach. Mr. Williams rang & said that a cheque was ready for me at h his house. Yesterday I received a book of views of Hobart, Tasmania, from Mrs Christina Jager Mum received the following letter a few days ago from Mrs. Morris;

"56 Lett St., Lithgow, Nov 22 1945. Dear Mary, I received your ever-loving letter some time ago & so pleased all were well & you were improving.. What happened to you, Mary? You have always kept so well. God bless you & keep you strong. I am real well in myself & my poor old leg keeps good. I just get about the house. I came up in the car: I had to lay down, but still that that is all right to be able to get in the car. God help me; without him I am nowhere. I am sorry to tell you Maggie does not get good health: it is such a pity she has worked so hard for us all. I do hope she will soon be better again. Eva is not the best, but the girls are well also her husband. Bill is not the best: he suffered from one of those ulcers & gets some very sick turns. Well, Mary, have you got your boy home yet? A lot of the poor chaps are home again, & what a lovely thing for themselves after all they went through, & their parents would be so pleased to have their boys once again. Our boy won't be home for awhile; he is going to Japan, but I ask God to spare him tous all. Those old Japs were hard & cruel to our people, & they should be kept in their place: what do you say? Well now, Mary, what are all these strikes coming to? The men don't seem to do much good & the boys coming home to more trouble. Where is your boy-- bless him did he get home yet? How happy you will be to have

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him home with you: & ,Mary, what is it all for ?
I do hope when your boy returns he is real well.
Poor chaps, their food line is pretty rough I suppose.
Mary, how is Florrie, her husband & son ? Hope they are
well; also all the rest of your care. Poor Mr. Cocking,
how does he keep ? It will be 12 months on the 7th
Dec. since I lost my dear husband, & how I do miss him.
At times I am very miserable, but Maggie & Bill & Eva
& Col & family are all good to me; so I can't complain.
God gave my dear one rest & he will be happy, .
So now I must say Ta-ta to you, my dear old Pal, " thhe
very bezt of love to you & all of your care. So cheerio
from your old friend. Maggie, Bill, & Eva send best love
& hope you will all have a nice Christmas & a bright
new year. Excuse all mistakes, as lille Jan is on
the bed all the time. Eliza Morris."

This letter is from Fredence:- *FLORENCE*:-

"Nyngan, 28-~~10~~- 11-45. Dear Mother, Well, we have m-
ade up our minds to go on Friday, but as far as your
meeting the train in Newcastle (is concerned) it's pr-
etty indefinite just when we shall arrive, as the fl-
yer is booked out & we shall have to get any train we
can., " shall get the earliest we can after the train
arrives. If Art comes in I may get him to ~~X~~ ring or
send a wire, but I may not have much luggage unless my
big port arrives at the same time as we do. I'll tel-
ll you all the news when we arrive. Until then "cheerio.
Florence."

This came from Fred:-

" Dear Folks, I have a letter from both you & Joe to
answer, but it seems that the one to Joe will have to
wait until I have something to write about. This
place is supposed to be packed ~~by~~ by next week-end &
to leave here on or about 15 Dec. It's hard to say
whether I'll go with it, but present indications sugg-
est that I'll once again be dumped--this one to 2/1
C.C.S. (Casualty Clearing Station) about 2 miles away.
Some of the fellows from the 2/4 went there from the
start, & they say that the grub there is extra good;
so that's a big thing in its favour, & will be a we-
lcome change from the rubbish we're getting here.

Don't address my letters to there, though, because I may not go there, if you continue to send them to this place they'll be sent on. If it wasn't for the crook grub this would be a real good place, nothing much to do, & every afternoon about 3 o'clock down to the beach,; nothing but a good holiday.

I don't think you need bother about whether Flo is home or not, because I'll have 2 months or more leave in which to use my pass up, & besides you should know that home is sure to be the first place that I make for. You misunderstood my reference to Brunei. It was only a trip that was arranged -- there & back in one day-- just a sight-seeing trip, & I was lucky to have the opportunity to go. I'm glad, too, that I didn't have to stay there.

With Keith on the barbed wire & Joe with his cold, you seem to be getting a few more or less trivial things happening, but nothing seems serious; so everything is o.k. Let's hope that doctor Arnold says that your hand is completely better this time. There is a picture of a girl sitting for her leaving certificate in the "Table Tops" (the local rag) to-night, so I suppose that Daff is right in the middle of hers & worrying her head off about it too. Art, too, will have his head stuck in one of Gladys special type of books for his exam. I'm feeling real good, with the exception of a bit of a cold but I don't think it will last long up here & expect it to be better in a couple of days. I only hope that I'm home while there's a bit of Summer left; but, as I say, it's hard to tell how long I'll be up here yet. ~~xxx~~."

I know that you're continuing to send papers to me, but it's easily 6 weeks since I've had any, & every change I get means another hold-up. I think that it would be a good idea not to send any more as the last lot that you sent should just about get to me when I'm going home. There's always plenty of reading matter up here, no matter where we go, as every place carries quite a good library. There's nothing else I want & nothing else to say, so I'll finish now. Don't get too anxious about my coming home, as my turn must come soon. The air mail stickers are a washout up here. They always stick too soon. Fred."

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Last Monday (~~1XX~~) (3rd) we received this from Art:-

15 Charles St., Marrickville, Sunday 1st Dec. 1945.

Dear Folks, I was going up to see you last Friday fortnight, but found out I could not get a booking. There was some chance of getting a seat on the following or some subsequent Friday, but I wasn't game to leave Phil for a week-end any later than the beginning of November. Apart from that, my exams were getting pretty close (I'm in the middle of them now). My little sweetheart was a bit disappointed because I'd told her that she & I were going away in the train, but I'll make it up to her by taking her to see you some time in January. Phyllis is much better than should reasonably be expected; & as for Doreen, she's the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ sweetest little girl a bloke would see in a day's march. Not that she's an angel by any means -- she's a female Robert pretty often. Just now she's in pretty bad odour because she chucked her dinner on the floor to-day & broke the plate in the process. You'd better get the tin plates ready against our coming, Mum. All 3 of us wish we could be at home for Christmas, but getting all 4 of us home by train is too fagging a job for us to be game to tackle it. Maybe Phil will try the journey about the middle of January. I'll take on the trip alone (except for Doreen of course) if she doesn't like to face it.. Our chance of getting the house we left is more slender than ever, although there is some chance of getting it. Next week one of us will write to Wal or Fred. It seems 40 years since I've heard from either of them. How's the book-binding going, Dad? & how is the lip, Mum? & how is Chip getting on. We hope everything in the garden is lovely & the chooks each lay 2 eggs a day. We should have some real news for you pretty soon. In that event I'll probably ring you. Phyllis sends her love. So do I, & here's a kiss from Doreen.X. Arthur."

Tuesday Dec. 18, 1945. Last Thursday I got an injection in my left arm. At Ash's I bought another square-ended drill for 3/6. Yesterday was a very hot day -- temp. 102 deg. Fah. Florence & Robert went to Mrs. Longworth to get her new teeth. We have received this from Glad:-

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" 1st Avenue Warrawong, Wednesday. Dear Mum,
Your welcomed letter to hand some time ago. We are pleased to hear you are all well; we are tip-top just now, although I had the flu badly last week, & the kiddies all had colds. We get our holidays on the 30th of Dec, so I suppose, if we can get the petrol & the trains are running, we'll be up, one way or the other. We're hoping we can get the petrol, because we think the trains might be out out. Dell got 8 A's & 2 B's out of ten subjects, so she goes into second year when school opens; & Alva same top: she got 334 marks out of 350. She goes into 6th class when school starts. We haven't got John's results yet. Isn't the old strike awful? We had to use the kerosene lamp & candles last night because 9 o'clock is a bit early to go to bed. Wishing you all the compliments of the season, from Glad, Jack & family."

We also received the following letter from Wal.)

"159 Gregory, 12-12-45, 12-12-45. 3-12-45. Dear Folks:

Dear Folks, Still another year is getting near its end, & this will probably be my last letter before seeing you all at Christmas time. Notwithstanding all my efforts, including another submission a week ago, they seem very loth to let me leave Brisbane, so I will not be coming home for good, but will have to return here for at least some time in the new year.

I have arranged to go to Sydney on the Wednesday before Christmas (19th) & will see the crowd in the Sydney office before coming home for Christmas. I must also write to Art to-night & ask him to book me a seat on the Newcastle "Flyer" on Christmas Eve.

I returned yesterday after an enjoyable swimming weekend at Burreleigh Heads, it being much better now that we are able to leave on Friday night & have 2 full days clear. The car is running very well, although I didn't take it with me this time, as I want to save the tickets. I was lucky in having 2 tyres given me which were quite suitable for re-treading, so I am now fairly well off with 3 new re-treads. How did Joe get on about tyres? Reg. David came back here for a few days the week before last. He came to raise Capital & has now bought a chemist's shop at Paramatta. I was glad to know you were all well, with the exception of Keith's mishap,

but expect he too is in good shape again by now. Dad must be getting to be a real poultry enthusiast. Chip's idea in making toys is an excellent one. As you say, they are very expensive & rather poor in the shops, & I'm sure the kids will enjoy the personal touch of the home-made one. I haven't heard from Fred for a some time, but expect that the outlook up there is so jumbled at present that he is waiting for things to clarify themselves a bit before writing. There is not much else of news at the moment. I am somewhat curious about the effect of the strike on things down there, & can only hope that it doesn't become nation-wide. Certainly there is little tranquillity in in either the national or the international sphere at present, & even jobs don't seem to be too plentiful. Doubtless Dad is studying the news as closely as ever, & I will be able to discuss things at first hand when I am at home. Cheerie for the present. Wal. "

Also this letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 pto. F. Cooking, 2/6 A.G.H. Australia.
 Thurs: 6th Dec. Dear Folks, I hope that you haven't had a sneaking feeling that I'd be home for Christmas because if you have you're going to be disappointed. The mob from here are due to leave next week some time -- without me -- but they won't have time to get home, but will get there a couple of days before the new year. The Government seems to be making some sort of gesture to get the men home this year, but so far it's all talk: boats are always supposed to be coming & are not arriving. Now the story goes that 10,000 men will leave here before the end of the year. Personally I'll believe it when I see it. However, if they do come they should take most of the higher priorities home, & that should mean that I should be on the water in January, & then I'd still have a few weeks of warm weather before Winter. There is one bright spot on the horizon & that is that Louis Mountbatten is due to arrive here to-morrow or the next day; & those big bugs don't move around for the good of their health. My interpretation is that he's coming to make final decisions about the Poss taking over, & if they're ready to come it won't take long for them to find ships for us. Really, you

know. I have nothing to moan about for I'm doing very little work; & every afternoon at about 3 O'clock I go down to the beach. My cold has now quite gone & there's nothing the matter with me. We still have pictures 3 nights a week, & on the other nights there's plenty to read. The perfect millionaire's life. : the only thing is that I am not at home, & that makes a big difference. I wrote you last letter not to bother sending any more papers or anything else for that matter, & the way that the papers are not coming in is horrible. The last ship to bring any -- & there was none for me-- ran on a reef & most of the papers were more or less spoilt. It seems months since I had any, & on present delivery if you send any now I'd be well home before they got here.. Eric & Robert should be home when you get this, & that means that the hill Billies will visit more often, so things should brighten up for you for a while.. Don't forget, if I'm still away, to let me know how Dad's blood-count is., also the exam results for the mob. Joe will understand that it's all I can do to find enough news to write to you, but when things really start to move his will be one of the first I write. If it helps you any, Joe, Wal is in the same boat. I had a letter from him, I think before I got yours, & so far I haven't written to him either. I'll have to write to him soon or he won't get it till he gets back to Brisbane after Christmas. I'll finish now. So long; it won't be for long. Fred."

Tues. continued. We also got a Christmas card from "the Cockings at Warrawong" bearing this message:-

" Though life brings much that changes
And time brings much that's new,
There's one thing never changes,
And that's kind thoughts of you."

Mon. Dec. 31, 1945. As I wish to re-condition my old typewriter ribbons I have decided to try the following plan which was published in the "World's News" :) "S.J.W. In making typewriter ribbons any finely divided non-fading color may be used as the pigment; vaseline is the best vehicle & wax the best corrigent.. In order to make the ribbon last a long time with one inking as much pigment as feasible should be used. To make black

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record ink, take some vaseline, melt it on a slow fire or water bath, & incorporate by constant stirring as much lampblack as it will take up without becoming lumpy. Take from the fire & allow it to cool. The ink is now practically finished, except if not if not entirely suitable on trial, , it may be , it may be improved by adding the corrigency wax in small quantities. The ribbon should be charged with a XXXXIXX very thin evenly divided amount of ink; hence the necessity of a solvent -- in this instance a mixture of equal parts of petroleum & rectified spirits of turpentine. In this mixture dissolve a sufficient amount of solid ink by vigorous agitation to make a thin paint. Try the ink on one extremity of the ribbon. If too soft, ass; if too soft add a little wax to make it harder if too pale add a little more color ; ; if too hard add more vaseline/. If this is carefully applied to the ribbon & the surplus is brushed off the result should be highly satisfactory."

Copied from "The Handyman's 1000 Practical Receipts."

I did not get an injection last Thursday as the hospital out-patients department is closed until the 7th of January. On Christmas Eve Mum, Florence, Robert & I went to the Newcastle railway station & met Bill Purdy. He was loaded with a big port & a box containing a raw, frozen sucking pig & a quantity of mutton & a big turkey.. He hired a taxi-car, & we came home in it. Last Thursday I went to Mrs. Longworth & had my tooth bored ready for filling. Bill has been ill in bed with asthma. It was so severe that Florence called doctor Spitz, who prescribed medicine for him. To-day Bill is up, but is not well yet. Charlie & a friend have gone to Glenoak to shoot to-day, & will not return until next Saturday. Our son Jack arrived here last Saturday by car with Gladys, John, Adell, & Alma. They gave me some tomato plants & a young fig tree. They have gone to Raymond Terrace. Ella York (May Cocking's sister) visited us yesterday. I gave a handkerchief to each of these :- Mum, Ivy, Gladys, Ethel, Phyllis, Daphne, Adell, Alma, Doreen Judith, Art, Jack, John, Jose, Keith, Noel, Charlie, Wal, Florence, Bill. I sent "Through The Indiscreet" to Mrs. Christina Jager,

of June River, Tasmania. I received a book of Hobart views from her previously. From Mum I received a shirt, & Bill gave me a book entitled "Fifty Mutinies, Rebellions, and Revolutions," , 704 pages by 43 authors. Jose gave me a book entitled "Word From John", 228 pages by an unknown author. Walter came from Brisbane by train on Christmas Eve & gave Mum ten pounds. Fred could not get away, but expects to come home from RAB Labuan soon. Mrs. Sobb sent us a card with the following message:- "With kind remembrances & all good wishes for a happy Christmas & a bright new year." We received the following letter from Fred:-

"N X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking, 2/6 A.C.H. Australia, 14-12-45. Dear Folks, Only a fortnight to Christmas Day. It's certain now that I won't make it; still I'll be well there ~~there~~ for the next one. I was lucky enough to have a Christmas card given to me -- only one-- , so I'll send it home to every one I know; most will be at home to read it, with the possible exception of Jack & Glad,, but it's for them too. I hope that Art & Phyllis can get there too. You only just said that they had another girl, but not how anyone was, or what the kid was to be called. Maybe you didn't know, but I'm sure that you'll let me know when you find out. It's raining cats & dogs, & the wind is blowing a few splashes in through the window, but the day has been a bit hot, so it's a real welcome change. I wat to write to Wal if possible to-night, so that he'll get it before he leaves Brisbane; so I won't say any more than that I'm o k & that my cold has quite gone. Wishing you & everyone else a real good Christmas. Let's hope they gave you enough light & gas to cook the duck. I understand that we get something special too. Fred."

We also received this from Fred:-

"N X 193961 Pte. F. Cocking, B Coy. 2/12 Fld. Amb Australia. 19-12-45. Dear Folks, This is not intended as a letter, but I thought that if I posted something now you'd get it in the few days between Christmas & New Year. These couple of days always seem to be a bit dull, just mucking about waiting, & working out good

resolutions for Jan. 1st, but keeping them is always a different thing. A few days ago the main mob went on the hospital ship "Wanganella"

the same boat that took the 2/4 home, which meant about 5 weeks for the round trip to Sydney. It takes about 14 days on the water; so you can see that I'm not extra far away: far enough, though, says you. There's been a few ships coming in lately; the more the merrier. They've only got to take the same bloke home once, & my turn must come eventually. There's a pretty strong rumour that Indians are coming here before the New Year, & that there'll be none of us left here after the end of January. Although my points are not high they're by no means the lowest here; so I won't be the last to go. The Field Ambulance address is the one we have been given, not because we're in it, but because they've taken over part of what we had, & as the 2/6 is no more this is the closest place for us to get them. I suppose that I'll have plenty more changes before I'm home, but no matter where you write to I'm sure to get them sent on without much delay. I was glad to read the other day where the minnies are going back: it read as if they had a win, too; so I suppose that the B.H.P. are getting ready to start up again too. I don't want a shortage of trains when I get there, because it seems that I'll have about 7 weeks to roam N.S.W. I'm real well, practically nothing to do other than go down on the beach, & it seems that good grub is going to be turned on for Christmas. ~~XX~~-X 5/- a head should supply something worth while, shouldn't it? As I said, this is only a note, so I'll finish now. I do hope that Flo's ears are not causing her any bother now, & that this time she'll have them fixed up for all time/. Till early in the new year, so long. Fred."

Tues. Jan. 1, 1946. Jack, Gladys & family called this morning with Mrs Bobb from Raymond Terrace. They have all gone by car with Robert to Belmont. Mum was ill this morning, but Bill is much better. Hot day.

Thur. Jan. 10, 1946. This morning I posted Mum's tram concession ticket to the tram ways office, 10 Phillip St. Sydney for a new ticket for 1946. I got an injection in my left arm from the sister at the hospital. At Kodak's I got 14 sheets of half plate enlarging paper for 1/10. I went to Longworth's place, & Mrs. Longworth bored a little more out of my tooth. She gave me some cards to advertise a meeting to re-form a League of Nations Union under the name of United Nations Organisation. The cards read-- "You are cordially invited to attend the inaugural meeting of the United Nations Organisations (formerly League of Nations Union) Mayfield Branch, to be held in the parish hall, Church Street, Mayfield on Thursday 17th January 1946 at 8 P.M. Isabel Longworth, Convener." I bought the Sydney Morning Herald to see the results of the Sydney University examinations, but Arthur's name is not in it. At Harrington's shop I examined a quarter-plate Reflex camera, the price £ 23. Son Jack, his son John, young John David, Adell, & Alma have been here 3 days; they left in Jack's car this morning. Walter went to Sydney last Monday, & Bill Purdy, Florence, & Robert left here for Nyngan last Tuesday. I paid £ 1-8-2d at the Bank of N.S.W. for the "National Geographic Magazine to be sent to Nyngan for Bill this year. Some time ago we received the following from Arthur:-
"Charles St., Marrickville, Sunday.

"Dear Folks, The curtailment of railway services prevented our going home last week-end; now it is unlikely that we'll see you before the middle of January, Phyllis & the little nipper (duly registered as Judith Anne) last Friday) were now at home. Both are feeling mighty fine. The little 'un is healthy & comfortable (i.e. she has no rashes, etc.) so, so she is good all day & most of the night. Doreen thinks it's lovely having a little baby sister, so we're quite a happy family. We'll be sending you a parcel next week. It should reach you by Christmas or shortly afterwards. I intended to inspect Dad's handiwork on his bookbinding by now. I can't do so, as it seems as though a report is called for, Dad. You'd better let me know, too, whether you managed to get the missing number.....

The rest of the letter is lost.

We have received this from Fred:-

"N X 193961 pte. F. Cocking, B Coy. 2/12 Fld. Amb. Australia, 1-1-26. Dear Folks, New Year's Day, & I've spent, like I've spent the other days lately, just loafing a bit; that's all there is to do here now besides wait. The story about us leaving somewhere about the 20th still holds, & it seems to be pretty fair dinkum this time; so about 3 weeks should see us on the water. I hope so, anyhow, because I'm getting a bit tired of just mucking about. The Indians have arrived, & the day after to-morrow we go to the other side of the island, with nothing to do but wait our turn. It's good to know that Phyll & the baby are all right. The name they picked is pretty good, I think, don't you? I didn't quite know what you were driving at when I first read that the Millingtons hadn't left Joe's house to (too?) clean. First I started to think that Jack M. must have taken it, but after I remembered that Middletons were the last people in it I woke up to what you were driving at.. It shouldn't have been too bad: why it's only about a year ago since it was done. I'm sending you a couple of pictures: I don't quite know what they mean. One seems to be teaching the kid how to be a flag flapper, & the other has me tricked.. You may be able to work it out, or some clever cove down there might. There's nothing much to write about so I'll finish up. I just thought that you would like to hear from me on the first of the year. I'm o.k.; keep that way yourselves. Fred."

P.S. I got "World's News", 3 or 4 Heralds & a big bundle of Suns & Heralds from Joe yesterday, the first for a long time.. Last night was pretty tame pictures & concert till midnight, & at 12 o'clock a few rifle shots & Very, besides a fair bit of kero. tin banging. "

To-day (Thursday) we received this telegram from Arthur:- "Passed; see you Wednesday."

We also received the following Letter from Art:-

"150 Charles Street, Harriokville, Tuesday.
Dear Folks, We received the parcel from Dad. Thanks v-

very much, Dad; you know just what we needed. The nippers are coming along nicely, thanks, especially the little one who is now growing a third chin. She's the most contented baby I've ever seen; we hope it doesn't that she'll be a squealer later on. Wal will find me at home any day of the week from 9 till 12, & at night from 6 onwards. From 8 to 9 a.m. I'm teaching a bloke about 30 to speak & read. For this I hope to get a "Thank you." From 1 to 5 p.m. I'm teaching swimming at Bankstown Baths. For this I hope to get 16/- per day. It's a pretty hardly-earned few bob, but I'd do it for nothing I'm so bored sitting around here. Wal will find Phyllis, poor brute, at home at any & every hour of the day. & for night. She'll be mighty pleased to see him, & will give him a chance to play with the kids & admire them (which, being a bloke of discretion, & discernment, he can't very well avoid doing, until I return. So come any time, Wal. We'll welcome you, even though the home isn't ours. Economics results will be published in the war cables edition (noon) of the "Sun" & I think, in the Sydney Morning Herald on the 8th, 9th, & 10th Jan., i.e. Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday of next week. My name might be in the lists for English - I (Arts) Economics IV & History of Economic Thought. I'm a bit windy about it. If Flo drops us a line we may be able to meet her, Bill, & "Smacker" at Central on their way back. If Grandma (Witheridge) will look after Doreen we'll probably show you our latest kid. We hear no mention of Chip (Charlie) : how is he ? Phyllis sends her love. So do we all. Arthur."

Fri. Jan. 11, 1946. I have received this from Websters:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, near Redruth, Cornwall, 29th Oct. 1945. Dear Mr. Cocking, I am writing to thank you for the papers we are getting enjoying. You wanted to know if they are coming regularly. Well, some weeks we get them 3 & 4 a week, but I think it was owing to the war. Thank God the war has ended: we are more than thankful. What a dreadful time it's been for all of us. Now we can lie down in peace once more, & we have our street lights, & our windows without

dark curtains. It was awful to go out of doors; not a bit of light to be seen. And we need to be more thankful that the old bombs never drop anywhere in portreath, but very near by-- only a mile from us-- they have done a lot of damage to the airdrome. The noise scared us at the time. I do hope we never have any more wars. We shan't if we all do unto each other as we would be done unto. We trust you are all keeping fairly well if not in perfect health. Our boys are well. Fred has got over his bad attack, & Frank has been in hospital in Bru-ssels. He caught a severe cold & it settled in his back so bad that he could scarcely stand, but after treatment & rest he is well again. He is helping to guard prisoners in Brussels -- not too good a job -- but they are like in school; do what you are told. Anyway, he says they have very good food & comfortable beds, more than he has always had since in the army. His wife. His wife & little Joyce are well. Joyce has been very bad with whooping cough & asthma. They came & spent the afternoon with us yesterday. It was a nice day. We have had a very rough week -- wind blowing a gale, trees blown down, & rain in torrents. No one could go far. Now we have a lovely day to-day -- sun warm just like Summer. Well, Mr. Cocking, my eyesight is lots better. My ankles & both my feet had varicose ~~XXIX~~ ulcers. I couldn't sleep with pain, & our doctor came & ordered me to bed; so I've been up here 5 weeks. I don't like it, but it's done them good. One ankle has healed & the other foot is nearly well. He said only rest would heal them. I can sit out here now in the window, & the sun is grand. I feel like 16 in body, I am thankful to say. I have just lost my eldest brother, 78. He had a stroke a few months ago & was never well again, poor chap. A few months elder than my husband Harry, & he is well as can be after that long illness. Someone is outside with him now. He is laughing & shouting, you think him a schoolboy. He is sending his best regards to you & Mrs. Cocking & family. You were saying about them preserving the water out there. What a pity they don't think of the right thing to do. We were just the same -- tons of spring water running to waste -- but since the airdrome has been up there they leave it for their own use. Not so much wasted now. We are never short of wa-

water— lovely spring water. I have not had a letter from my cousin David out there for quite a long time now. My girls are both well. Kathleen is still at Falmouth, & Myra is here doing the housework for me to have the rest. Doctor said I should have ~~MYRA~~ had it before, but I didn't want to bring Myra home out of her good job. Yes, I feel sure our Labour Government mean to do what they say — no half & half with them. They're going to do their best for the workers all around. We are about the only ones that are Labour in Portreath. They just ~~XXp~~ put in the Conservative, Mr. Agnew, again; they think the world of him. Like pa Webster say, , the more they're bit & kicked the more they hold for they hold for them. pa gets into lots of hard talks, but don't make any impression, they can't see, or won't. Anyway, our Labour are in full power, more than before. Some say they never did anything when Labour was in before, but they weren't in power; couldn't blow nor strike much then: they will now though, I'm sure. Yes, our girls both had their share of bombs at Falmouth. Kathleen was a fire-watcher. She had to go out ever so often as they dropped lots of incendiary bombs & caught the houses on fire. A family of five were killed very near where Myra was, yet she escaped harm, but it worried us. We were afraid for them to stay down there. But they would stay on & come out all right lucky. Now Mr. Cocking, I must close with kind regards & thanks for papers & the books, well they were something to read worth while. Trust this will find you all well as it now leaves us. As ever, your sincere friends H. & E. Webster. Before you get this I hope to be out skipping around again."

Answered Jan. 11, 1946. "Sighted Off Nobbys" sent, & group photo of Mum, Florence, Bill & Robert.

Sat. Jan. 19, 1946. Last Thursday I got my usual injection in my right arm at the hospital. I paid a pound due for electricity. Last Wed. Art, Phyllis, Doreen & Judith arrived from Marfickville, all well. I paid Mrs. Watts 4/- for the Pensioners' Association on Thurs, that is 2/- contribution & 2/- levy.

Mr. W. Longworth has lent me "The Martyrdom Of Man", by Winwood Reade. Yesterday we received the following letter from Florence :-

*Box 15 Nyngan, 15-1-46. Dear Folks, Well, here we are again back in dirty old Nyngan, although Robert says he likes being back. We haven't had much dust so far, but judging by the state of the house & local reports the dust-storms were pretty numerous while we were away. The first big thing to mention, though, is Duff's (Daphne) pass to-day, or yesterday would be more correct, but we are always a day late with the news out here. Anyhow it is great to know that she got through. I'll bet she is a very happy girl now. Congratulations Dup, we're proud of you. The boy around the corner (Mrs. Callaghan's boy) was unlucky enough to fail, & wears a very glum look. I suppose that Art & Payilis & their daughters are with you now. What do you think of the new nipper's, Mother & Dad? Isn't she XXXX a little peach? I was just about to send that little pillow over to-day for Doreen's doll's cot, but I think it would be hardly long enough. If they send me the size of the cot I can be sure then; in the meantime perhaps you may lend her that little cushion, Mother. We are all well, but finding it mighty hot after the first day in Dubbo. Bill was his old self again (I mean his Wild West self), & we came home last Friday. Bill spent all day on Thursday at the shop while Robert & I amused ourselves in the park, mostly in the baths. We were going to see Olive Worley the night before we left, but had to turn back because Robert was too tired. Anyhow, we met her on the station the morning we were leaving. She had come down to welcome a new "off-sider". Her old mate has gone in charge of Lithgow. Ol had her sister Hazel's eldest girl, Margaret with her. She is a little happy kid, with features much like her mother's, but definitely more grins. Ol said she is coming out shortly in the Ford they have recently bought, & I think I shall have Margaret while they are in Nyngan. Hazel & family have just been to Dubbo on a visit, & Ol is wondering just how Margaret is going to return. She may have her for some time until her mother can come again. Hazel is stationed in Queensland, so it's a big trip to take. How did Jose get on about

tyres; did he have any luck yet? I hope their holiday isn't a failure because of it. I suppose that the next visitor home will be Fred. "All the men are to leave by the end of January; so I suppose that, after he has a good spell at home, we may expect him out to see us. I am very glad you didn't come over, Dad; I have found the heat pretty hard to take since we came back, & Bill was dreading going to Bourke because of it, but he'll get used to it again. Robert is a little champ since we returned. His behaviour has certainly improved & he is no trouble at all. I only hope he keeps it up. Perhaps the kids about here missed him while he was away -- it's hard to say -- but there isn't always a fight in the street now like there was before. All the kids seem to have declared "peace". Robert has a special playmate now-- Ian Patney-- he lives along where Gains lived. His father took Mr. Smith's place in the Bank here. Ian is 7, & I hope they don't quarrel, because I can trust Robert with him. He nearly lives here-- arrives before we have breakfast, & only goes home for meals. It seems pretty likely that we shall remain here for the time being, anyhow. The returned man has not applied for his job so far. The boss was away on holidays while we were in Dubbo, but the Inspector told Bill that he thought Bill would stay here. I had a letter from Mrs. Smith to-day & she said she was looking forward to seeing us on our holidays. We won't be popular when she learns that the holiday is over & we didn't call. Her father died about 6 months ago; it must be all that time since she wrote last.. You should have seen the mail at the post office for us to collect when we returned. And talk about fan mail-- there was some pile. Included in the number there was a card from Valerie. She is not returning to Nyngan, a boy has been transferred here now. Well, this is a good long letter; it should make up for the , & thanks to your good looking after, Min, we are in the "pink". My ears are very much improved & I think this treatment will cure them. Cheerio. It's about 11 p.m.; so it's time I turned in. Our love to you all. Florence."

Sat. Jan. 26, 1946. Last Thursday I got an injection as usual at the hospital. I have not seen Mr. Evans of Speers Point there (at the hospital) lately. I wonder what has become of him. I called at Longworth's house on the way home to see Mrs. Longworth about replacing the bit of metal packing in my tooth, but a girl said that Mrs. Longworth had gone on a 3 weeks holiday & will not return until Feb. 11th. I have just finished reading an old, yellowed book entitled "Traced & Tracked". No author's name is inscribed, but it is a "Herbert Jenkins's Book" of 307 pages. We have received the following letters from Fred & Wal:-

"N X 193961 pte. F. Cocking, B Coy. 2/12 Fld. Amb. Australia 15-1-46. Dear Folks, I imagine that you've been thinking all sorts of things, because it's a while since I wrote. No, I'm not on the boat yet, but there doesn't seem much chance of me being here more than another fortnight: maybe I'll get away before, & if I do I'll write XXXII on the day that I leave. As I told you before, we have shifted on to the other side of the island -- the side facing the open sea I mean -- & my tent is only a few feet from high tide. The Christmas tide came to within about 3 feet of my bed, so next day I got a couple of sheets of iron & built a retaining wall -- you know I can think of much more pleasant things than to wake up with bed & all floating out to sea. Since coming over here I've done practically nothing else but sleep, swim, & eat & drink cocoanuts. Nice work if you can get it, eh? That was up till to-day when we went down to give a hand with the packing of the last medical unit left here, so you can see that when it's finished there's no reason why we should be left here. I read in the "Table-Tops" to-night, & I suppose it's been published in the home papers, a list of the different priorities with regard to discharge going back to N Guinea or staying in the army. It appears that although I mightn't be immediately discharged, won't be sent out of N.S.W somewhere around Sydney I guess, which won't be too bad because I'll be able to get home pretty often & still give me a chance to find out something about Sydney at the Govt. expense. I'd much rather go home & wash my hands of the whole

thing, although after a bit of leave I wouldn't mind going back to the islands. I know that you'll be much happier if I just waste another month or two in Aus.: it shouldn't be any longer.

It was good to read that with the exception of Bill everyone is pretty right; & as soon as he gets back he'll be o k again. Apparently you didn't understand my reference to the 5 bob. I never paid it: it came from the canteen profits, I think, & Christmas never cost me a Ra-Zee. You surely didn't think that I'd be mug enough to pay in good dough when it's the Govt's responsibility to at least give us something worth while once every cracker dat -- don't you? It seems that the fowls must have been laying pretty well, for the last month or so we've had an egg for

breakfast every morning, besides fresh meat & butter pretty often; so you can see that the grub has improved a lot, as "all's right with my world", at any rate.

You know it's strangd, but good feed makes a tremendous difference. I hope that it won't be necessary to nail the nectarines on the trees so that they'll still be there when I get there, but if I miss out this time

I'm sure to be in plenty of time to prune the trees & make them take it next year. The papers seem to have been laying the sob stuff omthick again. Apparently they've been trying to give the impression that the blokes were so glad to be home, that, for want oof something better, & being so glad to be sailing into "Our harbour" again they just pitched their clothes overboard.. I'm sorry to disillusion you, but just pure laziness & the lack of fresh water to wash them is the reason. Most blokes go home with a surplus, & clothes, & when they get like the ground just pitch them into the sea.. I have 2 extra, both shirt Strides, & I'll be surprised if I have more than I'm supposed to when I leave the boat. I don't know if it will be worth your while to answer this, as I may possibly be gone from here before an answer gets here, but if you have a bit of spare time & write as soon as this arrives I might get it; although 5 days home & 5 back make ten, & I don't think I'll be here then. If you do write don't bother to write much -- just half a page saying that both you & Dad are well will be su-

efficient. I don't know if I told you before or not, but there's plenty of monkeys here, only about 2 or 3 different sorts, but a queer thing is that the E9 Boongs are frightened -- terrified of them & run like mad when they see one. But our blokes have caught a good few & have them for pets, just like kittens they are, & sit on your shoulders or heads. I wonder what Dad thinks: I'll bet he still has a snout on them after that one nipping his finger open at the Tighes Hill circus. No more room, no more news. All the best. Fred."

This is from Wal:-

" 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 22-;-46. Dear Folks,
Here I am back in the old box room again, having arrived a week last Sunday, but nothing exciting has happened, so haven't hurried to write. I spent a week in Sydney with Reg David, but unfortunately I must have got an infection under the nail of one of my left toes, which was very sore & somewhat restricted my activity. However, it is now practically 100 per cent again. I called on Art & Phyllis, & by strange coincidence Flo, Bill & Robert arrived just as I was thinking of leaving. Was very pleased to find what nice kids both Doreen & young Judith are. Possibly Art or Phil or both are visiting you now; otherwise the house will be very quiet again after the Christmas rush. Let me know how Bill is when you next write-- I hope he has completely recovered by this. The weather here has been terrific during the last couple of days-- very hot & sultry -- must be about 90 per cent humidity, so that our shirts can almost be wrung out when we go home & change into shorts. Have been pretty busy picking up back work in the office since returning, but have been given 2 new men, each about 45, one of them seems very promising: might even be able to work him into my job eventually. I suppose Joe has got away on his holidays by this. All my efforts both here & in Sydney to get a 21 type for him were to no avail, & evidently Bill was unsuccessful, as he was to let me know if he located one. Probably there'll be plenty of tyres soon anyway. I see we have to get 50 per cent more juice next month.

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What's the latest news from Fred ? I must write to him to-night, & hope my letter reaches him o k. Hoping you are all well as I am, Yours Wal,"

To-day our little speckled bantam has 2 chicks hatched & may have more yet.

Fri. Feb. 1, 1946. I went to Newcastle yesterday after paying Mr. Coburn 2/- sub. for the pensioners association., " got an injection in my right arm. At Tighes hill, on my return, I went to Mr. Albert Williams' house named "Lauriston" & was paid a cheque for 10/- from the Gardiners' Lodge. At Newcastle I paid £ 1-4-3 to the Gas Company. Very hot weather to-day. On the 29th Violet Sheldon's memorial notice was published in the Newcastle Herald. It is pasted in the back cover of this book. To-day I finished reading "With the Admiral of the Ocean Sea", a book of 336 pages by Charles Paul Mackie, which was owned by dear old brother Bob. he has crossed another dark ocean, & I hope he has also found a pleasant island on the other side ! To-day we received this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 30-1-46. Dear Folks, Thanks for sending the toys over, & I don't think it likely that I will go to the trouble of packing them up & sending them back again, Mother, but I will send over the cost of sending them here. Robert was very pleased about their coming, & fished them out of the bag just as if it was Santa's visit all over again. If I don't send the postal note this time I will send it next. I may go down to post this to-night. It's so hot during the day now that I go out as seldom as possible. You did not tell Bill definitely about the sheets, but I'll send a catalogue over, & you can send the number & what you want over. I hope you are not in a great hurry. ~~XXXXXXXX~~ I meant to mention about them last letter. Do you still want the tea-towelling ? The one we ~~had~~ got was E O M I on page 16. It's pretty good. I forget how much you wanted, but let us know when you write. I hope you have had a good rest since all your visitors have left. The teacher who was coming to stay here while Mrs. Young is away will not be coming after all. I had a letter on M

Monday to say that she has been transferred to Finley. Mr. Young came up & had dinner with us on Sunday & stayed most of the day. He is finding it pretty quiet at home. We went to see Mrs. McFarlane yesterday, who lives along this street, & I promised to supply her with tank-water until we get rain. We had some good rain last week, & a dead frog was found in their tank. It spoiled all their water, & so they were using the river water. It's not very good for drinking & isn't safe for children; so I hope that we soon get more rain to fill their tank, as they emptied it.

Everything looks very dry out here, but this & next month is the worst time. Nearly every teacher at the school here has a move, even the head master. Mrs Witheridge seemed to think that Art would get a move too. It would be bad luck if he did just as he has his own place at last.

What is Daphne going to do? Is she still going into the Teachers' College? How did the photos turn out Dad? Did you get any decent prints? Bill inquired about the car he was interested in out here, but the owner doesn't want to sell yet. It's bad luck about Jose's car. Bill said that a few days before he went to Bourke last time 4 tyres were sold there -- just the kind Jose has been wanting for so long. Did they get away for their holidays at all? Hope that you are looking after yourself this hot weather, Min, & that Dad is o.k., & that his teeth haven't been giving him any more trouble. How is Daphne now? You say she is on the mend: I hope she is quite well again. It won't be long now before Fred is home again, judging by all the boats that are being sent to bring the men home. I suppose he is well on the way now if he left on the 20th. I'll put the news on to-night & see if any boat has landed to-day or is due to land. You should be smiling now, Min, it won't be long. Did Wal get a move yet? The trains go back to their odd routine to-morrow, which means that I shall have every second week-end alone. Bill is in Bourke this week. I say alone, but it's not quite that, because Robert is a great mate when he is in the house, but ever since we came home he spends most of his day in some one else's yard or has several of his "toughs" here, but mostly I only see him at meal times & at night.

His holiday did him a lot of good & he looks the picture of health. He says he likes Nyngan best because it makes Daddy better. Cheerio. Hope I haven't forgotten to mention anything important. Florence."

Tues. Feb. 5 1946. I have posted the "Wide World" magazine to Bill Purdy-- the November issue. I am reading "The Life Of David Livingstone." This morning we received this letter from Fred:-

" N X 193961 F. Cooking, 2/1 O C S. Australia. Sun. Jan 27 1946. Dear Feaks, I never realised, till I just asked a bloke opposite, that it is Wal's birthday. I haven't had a letter from him since well before Christmas, but if I'd realised that it was his birthday I would have written just the same. I've been changing my address so often lately that even if he has answered my last it's quite understandable my not getting it. I fully expected to be aboard ship before this, but you know how it is; they're always giving eyewash & crook information out, until not I believe it when I see it. As you see, I've been taken into the O.C.S. but was only there a few days when it closed down, & although it is now my address, in reality I'm in the staging camp from where the next move is to the boat. Frank Forde, the M.H.R.--not Fatty-- was up here the other day, & although I think so little of him that I wouldn't go to hear him, I understand that he said that there were only 2 more boats to go from here: one on Feb. 2nd, & the other on Feb. 10th. I'll be a bit crooked on it if I'm not on the first, , but whichever I go on I'll endeavour to send you a note when I'm sure I'm leaving. I'm writing this from a Y.M.C.A. hut in the town, about 1 mile away from our camp & the fellow I came here with is waiting to go back, so I won't write any more. I only wrote this so you'll know I'm still waiting & so that you won't expect me home ~~XXXX~~ much before the end of February. Perilously close to the cold weather, eh? Look after yourself. Fred.

P.S. I don't expect you to answer this as I should easily be aboard before I could get an answer. After my next letter to you should come a telegram a

about what train I'm on."

This morning Jose, Ivy, Daphne, Keith & Noel started by car for a fortnight's holiday at Katoomba. This is written in type-ink that I made of vaseline & lampblack & a little turps..

Mon. Feb. 11, 1946. We have received this letter from Walt:-

" 159 Gregory Terrace Brisbane, 5-2-46. Dear Folks, I was glad to get your letter, & grateful to you, Mum, for your birthday present. I thought that at last you had forgotten one. I will buy something for myself when I see something that fills the bill. You mention Art's new home -- I know nothing of it -- so how about some details, please? I suppose Joe & Ivy have got away by this, & will be interested to learn where they have gone (to), & if eventually he was able to get a tyre. Tell him to let me know if he needs ration tickets, as I may be able to help him. I wrote to Fred on the 22nd Jan., but have heard nothing from him since, so assume that he may be on his way, although I see that a lot of chaps from Labuan have been put ashore at Rabaul. I was pleased to hear of Bill being right again -- he certainly had a miserable time in Newcastle, which could otherwise have been very enjoyable. I suppose they have settled down again, & I will be interested to hear of any move by them to Dubbo, Gebar, etc.. Brisbane has been turning on some hot weather again lately, although to-day has been cooler, & we seldom have any difficulty in getting a good sleep at night. Is Daphne sick again? I thought she'd never get sick. I'm sorry in being longwinded about the map, Dad, but I'm sending one now under separate cover, which I think will be satisfactory; in fact it is the same kind of map I have hanging on the office wall. It will surely be better than anything you have at home at the moment, but doesn't indicate the Barrier Reef islands in any detail. This was the only one I could get, however. I am intending to go to Rockhampton on Monday to evaluate gas engine & producer plant for emergency power supply to the local council, & expect to be back in Brisbane after a few days. Otherwise nothing of importance

has happened since my last letter except that last week-end I went with 7 others chaps to spend a very nice week-end at Norm Balmer's cottage on Bribie Island at the Northern end of Moreton Bay. The weather was very calm, but hot, & there were surprisingly few fish about, I being the only one to catch a fish of a little over a pound, which they insisted I should eat. The island is certainly a nice, pretty place to spend a quiet holiday, & we had an excellent time. Evidently you are all in good nick, & I hope you are finding things more enjoyable with the gradual easing of restrictions -- yet I suppose you would be able to get about much more if only Joe could get that tyre. All the best. Wal."

We also received a letter-card from Jose:-

"Katoomba, 7-2-46. Dear Mum & Dad, You see by this we have at last arrived here after a lot of trouble with the patched-up tyre. This pen is vile: I'll see how a pencil goes. Charlie's tent was ~~the~~ sure the old one, it turned out, & I had to go down & get the lean of Alf's. Also had to get Audrey's primus stove as yours leaked. But never mind, we managed to get here & it's pretty hot too during the day, but cool at night. If you want to get in touch address letters to P.O. Katoomba. I am wondering if Fred has come back on the boat that has been booked as being due (perhaps) Ivy's legs slowly mending, but it's very slow; otherwise war are o.k. I hope you are both well. I write this to let you know where we are & what a scribble it is."

Jose "

Wed. Feb. 13, 1946. Yesterday we received this from Fred:-

"N X 193961, Pte. F. Cooking, G.O.D. ? Labuan Feb. 6th. Dear Folks, The boat is in, & I'm led to believe that we go aboard to-morrow night or early Friday morning. The crew say we should be in Brisbane the week-end after this one coming, about 8 or 9 days, & so far as they know it's possible that it may go on from there to Sydney. That part does not worry me much, but I wouldn't mind a day or 2 in Brisbane; but if we go str-

right on to Sydney it will mean a lot less trouble lugging my gear, so whichever place we go to has its for & against. I'm just scribbling this before the pictures, & it seems ages since I had a letter from anyone at all, & since I came here to this camp about a fortnight ago I've done nothing but loaf around -- not even a swim or a cooanut, only the most horrible grub it's possible to imagine, so I have nothing to write about. Don't bother answering this. Expect a telegram in about a fortnight. So long for now. A terrible scribble, but it will tell you what's happening, or as much as I know myself. Fred."

Sun. Feb. 17, 1946. Last Thur. I got my usual injection at the hospital. I bought a packet of stock seeds for Mum at Woolworth's. I paid Mr. Coburn 2/- for the Pensioners' Funeral Fund. Jose & Ivy came last night with Daphne, Keith, & Noel. Jose intends to sell his old Ford car because it is so hard to buy tyres for it. Ivy's left leg is not well yet, but one sore is healing. Rain yesterday & this morning. This letter has come from Florence. --

"Nyngha Plazda. Dear folks, I suppose that you will be expecting a letter from me by now, but I haven't much idea what to write about. Life isn't very exciting out here, especially in hot weather. There is no where to go excepting to the pictures, & we go to them about once a fortnight, sometimes once a week if it seems to be a good show. Bill was away last Sat., & sold didn't go. He has to go to Bourke on Saturdays now instead of Mondays. The train does not go down until Tuesday since the strike ended. He wishes the miners had one long strike, he says, but of course that wouldn't do either. As for staying over there, Min, even though I didn't get my boarder, I suppose this is my job now, & I can't complain. I had a good spell away from the place. My ears are very much improved; it was worth going over for that alone. Mr. Young & Mr. Brand are grass-widowers, & we have had them up on several Sundays for dinner. We should be pretty good, being friends with the policeman & the parson. Robert & I were invited to Alan McPherson's birthday tea on Saturday. We stayed till well after 11; so that put out the evening in for me. They are nice people -- a cut above the rough swearing type that is so common out here. She is coming down to spend the day with me on Wednesday. They have 3 children -- the eldest a few months younger than

Robert, & the baby just 4 months. The old man at the back -- (Mr. Simpson) came over to-day & asked can he do my messages for me. He has asked me before, but I hate to impose on him, he always looks so ill, but he goes down, anyhow, so I let him get my meat. He was away for hours & we had finished dinner when he returned. I thought he must have had a weak turn & fallen off his horse. He is 66 & looks about twenty years older than that. Don't worry about Fred, Mother,; he will have to take his turn I suppose. I heard over the air that a boat had arrived in Brisbane at 5 p.m. yesterday, & I wondered if he was on that. Anyhow, it should be that his boat will arrive in the next few weeks, or perhaps he may be home when you get this. Anyhow, worrying won't bring him any sooner, & will only upset you. Are you still taking your tonie?

You & Dad can come out any time after this month for a holiday, but it's too hot yet. Mr. Brand said he may be able to get a schoolgirl of 14 to stay here with me. Her home is in the country, & her parents would like her to do another year at school here. He mentioned it last week, but I haven't seen him since. I will know definitely this week, perhaps. You need not send any money for the travelling: if you send the coupons & tell us the amount you want Bill can do the rest. Just had a welcome interruption -- a shower -- it didn't last long, but enough to cool the air for a while & to cause a temporary blackout. The blackout didn't matter much, it's hardly dark yet, but of course I couldn't write for a while. McFarlanes will be sorry when the rain stopped so soon. They can only get a slight dribble from their tank: the water is just up to the level of the tap.. The little we got won't make any difference, but it's possible we may get more during the night. It's time to knock off now & get Robert in for his bath. He says Tell Grandma I am good, & she will say I am a little tramp". If you remember, you called him a Champ, but he is slightly mixed. Anyhow he thinks it's a great compliment to be a tramp. Cheerio. Love to all. Florence."

Billy Bodenham was killed by a train, & was buried at Sandgate yesterday. Billy was a prominent Socialist & Labourite at Wallsend more than 20 years ago, & was lately a Communist.

ed. Feb. 20, 1946. Our Fred arrived home last Monday from Labuan with his bag & baggage, about a hundred weight. He had landed at Brisbane & came to Gosford by train. When he got there he was informed that he could go home if he wished to; so he came straight back by train to Waratah & walked home from there. He is very brown above his waist, but is quite well. Last night he returned by train to Sydney to see the military officer. He went out to Marrickville & saw Phyllis, Doreen, & Judith, but did not see Arthur. Fred returned this afternoon. Mum has washed his clothes & other things. To-day we received this letter from Art & Phyllis:

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, 18-2-46.

Dear Mum & Dad, Many thanks for the negatives, which arrived some time ago. You must forgive us for not replying before this, but no doubt you realised the work involved in moving houses, & know that we have been very busy people. We have been up until 12 nearly every night for the last week or so, & every morning has seen us hard at work before 7. We've kalsomined pretty well every room in the house, so that the joint is nearly fit for human habitation now. I've been busy, too, tutoring my two pupils. Yes, I've a paying pupil now-- 10/- per week. A twelve years old boy comes two nights a week for coaching in English & Maths. If I can do so, I'm going to take on enough coaching this year to pay for my Uni. work next year. It might be a good idea if I put out a brass plate something like

A.J. Cooking B.Ec.
Coaching in
Business, Scientific
& General Subjects.
Doreen a Specialty.

I've been transferred to Bankstown, where I teach 1st, 2nd, & 3rd year singing. 2nd year book-keeping, business principles, & 2nd year English. Mr. Frew, the boss, is a very clever old fox, but he's quite a slave driver. The good old days of ease are over! Doreen was away for a fortnight with her grandparents. She came back browned, healthy & bonser. The little nip is still the picture of contentment. Phyllis is in the pink. When is Fred getting out? Tell him to come up to our place when he arrives in Marrickville. I'll probably be

going to Newcastle alone this friday. See you then..
Arthur."

This morning I went to Newcastle & got an injectoin, but it being a public holiday on account of the Newcastle show very few patients were at the out-patients' s department. I bought 2 lbs. of dried fruit at the Bargain arcade. To-day we received the following lettwr from Wal:-

" 159 Gregory Tee. 19-2-46. I was very pleased to hear from Fred on Sunday morning last, but disappointed in not being able to see him-- partly because he was going again the same day, & partly because my car was in dock having the radiator repaired. Anyhow, he is probably home by now, & he assured me he was feeling quite well though he was not able to get his discharge immediately. Thanks for keeping me so well posted with the news, Mum, but I was surprised to hear that he didn't get the letter I wrote on 22nd Jan. It may catch up with him eventually. "Steady" didn't exactly give Joe the tyre at 8 quid, but at least he was able to get away for a break, & the mountains are as good as anywhere for a change. I have some prospects of getting him 1 or 2 tyres at the right price; so will keep on trying. Since my last letter I have been informed of my promotion to grade 3 Engineer, to be retrospective to 1st Dec. 1945. The rise is only £ 36 a year, but I'm more interested in the upgrading, which will carry further annual increments & put me in line for any jobs which may be going. I went to Rockhampton on Monday of last week & returned on Thursday. It's a town of 30,000 odd population, but not particularly interesting, perhaps because I struck it during such very hot weather. I was up there on the valuation of gas engine ~~XXXX~~ auxiliary power plant at Yaamba for the Rockhampton water supply. I also took a morning off to go up to Mount Morgan & look over the gold & copper mine. This was quite interesting, but there was no opportunity to pinch a nugget of gold as there is only 1 1/2 ozs. of gold in each 2 cwt. ingot of copper, & the final refining process is done at Port Kembla. I came away without any desire to work there, as mining operations always seem a dufding operation in dirty surroundings. The weather here has been very hot & humid since my return, so that I can hardly hold that against Rockhampton. On returning home each night I change into just a pair of shorts & generally have a cold shower, otherwise the evenings at home would not be

very pleasant. Am very well otherwise & things are doing fine. "heerio. Wal."

Mon. Feb. 25, 1946. Last Friday night Arthur arrived home from Marrickville. He went to the Newcastle show on Sat. & left here last afternoon for Sydney with a lot of his old school books.

Following is a list of correct sizes for Whitworths bolt threads:-

To tap for a bolt	1/4	5/16	3/8	7/16	1/2	9/16	5/8
Drill a hole	3/16	1/4	19/64	11/32	13/32	15/32	33/64

To tap for a bolt	11/16	3/4	7/8	1	1-1/8	1-1/4
Drill a hole	37/64	5/8	11/16	13/16	15/16	1-1/32

To tap for a bolt	1-3/8	1-1/2	1-5/8	1-3/4
Drill a hole	1-1/8	1-1/4	1-5/16	1-1/2

To tap for a bolt	1-7/8	2 inch diameter.
Drill a hole	1-9/16	1-5/8 inch diameter.

Sun Mar. 3, 1946. Last Thursday I paid Mrs. Watts 2/- for the Pensioners' Association & went to Newcastle for my usual injection. I paid 7/6 for a bottle of Kama Vita -- an extract of liver alleged to be a cure for pernicious anemia, at a chemist's shop in Newcastle. Yesterday Mr. Williams brought a cheque for 10/- from the Gardeners' Lodge for me. Some time ago Mum received the following letter from her old friend Mrs. Eliza Morris:-

" 140 William Street, Earlwood, Feb. 16, 1946. Dear Mary, You will wonder what has become of me, but I did not come back from Eva's place till after Christmas. I had a very nice time up there; I know such a lot of people. Lot of the real old folk are still there, but I am very lucky to get about with the gamilees? & it's good I can travel. I take up a lot of room, as I still have the caliper on my leg. 't keeps about the same, & I suppose I am lucky I can get about. I am back down with Maggie, & I am sorry to tell you she is not well at all. She has not been the best for awhile now. I do hope she will soon be well. It's very nice at her place; everything is so nice & green & clean. Eva would like to get down to live: she might in time. Her 2 girls are growing now; the eldest will be 11

in July, & a big girl. The other girl is 6 in August so they are coming on. I suppose Florence's boy is 6 now : they soon grow up. How is Fred ? Did he get home yet ? He was at the landing of Balikpapan, I think by your letters. Harry was at the landing & joined the occupation forces & left Moratai on the 15th for Japan, We do wish him good luck, for we are longing to see him. You will also long to see your boy, & best of luck to him! Harry is just like Maggie's own son. She was 3 when she was born. It will be 4 years on the 19th of Feb. since Ern's boy was killed at Darwin. The Japs made no mistake, & what a cruel lot they have been.. Our men did go through some pain by them. It will be nice to have the boys home again. What a terrible thing this shorta of food is. We hope for good seasons, & that is what will help. Everything has been hard, dry season, no men to work the land; so all was agai at us, but we must ask God to help us & we will. I do hope you & all in your care are real well. I think about you a lot, & wonder if Mr. Cocking got all right. What a strike it was among the Port Kembla men, & then the miners : every one was upset. Let us hope they will go on all right now.. Dorrie was up in Lithgow to see her mother. She is well. Her boy is 10 years old now. Time slips past. How are all of your grand-children ? How many have you now ? All well I hope. So now, good luck to you & fond love from your old pal E. Morris. I am lost without Pa."

We have received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 25-2-46. Dear Folks, The last letter contained the best news that we have had for some time--that Fred was at home. Is he back from Sydney yet ? & does he intend coming out here ? He said in one of his letters last year that if he didn't see us over there he would come out here. I hope that still holds good, although he may need a good long spell at home first. Yes, Mother, we were thinking that you were sick. We were going to ring last Friday night, but your letter arrived in the afternoon & saved us the trouble. Not that we mind ringing you, but you say it's such a trouble to hear us; so we only ring when I get a bit worried as to how things are. We had the evening out at the pictures instead, & it's the best picture I have seen since we came here. You would enjoy it yourself: if it comes over there you should see it. "King's Own" is the name of it. No, Mother, we didn't

have any grapes this year, or if there were any they had all gone when we returned from our holiday. Fred came in lucky after all to be in time for the fruit, & especially for that steak & eggs that he wanted so much. I don't think there is much chance if the school-girl coming to board here now, so many weeks have passed. Mr. Brand went to Sydney for a month so I think the arrangement must have fallen through. Anyhow, it doesn't matter much because I am not so lonely as I used to be, & knowing Mrs. McFarlane in this street has helped a good deal. Robert gets on pretty well with the kiddies next door when they are at home, but the girl has just started school, & the boy (about Robert's age) is more at his grandma's place a couple of miles out of town, than he is at home. Robert spends half the day mostly at McFarlane's playing with Sabin or she here. Bill went to Bourke on Saturday. I don't see any sign of that car yet that he intended to come & bring you over in at Easter. He has his eye on one, but the owner won't sell, so I think that trip will be off. Anyhow, when or if you do intend to come out here again did you know that sleepers are back on the trains again? If Jose & Ivy want to send Daphne over for a change after being sick, we would be glad to have her, & would try to arrange for her to come over with someone; but I suppose it's pretty impossible for her to come right out here until she is a bit older. Is she going to go back to school, ? or is she waiting to get a job? Robert started Sunday school on Sunday & thought it was pretty good. He thinks it's pretty good to be Grandma's champ, & says "Don't tell her I am naughty sometimes, will you?". But I think you would easily understand as he says he "can't be good all the time."

It's good to know that everyone over there is keeping well. Bill sent for the towelling, & it should be here by the end of the week. We got the material for Wal's shirts weeks ago, but Mrs. Power hasn't been too well again lately, so Bill hasn't worried her about the sewing; but we will try to get them over some time within the next few days. Tell Wal they won't take long to make once she starts on them. I hope he is not wanting them especially. Summer will be almost gone by the time they reach him. Well, I have 3 more letters to write, so I'll say cheerio. Love from Florence & Robert.

P.S. Bill was pleased to receive a letter from his sister in England the other day.

Sun. Continued. I have received this from Mrs Webster:-

#15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Cornwall, 6-1-46. Dear Mr. Cocking, I am writing to thank you for sending on the papers which we receive nearly every week; sometimes 3 come at a time. We enjoy reading them: it's good of you to send them. I am sorry not to have written you before. I have been laid up since the beginning of Sept. with my ankles. I could not heal them; so doctor kept me in bed until they healed, & then ordered elastic stockings. So now I can say they are better once more. I had to take MYra from her work to do the housework. I was sorry to have to do it. I hope you & Mrs. Cocking are enjoying a fair measure of health. Of course we can't expect to feel as we did when we were 16 or so. Pa Webster is well & gets about like a young man. After all that heart-trouble it's wonderful. Our girls are fine, & so is Frank. He is to be demobbed in March. Just been home for his last leave. He is in Brussels still. He enjoys the best of health, has made friends with a wonderful old lady & her husband who is like Mum & Dads to him. He spends all his time off with them. They have no children -- just a lone old couple -- reared a little girl who has been married to an American & is living out there; so Frank goes up to give them a hand. They have a nice house & grounds, & rear fowls, rabbits, calves, goats, all kinds of things for a living, fruit in abundance, & have lost a fortune in the ~~1st~~ two wars; been in prison in this one. So we have to be thankful we've been spared. Nothing has happened to us although we have lived in fear, afraid to go to bed most nights. Thank God, nothing bad has happened. We have spent a very nice Christmas; our family were all home, & their wives & children. But poor Fred hasn't gained much since his illness. He has to stay at home from school now with a bad throat. Kathleen is leaving Falmouth to live in Truro. Her gentleman has been Canon to the Bishop of Truro; now he is going to be a sub-dean; so they have to go there to live. We have had some lovely frosty weather -- cold, but it was lovely to have it so dry after weeks of rain. I am sending you 2 nice views of Carn Bras Castle & monument. No doubt you have heard about Carn Bras. It's lovely to go there in the summer time; you can see for miles around. Lots of goats live up there belonging to the people in the castle. We used to go in there & have tea; now the

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old people have gone. Oh, my eldest brother has gone since I last wrote you -- seventy eight-- poor old chap, good as gold to all, & my cousin in Cardiff, poor thing, was sick a long time. She used to come down & stay with us sometimes. Now, Mr. Cocking, if these elastic stockings don't dome good I am going to try the bandages you said about in one of your letters. Our chemist said he never knew or heard of them. Anyway, I am feeling grand at present, so will end by wishing you & Mrs. Cocking a very happy new year. Trusting all your family are well. Best regards to you all. I remain yours sincerely Emmie Webster.

P.S. I not heard from my cousin for a long time now."

Sun. Mar. 10. 1946. Last Thur. I got my usual injection at the out-patients' department of the Newcastle hospital. At Woolworth's I bought a pair of stick-on half soles for Mum. Yesterday Jose, Charlie, & Fred had a sail in Charlie's boat on the Hunter. Afterwards Fred made an alteration to the chuck of my drilling machine whereby I am now able to drill with the very small drills. Yesterday we received the following letter from Walter:-

159 Gregory Terrace, 5-3-46. Dear Folks, Since my last letter I have been glad to have letters from both Joe & Dad, & I have done nothing further about getting tyres for Joe's car. I was very disappointed to know he was going to sell it, however, because money is not much good these days, whilst a car, even though it does give trouble, is almost invaluable to break the monotony, apart from its value in emergency. Tyres, too, are now being released; & if he hasn't already sold the car, I for one hope he changes his mind. Is there any word from the Teachers' College for Daphne yet? --I hope she makes the grade all right. How's Fred doing? -- a real Mayfield-ite by now again I suppose, which should be more pleasant than being the wild man from Borneo. Yet perhaps he still has the wanderbug & is doing some travelling whilst on leave. If you are writing to John you can tell him that I haven't forgotten his car door handle, & that I should be able to send the new handle down in a week or two. Also, if you are writing to Flo. you might remind her of the sports shirts she was to have made for me. Everything here is good, & the weather is now much cooler;



CARN BREIA CASTLE CARBORNÉ.

G.8312



CARN BREIA MONUMENT CARBORNÉ.

G.8313

in fact the front pages of the papers are filled with news of the Northern floods. I can appreciate the reports on Townsville, but I've never been in Home Hill or Ayr. The week-end before last we had a pleasant fishing trip down the Bay, but only caught about 30 squire between 6 of us.. Although it was dull there was a fair wind blowing & I got pretty well burnt, but lost it all in a day or two. Things at work are doing quite well, as are things here, & I'm still in the pink. Cheerio, . Wal. Mum & Dad, Am sending you a few quid as your share of the dividends on my last rise, back pay on which amounted to about £ 6 last Friday. Thanks alot, both of you , for your help in the early days. Wal. "

£ (Enclosed were 2 post office orders for £ 3 each.)

Sun. 10th continued. To-day I wrote to Harrrh Webster & am sending photos of Hales foundry & the Commonwealth works.

Mkn. Mar. 18, 1946. Yesterday after oon Fred returned to Sydney to report to the military authorities. He probably stayed last night at Art's place. I have finished reading "The Martyrdom Of Man", by Winwood Reade. It is a book of 437 pages, & was evidently written to attack Christianity. It repeats the old exploded arguments in favour of the fallacy of Evolution, & assumes that Man was first a savage who learned by war & other forms of suffering. He said there is a spirit in Man, but also said that there is no ghost, which is a contradiction, for ghost & spirit are the same. I was disappointed by the book, for I thought that it would show & explain how the workers of the world, in all ages, were exploited by the owning class. He never mentioned the class struggle directly, nor showed how the workers were & are robbed through the private ownership of land & the means of production.

We have received this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 12-3-46. Dear Felks, I just forget where I put the last letter, so that I may answer it, & any questions you may have asked , but I knew it did contain postal notes, one of which has to go back when they

are changed. I am sorry, Min, that you did not get the same tea-towelling as we did; the one you got was much cheaper, but not much good. It only cost 6/11 the price; so the 2/- note has to go back, but Bill will have to cash it first. He is in Bourke just now & won't return until Friday. Hope that Fred is enjoying his leave, & it's one long leave when he eventually reports after the 2X three weeks are up. Nyngan isn't a hot place these days; we are havinh real Autumn days & the nights are very chilly. This cold snap seems general, though, according to the wireless: it will just suit you down to the ground, Mother.

The Rees family expect to be over that way this week or next on holidays. Robert had an invitation to Barbara's birthday party last Friday, but I couldn't take him down. I have been unlucky enough to have Eas-tritis? for the past few days, but I feel a good deal better to-day. It's been pretty common out here lately: Bill said several people on his rounds have had it. Doctor called a couple of times, & as usual wanted me to go to hospital for a few days, & as usual I refused & survived without. Bill & Robert are well: hope everyone over there is o k too.

Bill said to thank Dad for the books he sends over; they come in very handy. Art & Phyll must be very happy to have a home all to themselves at last. You didn't say where it was, though. I have no idea which part of Sydney they are in now. We haven't heard any more about the returned man getting Bill's job. The last we heard, he was in hospital in Sydney, but of course it is still likely that he may apply for the opd job when he is well enough. The house on the corner here (next to Smith) was sold the other day. £ 250 -- it's a pretty old place, but it has two allotments of land. One family last week had all their belongings put out on the street. The place had been sold for more than a year, & the tenants, up to a few weeks before they were tipped out, hadn't made any attempt to find a house. Anyhow, when they were put out someone took pity on them & shared their home with them.

Houses are still very scarce here. People seem to put their names 1 years ahead to rent a house. Building material is very hard to get out here. One home has been partly built for more than 6 months, & the couple of rooms are just standing there waiting

for the rest of the home to be added. These tenants have to get out too, as their home is sold. It seems as though we'll be staying where we are, for the present, anyhow. Cheerio. Our love to all. Florence."

Mon. Mar. 25, 1946. Fred came back from Sydney last Friday after sending this news by telegraph:-
 "No luck; being sent to Newcastle." He was informed in Newcastle on Saturday that he had to go to Cowra to-day. He left us last night very reluctantly, & will probably start with some others for Cowra to-day by train. Heavy rain fell last night & is still falling this morning. Last Thursday I got my usual injection from sister McCann. She is the one who took sister Grenall's place. I returned "The Martyrdom Of Man" to Mrs. Longworth on my way to Newcastle. I have finished reading the pamphlet entitled "There Will Always Be An England" by an opponent of Socialism. Last night I read another pamphlet, that John Rose lent me, entitled "Alberta N.W., 1935-1945". Last Thursday I posted John's book, "The Big Idea", by Major Douglas, to John, & registered it for safe delivery. Douglas also opposes Socialism. Ivy has banked eighty pounds on Fred's bank-book, which is the sum she owed him for building her mansion on the hill in Bull Street.

This morning I wrote to Muir Holburn to learn what he & Marjorie Pizer had done re publishing an anthology of Australian militant poetry.

Sun. Mar. 31, 1946. Last Thur. I got an injection from sister McCann. I bought a 16th drill at Paynter's for 1/3. I paid the Store bill & called at Mr. Williams' & got a cheque for 7/6 from the Gardeners lodge. At Ash's I bought a bit of aluminium plate for 1/6, & have made a holder & gauge-plate for drills & nail-bits of it. Fred did not go to Cowra; he was still left at Nobbys camp, but has not been discharged from the army. Yesterday Fred & Jose had a sail on the Hunter in Charlie's boat. To-day I finished reading the pamphlet that John Rose lent me entitled "The Enemy Within the Empire." It consists of 52 pages by Eric D. Butler, & is "a short history of the Bank of England." We have received the following letters from Gladys, Florence & Walter:- Take Gladys' first:-

"1st Avenue, Warrawong, Friday. Dear Mum & Dad,
 How are you all? We are all real well & hope you are the
 the same. I've enclosed a snap of John & one of his
 mates on John's horses. I thought that you might like
 one. Let me know if Fred is home yet; I thought that
 he might be home & you have forgotten to let us know.
 There's no news to tell you about, only that they are
 still building new houses at the side of our place, &
 we have a butcher's shop, a barber's, a draper's, a grocer's,
 a fruit & vegetable market shop, all opened up at Com-
 rol House, down at the back of our place. You'll see
 a change the next time you come to see us. I'll say
 good bye & all the best to you all up home. Love from
 Jack & the children, also myself. Glad xxxix."

This is from Florence:-

"Nyngan, Sunday. Dear Folks, First of all I will an-
 swer your questions, Mother, at the top of the letter.
 Pip's (Walter's) shirts are on their way up, & he will
 have them by the time you have this letter. It's been a bit
 of a worry for Pip, I suppose, but Mrs. Power was ill
 for so long & then went on holidays. The house was em-
 pty all day, but of course not locked (no one looks
 up here) so, after seeing the son, Bill just went in & co-
 llected them... Pip has had a long wait, but I hope he li-
 kes them when he does get them. They should be nice;
 the material -- I didn't see the shirts-- Bill sent
 them on his way home. Did Fred get his "walking ticket"
 yet? I hope he has, but even if he hasn't don't worry,
 because he won't be away long, surely.
 Bill hasn't collected the Magazine from America, but
 it will come, Dad. He enjoys reading the others you send
 & he will pass them on to Art. No, Min, I am not sor-
 ry about not buying the old house. This house is plenty
 old enough for me. When I have a house of my own I
 want it to be brand new. Our landlady was taken to
 Sydney on Friday to the Hospice for the Dying-- a Catholic
 hospital in Sydney. She has had frequent spells in hos-
 pital here & was in last time for about 6 months. The
 name of the hospital down there wouldn't cheer anyone
 up much, but she has a cancer & knows there is no hope
 for her. I am glad you at last got the photo of aunt
 May, & that it is so good. Fred certainly has a way

with Till, hasn't he? We had a letter from Nell Jordan & everything in her little garden is lovely. That reminds me -- we have started a garden again & it's going nicely. Six dozen poppies on Thursday & they all look real strong. Bill is enthusiastic about the vegetable garden too. We are only cool weather gardeners & let the garden go once the weather gets too warm. We are all pretty well. Bill is in Bourke & he is well too I hope. Rees's go over to Newcastle to-morrow. I think they have their holidays popped on them at very short notice, & then often have them cancelled. As far as Bill keeping this job is concerned, we haven't any idea just what is going to happen. As far as we know the other traveller is still in hospital, & I haven't any idea how serious his illness is. Our neighbour here is the hospital secretary. He resigned the other day & is going to Sydney at the week-end to try to get a full military pension. He is pretty young -- only 25, but was very ill last year; in fact the doctors here had little hope of his recovery & sent him to Sydney. Anyhow, he doesn't look too bad now. I don't know what chance he has to get a full pension. Oh, Mother, I meant to tell you this first: Robert says to say "Thank you" to Grandma, & send her a kiss for his 2/-. He woke me very early the other morning by saying, "Oh, say we go over to see Grandma & Dad." When I asked him when he said "To-morrow". He doesn't believe in delay once he makes his mind up. Hope Ivy is feeling well again. Glad to know that everyone else is well. Robert is wanting his tea, & then a walk to the post office to post this & collect the mail; so I'll say cheerio. Love from Robert & Florence."

Here is the letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 25-3-46. Dear Folks, I realise I'm late in writing, but little of interest has happened since my last letter. I took a one day run in the car to Southport a fortnight ago & had quite a good time, although it was very hot. In contrast to that has been the weather to-day, yesterday, & Saturday. As you have probably read, torrential rain has been falling, with high wind, as a cyclone is working its way down the coast. Yesterday 4 of us drove to Clontarf over the Hornibrook highway, but the rain

didn't let up at all, & we weren't even able to start a game. Last Friday we moved our office from the National Mutual Building in Queen street to Terrica House in Adelaide street, which is one street over going up the hill towards Gregory Terrace. After some barracking I was able to get a room on the corner of the building, with excellent light, & which is generally regarded as the best room on the floor. This should be our last move for some time now, as this building (which was formerly the American Red Cross centre) has now been bought by the Government for permanent Commonwealth offices. I see that Fred has spent most of his time at home, which was as expected, & hope he has enjoyed himself, & is now a free man again. How is Daphne getting on? Has she heard from the College yet? I'm very keen to hear of her being accepted after having been so positive on her own inclinations for so long. Also, what of Joe's car -- are you a carless community down there yet? I see more tyres are being released nowadays so perhaps that has commuted the death sentence on old "Lizzie". Was glad to hear that you are well & have too much cash -- let's hope it is always that way. I, to, am in good nick, & as the weather seems to be clearing I'll be able to open up the room for an airing. Cheerio. Wal."

Sun. 31-3 continued. This morning I wrote a note to Mrs. Gears of Newtown, Kadina, S.Aus., asking about Selina Murphy. Mrs. Taubman was to leave yesterday for Delegate to stay there 2 months for the good of her baby son Richard's health.

Thur. Ap. 11, 1946. Last Thursday & to-day I got injections from sister McCann. I did not pay Mrs. Watt as she was not at the post office. I called at the Co-op. store & asked to have 10/6 for petrol taken off our bill. The girl said we would get a credit note for the amount with our next bill. I paid £ 2 off our bill & left 11/5 owing. I bought a packet of parsley seeds at Woolworth's. We received 6 letters to-day; so I must begin to copy them.

This is from Selina Murphy:-

41 Digby St., Kadina. " 7-4-1946. Dear Joe & wife & Family. I am writing a few lines to let you know how pleased

I am to hear of you again. Mrs. Gear came here yesterday. I wondered what was wrong, as she was here the day before, & I said "What has gone wrong?", & she handed me your letter. So here I am, Joe, still alive. I wrote 2 letters to you, Joe, & received no reply. Did you get the letter I wrote back thanking you for sending along the 2 books, & I just wondered why you never wrote to me again, as it is ages since I heard from you. The last was when you sent on the books; so I really thought you had passed on & that your family thought it not worth while to let me know.

Well, I am ever so glad to know that you are still alive, & hope you are in better health now; & also trust your wife & family are all well. I am only fair myself. I got the rheumatism bad again, all in my arms & legs, & I suffer cruel with my back, & it just takes me all I can do to get around & do my bit of house-work. Some days worse than others. I did feel very well for quite a time: still it is no use complaining, for there are husbands worse than I. As long as I can keep about & do for myself I don't mind. The rest of my family are very well now, bar my son Tom: he is not at all well, & is very unhappy. His wife left him 12 months ago last New Year's Day, & left with another man, & he got the 3 children, but of course he got 2 girls. One is 17 years in July, & the other one was 15 last month. They are both out working now. His other little girl has gone with her mother. She is 7, & his son Harry is 13 last Jan. He is in High School here at Kadina; so he & his father come here for dinner 5 days a week, & then they cook for themselves. But it is a hard blow to me & to him, & he still frets & worries about her.

My daughter Hazel buried her husband 12 months ago the 28th day of Jan. last. He died in Ipswich hospital. He was from the first world war & suffered terribly. My girl had a very rough time going up & down to Adelaide, but was with him when he passed away. Then she had her little boy in Wallaroo hospital for 10 weeks with the scabies & blood-poison. Then it was up & down to that hospital. Then she broke down in health herself, but got all her teeth out, & now she is ever so much better. Her eldest son was in the R.A.A.F., & he had weeks & weeks in Brisbane hospital. He was on his way to the Islands & was taken ill & was put there in hospital. Then they

sent him back to Daw's Road hospital in Adelaide & operated on him & took a weeping cyst from his spine. So now he is at home & discharged; so poor girl has had more than her share of trouble; but now the children are getting away & things are brighter for her. Well, Joe, it is lovely to think the dreadful war is over. I feel much more a happy mother now, as my 2 sons are at home safe & with their wives & children. Lloyd -- the one that was in the Pacific so long -- was very crook several times with attacks of malaria, but he seems better now, only not so patient; their nerves seem shattered. He has gone to Whyalla to work. The youngest boy, Allen, is home from the war & is quite o k. He has gone to a job in Adelaide at his trade in a grocer's business. Lloyd made their home here in the same street as I am, but now they have to break up again & shift to Whyalla to live. I will miss them so much; & houses are so scarce. Alan can't get a house in Adelaide for love or money. They are living with his wife's aunt.

Joe, all the Whites family are still alive, but I don't see them lately. My other daughter, Olive, is still in Adelaide; they are all well. Olive was home a few weeks ago. There is no work here in Kadina to be had. Tom is out of work-- just gets an odd day here & there. Lloyd tried hard to get work here so as he would be near me & not break up his home. Tom's oldest girl lives with me. She goes to work every day & comes here to sleep; so it is great company for me. My daughter Hazel lives just across from me now. She shifted down near me after her husband died; so I got someone near me. Well, it is getting near Winter again. We had lovely rains last month; it was a very wet month, & we had very heavy rain in February. Mrs. Gear & I often talked about you, Joe, & wondered if you were alive, & if so, why you stopped writing to me. She still comes to see me & often spends a few days with me; & I go out to her for a week-end when I am able.

Well, Joe, I must bring my letter to a close. Trusting all are well, & to hear from you soon, I remain your cousin Selina Murphy. Remember me to your wife & family. How is Florence getting on? Well, I hope. Joe, I am a bad speller, but guess you can read this-- or hope so. Cheerio."

Thur. Ap. 11, continued.
The next letter is from Florence:-

"Nyngan 8-4-46. Dear Folks, It sounds by your letter as though it's mid-winter over there, & judging by the wireless to-day it's still cold. The temperature in Sydney this morning was just over 50 degs., & I suppose Newcastle isn't much warmer. It's pretty wintry here to-day; it's sunny, but the wind is cold. The weather here lately is perfect: it was just like Spring yesterday. Did Fred go to Cowra yet? Bill came home very pleased (he read the letter of Fred's move to Cowra at the p.o.) & was thinking how good it was that Fred could come here on his leaves. He hopped on his bike & went back to the station & inquired the distance from here & found it was 350 miles away, so he felt a bit squashed at that. We had a nice letter from Phyllis recently & were surprised to know that Fred had been at Nobbys, or at least was just appointed there. Is Daphne still going to the Teachers' College? The Brands are very happy about the arrival of a little son. They have a daughter besides. Does uncle Johnny keep well? & did he go to Sydney as he was talking of doing? Youngs & Rees's are both away, although Youngs should return this week. Mrs. Young has had a pretty good holiday: she went a couple of days after I did last Dec. Bill is in Bourke this week, & Robert spends most of his time up at the corner, so I do not get much company during Bill's week away. I don't think Robert will be coming over for a while yet, Min.; it's a bit cold travelling during the Winter. Bill will have a few days at home during Easter, but I can't see that car yet that he was going to ~~my~~ bring you there in. Really I'll be a bit disappointed if he does buy a car, because I am trying to save up for that home; & if I am lucky I might persuade him to do something about it next year.. I am hoping that material will be easier to get then. Cars are pretty expensive items these days, & even if we had one there aren't many places that are worth going to around here.. Well, I have to finish up now to get this in the mail. Write me all the news, because nothing ever happens here. Cheerio. Love from Robert & Florence."

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This one is from Walter:-

* 159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 9-4-46.

Dear Felks, To answer Mum's letter first; I sent down the new handle for John's car before getting the letter, & have since had a reply from him to say that the handle fitted perfectly & that he was very pleased with the job. He obviously still owns the car, but I see that Jee has at last sold the old Ford. Your mention of John buying the land next door to him surprises me, as I thought he was hoping to live in Wollongong, or even to get back to Newcastle. Fred is certainly close to home, & his ill-temper is almost excusable in not being released, but must be disappointing after looking forward to his return. The mention of another job being offered to him excited my curiosity, but was not fully explained. We are still very busy in the office, but outside work was falling off last week & I was afraid I would have to put off a few of the 14 chaps in the workshop, but after making a few inquiries I now have been able to get plenty of work to keep them going. I received 2 sports shirts from Flo. about 10 days ago, of quite good material, but needing some alterations in the body to fit me. I was very glad to get them, & have been anxious to hear from her as to their cost, but as yet there has been no following letter, so I hardly know how much to send her. Speaking of money, I was happy to receive a refund of £ 45 odd from His Majesty representing excess income tax paid by me last year. Most people seem to have the opposite experience. You also mention Chip's boat-- what sort of boat has he? I don't remember anything of it. It seems a shame that Daphne, after cherishing the thought of becoming a teacher, should have decided to abandon it rather than doing another year's schooling. After all, it is not a year wasted in any case, as the subjects would be learned more thoroughly & be a solid foundation for later work. Nor is she by any means getting too old. The new office in Terrica House will, I'm sure, prove better than the last one. Unfortunately the carpenters are still making a terrible noise around the place, & to-day has been largely lost because the painters were in to give us a "face-lift", but when they have all gone we will have a nice big, well-lit & airy office overlooking Adelaide street. I was very glad to hear that you were

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all well, as I am, & things are going on very much as usual, except that to-day the glamorous "Lord Lois" made his appearance in the city to relieve the monotony. The weather here is beginning to cool out, so it must go without saying that you too are hunting out your woolies. Fortunately the weather here is rarely cold for more than about a month or six weeks each year. Have not made any plans yet for Easter, but may get a few of the boys together & go up to Neosa Head, which is a favourite holiday resort, but which I have not yet seen. Cheerio. Wal."

The following note is from Gladys:-

"1st Avenue, Warrawong 8-4-46. Dear Mum, Thanks very much for Wally's address. The day after I posted your letter we received one from Wally telling us he was sending the door-handle. I'm sorry if I have troubled you too much. We are all well, with the exception of colds; I think the cold snap might have something to do with it. We'll soon shake them off I think. If you feel like coming down for Easter you are welcome. If Dad won't come you come on your own. Love from Jack & the children to you all, also from myself. Glad.xxxxx,"

And here is a letter to Daphne from ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ M. Vicars:-

"133 Maitland Rd., Mayfield, 1-4-46. Dear Daphne & Keith, For the forthcoming Convention on May 18th to 22nd the District Union has drawn up a syllabus for 47 days prayer commencing on April 1st. Our Society was responsible for prayer on April 1st (to-day). Failing to receive the notice in time to make arrangements, I have decided to make Wednesday of this week our day. During some part of the day would you please set aside some time to pray :-
(1) Rev. Miller who is coming from Victoria to be our special speaker.
(2) All arrangements for the Convention.
(3) That the Lord will bless us all & that souls may be won into the Kingdom. I am

yours in O.E. bonds.

M. Vickers (super.)

Fri. Ap. 12, 1946. To-day I wrote a long letter to Selina Mu
Murphy, of 41 Digby St., Kadina, S. Aus.

Sun. May 5, 1946. Last Thursday I got my usual injection from sister McCann at the hospital. I did not go down to Newcastle on the previous Thursday, for it was anzac day & the office was closed. Fred has got instructions to go to Sydney to get his clearance from the army & receive his back-money. He has been stationed at the Newcastle camp since he returned to Newcastle.

Daphne Cocking is still waiting for a letter from the education department re her prospective appointment as teacher of sewing. We have received the following letter from Gladys :-

" 1st Avenue Warrawong, 29-3-46. Dear Mum, Thanks for your letter : we were very pleased to get it, also to hear that Fred was back. You can tell him we're expecting him to come down & see us; he knows he is quite welcome to come whenever it suits him. We're pleased to hear that everybody is well. We are tip-top. Re George Sheldon, we're not at all surprised; he sickened us the way he was talking about his wife at aunt May's funeral. We thought he was a bit tough. Jack said the next time you write to Walter will you ask him about the door-handle for Jack's car? He said he could get one made, when we were up in Newcastle last, but we haven't heard from him, & we don't know his address, so we can't get in touch with him ourselves. We have bought the allotment of ground between us & Colorado's, the people next door. We've paid the deposit, & we have 3 years to pay it off. Best of love from Jack, John, Adell, Alma, & not forgetting myself, Glad. xxxxx.

And this from Florence:-

"Nyngan 21-4-46. Dear Folks, By all reports you are enjoying a very wet Easter. I wish we could transfer some of this lovely sunshine over to you. The weather here is perfect just now, & all the town is out, it seems, mostly over at the park to see the cricket, which was held on Friday & to-day. Several important Sydney cricketers have been brought up, & the play goes on all day to-day;

& the country folk bring their lunch & make a picnic of it. Valerie is up for the 4 days & is staying out at Bill Steele's place. She & Bill popped in yesterday, but only stayed a short time, as they were with the "Steele" family & were off somewhere else. Valerie has lost 2 stone weight since she left us, & looked very nice now she is so much thinner. Mrs. Young arrived home (they all did) & is very contented now, as she should be, after 4 months away. Her brother is there for Easter, & we were going down to-night, but her young ... is working, so our visit is postponed. Rees's are back, & it is very likely that they will get a move to our old town West Maitland. We are going down to visit them to-morrow afternoon. Bill has the 4 days off, & as he cannot get a train to Bourke until Tuesday & will return on Friday, he will be having a short & busy time there next week. Are any of the boys home for Easter? Do you mean that Fred is home for good when you say that you were glad Bill was disappointed about him not going to Cowra. You did not say whether he is still at home, or was sent some where else. We were very surprised to hear of the forthcoming wedding. I suppose it will affect Hazel a good deal. She will be looking for another home. Poor old Mr. Simpson died a few days ago (the house at the back of here). You remember I told you he used to get my meat sometimes for me. He wasn't very well at the best of times, & went out on a droving trip & was found dead in his camp.

It doesn't seem as though they are very anxious to move Wal yet, but I suppose he is better off up there during the winter months. I wonder how Mrs. Bob & her family are getting on during this flood at the Terrace. The main street is 5 feet under water; so I suppose will be having a busy time saving things in the shop. Living out here it is hard to imagine much rain, especially in a warm sunny afternoon like this. The people next door (Willings) are going on a long trip.

First of all, Mrs. Wherrits & family (Mrs. Willings' people) are going wild pig-shooting down around Brewarrina, & Willings will go in June. Then when they tire of that they are going on the trip that we had to Adelaide, Melbourne, & up to Gosford where they hope

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to buy a small poultry farm; so I suppose that in a few months we will have new neighbours again. We will be sorry, too, because, although they are rough & ready & swear like troopers, they are very obliging & are excellent neighbours. Mrs. Willing seldom goes down the street without inquiring if I want anything. Don't forget to let us know how Daphne gets on about the Domestic Science School. She should be quite at home at Art's place, especially with the 2 kiddies there. That will be just in her line. I remember what a good little nurse-girl she was when Robert was a baby. You should see how fat he is getting, by the way. It's amazing the weight he has put on lately, but he should really, the way his appetite has improved. He is the picture of health, but I hope he doesn't get too fat or I'll have to cut his ration. The Summer here, though, will soon thin him down again. Well, Cheerio. Time is up, or at least the writing pad is. I'm glad you are all keeping well. We are. Love from us all. Florence."

Sunday, 5th continued. I have bound the January, February, & March issues of the National Geographic Magazine, & have read the April number. During the last 3 days the weather has been delightful here.

We have also received this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 29-4-46." Dear Folks, I am a bit longer in writing this time, mainly due to the number of holidays since my last letter. I went to Mooloolaba in the Easter holidays, in my car, & took Fred & Nelson Soerer, 2 brothers whom I have known for years, & who came from Newcastle with me. We simply slung a tent-fly over a piece of rope & pegged it out, & had an excellent time with Fred as chief cook. This place is about 75 miles North of Brisbane, & with Mooloolah is a very popular swimming spot. The water was perfect ~~XXXXXX~~ for the whole period, which threw into relief the disturbing news of floods down your way. Surely the water wasn't 25 feet deep in Hunter street, as reported! I'll bet our old drainage system in the back yard worked overtime. ! The old

170.

Reg. Dimmick, was up here last week on holidays, & would like to come back to take my job, which would suit me fine, but I'm afraid the powers-that-be wouldn't have him. Reg. David has also been up on a visit, & I have driven him out to Eagle Farm to-day, where he boarded the Douglas Skymaster for Sydney.

Your last letter was quite interesting, but I see that Fred is still tangled up in the army net. What of Daphne -- how did she get on? Also Flo & John? any news Flo still hasn't written to me regarding the shirts, so you might remind her in your next letter, please. Everything here is fine, & I hope you are all well. Cheerio. Wally

Tues. May 14, 1946. Last Sat. was my birthday (79th) & Bill & Florence sent me a new book entitled "Cobbers", by Thomas Wood. It is an account of his travels about Australia. Art & Phyllis gave me a box of chocolate, & Ivy gave me a bag of apples, a box of lollies, & a bar of choc. Fred gave me 3 hacksaw blades, a triangular file, 3 sheets of emery paper, & 4 packets of safety razor blades. Art, Phyllis, Doreen, & Judith have been here since last Friday afternoon. Mum & I intend to return with them next Friday to be present at the university ceremony of presenting degrees to graduates, of whom Art will be one. We have received the letter below from Florence:-

"vBox 15 Nyngan, 3-5-46. Dear Folks, I suppose you are excited about Art & Phyllis & the nippers coming home in a few days' time. You didn't say, Mother, whether you intended to accept the invitation to go back with them, but I hope you do. Art will be very disappointed if you refuse to go. Phyllis tells me that Judith is a big baby & the image of Art. Will you tell Jose that Bill hasn't been to Bourke since his letter arrived, but he will be going to-morrow, & will see Fred Hodgson then. We went to a good concert in the town hall last night-- the proceeds help to swell the fund for a new swimming bath. The hall was full; so one of these days they may have the baths, & then Nyngan won't be so hard to take in summer time. The traveller from Wellington visited this district

" on Easter Saturday sought Bill out. I don't know how long they would have talked if they had been old friends, seeing that they talked for 5 hours non-stop on first acquaintance. He used to be here 7 years ago, & was then transferred to Wellington where he is now. Reeses have definitely had their move to Maitland, but they do not know yet when it will be. They have been told that they are pretty sure of a house in Bruncker road, Adamstown, which is the street that Mrs. Rees' mother lives in; so they are considering themselves pretty lucky. I suppose they will move to Maitland, though, when he is installed & they can get a house up there. Do you know your new relation (sister, isn't it, Min ?) you know-- Mrs. George Sheldon, nee Anderson.

Grace will have a load on her conscience if the marriage isn't a success. It is good to think that Fred is still at Nobby's & can come home each night. Perhaps he will soon be discharged altogether. Bill was very pleased when 3 National Geographic Magazines came the other day, Dad, & Robert is very interested in them too. It reminded me of the times he used to have you hunting through the bookcase so long to find books to suit his lordship. News isn't very plentiful, so I'll close down & hope for more next time. Hope you are all as well as we are. Our love-- Florence."

P.S. We have applied to have the phoneon, & expect it to be installed any day now." Florence.

The following letter came from Gladys:-

"1st Avenue, Warrawong, Monday 6th May, 1946. DDear Mum, Yes, here it is at last. We are pleased to hear about Artie; also that you will be going down to see it. If you & Dad are both well, let us hope that nothing stops you from going. You & Dad may as well continue your journey down to Warrawong, I reckon. Anyhow you know you are both welcome to come if you want to. We are all real well just now. We went out to Dapto yesterday & saw Nellie White & Pearl; they are both well. Nellie told us that Vera Woodward is in hospital with a baby son, & that Joy Duley has to go under an anaesthetic to see what is wrong with her. The doctor said it isn't bronchitis that she suffers with; he thinks it's something internal. She's a terrible size-- a lot fatter than Lila Pettigrew, she's an awful size; I feel real sorry for her. We didn't see the Duleys."

Poor old Jack broke the main leaf of his front spring, so we just came home steadily. Pearl White still works at Rockman's shop in Wollengong, & J m & Freda still live with Nellie, but Nellie was telling me that they'd soon be leaving, as they are going to build. She thinks they will only be with her for another 3 months. The weather is nice here just now. I've just brought all of my washing in, so I'll have to fold & dam them down before tea; so I'll say cheerio to you all from us all here at Warrawong. Lovingly yours Glad, Jack, & the children. xxxxxxxxxx."

Thur. May 23, 1946. Last Friday Mum & I went by train with Art, Phyllis, Doreen & baby Judith to Sydney, & from there by tram to their residence at 29 Illawarra Road, Marriekville. Mrs. Witheridge was there to meet us, & Mr. Witheridge came later in the evening. On Saturday Mum, Phyllis, & I went with Art to the University & sat in the large hall & watched the graduates receive their degrees. There must have been more than a thousand people present including the graduates in their flat-topped caps & various gown. On Saturday night Art took me to an advertising concert sponsored by business people, but it was not very interesting. We all stayed at home on Sunday, for it was one of the coldest days that I remember--indeed it was the coldest day on record at Newcastle, & in spite of all my care I caught a bad cold. On Monday afternoon Art took Mum & me out by tram & train to Hurstville, where we saw the block of stony ground on which he intends to have a brick house built when materials become cheaper. From there Art took us to Sydney central railway station. We boarded the five past five p.m. train & arrived at Newcastle at 7-45 p.m. At Mayfield we entered a disabled bus, & when we got out to enter another bus Mum left her bag in the disabled one. She did not miss the bag until we got home. Fred immediately went to the bus terminus at Waratah to inquire for the bag, while I went to the Mayfield terminus. I was told that the disabled bus had been taken to Fogg's depot; so I inquired there & was informed that the disabled bus was one of the Government's buses. Meanwhile Fred & Mum had learned that the missing bag had been taken to the Hamilton bus depot. On Monday morning Charl went on his bicycle to the depot & was given the bag, which contained Mum's purse with more than 3 pounds, & gloves & store token & other things. Since last Monday I have spent most of the time in bed & am now almost quite well.

On Tuesday Fred left home to visit Florence at NYNGAN, where

intends to stay a few days.

We have received the following letter from Walt:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, 20-5-46. Dear Folks, Since my last letter I expect Art has taken the honours at the Uni. ---m; congratulations.! Is he continuing with the Arts course? Incidentally, how about Daphne's job in Sydney? There was no mention of it in Fred's very interesting letter. I ~~XXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ suppose that he got the expected discharge from the 'cows' on the 7th, so I'll be interested to hear in which direction the wheels of industry have since been turning. This is wrong. Fred did mention it, but there is evidently no finality yet. No doubt about Dad! Fancy going to the hospital in all that rain you had, & spædging

his way down Hunter street. It seems the injections do a good job, anyhow. I've tried everywhere I know of to locate some Queensland kauri for Chip's (Charlie's) boat, but without success. The only firm ever handling it here---Moxon's--- say that their Sydney branch would be the most likely source of supply.

Things have been pretty well as usual here, except that a lass--- Eamie Carter--- who has been a good companion here, left for Sydney on the 16th. Tennis has started up again after a delay of some months because of a general overhaul to the court. Next week I am supposed to go to Townsville etc. on various jobs for a couple of weeks, but I have made no definite arrangements yet. Staff reductions are the order of the day in the office, & I have to lose 1 engineer, 1 supervisor, & the clerk in order to produce artificial vacancies for returned men. This policy, I feel, has no justification, & is purely a political move. In fact the present Government doesn't seem very impressive in any respect--- nor does the Opposition appear any better. In any case my own job is secure, but the policy is very annoying just the same.

If I go North I'll arrange for Mrs. Jones to forward on any letters & I'll answer them from up there.

Yesterday was a little corker here; a cold westerly blew all day, & most of Brisbane stayed indoors. Indeed there was snow at Stanthorpe & Wallangarra. Hope you are all fit, as I am--- in fact folk tell me I've put on a bit of weight since Christmas. Yours, Wal."

replied

I should have gone to Newcastle to-day for my injection, but I thought it wiser to stay at home to clinch the cure

of my cold. After we had viewed & heard the ceremony inside
Mum & I, & Art & Phyllis were photographed by a street ph
otographer outside the university. Art is to send us copies.
He also got his photo. taken in a studio last Saturday in
his borrowed cap & gown.

During our stay in Sydney I wrote most of the following
verses:-

FAT AND LEAN.

I could offer some suggestions with regard to social que-
estions

That affect exploited workers
In their struggles versus Fat.
They could gain their birthright--freedom--
From the parasites who bleed 'em,
By a world-wide League of Labour,
But there's too much sense in that !

Lean could cease to rush or ramble
To a betting-place to gamble
To deprive a fellow-worker
Of his earnings or his hat,
And could stop his stupid betting
With the bookies who are getting
Stakes his family is losing,
But there's too much sense in that !

Lean could tell Fat's politicians
He has very strong suspicions
That they're bound & gagged by brewers
And corrupted by their vat.
He could make a wise selection
At each parliament's election,
And put honest men in power,
But there's too much sense in that !

Lean could cease to squander millions
To enlarge the brewers' billions,
And could purchase stately mansions,
Now monopolized by Fat,
If alert, awake & sober
From November to October,
And could own all fruits of labour,
But there's too much sense in that !

Lean could own all land and money --
 All the flowers, bees & honey--
 All the wealth he's tamely giving
 With the wisdom of a gnat,
 If he discontinued drinking
 Masters' dope, & started thinking
 Of a Workers' Federation,
 But there's too much sense in that.

Lean will still keep on behaving
 In his abject way of slaving
 From his youthful days to dotage,
 And be trodden like a mat
 When he could be free & sated
 With the wealth he has created
 By his unrequited labour,
 But there's too much sense in that.

Lean can make no wise decision
 Nor discern a brighter vision
 Of a Socialistic System
 Wherein he could wield the bat,
 For he's taught to be contented
 To decay in hovels rented
 When he could enjoy a mansion,
 But there's too much sense in that.

He's been KKK trained through countless ages
 To be satisfied with wages ---
 With the crust of loaves he's baking--
 Or to angle for a sprat
 While great whales of wealth in motion
 Could be caught in Life's rich ocean
 By the harpoon of exertion,
 But there's too much sense in that.

If Earth's workers act together
 They can snap the galling tether
 Which enchains them to conditions
 That would suit a sewer rat:
 If they pooled their slim resources
 And united all their forces
 They could dominate this planet,
 BUT THERE'S TOO MUCH SENSE IN THAT!

To "Common Cause", 5-6-46.

176.

Wed. May 29, 1946. Fred returned from Nyngan last Monday. He does not like the place, & I think he was glad to leave it. I did not go to the hospital last Thursday as I had a cold which I caught in Sydney on the previous Sunday at Art's place..

Tues. June 4, 1946. Yesterday I went to Newcastle & had some blood taken for a count. On Thursday I had an injection from sister McCann. I bought 2 bottles of glycerine and linseed cough medicine, & a little dating machine & a large map of Australia. Last week Ivy went to Williams' house in T Mayfield East & got my cheque for 10/- . Fred is getting ready to go to Armidale next week to paint schools etc. for the government. To-day I bought a 4/- bottle of "Cystex" for Mum to cure her rheumatics. I have written the following to send to Arthur.

"IMAGINARY SOLILOQUY OF A UNIVERSITY GRADUATE.

"Of all the sins that do decide
The place we go to when we die
The worst of all is wicked pride
And no one knows the reason why."

Those words, by thoughtful poet penned,
Are not applicable to me,
For many know, & will contend,
That I have earned my high degree.

I felt elated, I confess,
And rilled with pardonable pride,
When first I donned my cap & dress
Where Learning's lofty halls abide.

Yes, I am gratified & proud,
And feigned humility decry,
For most of the uncultured crowd
Must surely know the reason why.

For seemingly unending years,
On Learning's long & weary way
I've struggled (almost unto tears)
To see my Graduation Day.

Through Winter's gloom & Summer's glare,

APPOINTMENT
Mr. M. A. Davidson, M.L.A., has been advised that the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, on the recommendation of the Commission, has approved the appointment of Mr. A. W. Purdy, Canonba Street, Nyngan, to the vacancy on the Nyngan District Hospital Board, due to the resignation of Mr. D. G. Cumming.

Unaided by my kith & kin,
 With little time & strength to spare,
 I've studied hard this robe to win.

I've read of glory that was Rome's
 In lands & periods afar,
 And studied economic tomes
 To learn why things are as they are.

While others kicked elusive balls
 Across the verdant, level fields,
 I strove to reap, where Wisdom calls,
 The fruit the Tree of Knowledge yields.

Although I wear my cap & gown
 With honest, firmly-founded pride,
 I do not with contempt look down
 On all untutored men beside.

And not alone for wealth & fame
 Did I become an undergrad;
 My thirsty mind was filled with shame,
 And ignorance had made ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ me sad.

I wished to scale the greatest height
 To which my intellect could climb
 To focus rays of mental light
 Upon the universe sublime.

I longed to search the boundless space
 Wherein resplendent comets run,
 And, by the aid of Science, trace
 What lies beyond the farthest sun.

I yearned to sound abysmal deeps,
 With plummet of enlightened mind,
 Where stubborn, silent Nature keeps
 Her secrets hidden from mankind.

I sought to see the primal source
 And nature -- hitherto concealed --
 Of power, energy, or force
 To which substantial things must yield.

I wished to know whence cosmic balls
 Bombard the Earth, & why indeed

178.

Each undetected shower falls
With unimagined force & speed.

To rede these riddles still I seek:
Why creatures live, & why succumb? ~~WHYXXXXXXXXXX~~
Why noble Reason does not speak
When gods & angels all are dumb?

(11)

Was ev'ry spinning planet sent
Around its sun's enormous ball
To hasten some "divine event",
Or is there no design at all?

Is Nature but a vast machine
Without beginning, end, or course --
An entity that's always been?
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
Like endless time, & space, & force?

How long did primal cosmos rest
Ere mighty orbs began to move
And scintillate, at the behest
Of power, in its orbit's groove?

My mind is hungry & athirst
To ascertain the reason why
Some stellar body was the first
To dart across the boundless sky.

New new horizons stretch afar
And bright auroras flash & glow,
But alps of difficulties bar
Access to truths I long to know.

I'll let no mundane foes defeat
The mental troops that I command
Until I occupy the seat
Of highest learning in the land.

The key of knowledge that I hold
Shall open widely Wisdom's gate,
Revealing fields of mental gold
For my enrichment soon or late.

My future time shall there be spent

179.

With pleasure, for perhaps I'll find,
By industry or accident,
The ne plus ultra of my mind.

This world is full of secrets still:
Great problems vex the wisest brain,
But I may cultivate the skill
To make their answers clear & plain.

Like bold Columbus, I way wing
My way across uncharted seas
And thence a panacea bring
For needless warfare & disease.

With all the strength that I possess
I shall endeavour still to find
Some fact or force designed to bless,
But not to curse, all humankind.

Like Lawson though misunderstood
By critics who may carp & frown,
"I'll try to do the world some good
Before (at last) "I tumble down".

The Perfect Era, long foretold
By prophet & peptic sage,
Has not appeared, for Lust for Gold
Still struts upon the earthly stage.

Like Moses on the quaking peak
Of Sinai, I fain would stand
To show the ignorant & weak
The way to reach the Promised Land.

I may succeed, though others failed,
In ridding Earth of want & sin
And evils that have long prevailed,
The Golden Age to usher in.

Now navies sail the seven seas;
Huge armies practise KX arts to kill
With bullets, gas, & vile disease
Regardless of the peoples' will.

But men may rise, some eons hence,
Above all mental mists & clouds,
With energy of mind immense,
And in attainments be as gods.

Alas ! These fancies, wide & wild,
Are creatures of my heated brain :
In learning I am but a child
And such I ever may remain.

The wisest men that Earth can show
Are like lost children in a wood,
For few are facts the sages knew,
And fewer still those understood.

High self-esteem good Sense forbids;
Nor should self-adulation crew
In view of countless pyramids
Of facts which men may never know.

Hence pride of learning is unwise,
And scholars should not be adored
While Wisdom's Himalayas rise
On continents still unexplored.

Earth's brightest souls, who strive to steep
Their minds in learning that they love,
Resemble fishes in the deep
Who knew naught of the sun above.

The universe is high & wide,
And its profundities are deep --
Beyond the reach of human pride,
Since "life is rounded by a sleep".

We should not , with disdain, look down
On those whose mental lights are dim,
For eminent professors drown
Because they knew not how to swim.

It's not to learn what fools men are
That weighty volumes fill my shelf,
But just to find (my pride to mar)
How ignorant I am myself.

Some future day all war shall cease

181.

And Learning shall do nations good;
Wise men shall dwell with joy & peace
In universal brotherhood.

*Repeated by
this paper*

Till then, like divers, men must grope
Where mental darkness makes them blind,
And, filled with love of learning, hope
Bright pearls of knowledge yet to find.

At last, beyond Death's chilly tide,
Mankind may tread where angels trod,
And, freed from sin & baseless pride,
Dwell everlastingly with God !

*To S. Murphy -
To H. Webster
13-6-46.
To Art, 5-6-46.*

Wed. June 5, 1946. To-day we received this from Art:-

" 196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, Sunday.
Dear Folks, I am writing this from a chair in the sun.,
hence the pencil. The w3ather should clear Dad's cold
if it is still ~~h3m3x3x3x3~~ lingering on. We hope, of course
ed long before this. We hope too, that your trip home was
And that Mum's leg didn't awe too badly.
And the photed, we think, are pretty good. Your copy
is enclosed. If we send one to the rest of the
crowd it will look to much like skite; but we'll s
send any/cof them mob a copy on request", buckshee,
gratis, & for nothing. You can tell 'em so. Flo wrote
to us the other day: she seems to be in good a-
pirirt & health. Mum's slippers are being sent t-
o her in a day or two -- at long last -- so is Mum's
la glove. We had to wait for your particular si-
ze. Phyllis sends her love. P S. The little nip ha
s her first tooth. (Scribbles) This being interp-
reted is "love from Doreen". Written by her." *Arthur.*"

Fri. June 21, 1946. Yesterday I paid Mrs. Watts 2/-
contribution to the Pensioners' Fund. I got my usual
injection at the out-patients dept. from sister NE
McCann. At Woolworth's I bought a packet of flower
seeds for Mum. Also yesterday week I got an injection
& was told that my blood test showed annimprovement
of a million corpuscles. Fred has put a new galvan-
ized iron flue above the gas oven, & is now painting
the kitchen. He has shifted the inside fly-door to

the outside of the back doorway. Mum has received a letter from Florence concerning her return from Nyn-gan on the 12th of next July. Yesterday I received the following letter from Mrs. Webster :-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, nr Redruth, Corn-wall. (May 7, 1946.)

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Cocking, So pleased to get your letter; I have 2 to answer now. One came a day or two after the other. Pleased to see you were all fairly well. Trust you are the same. Thank you for the nice photo of Mrs. Cocking. She is looking well; also your daughter & her hubby & little son, all looking very nice. He is a lovely little chap. Our Fred's boy too is a lovely little chap 2 years old, & Gerald, his brother, is 16 this month. Poor Fred is not too good, but I think rather better than when I wrote you last. Our Frank has been demobbed 3 weeks now. He is well & gone quite stout. His wife has been in bed a fortnight with a bad throat -- the doctor called it Quinsy. She has been as weak as a baby, & Joyce, their little girl, has had it as well: she is still in bed. Poor Pa is awful poorly. Doctor been to see him this morning. He gets down, but feels weak. He fell down a few weeks ago & has not been himself since, but I am hoping he will soon pick up again. He started to bring away blood, but that has stopped, so I trust he soon will be himself again. He sends kind remembrance to you & thanks you for your papers you so kindly send us. He does a lot of reading & he finds them very good. I hear they're going to start on the water scheme for Saint Day at last, but there is a lot of fuss over it as they're taking the water from Redruth, & some say if they do Redruth will go shorter this Summer, & they're short enough now. I understood always that there was plenty enough water at Vogue Hill, just under St. Day. It seems to me they do most things upside-down, for we had millions of gallons of spring water running to waste every day here, & yet they brought Redruth water here, & it's not near so good, & mixed with ours, instead of having a larger reservoir. Our was too small to contain all the lovely spring water. So it cost a lot more than the reservoir to pipe it from Redruth. But still they carried it out, & we have to pay a larger rate all our lifetime to pay for it. That's the way the councillors do their work: it makes you

sick. Anyway, the Labour Part are making grand improvements for the people-- that's the working class-- the rich don't like it, & they're doing all they can to upset them, it seems to us. I am glad to tell you my trouble has ended; my ankles have healed up grand now. Looking forward to a good Summer; it has started; the weather is lovely & portreath is crowded. The rooms are all let at the hotel & all the private houses everywhere. Our beach & the hills are lovely just now. Spring flowers everywhere -- primroses & bluebells, & then the foliage. No fruit, though, as you have out there. We have a nice lot of black currants & gooseberries & raspberries coming along. Our girls are fine. Kathleen has gone to live with her people at Truro. He is made a Dean at the cathedral. She likes it very well so far. Myra has gone down to the sea front to help in the tea-rooms. Our neighbour has one, & she lets Myra help me whenever I need her home to do anything here, as I don't want my legs to get bad again with too much standing. I have written again to my cousin you so kindly found for me. He has not written for a long time now-- more than 12 months. I wrote him 2 letters: no answer as yet. Now dear friends I must close with kindest regards to you & Mrs. Cocking & all the family. Yours sincerely Harry & Emmie Webster."

Fri. June 21, continued.

We have received this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 17-6-46. Dear Folks, It is almost a month since I wrote, so this letter is overdue. Doubtless you realised that because of my jumping about from place to place over the last few weeks, but now I am back in my old 16 x 16 room again & am just writing this before going out to a day's golf. My week-end trip to Sydney was not conclusive in so far as any actual position was concerned, but in view of the fact that the senior Mechanical Engineer's jobs were advertised in several States I wanted to feel the pulse of things in Sydney, although the senior job there is already given to the chap who has had it for many years, but who is due to retire in a few years' time, I had profitable talks with the heads there & have now applied for various jobs there, so my trip wasn't wasted.

I returned to Brisbane on Sunday night, 20th ? May, & on the following Wednesday morning went on to Townsville. After various inspections I was able to spend the following week end very enjoyably at Arcadia, Magnetic Island. Here I had a comfortable hut, & the water was perfect for swimming. On Monday morning, 3rd of June, another chap & I went out to Cloncurry, which was my first trip into the West. The going was very monotonous over limitless grassy plains, & the place itself proved unattractive, particularly as a biting cold wind was blowing. After looking chiefly at pumping plant we got away again on Tuesday & slept the night in a real out-back country pub at Terrans Creek, where there was ice on the ground the previous morning, & where we never succeeded in getting warm. Townsville weather was beautiful by comparison, & I looked at several other jobs there on the Wednesday afternoon & Thursday. At 8-5 a.m. on the Friday morning I left (for ?) Townsville on the rail motor & had a fairly slow, but but not uninteresting ride through Ayr, Home Hill & Bowen to Proserpine, where I arrived at 4-30 p.m. I was fortunate in locating a booking agency, & as a result of hasty arrangements I was able to spend last week-end at South Mollen Island, which is one of the Whitsunday group & about 2 hours out from Proserpine. Here I had an enjoyable 3 days (Monday being Victory Day holiday), but I actually prefer Magnetic Island, as South Mollen is very mountainous & there is only a very confined area on which the whole life of the island takes place. Tuesday was spent on inspections at Gunyarrra experimental station near Proserpine, & on Wednesday morning I got up early to catch the Brisbane mail at 3-15 a.m., & on which I travelled as far as Mackay, which place I had been anxious to see. Nor was I disappointed, for it is a very nice town & compares very favourably with any other of my favourites - Bundaberg & Toowoomba. This is the principal cane farming area in Queensland & is therefore a very prosperous town, as cane is always a good paying proposition. My northern tour was at last over, so I returned to Brisbane on Wednesday night & have since been picking up the threads in the office here. Your letter, also the "Review" chased me to Townsville, for which many thanks. Evidently Nyngan isn't

very popular with any of the family, particularly as Fred, after months in the islands, considers it "outback". I still haven't received the bill for those shirts from Flo. Evidently she's got too much money. This seems all the news for now, but I hope not to be so long in writing you next time. Hope you are all keeping well in the four southern households. Money order for £.5 enclosed. Wal."

I received a cheque for 7/6 from Mrs. Williams last Thursday. I visited George Sheldon's second wife, Edie on my way home.

Tues. July 2, 1946. Last Thur. I got my injection from Sister McCann. Last Sun. night Fred left by midnight train for Armidale with Burt looking to start painting the girls' living quarters there. We received the following letter from Gladys some days ago:-

1st Avenue, Warrawong, June 20th, 1946. Dear Mum & Dad, Yes, here it is at last! We hope you are both well. We don't blame you for not coming down when you were in Sydney, in fact we didn't think you would have gone to Sydney when the weather was so bad. The weather is terrible here to-day; it's blowing & raining & very cold; in fact I haven't been wafm all day. Jack sold his car, & doesn't he miss it?; he's running around everywhere trying to buy another one. We paid for the block of land next door with the money; we made sure it wouldn't get spent on other things. I've been having my teeth out: I'll get the last 3 out next Wednesday. I'm under the doctor again with my nerves & low blood-pressure. I haven't been too well for a long time, but I'm feeling a little better now. Jack & the children are all well. Cheerio to you both, also love to the rest of the folk. From Glad. xxxxx."

Sun. July 21, 1946 I have finished reading the book entitled "Electricity", by Robert M. Ferguson, Ph.D. of the Edinburgh Institution. It was printed by Chambers in 1866. We are expecting Florence to arrive here with Robert to-morrow, as Rev. Mr. Brand is to bring them & Mrs. Brand by car from Nyngan. During the last 3 weeks I have had 3 injections at the hospital. Last Thursday I went to Williams' place & Miss Williams ga

gave me a Gardeners' lodge Cheque for 10/-. Mum has received the following letter from Mrs Eliza Morris:-

"140 William St. Earlwood, July 3, 1946. Dear Mary, My word, what a pleasant surprise it was the day you called to see us. It was really nice, & I thought you looked just the same -- a bit older of course -- but well; & Mr. Cocking looked better than when I saw him last. It was nice of Arthur to bring you around. I do hope your family are all well. Where is Fred? Is he still in the army? We had a letter from our boy yesterday: he said he was real well; & that was good, don't you think? How are Florrie & her family? You will be happy when everything is all right again. I am sorry to tell both Maggie & Bill have been sick. Bill was in bed, but is much better & is up & at work, but is not the best, but getting better. Maggie don't sleep, & always feels tired. I think there is something wrong when you don't sleep. All sorts of things go through your mind while you are in bed. What is the weather like your way? My, it's cold this way & as cold as poor old Lithgow. They have had a lot of snow this year. Eva said it is very cold. Her eldest girl fell & broke her arm, but is getting on all right; she came down & sang over 2 O H one Saturday morning. She sang very nice. She will be 11 years old on the 23rd of this month. Well, Mary, what do you think about all the trouble there is in this fair land of ours? Everything is real upset, what with the electric light & the gas & all this big trouble in Brisbane. The people don't know where they are. Trusting all will soon be over & all goes well. Well, now, I do hope you had a nice holiday when you were down, & everything all right when you got home. I will close best love from Maggie & Bill & myself your loving old friend E. Morris. Hoping to hear from you soon. Please excuse paper, but I wanted you to get a letter. Give our love to your dear partner. Ta ta! I do miss my poor old partner. God took him home to rest, bless him. Please excuse mistakes X."

We have also received the 2 following letters from Florence:-

"Nyngean 17-7-46. Dear Mum & Dad, I hope you were not

too disappointed about the postponement of our trip. Judging by the reports we have had about travelling on this line since the reduced train service began, we are very lucky to be going over by car. The trains only leave 3 times weekly, & they are pretty packed after they leave Dubbo. This new arrangement is good because it will mean all day travelling. I don't know yet what time Mr. Brand intends leaving XXXX here, but I think that we will arrive there about evening on Monday. If Mrs. Brand & the 2 kiddies do go (I think she will if she can find accommodation for the night) it will mean that we will be later making a start I suppose. When a big car pulled up here about an hour ago I thought it was the Brands (she said she would come over one afternoon this week) instead it was Steele's car with Valerie, Bill, & Mrs. Steele. It is Valerie's annual holidays, & she arrived today & is looking up all of her old friends before going out to the bush to stay with the Steeles for a couple of weeks. I don't know whether you understood over the phone that Bill soon went home to visit Bourke. He is trying this week to get a man to take his place there, & if he does get one he will soon have his run altered to Warren & Newertire & of course be here in Nyngan alternate weeks. "A live wire" XXX the boss wrote that he wants Bill to get for the job. The only applicant he has had from here for the job is old Charlie O'Rielly who is pretty old & very slow. He is the ex-mayor of the town & is about 68; so I am afraid he won't get the job. I had a lot of visitors last week calling to see me before I went, but, like old "Stiffy" Vaughn, I am still here. Mr. Brand says that taking me over is all part of his work, but we can't help thinking what a wonderful chap he is & what a good friend he is to us. I hope you won't worry, Mother, if I ask him or them in to tea, but I would like to after him making this long trip for me. Don't fuss-- he has been here for meals, so he is not over fussy. The next day (Tuesday) he will travel to Sydney to see his father who is not very well. He intends staying the night with Smiths or at the Methodist parsonage.

Valerie gave Robert a bowl of salted peanuts & he wants me to send you some in this letter; so if I do don't think

it is me who is mad in the house. He is looking forward to seeing you all again, & says he is going to be a very good boy over there, but, as he tells me, he "cant be good all the time." It's been cold & wintry here to-day, & we (Robert & I) have been sitting in front of the fire all the afternoon. Mr. Brand just rang to say that everything is set for the trip, & we will be leaving at 5 a.m. on Monday at the latest. He says about 10 or 12 hours should do the trip. He says that Mrs. Brand will go, & if she can't get a bed at Smith's (this is to you) I'll sleep on the lounge for the night, & she can have my bed, that is, of course if you are agreeable. Anyhow it is lovely to know that we will travel in comfort & be there about 3 p.m. or 5 p.m. if his reckoning is right. They may go straight on to S Smith's for tea; so don't cook a hot tea especially for them. I'll bring some tinned stuff over that perhaps you can't get there. Well, cheerio. I'll get down & post this so that you will get it before the week end. Love, Florence."

Florence's other letter is as follows:-

"Nyngan 17-7-46. Dear Mother, I have just been to the post office to post a letter to you & have collected yours, & now at home when I read it it seems that you are worrying your head off about next Monday. I think that I have explained everything in the previous letter, but one question you ask is is Bill coming? No, he will be back in Nyngan & starting work that day. Don't worry. I am sorry if coming this way is going to upset you. I hate to have to put you to any trouble, & I wouldn't if it could be avoided. As I said in the previous letter, don't cook a hot tea, because it's likely that the Brands may go straight to Smith's after meeting you. I'll try to get some eggs & make a cake on Sunday, & I'll get some biscuits. If you get a bit extra bread in & perhaps a couple of pounds of sausages in case it's a cold night. Anyhow I'll bring something (spaghetti or something) in case you can't get the sausages. I'll get the meal ready when I arrive. It won't take long to cook some sausages & potatoes if they do stay, but don't go to the trouble of a baked dinner, because we can't be sure when we will arrive. As I s-

said in the other letter, Mr. Brand says 10 hours travelling, so if we start at 5 a.m. we should be there at 3 p.m.. Anyhow, we should be there at 5 p.m. allowing for stop for dinner. I wish I could have got a reliable person in here, because I am afraid I am a nuisance to a lot of people just at present by leaving here. Anyhow, if you just get a bit of extra bread, half a loaf & 2 lbs of sausages, I'll fix you up when I come. Anything else I'll bring myself. Evennif they don't stay the meat can be used the next day. "heerio till Monday. Florence."

Sun. July 28, 1946. Florence & Robert arrived on the 22nd with Mr. & Mrs. Brand & little girl & baby. Florence has bought most of the things she requires, & has met doctor Hutchison ? & made all arrangements. The Nobell family moved into the house next door which was vacated by the palmers, who have moved into their new house at Speer's Point, Lake Macquarie. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann. A strong cold westerly wind has been blowing about a month & is still going strongly. We expected Fred to arrive home yesterday, but he did not come. On the 8th inst. we received the following letter from Fred:-

"Smith House, Armidale, July 7, 1946. Dear Folks, I suppose you've been waiting for me to write to see see if it's so terribly cold up here. Well, yesterday & to-day are the only sunny days there've been since I've been here, & one of the other days a real little bit of snow fell, not enough to stay on the ground. I was unlucky enough to get a cold coming up on the train, but it stayed in the head, & is just about better now. There was a camp-stretcher here for me, & I made a straw mattress out of hessian, & put 3 corn & 1 chaff bags on for blankets, & so I now have a good warm bed. The other painters here are terrible mugs, with the exception of Bert & the boss, who never works, so it shouldn't be hard for me to keep the job if I want to. The other fellows batching here are easy to get on with, & the grub is good, so if it was only a bit warmer it would be pleasant enough, but as it is it is not too bad. The job here is expected to last until near the end of this month, & so far we don't know where we go next. I'll do my best to go home for the week-end in about

This is only a note: there is no need to answer it unless it's necessary. Fred."

Some days ago we received this from Arthur:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, Sunday. Dear Folks, The little nipper (Judith) was pretty crook last weekend, but has made a rapid, complete, & happy recovery. Doreen & Phyllis are O.K., & yours truly is literally in the pink. To-morrow night I am sending you 2 suits by rail to Waratah. They are destined for "whom they might concern", but I'd suggest that the brown double-breasted might suit Dad for wandering around the yard, & the blue suit would do hip for gallivanting on the river. nyhow, who gets what is up to you blokes. I've had a preview of what's to come in seeing Charles Bonaventure packed off to Narrandera, where he is boarding while his wife & kids stay on in Sydney until he gets them a house down there. Nearly all the graduates I know have been treated similarly. One has gone to Young, one to Murwillumbah, one to Tumut. You will readily understand, then, that we fear we'll be sent to a country high school town next year at the latest. Still, we can't be worried until it happens, & perhaps not even then. See you on or about 24th August. Love, Arthur."

We have also received the following from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 21-7-46. Dear Folks, We are now back in a civilised community here after the end of the strike last week, & it's certainly much more pleasant to be able to have hot shower, eat without the use of a candle, & to stay up after nine o'clock at night. Otherwise nothing of importance has happened since my last letter, nor has there been any news about the new job. In the meantime I'm still busily engaged in the reconditioning of my furniture, & I must say it is coming on pretty well. Next week I'll have to leave it alone, though, because I'm going for a tour in my little Dept. prefect sedan through Teewoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, & Wallangarra. I'm rather looking forward to the run, except for the fact of the cold weather, but I'll be able to take plenty of clothes, as I've got the car to myself. The job is to inspect the various military establishments & assess the estimated

cost of annual operation & maintenance of mechanical plant on each of them. This will keep me pretty busy until the week-end at least. I see that Flo is due home to-morrow. Greetings, Flo. I don't write directly to you, but suppose Mum forwards my letters on, or at least extracts occasionally. My regards to Bill & young Rebbe too-- how is he? Bill will evidently have to do the bachelors' act again for a while. I might easily see you myself before you go back. Thanks for the photo, Mum-- it was a good likeness of you all, & I recognized the building behind you as one in which I once did a ventilation design. Thanks also for the papers which are coming to hand. It has occurred to me that one of you might like a holiday up here; not that it's much of a place, but if so let me know, & I think I could fix you up all right as there's a spare bed in my room. Unfortunately I don't think it's any warmer here at the moment, but it's been a record cold winter & must surely start to warm up soon. I'm sorry I didn't get out to see Art & his wonder kid when I was down recently, but as time was so short & he was not on the phone I hesitated to send him a wire for fear I'd keep him at home from his other engagements. Anyhow, they'll both surely be better still when I do see them again. How about Daphne? Is she yet at the Teaching College, or did she pull out? I take it that all Joe's crowd are well; & if I'm any guess he'll be missing the old Ford by now. It's hard to appreciate a car until you have to do without one. At least that's how I find it here whenever mine's in dock. How long is Fred to be in Armidale? I assume it's only temporary job there & he'll move to some other place soon. Glad to know you are all well as I am. If none of you want to come up for a holiday you could mention it to Johnny Rose, who might like to come. Cheerio. Wal."

Fri. Aug. 9, 1946. Yesterday week I got an injection from sister McCann, & afterwards went to the big hospital & had a bit of grit taken off my left (blind) eye by young doctor Roberts. Yesterday I went in again to the out-patients department & got an injection from sister McCann. At Ash's shop I bought a 3/16 square ended drill for 2/3. The cold westerly wind has ceased to blow, & the day is nice & warm. Douglas Cocking came last night & told Florence that his car is for sale for 50 pounds. We have received this letter from Gladys:-

"1st avenue, Warrawong, Wednesday. Dear Mum, I suppose you think we had forgotten you, I've had the flu, & Jack had it over the week-end. He was in bed on Monday, but started work on Tuesday. We are pleased to hear that both you & Dad are keeping well. Jack bought a square-top "Chrysler" sedan car in Sydney 3 weeks ago. He couldn't do without one; he done nothing but moan for the 3 weeks he was without one. There's no news down here to speak, so I'll say good bye to you all. From Jack, the children, also myself. I'm in a hurry to get the bus to :port Kembla, so ta ta. Will all my love. Glad.
XXXXX."

Also this from Walter:-

3159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 5-8-46. Dear Folks, since my last letter I have finished the little tour I mentioned, that is down to Wallangarra through Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, & quite enjoyed myself too. I left here on the Tuesday morning before last, & returned to Brisbane last Monday. The country is terribly dry & rather in contrast with what it was when Mum & Dad came through that way with me on the way up here. Wallangarra must surely be the most uninteresting place in Australia. -- just 2 old pubs & a shop in the midst of a tumble-down town set amid arid boulder country. I even had to go on over a corrugated road to Tenterfield to get a bed for the night. The road all the way to Wallangarra from Brisbane was perfect, though, & I was able to spend the intervening week-end in Warwick. Joe feeding her? Perhaps she's pining for another car, yet she looks so much stronger & healthier nowadays compared with a few years ago. I suppose that Fred is home again, & that with Flo & R Robbo also there you have pretty full house. I assume that everyone else is well & that Chip's new boat is well under way by now. Incidentally, Chip, don't forget to sell that suit of mine if anybody wants it, will you? Was glad to get your note, Flo., & was hoping that you would at last tell me how much I owe you on those shirts you so kindly sent me.. Thanks very much for your efforts, & don't be afraid to sting me -- I think I'll be able to afford it. Hope you both enjoy your stay at home. My room is still improving with the application plenty of energy & a few bright ideas. Still no news about the new jobs, so suppose I might as well carry on in the meantime.

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since the major overhaul on my car it was never all right, & none of the experts here could fathom the trouble. However, whilst I was away last week they pulled the motor down again & found the valve timing wrong. Now there is a remarkable improvement & it's a pleasure to drive; so you'll be able to enjoy something of it if ever I'm able to get it back on Maitland Road again. Johnny Rose sent me a letter last Thursday in his usual breezy style. He can't come up here at the moment, but is obviously interested in the idea. He would be wise to come in time for the exhibition here next week. I have been able to order an Airzone "Cub" radio, for my room, from Sydney at £ 16-17-6, less 40 per cent, through the good offices of a friend down there, & am looking forward to getting it any day now. Cheerio. Wal."

Sat. Oct. 26, 1946, Yesterday afternoon Florence's second baby -- a girl -- was born at the Mater hospital, Waratah. Mum, Jose, & Ivy went over to see them, but was not permitted to see the baby. Both Florence & the baby are well. Since my last entry in this diary I have had a lot of trouble with my left (blind) eye. Shortly after doctor Roberts took the grit off my eye doctor Price examined it & later, took an ulcer off my eye. at his surgery in Bolton street. He did not charge anything for his treatment. My eye is now almost back to normal. Mr. Frith, senior the shopkeeper, died recently & was buried at Sandgate. Last Sunday Robert & I attended the holiness meeting of the Tighe's Hill Salvationists, & the children's anniversary in the afternoon. I met Jim Stanbury, Mary & Gladys Goodwin, Bram Lucas & his wife Avelin (nee Smith), Harold Vaughn, Bob Bannister, brother Jack & his son Alf, & the captain of the corps, -- Gilbert of New Lambton. To-day I finished binding the July, Aug. & September copies of the "National Geographic Magazine". During the time

since my eye became too bad to write, we received the following letters from Wal & others.:

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 6-9-46. Dear Folks, Have just received a very interesting letter from Flo., for which many thanks. Things here continue to be quite pleasant; Flo. is not far out when she says I have a good job, yet I still wish the same job was in Sydney rather than here. Last Tuesday I went to Kingaroy in a very nice Ford Mercury car to give an estimate for the transfer of low-pressure air training chambers to Amberley. To-morrow morning I am ta-

king 2 of my chaps in the same car to Maryborough & Bundaberg & will leave them there to install wood-working machinery for the Industrial Training centres now operating at the Tech. colleges. This should give me rather an enjoyable week; so I'm not complaining, though of course life is not all plums. My room is still improving as a result of my continued efforts on odd occasions., & it is becoming the envy of several of my friends. There has been no sight or sound of Johnny Rose since I last wrote him, but I'd hardly be surprised to find him arrive here with all his worldly possessions wrapped in newspapers any day.

Unfortunately my letter to Flo. must have crossed her's on the way, but I'm sure she'll be able to cash the money-order for the shirts. I was quite concerned about Dad's eye, but re-assured by Flo. & the fact that it is now definitely improving. You were very well advised to get the best of attention for it; & let me know if I can send you down some cash for the bills. Ivy, too, is evidently on the mend, which is a good sign, & I'm hoping that everyone will be fighting fit when I get down there at Christmas or sooner. My chances of getting a transfer seems to be fading again, & the only satisfaction I can get at the moment is that they say I have done my job too well to get away. Of course there is nothing definite.

The lass you speak about, Mum, is Esme Sattler. I heard she was to get married, but she may not have & may still be living in Kerr street. She was quite a nice lass, & would very likely remember you.

Fred seems to be very quiet in his new job, & his infrequent writing contrasts with his good correspondence whilst in the islands. You'll have to tune him up about it! I don't seem to be hearing anything of the exploits of Joe's or John's families nowadays-- or of Chip. Are they leading such a monotonous existence? How about Daphne? Is she a school teacher, or a counter jumper by now? Admittedly I'm rather diffident about increasing Mum's letter-writing, but perhaps another letter from one of the others might mention a few of the details. Strictly speaking, I suppose that I should from time to time send down a few things typical of Queensland, yet there are so few things even worth the while sending which are peculiar to this area or State. Development is definitely backward here, & things are considerably more interesting & valuable in the Southern areas. I am sending by separate package a cutting for a double poinsettia which is an excellent cutting? & which you may care to try. Bir-

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thday greetings for you for to-morrow, Mum, & the hope that you will enjoy many more happy birthdays in the future. Cheerio for now, All the best. Wal."

THIS IS is from Fred: "Stoke Farm, Sun. Aug. 188, 1946.

I suppose you think that I've forgotten you, but I thought that I would have gone home last week-end with Bert. He told me that he'd either ring or write, or both, so if he did he'll have told you all about Armidale. It was cold, but not so cold as this place.

We are about 6 miles from Ben Lomond & 8 from Llangollan, whilst the only shops are in those places, so our only supplies must be got from either place. We are a bit

fortunate, as the Cockys get us anything we need about every second day. The bread is usually stale, & meat is seldom. We got our first yesterday, but rabbits

& eggs are in ~~plenty~~ galore, so far we have lived extra well, so we are not bothered about grub.

I just went outside for a drink of water, & a few fluffy little balls of (what one of the other fellows assured me was) sleet were falling, & he assured me that when we wake up in the morning snow would be on the ground. I wonder. Just at present I am sitting in front of a big log fire, nearly roasted on one side.

Chip should, by now, have received a registered letter containing 3 (think it was) cheques. The amount in them is what they pay me after deducting £ 1-4-0 in tax. With me here are one other painter, & one carpenter; all correspondence, including pay, is addressed to me. I wouldn't mind if I got something extra for it, but my cheque this week is the same as last.

It's only a small building -- one room--with 20 odd kids if they're all here, but only 7 turn up each morning; the rest either have, or are in contact with, measles or scabies. The teacher is a decent young bloke just out of college at the end of last year, & knowing how Art liked being in a one-horse school I can certainly sympathise with this bloke. This job will about cut out this week-end, & we have asked for our next job, but until next Wednesday we don't know where it will be. Wednesdays & Saturdays are the only mail days, when someone meets the mailman about 15 miles up the road. This I don't expect to be posted until Tuesday when one of the locals is going into Glen Innes for the day. You will understand that it's no use of your answering this letter, as I should have left here before an answer could a-

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The teacher lives across the road with people called Bush (pronounced Bush, anyway) who have the phone on; I don't know their number, but the storekeeper in Llangollan is called

Hodder; & if in emergency you wanted to get in touch with me I'm sure that he'd ring a message through. if, after the week-end & before you know where I am, you want to get in touch with me you can find where I am by ringing M 1612, which is the Newcastle office of the Department. Before leaving Armidale they told me that I had one more job to do up this way, & then I am going to Cook's Hill. I don't put a lot of faith in it, but in about another 6 weeks my free railway-pass home is due. I would have gone home before coming here, but it hardly seemed worth while to go over 500 miles just for a week-end. The only things that keep me in the job is that it is so terribly easy & that I have £ 7-5-0 a week after paying tax, instead of working like mad with a boss chasing me up, for about £ 5-12-0 after paying tax in Newcastle. I'll write again when I get to the next place. The address here is:- Stoke Farm, via Ben Lomond. So long. Fred."

This letter is from Wal.:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, 26-8-1946. Dear Folks,
I must first plead guilty to being a week late in writing, but I was particularly busy last week, & there was nothing of importance to write about. I hope that both Dad & Ivy are now o k again & that you are enjoying the company of Robert & Flo., also Art, Phil & co who have probably now arrived. John evidently felt as I always think I'd feel without a car, & he should get a lot of good work out of the Chrysler. I suppose Joe is also feeling the loss of a car sometimes, although admittedly they go through a lot of money. Mum's conjecture about my room must surely be wishful thinking -- quite a contrast between the Myola street wedding & the " Know-Alls. How young Cliff (Cooking) is going to finance things when he's only 19 is beyond me. I don't think I've ever met him -- what does he do?
I wrote to Johnny Rose a few weeks ago, but have heard nothing further from him. The radio I had in my room last year belonged to Reg. David, & he took it to Sydney with him. The one I now have was sent up by a lass

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friend in Sydney, & she got a 40 per cent out for me. It is an Airzone Cub & has a nice tone. I have made a special bracket for it near my bed, & have had a new switch installed near it. A fortnight ago I spent the week-end down at Corrumbin & renewed many old acquaintances. Also did some enjoyable sunbaking, & swimming, & drove down through Coolongatta & Tweed Heads for a few miles. The following week was a very busy one in the life of Brisbane, as the first post-war Exhibition was held for 7 days, & attracted record crowd crowds. We had 1 1/2 days holiday for the occasion, & I spent one afternoon & evening fully interested in the various exhibits, without worrying about the ring events. The various agricultural displays were very creditable considering the unprecedented drought conditions now existing here. We have been rather more busy in the office lately, & I am trying to complete my estimates for annual maintenance on mechanical plant for permanent military installations.

We are having some excellent weather now after our record cold winter, & everything in general is going fine. Still no news of my possible transfer from here, though. Next week-end about a dozen of us intend going to Bribie Island & do a bit of fishing. All of the fellows are from the local Y. M. & we stay at Norm Balmer's place. Cheerio for the present, all the best to you all. Wal."

This is from Mrs. Eliza Morris:-

"No. 4 Kia Ora Flats, Giddings Avenue, Cronulla. Aug. 30, 1946.
Dear Mary, You will be surprised to see by this address we are at a new place. Maggie got the flat for 2 weeks; it is really very nice, & I do hope the change will do Maggie good. She is not very well, & Bill is not the best. I am fair, but tired to-day. I was down at the beach with Maggie yesterday, & Eva's children: they are with us. Eva may be down for a day or two. We hope she comes; it will be nice. The beach is not far away from us, & the weather is very nice. Of course rain is badly needed. I suppose you have Arthur with you before this: it will be a change for his wife & family. How is Florrie? I do hope all goes well with her. It is a pity her husband's health is no good ever in Mayfield. I hope, Mary,

you do keep well, also your dear old partner. My word, I miss my poor dear husband very much, although everything is done for me, one gets lonely sometimes, which is quite natural. I trust all of your boys are well. We had a letter from Harry: he said he was good & quite happy. We would like him home. You would get a surprise when the other little slip was in your letter -- it was for Mrs. Ramsley; she is very well. Three of the family are married, & the youngest girl will never be very well; she has a leaking valve to the heart: she is quite happy with her mother. I do hope, Mary, you keep well, for there is always ~~XXXXXXXX~~ plenty for mother to do; & you will feel anxious till Florrie is over her trouble. I do hope all will be well.. Just fancy, Mary, I was talking to a lady who will be 84 on Sunday. She is real well & strong & got splendid eyesight; so she is a lucky person, what do you think? When you writ, address my letter to Earlwood; we will be home then. My brother Alf has been very sick, but seems much better again, thank God. I don't think, Mary, there is any more for me to say; so best love to you, my dear, & all the family, & best of luck to Florrie, & trust Dad keeps well.. Very best from Maggie, Bill, & myself. I must tell you we had a letter from Harry. He was well & quite happy with himself. Of course they won't worry you, but Maggie won't settle till he gets home. I tell you, Mary, we all miss him & wish the war was all over & the boys home. The war is over, but not the peace; so we must wait & hope it won't be long. Love from your old friend Eliza Morris."

~~XXXXXXXX~~ Another letter from Walter:-

159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 1-10-46. Dear Folks, My last letter was written just before I left for Maryborough on 17th September. I had a very enjoyable trip, & left the men in Maryborough to install the woodworking machines for the Training College. The night before I left Bundaberg it rained heavily, which was real music to the ears, as this represented the end of a 6 months drought. After returning to Brisbane I was able to enjoy a fixhing week-end down on the Bay. We had some lovely weather & caught some good fish. After a long wait I got a new suit which had been made for me by a paramatta tailor, & for which he measured me

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during my last week-end in Sydney. The coat was considerably too big, & is now being altered, but the material is quite good. No further news is yet to hand as to ~~any~~ any possible transfer South, but it seems that strong influence for the top-ranking jobs will go to returned men. I am at present following up this aspect pretty closely. I am particularly pleased to hear that Dad's eye continues to improve, & I hope he is taking every care with it. You will very much like that pointsettia if it grows, as it is an unusually pretty double one. Now to answer the questions: You did send me a copy of that photo, Mum, thank you. That M.O., Flo, was made out in the name of Mrs. A.W. Purdy. Evidently you are pretty financial nowadays, as you have had no need to cash it so far. Glad to know that both you & young Robbo, also Bill, are doing well. There is little other news at the moment, so I'll close with my best wishes to you all. Yours Wal."

This letter is from Gladys:- 1st Av. Warrawong, 26-9-46/!
Dear Mum, Thanks very much for Arthur's photo; I think it is very good of all of you. I see Arthur is getting no thinner. We didn't know poor old Dad had a bad eye: we are pleased to hear that it is getting better, though you must have forgotten to tell us. We haven't seen Cliff Cocking since he was a baby, so we wouldn't know him if we saw him. Anyway, we wish him good luck in his married life. There's no news to tell you about down here, only that Dell is going to Sydney on the 21st & 22nd of October to compete in the Eisteddfod for singing & verse-speaking. She's in the choir for the school. I don't know how they'll get on., they seem to think they have a fair chance.. The weather is very cold, windy, & showery here; it gets on your nerves. We are all well just now. I'll say cheerio for now. Love from Jack & the children; also myself., to you all. xxxxx. X extra special for Robert."

Mon. Oct. 28, 1946. Mum, Robert & I walked over to the Mater hospital at Waratah this afternoon & saw ~~REB~~ Florence & the baby, who has not yet been named. She is very dark, & much resembles Robert when he was a baby. Florence has to remain in the hospital for 5 weeks in all,

as there is something wrong with her leg. She is not in pain, & looks very well. She has a room all to herself. We returned by bus. Almost ever since Old Bob Ashby died, Charlie has been sleeping with Allan in the house on Shelly Beach, Hunter river. Charlie has been putting an engine in a boat there. Fred & Bert Cocking are painting a school at Wallalong, but Fred came home in Bert's car on Friday last, & left for there again this morning.

The following letter was sent by Phyllis:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, 15-10-46. Dear Mum, Arthur has asked me to correct the information he gave when he rang the other day concerning a trip home with Doreen in a few weeks time. He mentioned Friday, the 25th, but now realises that he will be singing in the Federation Choir at an Eisteddfod on Sat. 26th; so you may expect him on the 1st Nov. if that will still be convenient to you. would you please make the appointment at Mrs. Longworth's to fit in with these dates too? We are surprised to hear that Flo is still at large.. Tell her it's sure to be a girl, seeing it's late for the appointment. You would be surprised & delighted if you saw Judith's head now. Except for a couple of little patches in the front of her head it is almost free from infection, which, according to the skin specialist, at the Children's Hospital, was "scalp eczema". Her hair is growing nicely too, & with frequent brushing I'm hoping for lovely blonde curls. Doreen often talks about Robert, & is looking forward to seeing him again, We are having a little birthday tea among ourselves for her next week-end. We intended having a little party, but decided to wait another year as she seems too young to understand about it. I'm glad to know you are keeping well. We are all in the best of health & spirits. Remember us to the folks on the hill. Hope Ivy is much better these days. If Flo is still in the same mind about getting those shirts made for Robert, tell her I can get them done, but will need one of Robert's old ones as a pattern. You could either send it down or give it to Arthur when he sees you. Cheerio for now. Love to you all. Phyllis."

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Sat. Nov. 2, 1946. Arthur & Doreen arrived by train from Marrickville last night, both being quite well. He brought Doreen to let Mrs. Longworth refill Doreen's tooth. To-day Bill Purdy arrived by train from Nyngan to visit Florence at the Mater hospital. He is also well, & has not had an attack of asthma yet, I have given him the shaving stand that I made. On Thursday last I had an injection from sister McCann, who has returned after her holidays.

We recently received the following letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, 29-10-46. Dear Folks, I have not received your last letter, but understand it arrived here, & that Mrs. Jones sent it on to Townsville. I am still trying to track it down, & if there was any thing in it requiring an answer I'll cover it in my next letter.

I went to Townsville on the 14th, & after spending 5 days there, also at Charter's Towers, I came back to Mackay for the week-end on 18th. Then came back in hops to Brisbane, spending a night in each of Rockhampton, Bundaberg & Maryborough, & arrived back here last Thursday. A very pleasant trip in a, & I was able to look at quite a few jobs. Hope you are all 100 per cent fit, as I am, & that things are going along well at home. I had a couple of good swims up North, & have otherwise been playing golf & tennis down here as usual. The car is running particularly well, & I am playing with the idea of driving it down for the holidays at Christmas. Speaking of holidays -- I wrote to Johnny Rose, asking him to book us in somewhere for a week; so will you please give him a ring & tell him I want an answer quickly?

Still there is no decision about my future job, but at least the Returned Soldier barrier doesn't seem to be so strong as it appeared at first. Perhaps I'll get some news between now & Christmas. In the meantime I have put a paper frieze around the top of ~~xxx~~ my room, which improves it immensely, & I have only now to paint the walls & to get some lino to have everything shipshape. How is the poinsettia growing? All the best, Wal."

Thur. Nov. 7, 1946. Yesterday Mum, Robert & I went to the Mater hospital & found Mrs. Noble with Florence. As it was Florence's last day at the hospital we all came home with baby Joy Lorraine in a taxi cab. Bill Purdy returned with Arthur & Doreen to Sydney last Sunday, & has now begun working in the Warren district, to which he was transferred from the Bourke & Nynghan district. The weather yesterday was very hot, with a hot westerly wind, but to-day it is cool. Robert learned the first half of the alphabet yesterday, so I gave him the first of 2 books that I promised to give him.

Sun. Nov. 17, 1946. On Friday, Nov. 8th, Fred came home suffering from fibritis in his back. He is still at home, for he is not well yet. Last Thursday I got my usual injection at the hospital from sister McCann. I met Mr. Batey there; he is also anaemic & receives injections of liver. My weight was 10 stones 7 pounds. I bought another book for Robert, who has been able to write the whole alphabet & name the letters. Ethel Cocking was taken to the Mater hospital a few days ago with a bad heart. She has improved a little, & is still there. Florence went to see her twice. Yesterday Olive Worley came to see Florence. Olive is staying a fortnight at Ivy's place on furlough. Our Charlie has been sleeping at old Bob Ashby's place by the river almost ever since old Bob died. Last Friday Charlie brought home 4 black hens from there. Baby Joy Lorraine was born at the Waratah Mater hospital on the 25th of Nov, which is also brother Bob's birthday. Her father, Bill Purdy, came from Nynghan to see her, but stayed here only one day. I have nearly finished making the second shaving-stand. Rain yesterday.

Sun. Nov. 24, 1946. I spent all day yesterday making a steel hinge for the ice-chest, but the hinge was too long; so I shall make another. Fred came home on Friday & is now almost quite well again. On Thursday evening Jim Cocking brought Mr. Pitt here. He is from Penrith & he & his wife is staying at Jim's house. Their widowed daughter is coming to look after Ethel for a few days. Ethel is much better. Last Thursday I got my usual injection from sister McCann. I bought a washer & a scrubbing-brush for Mum. Ben Broadhead has gone off for a fortnight's

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holidays. Mrs. Jenson brought Florence a nice little coat-hanger for Joy last Thursday. Our apricot tree, at the Western end of the hut, is well loaded with nearly ripe fruit.. We have received five pounds & this letter XXXXX from Walter: --

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 18-11-46.

At long last the missing letter which chased me to Townsville has turned up again, so we are now all square in the matter of taking our turns at writing. Firstly, my hearty congratulations to Flo & Bill in regards to the new "Joy". A very nice name too; & she must surely be healthy at 7-12 on the scales. Am sorry to hear Ivy is still "not right", & am sure she'd do well to get a good doctor on the job & do just as he says. Am sorry to hear of Ethel being sick. She is a good scout & deserves a better deal. Whilst on the same theme -- how is Fred's back ? Evidently another chill, was it ? I am still in the pink, & apart from a trip down to Currumbin a fortnight ago, I have done little writing since my return from the North.. I have been playing a fair amount of golf & tennis, & am lately doing pretty well at golf. There is no word yet from Johnny Rose, so think I will write to him again to-night. Am reckoning on leaving here by car on the afternoon of Friday 20th Dec., & have a leisurely drive home. If there are any spare petrol tickets down there I'd appreciate them. I'm reckoning on being home for sure on Christmas Day, & will go on to Sydney after a week or so. I think I mentioned a lass named Essie Carter who went from here to live in Sydney about last April. Both she & her people have been very good to me here, & seeing that she is now on her own in Sydney I thought it would be nice to invite her up to spend a couple of days with us at Christmas, but realise that the house will be pretty full, with beds in short supply. I'd like you to let me know how you'll be placed, Mum, but don't be self-conscious about asking her, as she's a good sport & would pull her weight. At last I have my room pretty well finished, with the exception of lino, which is required for the floor, but which is too expensive. Anyhow, the place is very comfortable & generally admired. I'm enclosing herewith a recipe for a cake which is really very nice, & which I hope you'll like. The white top is poured on top of the rest of the mix before baking.

"Newcastle" flats are owned by a woman who was born in West Wallsend. Yours Wal."

Sun. Dec. 1, 1946. Last Thur. after getting my injection, I bought 2 ~~XXXX~~ 3 small drills at paynter's for 5/-, & Cole's number one Funny Book for 6/- at Wilk's shop in Mayfield. Fred returned from Wallalong on Fri. quite well. He brought 2 millet brooms home. also a primary book. Florence has been attending to Ethel Cocking, & is with her again this morning. Robert is about right again. Yesterday we received the following letter from Arthur:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville Thursday 27-11-46.
Dear Folks, At last I have something to write home about. I've struck a pretty good run of luck lately. First, the inspector has been & gone, to my relief & elation, for he seemed not only pleased, but impressed. It so happened that all the things on which the inspector happens to be a crank are just those points which I have stressed most. Second, I am going to take on the swimming school at Goulburn from 6th to 16th Jan next. I was appointed to take charge of the school at Bankstown, which meant supervising four other blokes, & of course, taking my own squad, for which job I would have received nineteen bob a day. but Fred Eagles, a teacher of Campsie, who taught me how to teach swimming, asked me would I swap Goulburn for Bankstown, as he had been appointed to the former & would prefer the latter; so I agreed to go to Goulburn. The Goulburn job yields only £17/6 a day, but the Department will pay my fare & give me an extra £12/6 a day subsistence allowance while I'm there. Now, it so happens that there's a teacher in Goulburn who wants to spend part of his holidays in Sydney, & wishes to swap houses for a week or two; so I may be able to take Phyllis & little Judith (Grandma will look after Doreen) & the 3 of us can have a holiday at practically no cost. Goulburn is reported to be a bonzer town, & I'm looking forward to the change. Phyllis & the kids are in the pink, & send their love. How is the new nipper? Does she squeal at night? Is young Robbo a little gentleman to her? You have a lot to tell us. Let's hope you do it soon. Arthur."

Wed. Dec. 18. 1946. Last Thursday I got my usual PROK FROM sister McCann. There

was a notice posted inside to inform patients that the outpatients' department would be closed from the 20th instant until the 6th of Jan. I took in a bagful of empty bottles for the dispensers. Last Saturday Phyllis came alone from Harrickville, & stayed until last Sunday. Art & Mr. & Mrs. Witheridge looked after Doreen & baby Judith. Fred came home last Friday & left home with Bert on Tuesday, to work at Sawyer's Gully. Last week Mum spent a day with Jess, Ivy, & the 3 youngsters at Belton Point, Lake Macquarie.. We have received the following letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, 3-12-46. Dear Folks. We have just survived the most violent hailstorm & thunderstorm I've ever seen. I was able to go over & look at the test match this afternoon. After a dull play by Hammond & Yardley an appeal against the light succeeded, & the rain started. I drove home just in time, but not before the car took some punishment from hailstones. Then the sun really started, & most of our windows on the weather side were broken & the room flooded. A brick fence in the back yard collapsed, & 2 piers of the house next door. I haven't yet seen any newspaper reports, but it is likely that considerable damage has been caused.. Your last letter raises many points, but my first inquiry is regarding young Robert, whom I understand has had bronchitis. How is he doing now? --Much better, I hope. I am pleased to note that Fred is right again, & that Ivy appears to be getting better. Thanks for the clothing coupons -- I can use them. Thanks also, Flo. for your offer to sleep in the garage to make way for Eme, but I'm sure that it won't be necessary. I must confess that I'm in something of a quandary because I wouldn't like to have her on her own over Christmas just in a room & missing the company of her folks. If she'd be able to come I think that it might be possible for her to use my room for the couple of days, & I can easily fix something up for myself. I've no doubt you would enjoy her company. You are wise, Mum, in not paying the present exorbitant prices for curtains, line, etc., because prices must surely fall before next Christmas. I have at last been able to get some plain brown line for

my room, & it makes an enormous improvement. I have had a letter from Johnny Rose in which he expresses some doubt as to his ability to come up here. He expects to know in a week or two, but it seems possible that I'll be driving down on my own. This is no problem, of course, because I'll have plenty of time, & may get away from here on the 19th (Thursday).

This crowd are taking so long to make up their minds regarding appointments that I have tentatively applied for a lectureship in Mech. Engineering at the Sydney Tech. Even if I have any luck with it my acceptance will depend on what this Dept. indicates as its intentions in the meantime. I'm afraid. I'll have a hard job persuading them to release me from here., particularly as several of their old hands have resigned to take other jobs. This appears to be all the news for now, & I may not have time to write you again before Christmas; so all the best to everyone. Cheerio. Wal."

Fri. Dec 20, 1946. We received this from Phyllis some days ago;)

"196 Illawarra Rd. 8-12-46. Dear Mum & Dad, We were glad to receive your letter last week & sorry to hear of so many on the sick list. It is to be hoped that now the warm weather has settled in all such ailments will disappear for good. We have had our share of coughs & colds, but they have just about cleared up now.. I am looking forward to a visit to Goulburn in the near future. As I myself have done very little travelling, it will be quite an experience for me. We have had the offer of 2 houses in Goulburn, so our accomodation problem is just about solved. There are 4 schools in Goulburn."

There are 4 schools in Goulburn, & Arthur wrote a letter to the Headmaster in each school explaining our position, asking him to pass it on to each member of the staff, which resulted in the 2 offers. One teacher wishes to exchange houses for a fortnight, & the other, wishing to spend the vacation elsewhere, suggested we caretake his place while he is away. So I think we are very fortunate that things are working out just as they are.

I would like to invite myself up to see you all next weekend alone . I say alone because I know it is just about "house full" at 331, which makes it impossible for us all to come. But I would like to see you all before Christmas, especially little Joy, whom I may not see for a long time otherwise. Arthur, Mum & Dad have offered to share the responsibility for the 2 nips, so I know the(311 they'll be in good hands. Judith is no trouble at all & eats just about anything & everything (there are no Patrick & Murphy fights between the 2 of us now). She realises now who's boss.

I will leave here on Saturday morning's flyer & come back on Sun. afternoon. Don't worry as to where I'll sleep. I can easily curl up on the lounge. We have been thinking, Mum, that a week in Sydney wouldn't do you any harm; in fact it would do you a lot of good. How would you like your big son to come up & see you the day after Boxing Day & bring you back with him to stay here until we take our trip to "oulburn, which will be a week from then? Dad is included in the invitation too, of course. but somehow I think he'd prefer to browse among his beloved books. Think it over, & say "Yes" when I see you later. I'll save all the rest of my news till I see you. Love to you all from us all down under ". Phyllis,

Sat. Dec. 21, 1946. Yesterday afternoon Bill Purdy arrived in his Ford car from Nyngan. He brought 2 men & a woman & put one off at Parramatta, & the other man & woman at Hamilton. The car is in very good condition & seems to be well worth the £125 he paid for it. The trip over took 22 hours & cost £3 for petrol, of which he used 182gallons 20 gallons. Bill is quite healthy, & so far shows no signs of asthma. Keith & Daphne came home from the Lake yesterday, & Jose, Ivy, & Noel are to return to-day. I bought 6 white ladies' handkerchiefs at Frith's shop for 6 shillings to-day. That shop has been sold to Owens. Fred came home on Friday Bill gave me an old mincing machine to cut up food for fowls. Hot weather

Thur. Dec. 26, 1946. Boxing Day. Yesterday we had at home for Christmas dinner Mum, Florence, Esmie Carter, Walter, Fred, Bill, Robert, & myself. Esmie came from Sydney in response to our invitation. Jose gave me a book entitled "American Trails", by J.B. Murray. Walter gave me a fountain pen shaped like a pencil. Bill gave me a pair of black socks. Mum gave me a shirt. Fred gave me 60 feet of new garden hose. I gave Jose, Ivy, Daphne, & Keith a handkerchief each, & Noel a florin. I gave Mum & Florence a pair of stockings each, & to Bill I gave a tie. Bill bought a Ford car for £125 at Nyngan & came home in it. Walt brought his car home from Brisbane. He gave Mum an electric toaster. Fred gave us a bed-reading lamp. XXXXXX Wal & Bill have taken Mum, Ivy, Esmie, Daphne, Keith, Noel Robert, & baby Joy out to Toronto to-day. We expect Art & Phyllis to arrive by train from Marrickville this evening with their children. Hot weather. To-day I wrote a letter to Les & Florrie Duley, & enclosed a photo of Robert Purdy & the view from our front door.

Thur. Jan. 2, 1947. Fred went back to work at Sawyer's Gully this morning. Sgt. Phyllis, Doreen & Judith left yesterday for Sydney. Walt is at Bowral, & Florence & Bill are probably still at Warrawong with Jack & Gladys. Yesterday I wrote a letter to Mrs. Webster. John Rose lent me a book entitled "Alberta Now" a few days ago. He will probably go to Brisbane with Walter in his car when he returns from Bowral. The paper announces to-day that the British Government has taken over the coal mines, for which the owners were paid £168,000,000. That is the most important action ever taken by the Government, & may be the means of bringing peace to the miners of Britain. If the venture is successful it may lead to the nationalisation of all of the means of wealth-production in Britain. Fine & warm to-day. Yesterday I re-posted an aches for Bill Purdy. I finished reading "American Trails", which Jose gave me at Christmas.

Fri. Jan. 10, 1947. Yesterday I paid 11/- at Giles' chemist shop for the first quarter of this year to Doctor Henry. I got my injection in my left arm from sister McCann. At Woolworth's I bought 36 marbles (6d.) for Robert Purdy, & at a seedsman's I bought a young fuschia plant for Mum for 1/6.. Ew have received the following letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 5-1-47. Dear Folks, Well, here we are back in Nyngan again. We arrived on Friday night after a 2 days trip from Port Kembla. Bill wasn't much better down there, so we left on Thursday morning about 9 & stayed in Bathurst the first night. There is quite a good camping ground there & kitchens for renting, & we were lucky enough to get one for the night. It was very cold there, & we were glad to have shelter for the baby. She slept in her pram inside & we (Robert & I) slept on camp-stretchers under a tent-fly, & Bill in the car; so we easily got over the problem of accomodation. The next day we started off about 9 a.m. & arrived here at 9 p.m.. It was a good trip: if Bill had been well it would have been perfect., but he was too bad. The car proved to be a beauty, not one delay, except at Port Kembla,. Before we started on the trip Bill had the brakes fixed. It only took a few minutes & was worth the time we spent there. Jack treated us very well while we were down there, & lent us the camping gear for the trip. He took us for a run on New Year's Day into Wollengong, then up to Mount Keira, & then down to Dapto & Kiama. We called at Nellie's & Florrie's & saw all the crows, including Lila, who was up for the holidays & staying with Nellie. Nellie looks very well: her hair is turning grey, but she is better looking & very cheerful. Jack persuaded her to come to Kiama with us. They said they were pleased to get Dad's letter. All the rest of the crowd were well & seemed much the same as ever. The South Coast looked very pretty, & Jack's car is pretty good & roomy & very comfortable to ride in. The best news we have had since we came back is that our next-door neighbours are leaving to-morrow, so that will mean a happier time for the Purdys. Robert is the happiest of all. Those kids have given him a few pastings since we have been here. Mr. Brand was here at 9 o'clock this morning to see if we were at home, & he brought Mrs. Brand over this afternoon to see the baby. The house was pretty dusty,

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as you can imagine, when we arrived, but we have got it all in order again now. The kiddies are very well: Joy is very contented & happy, & Robert is very pleased to have his own little bedroom with Joy alongside him so that he can watch her, as he says. Bill is much better now, & in a couple of days will be full of pep again, I hope. Did the atomiser arrive from Melbourne? We will be sending the primus back on Tuesday, also the spanners belonging to Jose. I hope Ivy is quite o.k. again now, & that you are having your long-deserved rest, Mether, now that Christmas is over & the crowd gone, & peace reigning once more. We will be sending your money back in this letter, Fred,, thanks very much. I don't know how we would have fared without it.. It's baby's feed time-- the last one for the day-- & so so I'll say cheerio. Love from us all. Florence.

P.S. Mrs. Brand was inquiring about you both to-day."

(Seven pounds were enclosed in a registered envelope.).

The following letter was sent to our address for Walter by a friend of his in Melbourne. Mum read it over the telephone to Walt, who is in Sydney, yesterday.

"Dear Wally, Mr. F. Curring returned from leave yesterday afternoon, 2-1-47. , that is the reason why I have been unable to write to you before this date. I have spoken with the C.M.E. regarding yourself & he informed me that he had not recommended you for the Perth Job as there was no application from you. Though applications are closed, or about to close, he told me that he would still consider your application if you apply pronto. If you desire to do so I suggest that you airmail your application. You will, of course, get one of the grade III jobs if you apply. You know your own desires in this regard. I'm still very strange here & will remain so for some time. I will mail this letter this morning to your Newcastle address, & hope that it reaches you in time. Drop me a line sometime. Kind regards.
John Smith."

Cellins Street, 3-1-47."

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Tues. Jan. 21, 1947. We have received the following letter-card from Arthur:-

"Sunday. Dear Folks, We arrived safe & sound from Goulburn on Friday after a pleasant & (I hope) profitable stay there. You should feel sorry you didn't go down with us -- cool nights & plenty of meat, & no gas strike make a big difference to one's comfort. When we receive it I'll let you have a copy of what the local paper said about the swimming school. By the time you get this I'll be up Coff's Harbour way. Seeing I have no definite itinerary Phyll will not be able to get in touch with me, so I'll ring you on Wednesday night, should occasion arise, : she can then contact me through you. Hope all are well. Arthur."

Tues. continued. We received a note from Esme Carter to-day to tell us that she will come by rail from Sydney next Saturday. I finished reading John Rose's book entitled "I Was a Soviet Worker", by Andrew & Maria Smith, yesterday, & I am inclined to believe that he told the truth about the condition of the workers in Russia. Last Thursday Gladys, John, Adell, & Alma came from Raymond Terrace to stay with us a few days. John returned to Sydney last Monday, but the others are still here. I have finished making my third shaving-set, which I intend to offer to Allan. Last Thursday I got my usual injection: also had blood taken for a test. The last blood-count was made last June. Arthur arrived by train from Macksville this afternoon., He will stay here a few days if all is well at his home. To-day I received the following letter from Mr. Muir:-

"EYE CULTURE. Better eyesight without glasses. Established 1929. Brisbane office: National Bank Chambers 180 Queen Street. Phone B 8422. Melbourne office :Capitol House 109 Swanston Street,,C.I. Central 5703. Head Office St. James Buildings, 107 Elizabeth St. Sydney, N.S.W. Phone M.A. 3167. 21st January 1947. Dear Mr. Cocking. I am sorry, but I never disclose names & addresses of my patients to strangers. Just the same as any doctor who takes pride in his work, each patient's name is kept strictly confidential. Every now & then I am asked to do this by people who will not bother to reason with themselves the

logic upon which eye-culture is based, but they are prepared to follow blindly the recommendation of a stranger whose case is perhaps completely different from theirs. But there is another aspect. As I have mentioned to some of these people it would be possible for me to have 2 or 3 "stool pigeons" in every district. I could arrange with these people when your wife contacted them, to be very enthusiastic about Eye-Culture, & say it is marvellous, & then, after that, when your wife decided to take up eye culture, they would receive a commission for sending her along. So, that is another aspect., & one reason why I never divulge names & addresses.

Another aspect, perhaps of which you have not thought, is, to do eye culture successfully you must have a willing patient. A person must really want to do it.. Therefore, urging by husband or wife is usually not very satisfactory. The old story of, "You can lead a horse to water" applies here. -- the horse must do the drinking. In this case, your wife must do the eye culture. Therefore she must want to do it.. I am pointing this out to you because, unless she does want to, she won't have a real interest in it, & will therefore not do it properly & cannot possibly obtain the full benefit.. That would mean a waste of your money, & she would undoubtedly say eye culture was not good.

The fact that I have been practising for nearly 20 years, helping many long-standing sufferers, many who had been told by eye specialists that nothing could ever be done for them, indicates there must be something in Eye Culture. There is a tremendous lot in it., but it doesn't matter what instruction I give, it is useless unless it is followed faithfully & enthusiastically. If I could see your wife-- & possibly one day she might be inclined to make a trip down to see me (though I would suggest before doing so, you write to make an appointment)-- I think I could possibly explain things to her in such a way that she would realise the common-sense upon which Eye Culture is based. Yours faithfully.
C.E. Muir."

Mon. Jan. 27, 1947. This morning Esmee Carter went to the Hunter river with Fred to have a trip with Charlie & him on the river. Jose is here fixing up wires for a reading-lamp for Mum to read with in bed. Yesterday I typed a note to Mr. Campbell, editor of the "Rock" newspaper. I am sending by Esmee copies of "Gail's Capers" (written in Nov. 1935) "The Liquor" (written June 14th 1928). XXXX
 Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann, who told me that my blood count was not quite as good as the one before. Esmee Carter came from Sydney last Fri. night, & will return by train at 5 p.m. to-day. Arthur called in on his way back from Kempsey, last Thursday & has now gone home by train. I have finished reading the "Wide World Magazine" for January, & will send it to Bill Purdy. I have sent a set of 5 spanners to Bill last Thursday. Douglas Cocking took home a window frame from here this morning.

Wed. Jan. 29, 1947. Esmee Carter went back to Sydney by train last Monday evening. This morning I gave Allan & George the last shaving-stand that I made. I posted the "Wide World Magazine" to Bill Purdy this morning. Yesterday Mum & I planted out about 100 zinnias.

The following letter came some time ago from Florence:-

"Box 15 P.O. Nymgan 17-1-47. Hello Everybody! The goods arrived to-day. Will you please let us know next letter the price of the retread for the tyre; also freight on it & the other goods you sent over. I hope by now that Ivy has the result of the X ray, & that everything is satisfactory. At least she will be getting some treatment, so that is a good start. I hope it isn't long before she is o.k. again. She has had a long time now not feeling well. We are all well; Bill is back to normal, & we are much happier than we thought we would be on our return. Hamptons going has made a wonderful difference to our peace of mind. The people in Smith's place are easy to get on with; Mrs. Townsend is especially nice. Mrs. Smith had a son yesterday at the Mater, Waratah. They will be overjoyed, seeing that their last one died. The Brands have been to see us a couple of times since we came back; & we had a short visit from Mr. Roberts (Mrs. Murphy's brother-in-law- the other night He came over from Warren & brought a fan for Joy.

Robert seems well, although he hasn't the good appetite he had over there. We are going to get a tin of malted milk to-morrow to try to fatten him up a bit. I am afraid he doesn't worry too much about learning letters & figures; he is too interested in playing since he came back home. His 2 little mates-- Kevin & Brian Maxwell-- are going out to Warrigal (5 miles out) at the end of this month. We hope that Mr. Matthews gets a transfer soon: he is on holidays now & may have word of a move while he is away. Someone asked Mr. Giddy for the house the other day, ' he said he had promised it to us; so the only hold-up now is the move. We should know in a couple of weeks if he is soon going. I had a letter from Mrs. Young just when I arrived home, & she says she is very lonely in Walgett, but she easily makes friends, so I suppose she will know half the town by now. Cheerbo. I am finishing this off the next day, & it's nearly mail time. Robert was very pleased with the marbles, Dad. He says to say Thank you very much. Love from us all. ~~KIXXKIX~~. Some days are pretty hot, & may be worse next month, so we think the fan may be a great help for Joy.. She is coming on very well; we can see that she is growing & getting pretty round & fat, but there is no notice of a visit from the clinic car yet; so we have to just guess that she is gaining, or ~~KIX~~ at least guess how much. I received the list of her feedings from sister Henderson from the clinic there to-day. She finishes her letter by saying, "I hope that your daughter may be a joy in every way"; & she is, so far. She is a happy little kid; a great smiler, & is very contented.. Tell Charl Thanks very much for the scent: it is very nice. I suppose you have been having a gay time,, Mother, running around in the car. Bill has returned from Warren to-day & brought such a lovely box of fresh vegetables with him for 5/-. One tomato weighed $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. We get the mail you re-address. I think I told you over the phone that we got the atomizer, but Bill doesn't need it now. Love from us all. Florence."

We also received this letter from Esme Carter:-

"O/ Blech & Gerber,, 46 York Street, Sydney, 19-1-47.
Dear Mrs. Coeking, This is just a note to thank you
for inviting me up to see you all again at next week-end

& to give you an idea when to expect me. I decided in rather a hurry when Wal asked me over the phone, & I forgot to even mention trains. I had hoped to get a seat on the flyer, but it is booked out for both Sat. morning & Friday night, with the result that I will have to get a slower train. Perhaps the best idea for me would be to give you a ring when I arrive in Newcastle, & then you will know how soon to expect me. The night that I left Newcastle I had the worst attack of home-sickness I've had since I left Brisbane, & I suppose it was the reaction after coming back to my own lonely little place after being with a jolly family crowd for a while. However, I promise it won't happen next time. You must miss them all very much, especially Flo & Robert & baby. You probably don't know what to do with your time, or have you still some of them at home? Well, this started out to be a note, so I'd better not ramble on for ever, but if there is anything at all that I can get you, or bring up with me, you will let me know, won't you, as I'd be only too glad to do anything for you. Will you remember me to Joe & Ivy & the children, & tell them I'm looking forward to seeing them again; & tell Mr. Cocking that this time I'm bringing my music case with me; so we'll have to find a pianist. Till Saturday, then. Love. Esmece."

Sun. Feb. 2, 1947. Last Thursday I got an injection in my right arm from sister McCann. I bought some marbles for Robert Purdy, & a mirror at Selfridge's shop. On the way home I went to Williams' house & got a Lodge cheque for 10/-. Fred returned from Cessnock on Friday evening with sore feet. Charlie is thinking of building a boat from a plan made by a nautical engineer. I have begun to make another shaving-set. Robert Purdy has probably started to go to school at Nyngan. Peter Taubman has started to attend the Mayfield school. Rain yesterday. This evening I wrote a letter to Selina Murphy.

Sun. Feb. 9, 1947. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann. She told me that the doctor wished to see me next Thursday as he has a new liver extract that is stronger than the old one, & he wants to check-up on my condition to regulate my dose. I bought a 9/64 drill at Paynter's for 1/12. , & paid the gas bill. We received the following

letter from Florence:-

*Nynghan Box 15 2-2-47. Dear Mother, We were glad to get such a nice long newsy letter from you. It certainly was written when you were in a more cheerful mood than the previous one.

The outings with Walt must have cheered you up a bit. Mrs. Henderson (nee Rachel Smiles) must have been pleased to see you again.; also Walt who was her favourite. You d dn't mention anything, though, about Bessie Henderson nor the rest of the family. I am glad everyone is o k at home, & t that Ivy's trouble is not serious -- hope by this that she is all right again. Esme Carter must have taken a fancy to you to return so quickly. You have had visitors for a long time, &, as you say, you will appreciate a a bit of quietness now that things have returned to normal. Where is Fred working? Is he home each night, or only at week-ends? We are sending on £ 8-0-0. Six of this is what I owe you, & the £ 2 for the re-tread & the freight. If it is any more let us know next letter. Thanks for all the sending you have to do. Our get-away was so sudden I couldnt collect my wits, muchless my belongings.

Thanks for getting the tyre fixed, Fred. Thanks also, Dad, for the spanners that you sent over for the car; they are very acceptable. The car is running pretty well. We went for a little run after tea to-night: I enjoyed the outing although there is not much to see on any of the roads out here. You know that, from our trip out here in the roaring 90s. It's been hot out here lately -- plenty of dust, but these last few nights have been cooler. To-night shouldn't be too bad either. Joy stands it pretty well: she is a good kid-- the happiest baby in the world. We only look at her & she laughs, probably thinks we are a dopey looking lot. I weighed her last weelp she was 12 pounds.

On tenth of the month the clinic car calls, & I'll go & have a check-up on her weight & her feeds.

School did not start here e last week. I think it starts on Tuesday, & Robert will go unless we get word to-morrow that Mr. Matthews has a move from here. If he has we won't start Robert until we get that house. It will be better to start him off from there. He seems to be better than he was. We couldn't get him to eat for a while, but he is better now. His playmates went, but cousins of Maxwells (the same name too) came in to the house the next day, & he is friends with the 4 children there, & the little girl at the back spends a lot of her time here; so he is perfectly happy.

The lady next door (Mrs. Townsend) brings her new baby home on Tuesday: Robert is anxious to see her, although he can't imagine it to be as good as Joy. Well, it's getting late & time for bed. Joy has had her last bottle for the day. It's nearly 11 p.m. & time to settle her down for the night. We never hear her again until 6 a.m. Cheerio. Our love to all. Florence."

We also receive this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane 3-2-47. Dear Folks, I assume that you have, by this time, had a ring from Johnny (Rose) who left here yesterday, & who will have explained any delay in writing as being due to lack of news about any possible transfer.. Added to that, of course, was the greater difficulty in writing whilst he was here, & the fact that little of interest has happened since my return. We had quite a pleasant trip up despite the fact that the top tank of the radiator was leaking, & the fan threw water back over the distributor, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ so causing the engine to cut out every 20 miles or so. This required that a dry rag be wrapped around the distributor at intervals, & that the radiator be refilled periodically; but the trouble has since been rectified, & the job of putting on a new rear mudguard has started to-day. We arrived here on the Sunday night after calling on Esme's people, who were holidaying at Coolongatta. John appeared to be quite impressed with my room & facilities on his arrival. I was glad to arrange a comfortable bed for him, which he used to the full. In fact he did little else but sleep but sleep & rest during his whole fortnight's stay, with an occasional walk & a couple of games of golf.. The weather was alternately very set or very hot & humid, but I feel that he enjoyed himself nevertheless. Mrs. Jones & daughter have been away in Sydney since early January, but are due to return to-morrow. In the meantime Mr. Jones is batching & doing a good job of preparing my breakfast for me each day.. I suppose Esme came up for the long week-end as intended. I hope that both she & you enjoyed her stay, although it is certainly more difficult with no car available. It just seemed rain up here practically the whole time, so I was lucky that I had not arranged to go down to the coast, where so many people became marooned by the flood waters. How is everybody doing? What of Mum's eyes & leg, also Ivy's X ray? Everybody here is fine & I have now caught up on practically all the leeway in the office. I'll let you

know if there is any news of particular interest, but this is all for now. Cheerio. Wal."

Thur. Feb. 13, 1947. This morning I got my usual injection from sister McCann. She said that the doctor had looked at my r cord-cards & wished me to get a blood-count taken every 4 months to watch my progress.. I must only get one injection each fortnight in future. At Sorby's I bought 2 ounces of rivets (6d) & 3 ounces of 5/8 tingles (4d). Mrs. Watts was not at the post office to receive contributions, so I did not pay her. The long drought in the nor-west of N.S.W. has broken, & now big floods are feared. Mr. McKell is now the useless governor-general of Australia. & Jim McGirr is State premier in his place. Mrs. Perry was buried this week.

Mrs. Terry is the mother of Frank Terry, who married Daisy Rosamond--Ivy's sister.

This evening I wrote a short letter to Miss Helen Pilpel of 22 North Street, Mount Lawley, Western Australia, asking her to send some parsapapilla leaves to me if she can obtain them there.

I have written the following verses:-

~~XXXXX P R O P H E C Y~~

A PROPHECY. (Tune) Some Time We'll Understand".

Some day, it may be ages hence,
The world shall rid itself of kings;
Then queens with pomp & pride immense
Shall go with other useless things.

Chorus:-

No nation needs a figure-head
Nor dictator who never delves:
Enlightened men can earn their bread
And do all governing themselves.

Already more than half the earth
Is governed on a kingless plan,
For thoughtful men of sense & worth
Have ceased to deify a man.

No more shall kings, by "right divine",
Encumber costly, needless thrones,
Nor priceless gems resplendent shine
On crowns of idle, useless drenches.

218 A.

No palaces shall then be raised
Where royal parasites may lurk
Extravagantly dressed & praised,
While honest men do useful work.

J. H. Webster
24-5-47.

No more, in that enlightened day,
Shall kings monopolize the job
(For most unconscionable pay)
Of governing the plundered mob.

Then little children shall not sing
" God save our gracious king," at school,
Nor venerate a pampered king
Who may be reprobate or fool.

Those relics of a savage past ,
Which loyal sycophants adore,
Shall on earth's rubbish-heap be cast..
And monarchies shall be no more.

un. Feb. 23, 1947 Last Wed. I went to the Newcastle
show at Broadmeadow, but came away disappointed
as I saw little to interest or instruct me. As
usual there was a publican's booth there with
its usual bob of fools poisoning themselves.
I did not go to the hospital on Thursday, as I
have to attend only once a fortnight now. Fred
came home from Cessnock on Friday. Jose has had
had a lot of trouble with a man named Bignell
at the steelworks. Bignell has been insulting
& abusing Jose for about 4 years, but when
Bignell called him a liar Jose tried to punch
him, but got knocked out, as Bignell is much
younger & bigger. Kinley got an explanation of
the trouble from Jose, & promised to have an
inquiry made, at which he promised to attend.
It was held recently, but Kinley & other high
officials who should have been present were
absent, so Jose said he would leave the steel-
works. Finally he was persuaded to remain a f
fortnight to see if Bignell would keep his pr-
omise to be civil in future.

EYE CULTURE

Better Eyesight Without Glasses

(ESTABLISHED 1929)

BRISBANE OFFICE: NATIONAL BANK CHAMBERS
180 QUEEN STREET. PHONE: B 8422



MELBOURNE OFFICE: CAPITOL HOUSE
109 SWANSTON ST., C.I.

HEAD OFFICE:

ST JAMES BUILDINGS, 107 ELIZABETH ST.,
SYDNEY, N.S.W. PHONE: MA 3167

SYDNEY.
10th February, 19

Dear Mr. Cocking,

You say, that if I require a secretary, I would ask for references. It might interest you to know references do not interest me. I go by judgement - in other words, I use my brain and think. I am sorry for your sake that you cannot see sense or reason in my withholding names and addresses of patients.

I have not asked you to blindly accept my recommendation at all - I pointed out upon what, Eye Culture is based. If you cannot reason the commonsense of it, then it is just as well for your wife not to take up Eye Culture.

Get it out of your head that I am urging your wife to be a patient, because I do not want patients who cannot recognise commonsense in Eye Culture through their own reasoning, because, unless they can reason, they cannot be taught to strengthen their eyes as the brain controls the vision.

I am not prepared to teach people to think. I am too busy helping those who do think. Why should I spend hours of my time trying to make a person think, if they do not do it themselves? At one time I did that, but wrecked my health in the process. The result was, that for 12 months, I was not unable to do any work because of the long hours I devoted each day to helping people help themselves.

Yours faithfully,

B. C. Muir
per M.B.

have received this letter from cousin Selina Murphy:-

Digby Street, Kadina, South Aus.) Sunday 16-2-47.

Dear Joe, Wife, & Family, Here it is at last! I have been going to write to you for ages now, but somehow it just gets put off. Well, I was very pleased to receive your very nice letter last week, & pleased to know that you are still on the good old path. I was beginning to wonder if you had gone on your long rest. I was quite thrilled to receive your photos. It is very nice of you all. Well, Joe, I am ever so much better lately since taking 20 bottles of medicine & tonics, & a few weeks away to my youngest son's for a ~~XXXXXX~~ perfect rest that I had. But since I wrote to you I have had a bad time. I had a bad fall over two suit cases & hurt my left knee badly. I was in bed 3 weeks, & I had a dreadful knee. I had to go to Wallaroo hospital to get it X rayed. Doctor thought I had broken a bone in the cap, but there was no bone broken, but I was shocked by the fall. Then I had enlarged heart. I had not got well from it all when I had a bad attack of bronchitis; & doctor gave me a good overhaul, came to the conclusion that I had got some kind of arthritis all through my system, all in the muscles of my stomach & it affected my back; so he gave me medicine to take -- plenty of it -- so I am lots better. My back is not near so painful; but my eyes are bad. I've got a treat to write or read, or even do any sewing; they are just streaming all the time. I have to write in spells.

Well, that is enough of my worries. I hope you are all well. Your son looks well, & his wife is a dear little thing. I think your wife has gone thin, but it is very nice. Now, Joe, I am sorry to tell you that I lost my dear sister Ellen -- that is Mrs. Robert Mowbray, . he died on the 10th of last November after a long illness; & aunt Lizzie Vercoe has been dead 18 months, if not more. Her son Henry, that she was living with, is a very sick man. I hear he has had to give up work. He has a delicate wife. Poor old Dicky White was buried last week. He was well over 80. The rest of the Whites are ~~XXXXXX~~ all alive. Well, Joe, it is just lovely that our boys are all at home from the horrid war, but still there is a lot to worry, for the poor lads can't get houses to live in.

My son Lloyd had a nice home here-- of course a rented home-- he could not get work here & had to go to Whyalla. Then his wife went up there to live with a woman friend theirs. Well, it was o k for a few months, then the lady picked up with a man & wanted her home to herself, & out they had to go. Well, do you know, he can't get a house in Whyalla. He is in one place & his wife & his wife is working at a hotel for a home, & they are boarding.. The little girl in another place. -- Yet he has a good Xmas job there, with over 6 pounds per week at his painting trade, & got their goods & chattels stored away in a garage.. This housing problem is awful. There is not a house in Kadina that you can get. Shops & all are turned into dwelling houses. My other son that returned is just as bad. He got 2 unfurnished rooms, & use of kitchen, with a woman in Adelaide. He is working at his old job in a grocer's biz. They are expecting a little one any day now. His other little boy is over five. Lloyd only has one girl & she is over 8 -- a lovely girl. I am a real great grandmother, Joe. My oldest daughter Olive's girl is married & has a son 10 days old... My youngest girl, Hazel, lives near me now -- been here for a long time now. She lost her husband through the first world war. My son Tom is still a lonely man. You know I told you his wife left him 2 years ago last New Year's Day. His oldest girl lives with me. The other girl was 16 yesterday. She works at the hotel here now. About this Mr. Davey -- I really don't know any thing about him: I only know a Ben Davey. The Hanton's have all gone somewhere; I really never hear anything of them. The Groses have all left here as far as I know. It is a pity, Joe, that Florrie's husband suffers so, & that they can't be near you. It is just like you say; it seems like Florrie is an exile from home. I am pleased to know that she has a little girl. I guess they are proud of her. It is nice to know that your boys are all so well in jobs & so far advanced. My son was in Newcastle a day's pleasure when at camp. I asked him to try to find you out, but he had no time to do so he said. He is a lovely boy: you would like him, Joe. Is it very hot over your way? It has been cruel here -- the worst Summer I have ever known. I get flat out these days. Well, Joe, my old pal Mrs. Gear is a very sick person. She has been in hospital & had a big operation. She has not been able to visit me for over 6 months now. I do miss her so, as we were like sisters. She is at home & getting on o k., but can't walk like she

used to, & she is in her 77th year. I am over 70; my brother Jim is 72. Well, Joe, I think I have told you all I can for now. My families are all well. I trust you & yours are likewise. I hope you can understand my letter, as I am a poor speller. So now I must wish you all the very best of a happy year & a healthy one too to you & yours. So cheerio. About the Brickmans: Harry is dead, & Murphy. Bill is dead, & Emma years ago. Maria Dalby is dead too. Annie Dalby was here yesterday to see me. She was Mrs. Warne, but is a widow now. Polly Dalby is up at Murray Bridge somewhere, & Lottie Giles is still in Sydney. Mary Giles -- that is Lottie's sister -- Mrs. Fred Terrill, is in Broken Hill. Uncle Steve Giles is dead, & Olive Giles is dead too. I don't know where young Steve Giles is, but young Charlie Giles is dead, & aunt Maria Dalby is dead a long years ago. She was my mother's sister. So cheerio, Joe; write soon. Love to all of your family. From your cousin Selina Murphy."

We also got this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan, 18-2-47. Dear Mother, We received your letter on Saturday. I suppose it would have been in the post office early in the week, but we had such a wet week that I couldn't go down to collect the mail. I intended answering it on Sunday night, but the Colbrans called (the pig-man) with their new baby, & so the letter was postponed. It is raining here to-night. We had a storm earlier in the night, & it is still raining. This rain is good: it has inspired Bill to start a garden. We have no idea when we shall be moving, but we are quite happy here now. Our neighbours are good, & that makes a big difference. Robert started school on the 4th of the month & is very enthusiastic about it. I only hope the enthusiasm doesn't wear off, but I don't think it will while he has the teacher he has now. He started off by asking her did she cane the little boys & girls, & she told him, "No", only the big children get the cane." The kiddies are all very fond of her, & judging by Robert, they don't seem to be one bit afraid of her. I am glad Peter is settling down all right. It was a relief to us to know that Robert was & is still keen about it. Every day he comes home with stars the teacher puts on his work. I think Dad's tuition must be a great help to Robert. He seems to take part in most of the little plays they have in the class. Yesterday he was the wolf in Red Riding Hood. He was in another one to-day, but I can't think what it was

about. Anyhow, he gets a lot of fun out of it, & it is a hard job to keep him at home.. On Friday it rained heavily all day, so I insisted on him staying at home that day, but the other days he went. He says there is nothing to do at home; it's better to be at school. Now I have been doing a bit of boasting about the son, I have to put in a word for the daughter too. You would love her if you could see her now. I forgot to tell you that weeks ago she

started laughing out loud (before she was 3 months). She beats Robert as a baby-- he was 4 months. She is the best & happiest baby in the world,, & unless she alters considerably, we have chosen the right name for her.. I haven't taken her to the clinic yet. It was here yesterday, but I was washing, & it got away early this morning, so I missed it again. But I think it will be back again in 2 or 3 weeks., so I'll try to see the Sister then,. In the meantime Joy seems very contented, so I don't think I need to worry. Now, Mother, back to your letter again. (I don't think I can skate much more about the kids). I can't help but feel that you are being badly robbed, but seeing that you are so emphatic about its being that way I can't do much about it. Anyhow, thanks very much, Mrs. Millionaire.

You certainly helped me out of a bad situation by putting up with us so long. I suppose you are enjoying a well-earned rest now. that all "Your kids" have gone again, & everything has settled down to normal. Bill & I are well, although a couple of times since we came home Bill has had a slight stuffiness, but the atomiser soon fixed him up. Yesterday while he was digging he began to puff a bit, but came in & used the spray, & he was all right again & went on with the job. Have you had any news from Walter lately? Where is he likely to go to? I sent away to-day for 3 house frocks from Grace brothers. Bill says to put that in block letters. I suppose he thinks I am being disloyal to Marcus & Co., but they couldn't supply them, & I am hoping that this firm will. Cheerio. Hope you are all well. Our love-- especially Robert's. Yours Florence."

Sun. Mar. 2, 1947. Last Thursday morning I paid Mrs. Watts 4/- sub. for the Pensioners' Association. I got my injection at the hospital from sister Mc Ann, & weighed myself. My weight was 9 stones 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds.. I bought a 3/16 drill at at Serby's for 1/8. Yesterday we received the following letter from Arthur:-

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville,. Mum told me that sh'd

have the plaster, or whatever you call it, off Dad's leg about 2 months after he bumped his shin on the bike; i.e. about now. Since the bumping was my fault, I've been pretty concerned about how the leg is, but I know you folk wouldn't know until the plaster was off. How is it?

I do hope it has healed by now..... Phyll hasn't been too bad, considering, & is quite pleased to receive breakfast in bed. Next, I've decided not to pursue my Uni course this year, because the time-table works out very awkward. I can't leave Phyll to look after the kids, get their tea, wash up & get the kids to bed all on her own, but that's what would have to happen if I did the subjects I intended, because lectures are at 6, 5 6 & 5 p.m. dXX during the week. Instead of Arts I'm thinking of going for an accountancy certificate through a correspondence course from the Tech. With very hard work I think I could be ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ a qualified accountant in about 2 1/2 years. I haven't abandoned the idea of the B.A.; just postponed it. Little Judith is running all over the place now. She is her cheerful old self again. —the happy type of kid you knew when we were in Mayfield the time before last. Her head is a mass of curls like a tangle of spun gold. Don't think from this that she is pretty: she's not; although passers-by often remark on "what a fine, sturdy little boy he" is. Lately I've had the care of the kids on my hands quite a lot & they've been like 2 little angels, as though they realise that my hands are pretty full. The boss has asked me to act as an understudy to the careers adviser, who is due for promotion very soon. That means that I'll come in for the job shortly, & I don't look forward to it. A career adviser keeps most of the school records,, works out & co-ordinates the time tables,, acts as intermediary between the head master & staff, interviews parents, & advises parents & kids on the choice of occupations.. He usually has an office near the boss's, & has a lot of his time wasted by being at the boss's beck & call all the time. The job is a gateway to a Research Department, position such as District School Councillor, but requires a degree & Psychology II. I've only done Psych I, & wouldn't have a chance to do Psych II for a number of years, so that it will mean neither extra pay nor promotion for me, but it may do me some good in the long run. I saw uncle Johnny on Sunday night, but I wasn't speaking to him long. Phyllis dad heard that Frank Smythe (who has a practice in Cairns) was bringing his wife down here for a

holiday, when the car he was driving collided with a lorry. His wife was killed & he was critically injured & is not expected to live. Last point. We're going to John's for Easter while their mob come here; so if you want a holiday, Mum & Dad, come here before Easter, come down the coast with us, & we'll take you round a little in Johnno's car, & then you can stay with us a day or 2 after we return. Think it over. Phyllis & the kids send their love. Arthur."

Fri. Mar. 7th, 1947. Yesterday I received a parcel of sarsaparilla leaves from Mrs. W. Thornton with the following note:-

"Hillcrest, P.O. Adamstown, Newcastle, N.S.W. March 4th, 1947. Dear Mr. Cocking, No doubt you will be thinking I have forgotten all about my promise to send some sarsaparilla if possible. Well, I have been trying ever since, but until the rain came & it shot out it was hard to find. Well, it is not much, but I will try to find you some more & send on. I do trust it will do you good, & that you have better health in the future. Yours truly Mrs. W. Thornton."

This morning I wrote a short letter in reply to Mrs. Thornton. We have received a postcard view of Federation Bridge, Mullumbimby, on the back of which Daphne Cocking wrote:-

"Mullumbimby, -Sunday 2-3-47. Dear Grandma & Grandfather, This is just a card showing what a lovely little town Mullumbimby is, also to tell you that I am having a wonderful holiday in spite of the rain, which has fallen practically all the time I have been here. I hope you are both well & not working too hard.
Love from Daphne."

Fri. Mar. 14, 1947. Yesterday I got in early at the post office & paid Mrs. Watts 4/- for the pensioners' association. I had in injection from sister McCann, At Scott's I bought a dressing-table set consisting of 2 doyleys & a centre piece for 5/6 to send to Mrs. W. Thornton at Hillcrest, Adamstown. I sent it to her in the afternoon by registered envelope. I also bought Mum a dark brown blind 3 feet by 6, but there was no roller attached to it. Our Fred went by train to Sydney early in the week to be examined as an applicant for the position of House-painting. He slept at Arthur's place & was examined next morning. He will be notified in about a

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 nedweek's time whether he has been appointed or not. He returned to Cessnock on Wednesday. I have received the following letter from Mrs. Webster:-

"15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath, Cornwall, England. Jan. 16 1947. Dear Mr. Cocking, I am thinking I ought to write you again (as) I felt that my last letter was a funny one, for my nerves were so upset with Father so bad with his heart & stomach & so depressed.. Doctor told him he can't do any more for him. He couldn't have an operation as his heart is very weak. I think I told you that he fell down last Easter & not been well since, & so well before -- like a school-boy moving about. I can tell you what with the worry when the war was on & the old planes over our heads nights & days, no rest, I used to think they would drop on us sometimes, but they didn't, but 2 dropped not many yards away & the dear men all burnt to death, & some little boys had it as well. They were burned so bad they still have marks of the burns. I do hope you all had a happy Christmas & were all well, XXXX
 XXXX We spent a very nice Christmas. Fred & his wife & family, & Frank & his little family came down. They're all well, barring out colds. We have had some dreadful weather: torrents of rain, & wind. I never remember such a winter. No boats could come in or out of our little port, but thank God we were blessed; we had no water in. In some of houses the roofs were blown off & chimneys came down. Well, it was dreadful. We had our house all cemented & the chimneys all standed too, as, like a dog say, it's better than a new fur coat to wear. The men were glad of the work. I hope you have received the papers. We got yours & we thank you very much for them. It's so kind of you; but don't deprive yourselves. You send on so many. I hope Mrs. Purdy has had her little son or daughter by now & that she & the baby are well. The little boy (Robert) is a lovely little chap. I am so fond of children. Fred came yesterday & brought his little boy -- 3 years in March -- he's been in hospital with a broken thigh. Now he is proud to walk again, dear little chap. We have about 800 poles up XXX over here in the camp where the airmen XX were. They're very nice chaps so far as we can see -- no noise at night. They're very quiet, Some have their wives in the village lodging. They look thin & sad., poor things, My 2 girls are both well & happy. I have Myra home with me now. I (was) so sick I had to keep her to help me. I see by the papers you are having a lovely Summer. Do hope we will have one this year, it was

awful last year,, more like Winter. Now I must close this if I want 50 Catch post. So as ever, your sincere friends H. B. & E. Webster."

We have received this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, 24-2-47. Dear Folks, Thank you for your long letter & the good news that you are all well. Esme wrote in glowing terms of you all during her week-end up there, & said how much she enjoyed the spell & the kind treatment. Dad must be feeling well to be able to walk to the top of Braye park with her! That's quite a climb, G Good on you, Dad. Johnny seemed to have enjoyed his spell up here, but a letter which I have since received indicated that his stomach trouble recurred immediately on his return home. He needs good medical treatment. I hope that you have had that leg attended to by now, Mum, & that it is improving. Also pleased to note that your new glasses are o.k. I have been offered a lectureship at the Sydney Tech at £ 653 p.a. which was rather low. I hesitated to accept, & wrote for further particulars, but have not yet had a reply. In the meantime I have learnt that the Melbourne Chief has definitely recommended me as the senior Mechanical Engineer for Perth, which has rather more appeal to me. In the first place, it is definitely a higher status with more extensive possibilities, & it will carry a salary of £ 688 at least with prospects of a rise of up to £ 150 in the near future. The only apparent drawback is in its distance from home, but actually it is no different from Queensland, because I'll be able to come home for a few weeks each year just the same as I do now. I feel sure that Perth will be a more pleasant place than Brisbane in which to live, & it will be all be valuable experience at the Government's expense. Of course this is counting the chickens before they are hatched, but I'm fairly sure that the appointment will be approved by the Public Service Board. The car has now been fitted up with a new mudguard, & having cleaned up the duco with a cutting compound & polished it, it is looking better than ever. Now I am to get the wear taken up in the front wheel suspension units & steering. We had an enjoyable week-end's fishing a fortnight ago down on the Bay, & Esme's Father also came. Unfortunately the almost continuous rain reduced the number of fish about. Mrs. Jones is now back from her holiday, & I thanked her for the jam on your behalf. I have also

designed a new concrete retaining wall for them to replace a brick one which collapsed in the storm before Christmas, & have been able to get a contractor to-day to do the job for £92, which is quite reasonable. Everything with me is fine & things are going along very well. All the best. Wal."

Mon. Mar. 17th, 1947. Saint Patrick's day. I have written these verses to put inside George Millar's book, "Seventh Day Adventism Renounced.":-

What Is Seventh Day Adventism?

A fallacy believed by some
Who still believe the Lord may come
This morning or to-morrow
Earth's social systems to destroy;
To fill the minds of saints with joy,
But sinners' hearts with sorrow.

A misconception of the mind
Which sightless leaders of the blind
Made popular by preaching,
While "visions" seen by Ellen White
Misled the populace in spite
Of Christ's explicit teaching.

In eighteen hundred eighty three
The "prophet" Miller said he'd see
The welcome Lord ~~at~~ descending
From Heaven with a mighty train
Because he said he'd come again
When times foretold were ending.

He did not come; but, though deceived,
The prophet and his dupes believed,
For hope was not forsaken
And they expected more and more
That Christ would come in eighty-four,
But were again mistaken.

A part of Miller's faithful band
Had sold their houses, goods, and land
And rested from their labours.
They waited with uplifted eyes;
Wished doubting friends the last good byes,
And pitied sinful neighbours.

Their faithless friends they thought to leave
 Behind on Earth to sin and grieve
 Amid the scenes they cherished,
 While Adventists would safely dwell
 Above in bliss no tongue could tell
 When sinners all had perished.

They never entertained the thought
 That prophecy must come to nought
 And be the blameless killer
 Of ev'ry spiritual good
 When it is quite misunderstood
 By men like White and Miller.

Their stupid and pernicious cult
 produces still a bad result
 By reverencing one day--
 The Jewish Sabbath Day, indeed,
 And robbing men of rest they need
 By desecrating Sunday.

This Adventism is a myth
 Like those conceived by Joseph Smith,
 Ann Lee, and Mary Eddy;
 But they, poor souls, were not to blame,
 For fancied "revelations" came
 From brains and nerves unsteady.

Hysteria and nerve-disease
 Made Ellen White quite hard to please
 And sometimes most despotic,
 But she, like them, was self-deceived
 And her "celestial" dreams believed
 Because she was neurotic.

From time to time we may expect
 That some fanatic modern sect,
 Led by some world-adorners,
 (As if the rest had not sufficed)
 Will come to warn the world that Christ
 Is just around the corner.

This oft-reiterated tale
 Is now becoming rather stale,
 Though told on many stages,

That Jesus, with seraphic train,
Is just about to come again,
And may be told for ages !

Tues. Mar. 18, 1947. To-day I sent a letter & a paper to Harry Webster. This afternoon we received this from Florence,

" Nyngan 16 -3-47. We were please to have a letter from you again & to know that everything is all right. You just escaped a phone call, Mother,. We had agreed to ring that night, but Bill brought the letter home when he came from work in the afternoon. I am a week late, too, I am afraid, with this letter, but somehow I couldn't settle down to write.

We have been to Dubbo since I last wrote. Just went for the day one Saturday & did some shopping, & Bill had a talk with the boss about his work. He has 2 new towns to do now, both 28 miles distant -- Gililambone on the Bourke line & Hermidale on the way to Cobar. He does them each in a day & leaves for Warren on a Tuesday morning & returns on Friday afternoon, so it's not so lonely as when he was doing Bourke.

We went to a birthday party last Thursday week (Mr. Munro's) I think he was more than 21, though. We had a real good night. Robert's school teacher (Miss Leary) boards at Munro's. I met her again yesterday afternoon down at the river. when she took Robert "paddling". She is a very nice girl, & wants Robert to take the part of Little Tommy Tucker in a concert on April 29th. We went to church to-night & have made arrangements to have the nipper christened at the Sunday school service. Joy is still a wonderful kid,. I think how she would be spoiled if she were over there now. Still, it is a pity you are missing her. She resembles me a good deal, though this afternoon I thought how much like Art she was. Her hair is brown, though, & her eyes not such a bright blue as his were. She is very fat & very brown; she does a lot of sunbaking. Her last weight a fortnight ago was 14 lb. 1 ounce. We had a letter from Ivy, but I haven't time to answer it to night. Tell her we got the snaps, thanks. I am still wondering why I must always spoil a photo by getting a dopey look. The one of us (the purdys) would have been real good except for me spoiling it. The country out here is looking lovely after the recent rains; we noticed it on our trip to Dubbo recently.

The river has plenty of water in it instead of being dry as it has been for months past. When will Wal know about his Perth job, & when will he start if he is successful ?

Is Fred still at Cessnock ? You have a pretty good time

rying for her early morning feed. She is pretty contented. We don't spoil her as we did Robert, but we get a lot of fun with her. You ask if she has curly hair, Mother. Any little trace of curl that may have been there is disappearing. Her hair is brown, & she doesn't chew her fingers now, but her toes. Do you think that is any improvement? Perhaps it is, though, because I don't suppose she will continue that as she grows bigger -- it would mean taking her shoe off; & besides it might look a bit undignified. Cheerio. Our love, Florence."

WHAT IS A ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ?

The foulest swindle, barring none,
That ever plagued the cheated Earth :
Its infamies are ever done
To foster ignorance and dearth.

Its history, from ancient time
Until the present modern years,
Is one long list of callous crimes
That bathed the Earth in blood and tears.

The constant aim of pope s and priests
In purple and in sable rabe
Is still to sit at ample feasts
And dominate the plundered globe.

It ever works with hand and brain,
Regardless of enornout cost,
And waits with patience to regain
The worldwide power it has lost.

This wicked and apostate church --
This sly misleader of the blind
Has left the Saviour in the lurch
And aims to rule and rob mankind.

Indulgences and charms it sells
To faithful dupes and thievish clods
Who credit ev'ry lie it tells
And eats its priests' unleavened gods.

No man who uses common sense
Will credit tales from priestly drones
Of ancient miracles, immense,
Produced by saints' decaying bones.

This imposition, called a church,
Opposes human freeddm still
And prosecutes its ago-long search
For strength to flout, "Thou shalt not kill."

Its hellish Inquisition shows
That right to torture, kill, or maim
Its foes by racks and cruel blows
Is ever this impostor's claim.

For ages it has plagued the Earth
With mental darkness black as night:
Its cruelty,, disease and dearth
Extinguished Learning's feeble light.

The aspirations and the hopes

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Of peaceful peoples were destroyed
To gratify the lust of popes
For wealth and power they enjoyed.

Through centuries of darkened years
It caused a devastating flood
Of starving orphans' bitter tears
And murdered martyrs' precious blood.

Should nations tolerate this wrong
And let this hungry panther creep ?
How long, O Lord, how long, how long
Shall protestants remain asleep ?

Thur. Mar. 20, 1947. This morning I received another sma
all parcel of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~IX sarsaparilla from ~~XXX~~ Mrs.
Thornton, with the following note:

"Hillcrest, P.O. Adamstown, via Newcastle, N.S.W.
Dear Mr. Cocking, Was pleased to hear you received the li-
ttle parcel safe. Thank you for your kind letter and your
little gift in appreciation, but believe me I thought it
was very kno indeed of you to send that; but please do not
be offended when I tell you you must not spend your money
on me or send any more gifts, as I am very pleased to
be able to get a little sarsaparilla. I know it's not e-
nough, but will always do my best to get you what I can.
It costs me nothing & I am glad to be able to do it for
you. It's so little to help any one just a little more I
am sending. Do trust you will be feeling better.
Yours sincerely, W. Thornton."

We also received this letter from Walter :

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 18-3-47. Dear Folks;
It is some 3 weeks since I wrote, & the chief news is the
fact that I have been finally recommended to the Public
Service Board for the perth job. This may possibly dis-
appoint you, & I admit that it is a long way away, but
the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. As I h-
ave mentioned, I will still be able to come home each
year, & in that respect it will be no worse than Brisbane.
It is also most unlikely that I'll be over there more th-
an 2 or 3 years, as several of the senior men on this si-
de of the country are due to retire by then. Certainly
I could have no chance of getting one of those jobs wi-

without having got the senior status beforehand. I feel, too, that I am lucky to be able to be able to see the country at the Government's expense, & that Perth will prove quite a pleasant place in which to live. I received a further letter from the Sydney Tech. on Monday, 3rd of March, & a reply-paid wire from them on the 6th asking for my decision as to whether or not I would accept the lectureship. I showed the wire to the Works Director here who immediately phoned Melbourne, & it was in this way that I learnt of their final recommendation. I then wired Sydney declining their offer.

I note from your letter that everybody is o.k., which is always well to know.; also that Daphne had gone to Mullumbimby, where I hope she thoroughly enjoyed herself.

I'm disappointed, Mum, that the doctor was such a defeatist regarding your leg, & I frankly don't believe that pain is unavoidable. It sounds as though another doctor is called for. Robert was certainly ~~XXXX~~ true to form in asking about the stick on his first day at school, & I bet they'll have plenty of fun following him in his exploits. I have at last been able to get rather a nice Summer 2-piece suit of an Irish linen type material known as Mogashite. This almost solves my clothing problem, so that I'll probably drop off some of the clothes which I no longer wear, on my way through there in a couple of months or so. I have also had the front wheel suspension units on the car completely overhauled & she is riding very nicely again. I haven't quite decided whether or not to sell my car in Sydney on my way through, but I'll leave the decision until I'm actually going. Last week-end I was one of the crew in a boat race down at Stradbroke Island, & we did very well but were disqualified because we did better than our handicap speed.. It was an excellent outing, just the same. I'm thinking of going down to Burleigh for Easter, but am not yet sure of a booking. Cheerio & all the best. Wall."

Sun. Ap. 6th, 1947. Last Thursday week I paid Mrs. Watts 4/- & went to Newcastle for my injection. On the way home I called at Williams' & got a cheque for 7/- from the Gardeners' Lodge. It was pension day. I bought some Iceland poppies & carnation plants for Mum, & in the evening we planted them. Mum has received this letter from E. Morris:-

"132 William St. Earlwood 30-3-47. My Dear old Friend, My word I was pleased to receive your ever-looked-for letter, & glad to see you were well; also the family.

Vale Mr Richard White.

An old identity of the district passed away the other week when Mr "Dick" White was laid to rest at the ripe age of 86 years. He was, no doubt, known by a large number of readers, especially in the Mines district. He was of small stature and most hardy, and, as some one said to me the other day, he was "tough" also. He arrived here with his parents, and brother Charlie, from the Burra copper mines in 1862, when he was two years of age. From when he commenced work and for many long years, he was engaged in the crushing plants at the Mines. As I look back to some of those years, I can remember him quite well. In 1913 with Mr Reg White, he established a picture show in the old Primitive church hall (next to the Mines school). Readers will remember this and it was, as someone said, "the walker's pleasure in those days." I think when you recall this, many of you will remember Dick. The White family are long livers, for Dick leaves a brother Charlie 91, and two sisters Vina and Bess 84 and 81 respectively. Major Southwell officiated at the funeral services.

He returned to Newcastle last November after serving in London hospitals throughout the war. He left Newcastle in August, 1939. With the outbreak of war he placed his services at the disposal of the London County Council. During the war he was a surgeon at Whitechapel, St. Giles and Paddington Hospitals.

During the London blitz, hospitals in which he served were hit repeatedly. Dr. Collier was senior surgeon at Paddington when he resigned to return to Australia.

The son of the late Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Collier, Dr. Collier was born in Samoa, where his father was a Methodist missionary. His early education was at the Hamilton and Lambton Public Schools, and at East Maitland Boys' High School. He graduated in Arts at the Sydney University, then completed the medical course. He became a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons.

X-ray Inquiry

Dr. Collier began practice at Teralba, but after a brief period he moved to Wallsend, where he spent 18 years. He was intensely interested in fractures. As a result, he did a great deal of X-ray work with equipment that gave the operator almost no protection, and he suffered permanent injury.

Dr. Collier began practice as a surgeon in Newcastle in 1927. He was on the honorary staffs of the Newcastle and Mater Misericordiae Hospitals, and was an honorary consulting surgeon to Wallsend Hospital. He was Acting Government Medical Officer for Newcastle.

Dr. Collier was a former president of Newcastle Rotary Club. He is survived by his widow and a daughter, Miss Mary Collier.

A service will be held in the chapel at the Crematorium, Beresfield, at 2 p.m. to-morrow.

Tremendous Loss

Dr. Ostinga said Dr. Collier was a man of outstanding medical, surgical and cultural ability. His death would mean a tremendous loss to the district and the medical profession.

Originally practising in Wallsend, Dr. Collier specialised in surgery in Newcastle and was Senior Surgeon at Newcastle General and the Mater Misericordiae Hospitals. In addition, Dr. Ostinga said, Dr. Collier was an excellent teacher, and was generally regarded as one of the pillars of surgery in New South Wales.

He was a Fellow of the Australian College of Surgeons, and was also well known in literary circles. His hobby was literary culture, and he was probably one of the most cultured men in Newcastle in scientific and literary subjects, Dr. Ostinga said.

Stayed Through Blitzes

Dr. Ostinga added that Dr. Collier, in his unselfishness, stayed in London throughout the heavy blitzes. He felt he could do more useful work there, and declined to leave, though he had ample opportunity to return to Australia and even to leave London for some safer area in England.

Dr. A. E. Harker, of Lambton, who was associated with Dr. Collier in surgery at Wallsend Hospital in 1908 or 1909, said Dr. Collier was a clever and painstaking surgeon who had built up a splendid reputation.

It is a pity Florrie's husband gets so sick when he comes to see you, but still grand to think he is quite well where they live -- that is a big thing. It was also nice to think the baby was a little girl, & I like the name, (Joy Lorraine) it is very nice don't you think? A boy & girl -- that is grand -- & the little chap (Robert) started school. Some one must have tried to scare him; that is no fun. I am well, Mary, also Bill, but Maggie does not improve

It is a pity Florrie's husband gets so sick when he comes to see you, but still grand to think he is quite well where they live -- that is a big thing. It was also nice to think the baby was a little girl, & I like the name, (Joy Lorraine) it is very nice don't you think? A boy & girl -- that is grand -- & the little chap (Robert) started school. Some one must have tried to scare him; that is no fun. I am well, Mary, also Bill, but Maggie does not improve

te, Monday, March 31, 1947.

Dr. Collier Dies; Served In London's Blitz

Dr. Frederick W. D. Collier, B.A., M.B., Ch.M., F.R.A.C.S., well-known Newcastle surgeon, who died in a private hospital at Darlinghurst, Sydney, on Saturday, performed an operation on Wednesday. Two days later he entered hospital himself.

The President of the Newcastle branch of the B.M.A. (Dr. Ostinga) said Dr. Collier's death would mean a great loss to the profession.

Dr. Collier was 63. He had carried on with his work until last week, despite ill-health.

much, so sorry to say. She is a great worker & will get about if possible, & I really think she makes herself go. Eva & her family are well. They may be down from Lithgow for Easter. Well now, Mary, the Royal Show opened on Saturday in fine weather; what crowds will go to see it. As you say, your boy had enough of Japan; the name of them is enough, what a wicked lot they were, & what sufferings our poor chaps went through at their hands. We had a letter from Harry: he said he was well-- that was grand news. I think it will be hard for the young men to settle down again. Our lad will be 20 in June, just a boy yet. Mary & Tom Orchard are going to Wollongong on Monday. Tom is not well, & the change may be good for him. He was 70 last November. Mary is just the same. We are going out to the cemetery this morning to where "pa" is resting. I like to go; so does Bill & Maggie. He was a good man. God gave him rest. I am so pleased you have Fred & Charlie with you. Does Jose keep well? I often think about you all. Yes, Mary, I had a nice time in Lithgow & do like the old place, & I know a lot of the old people; you will have forgotten them by this. It is very cold in the Winter time & hot in Summer. Earlwood is a very clean place to live in. Bill got a promotion to Wynyard last week; it is a rise for him. He is a good chap. He will take Eva's girls to the show. If Maggie is well she will go; I hope she can make it. I was glad you gave me your age; also Mr. Cocking's. It is nice to have them. Poor old Annie Roddom that was is very sick, Mrs. Speers' sister she is in Lithgow; also Bella. I was glad you had a nice Christmas, & trust you will have many more with your family. We are all scattered about now. What happy times we had in our day! And now I will say cheerio to you all from your old pal. Best of love from Maggie & Bill. E. Morris."

Tues. Ap. 8, 1947. To-day a plumber put a new piece of water pipe at the back door in place of a leaky pipe under the back door step. I have been getting things ready to re-instate an electric bell in the hut to be rung from the shed. To-day we received this letter from Florence:-

"Nynghan, 20-3-47. Dear Mother, Dad, & Everybody, We were pleased to have your letter during the week. Mother, but I wish you wouldn't worry as much as all that about answering letters. I would much rather that you have a good night's sleep than sit up half the night answering

letters. It seems as though you are a bit worried about 236
 Walter going to Perth, but, Mum, you should be fery proud
 to think he has been selected for such an important position.
 It won't be for always, & all the experience will be
 very valuable to him later on.
 We have had a wet week-end, & found the car pretty handy
 this morning when it rained very heavily just azz we had
 to leave home. This was the day, you remember, when we were
 to have the nippers christened. They were both real good
 & the service was very nice. On Tuesday night there is a
 musicale in the Town Hall, arranged by the church, & it's
 in aid of the swimming-baths which they hope to open here
 some day over in the park. Bill is taking part; he is on
 the program for 2 solos, & singing in the male quartette &
 choir.. He says to tell you that they won't be broadcasti-
 ng it (what a pity!). Anyhow, it should be a good conceert
 judging by the items I have heard of so far. I have ticket
 here & I am hoping to be able to go. Joy, of course, will
 decide what sort of an outing it will be for me. I thi-
 nk she will be all right, though; she cries less than any
 baby I know. Bill minded her last night while Robert & I
 went to the pictures, & he said he had no trouble at all
 with her..... Wednesday morning. I left of writing th-
 is on Sunday night, as I have been waiting to tell you
 how the concert went off. It was real good. We had a good
 time, Bill being one of the main "performers".
 The photo enclosed is one X&f taken some weeks ago. I have
 one, & have been waiting for this one; so it's lucky that
 I delayed the letter. These houses are to be sold in a
 month's time; so can you send us a large-sized tent-- about
 24 by 24 might do. Tell Daphne that Joy wore the set she
 made for her, on Sunday, & last night, & she looks lovely
 in it. Hope you all have happy Easter time. Don't worry
 about me making a fuss on your wedding anniversary, Mother.
 I'll be too far away to do much harm. We are all well:
 hope you are the same. Love from us all. Florence."

Fri. Ap. 11, 1947. Yesterday was pension pay day, I X&f
 paid Mrs. Watts 4/- & got an injection from sister McC
 ann. At Woolworth's I bought some seeds of cabbage, l-
 ettuce, & onions.; also a dozen 1/4 inch nuts. At Pay-
 nter's I bought 3 drills. I posted "What Is the Roman
 Catholic Church?" to the Rock. I bought 12 2 1/2d & 12
 1 1/2d stamps. At Ash's I bought 4 ounces of shellac (;/3)
 & 2 lbs. of sal ammoniac (2/6). At a second-hand shop

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237.

I bought 2 two-volt lamps for 1/6. This morning I am going to make the sarsaparilla medicine for anaemia as directed by Mr. Wiltshire. (See page 32 of my diary for May 9th, 1943).

His recipe is:- "The method of preparation is to chop the leaf finely into 1 1/2 pints of water & simmer for 15 minutes. Allow the mixture to cool & add a spoonful of Epsom salts. This will make blood & purify the system"

Thur. May 1, 1947. This morning I went to the pathological department & had blood taken for a test..I paid one pound & ninepence for Gas, & got our Co-op. store book. Our dividend, with interest, was £ 5-0-9, Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann. During the last fortnight I have repaired an electric bell that Jose gave me, & have fixed up 2 wires from the shed to the hut, where the electric bell is placed, so that Mum can ring for me to go down to the house for dinner or supper. I have bought 6 new Leolancheporous pots & 8 new glass jars to contain them. The jars cost 2/- each, & the large JXXX pets cost 5/- each, &

the 75 yards of 1/2" of rubber & cotton covered wire cost 18/9 at the Store.
there.

Yesterday I made a little box & Mum packed 2 7lb. tins of lactogen in it, also a picture & some marbles, & I took it to the Waratah railway station to be sent to Bill purdy for Joy & Robert. The freight was 3/11/.. We have received

the following letters:- From Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Dear Folks, Queensland is now coming into its own again as regards weather. After having hot humid days for about 3 months we are now enjoying really perfect weather..Unfortunately this did not apply to the Easter week-end, which turned out very boisterous & cold & gave all the Southern surfing visitors a very cold welcome & a poor impression of Queensland beaches. I went down to Burleigh Heads for the week-end, but the weather spoiled things somewhat. There is still no further news regarding Perth, & I assume they are waiting to finalise the suggested appointment of a fellow from Adelaide to take my place

here..

Esme Carter arrived here on Friday night

last on a fortnight's leave & came golfing with me to Clontarf yesterday.. She wore new golf shoes, & with blisters developed during the morning she left me & slept in the car during the afternoon. I think she needs a good rest anyhow, so perhaps it was just as well.. She mentioned having got a watch for Daphne & hoped it would suit. Evidently it represented quite a saving on new prices. Joe wrote me about the prospects of getting a cheap jeep up here. I notice that Bill's new ~~disappointment~~ takes him in a 30-mile radius from Nydom from Nyngan in each direction. If this means that he doesn't do Bourke now it should enable him to spend more time at home.. I was glad to note that your leg has improved, Mum, & I was wondering if that Lantogen C would help at all.. If you think it worth a trial I'll pay for it. I am feeling fit & hope you are all the same. Cheerio. Wal."

This letter is from Mrs. Morris:-

" 132 William St. Earlwood, 21-4-37.. Dear Mary, Well, here I am once again, & so pleased to say Bill & myself are real well, thank God, but sorry to tell you Maggie does not make much progress She is a tiger for work ~~unmanageable~~, but, as you say, must give some of it up. We were glad to hear you & all of your care are all well. It is good to thing Florrie's husband's health is good where they are living, & her little children are also well. What a lovely day it is--just perfect. We were out for a run yesterday. We go to the cemetery & do poor old pa's grave; we like it kept nice. You will remember how particular he was; & then we go for a little run: it is nice for me to get out. Did you listen in for the Red Cross appeal for Britain? /It was very good, don't you think? They must be in a terrible plight over there, our motherland; & princess Elizabeth is 21 to-day. She grew up a nice girl, don't you think? And she was given a golden key for her 21st birthday. Mary you said you were still puzzled about the number of our house. No, we did not shift, but the houses in the street were all re-numbered, that's what it was.. It happened one time when we were away it made things awkward for a while. Bill got everything fixed up. Fancy Jose's daughter being 18 on the 4th of this month; that is my birthday. Will's daughter had a daughter born on the 4th, & I am proud of it. The baby's name is Mar-

garet Ann; they live in Orange.. Ern's girl, Edna Fowler, had a little girl born on the 6th of April; I don't know baby's name yet. They live in Melbourne. This is Edna's third daughter; the eldest one died when it was a few months old. We soon grow old when the families come to have their little ones. I have not heard from Mary this week, but her son Steve with an uncle, bought a paper business in Sydney.. They say it is a good business to go in. . . Yes, Bill is quite settled in his new position. This one is at Wynyard. He was away at church last night to the tea for men. It seems to keep men at the church. Bill is a good-living chap. Well now, my dear, I think I will close. Best love from Maggie & Bill to you all, & best of all from your old pal E. Morris."

This one is from Florence:-

"Nyngan, 3-4-47. Dear Folks, You will wonder why I am writing in pencil, but I can't find my pen anywhere & Bill has his week away at Warren; so I thought that rather than delay the letter-writing any longer I had better write in pencil. I am pleased that Daphne got a job at Scott's. I hope she likes it; even if she doesn't it may lead the way to better things. What do you think of this?)) It reminds me of Jack calling out to Dad at the lake: Robert shouting from over at Anelzark's corner this afternoon:- "Mum, what do you think of cruel Mackie? He killed a poor little Catholic frog this afternoon." When I told him that frogs were not Catholics he said, "What are they, then, Publicos?". So you see what a queer kid he is. I am glad you like his photo. Joy has two teeth, I don't remember telling you. I think it was just after I had written your last letter, but it may have been before. She has been very good; & I hope she cuts all her teeth with as little trouble. You need not worry about me being jealous of little Robert Noble, Mother: I won't be. I like to hear about his progress too, because I can tell if Joy is coming on as well as she might be. I, or I should say we are too happy to be happy to have her to worry about being jealous of anyone else. She hasn't curls, & she isn't beautiful, but she is the happiest baby in the world, & the ~~XXXX~~ least trouble, I should imagine. Anyhow I don't want to change her for a little curly-headed boy. I don't think even at first she was as good looking as Mrs. Noble's baby, but she'll do. The nights are pretty nippy out here now. I am just letting

the fire die out waiting for 10 p.m. to give Joy her last feed. The days are lovely & warm mostly, & we have had some welcome rain in the last couple of days. How is every one at home? You didn't say. I hope they are all well. Where is Ethel on holidays?, or perhaps she is at home again now. Is she keeping well. I was only looking about the tent, Mother. I am afraid I would like something a bit more secure when Bill is away. A man was here to measure the allotments last week, & he says it will be two months before the sale, & then the owner will not be able to even give notice before 6 months. This is a new law just passed so we should have tons of time for another place. Perhaps Mr. Matthews may have his transfer by then & we can move in there. In the meantime we are not worrying. I don't suppose they will put us in the street. I am enclosing a little cutting out of the local rag. We tried it, but it is not the same answer. I thought you may be interested. Cheerio & love. Florence."

This one is from Art:

"196 Illawarra Road, Marrickville, 25th April. 1947.
 Dear Folks, We have been wobbling for a long time whether Fred got that Tech. College job. We hope he did, but I've got a feeling that he wasn't very anxious to get it, anyhow. Last Sunday afternoon I took the little nip out to Carpenter's place. Pearl seems pretty well again & everyone else there is o.k. You know, of course, that went down to Johnson's place. We had a bonser time, & I think the break did Phyll a lot of good. Apart from doing a spot of coaching of our assistant head master & a bank bloke in Economics, of course, I'm now trying to coach a Dago kid of 17 in elementary school subjects. As you might have guessed, the kid is a bit heavy in the head-- he left school at 15 in 5th class-- but he shows promise of being a trier; & his father seems a thoroughly nice & very intelligent sort of bloke.. We, that is Phyll, the kids & I, hope to be going home for the holidays to stay with you for about a week, i.e. from today fortnight until the following week-end.. If there's anything you can't buy in Newcastle let us know, & we may be able to get it here & take it up with us when we come. The kids reckon they love you both like anything: that Phyll & I do goes without saying. I've been career adviser for a month or so.. See you in a fortnight.
 Arthur."

Fri. May 9, 1947. Last Wed. night I tripped over 2 bags of fowl's feed at the back door & injured my right knee so badly that I can hardly walk. I could not go to Newcastle for my injection yesterday. We have received the following letter from Mr. Witheridge:-

"15 Charles Street, Marrickville, Tuesday May 6th.
Dear Mrs. Cocking, Phyllis gave me to understand that you find it rather difficult to obtain soap up there, so I have gathered together some for you. So I have to-day (Tuesday) sent you on a packet of same. I have ~~sent~~ it sent it from Newtown station as I happened to be up there to-day, & I sent it to Waratah station; so perhaps you will get it by Thursday. As you know, someone will have to pick it up. You will soon be getting your family up now. Give our love to all. Fro P. Witheridge."

Arthur, Phyllis, Doreen & Judith arrived from Marrickville at about 20 to 1 p.m. to-day.

Sun. May 11, 1947. This is the 79th anniversary of my birthday, as I was born at Kadina, S. Aus, on May 11 1867. Walter sent a telegram from Brisbane) "Congratulations on eighty; hope you reach a century. Telegraphed £ 5 to Mayfield." Art collected the money yesterday. Art gave me a new shirt. Jim & Ethel ~~XXX~~ gave me a birthday cake. last night. Son Jack gave me a new shirt, & Fred gave me a packet of razor blades. My injured leg is getting better slowly. This is a beautiful day.

Sun. May 18, 1947. We received this letter from Florence:-

"Nyngan 1-5-47. Dwar Mother & Dad, Thank you both very much for sending over the lactogen. I knew it was a nuisance, but we didn't know what to do about it, & supplies are out & have been for some days in Nyngan. m. Bill was able to get 2 small tins at Girilambone to-day, & they were the last in the store there. Anyhow, with 2 large & 2 small tins we should go a few weeks before we need any more, but we will certainly see how things are before we have finished our supply. Joy is coming on so well on this food that I would hate to have to alter it. This isn't a letter -- just a note, Just XXX of thanks; & Robert wants me to say thank you to Granma & Dad for his marble collies, & picture. He just put the picture

up in his room straight away. We are all well. I can't be bothered writing a long letter. I have just finished ironing & it's after 11 p.m. & nearly bed-time..So cheerio. I'll write later. Love from us all. Florence."

This letter is from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace 2-5-47. Dear Folks, I was pleased to get Mum's cheery letter & to know that you are all well. Since last writing Esme has spent her fortnight's holiday here & appeared to thoroughly enjoy a good time with her folks.. Her birthday was on Saturday last, & I drove her & her family for a very enjoyable picnic at Wooloolaba on the North Coast. She left on her return to Sydney on Sunday morning, & was undecided as to just how long she would continue to live in Sydney. On Tuesday I went up to Rockhampton for a final inspection on a sawdust extraction plant, but Rocky never has interested me much, & I stayed no longer than necessary. I have at last been officially informed of my nomination for the Perth job, but confirmation awaits production of my birth certificate, & another medical exam. In view of this I would be obliged if you would again send my birth certificate up by registered post at your earliest convenience. Even after these formalities it seems there will be some week's delay pending the approval by the Gov. Gen.; also tabling on the table of the Federal House for 14 days, followed by a period of 30 days during which objection may be lodged. All my inquiries regarding Perth indicate it to be the best of all the Aust. capitals, with a very co-operative office staff, so I am somewhat anxious to shake the Queensland dust from my feet, notwithstanding my real regret at the prospect of leaving so many good friends here. It was very interesting to know that Daphne had started work, & I hope she does well & enjoys the job. Esme got the money all right & intended to answer Daphne's letter when she returned to Sydney. I am in the pink as usual, & am driving to Bundaberg for a few days next week. Yours Wal."

The following typed letter is from Sydney in reply to one from Fred inquiring as to the most suitable shrubs to plant in our garden.

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243.

maker there) was nere for dinner with us a couple of Sundays ago. We haven't any more word about these houses being sold yet. We were interested in buying the fibre one next door, but when we worked it out the interest was so much & we would be anchored here so long that we will go on paying rent until building is cheaper. Cheerio: it is time for Joy's last feed for the day, so I'll finish up. Love from us all. Florence."

Fri. May 23, 1947. Yesterday I paid Mrs. Watts 4/-, which finished our payment of contributions for this year. At the hospital I got an injection from Sister McCann. She told me tha my blood-count shows that over four million red corpuscles. The normal number is 4,500,000.. I promised to give her Byron's poems. At Woolworth's I bought 4 10 inch hacksaw blades for 1/2, & at paynter's I bought a 18th drill for 1/2. We received this letter from Wal:-

"159 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, 13-5-47. Dear Folks. Thanks very much for sending my birth certificate so promptly. Both it & my medical certificate have now been handed in, so all the red-tape machinery can now be started. I appreciate your sentiments about us being away from home, Mum, but all families seem to spread out when they grow up, & I'm sure we'd all stagnate if we didn't. Actually you could feel a little pride in having your early efforts rewarded by having one of the six senior jobs falling on one of the family; & I'm confident that you'll see me for my leave each year as usual until I am later returned to the Eastern area. It's good experience, too, & I must confess that I'm rather looking forward to the "pastures new" My lack of originality is regard to Dad's birthday will, I hope, be forgiven; but I felt that he choose something to his own liking, whereas I had no idea as to his requirements. My only hope is that had an enjoyable day & is as young as ever to enjoy the future. I am afraid that my earlier prospect of joining you both for the celebration of your Golden Wedding cannot be realised, but you can rest assured that my very best wishes will be with you, as also will be my continued gratitude for all the hard work done for me in the past. I thank you both, & will say the same on the occasion of your Diamond Wedding. Frankly I'm in a quandary as to an appropriate gift for your anniversary, have not given up hope of a last minute inspiration as to

something which could really be appreciated. My real wish would have been to have negotiated your transfer to another home in a more attractive & convenient locality on a "walk in walk out" basis, but it is impossible to do any thing from this distance, so I'll have to leave that as a plan for the future. Since my last letter I have taken some men by car to Bundaberg & left them there to salvage various equipment from the local aerodrome. I returned to Brisbane on Thursday last, & was able to win a little friendly golf ~~ball~~ tournament between six of my friends over the week-end, which win seemed very popular in view of my departure soon. Next week-end we are going down to the Bay again for a fishing trip, & I have bought myself a new gut line to-day in readiness. I have not heard from Esmee since her return, but assume that she has settled in again o.k., & that perhaps she is waiting for me to write first. It was very nice to know that you were all well; & I am in the pink as usual. Cheerio. Five pounds enclosed per phone. Wal."

This letter is from Mrs. Webster:-
 "15 Greenfield Terrace, Portreath nr Redruth, Cornwall,
 April 2nd, 1947. Dear Mr. Cocking, Just sending you on a few lines in answer to your welcome letter. Sorry not to have written before as I intended to do. We thank you for the papers, & I have been promised some views of our village & surroundings; when I get them I will send them on, but the weather has been against us. Snow first, & then frost spoilt all our bits of green stuff in the garden. We had a lovely lot of broccoli spoilt; then rain nearly washed us out-- couldn't get but very little to eat. Coal ran short; no fire. Well, never such a thing in England before. Black stone, 18/- for 4 cwt. & it has to last a month. If it was coal instead of more than half stone it might last with care.. I have to spend 4/- a week to help to burn it. We are well cared for here in England. Our food is awful; a half pound of corned beef, fivepence worth of liver or sausages to last from Wednesday until Saturday. No fresh meat, only Saturday, then only a small bit to last till Wednesday; so we are all feeling worn out. I have been very sick since I last wrote to you. Nothing to help us on, & every bit we get is so dear. We have more pension. Father has 26/- & me 16/- per week, what's one good thing-- we find it handy.

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244. A.

Copy of a telegram sent by Jim & Ethel Cocking to me for my birthday:

"Loving greetings & best wishes for your birthday. Jim and Ethel."

This letter is from Florence:-

NNyngan 13-5-47. Dear Folks, I suppose it's just about time I answered
 your last letter, although there isn't much to write about. The local
 show is on just now & we are going to-morrow. Robert has been wantin
 g to go to-day, & he's been pretty persistent with his pleading, so
 I hope he enjoys it to-morrow. The weather here is beautiful, very
 warm days. We are still wearing Summer clothes, & a cardigan somet-
 mes in the evenings. ~~nnWenakenall~~ well, & the little fat daughter is
 a picture of health; she has very rosy cheeks & usually a big grin.
 I told you that I have started to wean her, at least I thought I had,
 but she still takes a full bottle of lactogen & groats thrown in for
 dessert. so, instead of cu ting out the lactogen, at a y of her feeds
 she has that extra. It s going to be pretty gradual process, this
 weaning business, but I am not worrying much, because she is pretty
 young yet. The only thing I am a bit worried about is that she may
 grow too fat; but I can't starve her to make her stream lined. She
 is happy & healthy, so I haven't much to complain about. Robert is
 having a good time now that it is school holidays. Football is his
 la test cra ze. He is playing before breakfast, & comes in pretty
 hungry for meals.. He has a good appetite now. He seemed to get a bit
 thin in the Summer time, but he is growing taller, & I am hoping the
 improvement in appetite will fatten him a bit; I think it has alrea-
 ady, but he could still be improved with a bit more weight. It seems
 as though I am ne er satisfied-- one too fat & the other too thin--
 but I think they will be all right later on. Robert is a much better
 boy than he used to be; perhaps the discipline at school has helped
 a lot. We are expecting the man who took Bill's job at Bourke here
 on Sunday, also his wife (Mr. & Mrs. Egan). We received a wedding in-
 vitation from the daughter of one of Bill's old customers down the-
 re to-day, but we won(t be able to go down. Fred Hodgeson(the boot-

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DAILY TELEGRAPH.
SUNDAY TELEGRAPH.

THE AUSTRALIAN
WOMEN'S WEEKLY.

168-174 CASTLEREAGH STREET,
SYDNEY.

G.P.O. BOX 4088 SYDNEY.

CABLE AND
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"PACKPRESS," SYDNEY
-- BENTLEY'S CODE. --

TELEPHONE: M2406

To Mr. F.G. Cocking.

May 6/47

Dear Sir.-

I am disinclined to recommend lists of shrubs for the reason that I do not know what people like and therefore what they want. The average nurseryman's catalogue, which is usually descriptive of most shrubs, is a much better medium than anything else.

From such a catalogue you could select evergreen or deciduous shrubs to suit your pocket and your tastes--as well as the position--and then again--many species and varieties are unobtainable to-day. I find it most unsatisfactory to suggest per letter long lists of shrubs--many of which, the reader will find subsequently, are out of stock.

Practically any sort of shrubs except those suited to the mountains will do well in your district and I suggest that you go to your nearest nurseryman and ask him what he has on hand--the price and whether they are established or only baby shrubs. You can save yourself so much disappointment and expense, also long years of waiting, by doing this--and getting big shrubs or trees already grown. Magnolias, gardenias, camellias, cassias, lasiandras, wattles, ~~acalyphas~~ acalyphas, roses, hibiscus, most native shrubs, will all do well in the positions indicated in your map.

Yours for a better garden,

W. Edwards

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her is still very sick-- his heart is very weak. Doctor told me not to be surprised at anything happening to him.

have just buried my sister, poor thing, quite sudden, & a cousin: it quite upset me. I was glad to hear you were all fairly well at the time of writing -- hope you are all the same. Our boys & girls are fairly well at present.

I was glad to ~~XXXX~~ see your daughter has had her little baby. Our Frank's wife is expecting one in June. Joyce is nearly seven years; & the little one who died would be 3 years old if he had lived. Such a fine ~~XXXX~~ lovely boy, but sorry to say, she is not very fond of babies. Not like me; I used to love my babies before they were born.

I am sorry to say Father is very poorly still; I have to do everything for him now, & not too good myself. It makes it very hard. His heart & stomach are bad. I took him in to the hospital for X ray, but he was so weak. They prepared him for it & we were to go in on the tuesday, but he was so bad that we never went. Doctor said never mind; the heart is too weak for the operation; so it's just a matter of time now. He sends his kindest regards to you & your wife & family, & many thanks for the papers, which he reads when able & enjoys. Now I must hurry for post. With kindest regards to you & your wife & family. I passed my 73rd birthday on Friday. As ever, your sincere friends, H. B & E. ebster. "

hur. May 29, 1947. ~~Last Thursday XXXX said Mrs. XXXX~~ To-day we received the following letter from Bill & Florence:-

"Nyngan 27-5-47. Dear - sons, Your letter & the parcel of cake arrived on Friday, or perhaps it might have arrived early in the week, but I didn't go down for the mail. Thanks for the cake: Robert claimed it, but allowed us a little taste of it. It was good of Ethel to make it for Dad; he did pretty well on his birthday. I am glad you got the parcel in good order on the 22nd. Don't put the sheets away in your glory-box, Mum, we want you to use them now. They may save you from having a few sleepless nights with your bad leg; & we thought Dad would appreciate the extra warmth these cold nights too. The photo will give you some idea what Joy looked like, but you can't tell from a photo what a happy nipper she is. In the proof where she was laughing her eyes looked so small, so we had to choose a more serious expression. I hope you are feeling more cheerful & in better health than when you last wrote. Why do you have to do such a lot of washing when you are not well? Surely there is no need to

wash when you have one of your bad days. I know how sick you get, & I certainly wouldn't worry about work on those days if I were you. Oh, getting back to the photo: the frame was an old one we had here. The picture would have been nicer in a gilt frame, I think, but we only had a few minutes between the time we got the photo & the time of the train's departure, so we used that one. I am sorry it was such a makeshift, but perhaps you have one over there that is more suitable. Did Jack & Glad stay at home with you for part of their holidays, or did they just call in?

Dear Mum & Day. Now me. You know Bill, that son-in-law who has your daughter in the bush. Well, thanks for the £1; I'll buy something with it. I asked Flo to write this, seeing that I am the one who received the present I had to do it myself. Cripes! I am feeling old. Only 20 more years to go & I will be getting the old age pension. I hope there's no means test, because it would be a shame if I came into a fortune before then. By the way-- did Dad get full on the 50th anniversary of your wedding? We would like to have been at home that day, but that was impossible at that time."

There's XXXXXX Bill says if you can't understand his writing, send it back & he will have it typed. I can hardly understand it,, but I suppose my letters take a bit of understanding at times. There isn't any news. We are all well now. Robert is just over an attack of bronchitis, but it was slighter than usual.. We had some good rain over the week-end, & now Winter has come. Up till now it has been beautiful weather, but I think the cold weather has settled now. Cheerio -- hope you & the hilly-billies are all in the pink..Love from us all. Florence."

Tues. June 3, 1947. This morning I have typed the following verses:-

POOR BYRON.

Lord Byron left his scornful wife
Because of their domestic strife,
And sought sweet peace & leisure
To write at ease impassioned rhymes
In more congenial foreign climes,
And taste forbidden pleasures.

There, flouting all divine commands,
He herded with the swinish bands

Of any town or city:
With love transformed to lowest lust
He filled his foes with deep disgust,
And friends with grief & pity.

Poor Byron was a gifted man--
A genius to write & plan--
With ample erudition,
But threw all moral bonds aside
And drifted on Sin's turbid tide
That flows to dark Perdition.

"The soul that sins shall surely die",
Said One above, who cannot lie;
Yet genuine repentance
For wickedness may still atone--
Not skill-- but penitence alone
May nullify the sentence.

His loves & hatreds were extreme,
And love of women was his theme--
Indeed it was his passion.
From each compliant girl he met
He parted with extreme regret,
In Continental fashion.

To penalise his scornful wife
He wasted all his wedded life
And wrecked his reputation
With any woman but his own,
Till tidings of his fall had flown
And shocked each decent nation.

Defiant of divine decrees,
Of Pleasure's glass he drained the lees,
Contemptuous of dangers.
At last, of kin & home denied,
The young, defiant poet died,
And lies entombed with strangers.

His life should aid us to recall
That folk pre-eminent may fall
From their exalted stations;
And help us all to realize
That we are not too good & wise,
And stop self-adulation.

Tues. June 3, continued. This morning I posted the Sunday Sun to Harry Webster, 7 A Readers' Digest to Mrs. Thornton. Last Sat. Fred planted out 57 cabbages. Rain most of last week, but fine to-day.

Thur. June 12, 1947. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann, & my left arm is still sore. I paid Fred's insurance, & bought 3 packets of brown onion seeds. . . Last Monday I telephoned to Mr. James of 233, the owner the sawmill on Maitland road, to inquire about the 2 line-posts that we need. I also rang to Bill Stauffer's house to engage him to carry the posts & other timber down to us. Later 2 young men came with Bill's lorry & took me up to the sawmill. The price of the timber was £ 2-5-6, which I paid to a young woman (Less 6d, as she had no change). Mum & I & Keith put one post in on Tuesday, & the other one yesterday. Byron's poems to sis McCann. To-day we received this letter from Walter:-

"159 Gregory Terrace 269-6-47. Dear Folks, Had it not been for my recent 2 or 3 telegrams I would have felt very guilty about the long delay since my last letter, but if you have perhaps feared that I have been sick, this will serve to put your minds at rest, for I'm 100 per cent fit as usual. Dad's long letter was very interesting as usual, & I was very pleased to learn of young Robert's progress, & the fact that Daphne is enjoying her job. Concerning the query on Esme, I am writing to her to-night, & will ask her concerning Mr. Campbell, as you requested. She appears to be doing quite well at her music, but due to an oversight on the part of her teacher she was unfortunately left out the list of names submitted for the June exams, & must now wait until September. Don't be afraid of the bank-roll, Mum- I'm sure that sending down a few quid won't leave me short; & I hope that by now you've been able to squander it on a few luxuries that you wouldn't ordinarily buy for yourselves. My expenses, when I go West, will be fully borne by the Department, so I'm not likely to go short. I am still waiting for confirmation of the appointment to come through any day, & I'm afraid I don't share Dad's pessimism regarding religious barriers etc. Certainly I'll be the youngest State Engineer, but I still feel confident it will come through very shortly. Since my last letter Mrs. Jones & daughter have had a week's holiday at Tambourine Mountain & have returned full of enthusiasm regarding the purchase of a flower farm up there, but I

think there is some hitch about the price (£ 2250) which is wanted for the place. I have had another trip down the Bay fishing; also another trip & very enjoyable swimming at Burleigh Heads, & a quick trip to Kingaroy, where I have sent four men to dismantle a R.A.A.F. training chamber which is to be transferred to Amberly. To-morrow I am taking 2 men to Round Mountain camp near Beaudesert, to take out 3 generating sets which we have bought from Disposals. The workmen have at last started work on the new concrete fence at the back of our yard which I mentioned some time ago, & for which we have been waiting so long. The cost is £ 92, but it will make a vast improvement, & we expect it to be finished this week. I watched the open golf championship here last Saturday in perfect weather & really beautiful surroundings, & I'm sure that the 3000 people present must have thoroughly enjoyed the day's outing. Cheerio for the present; I hope you are all well. Yours "Wal."

Sun. June 22,, 1947. Last Thursday I got an injection from sister McCann. I bought a 7/64 th drill at Sorby's for 1/1. I called at Williams', but there seemed to be no one at home.

Jose & Ivy returned from her sister Daisy's place near The Entrance last Sunday night. Charlie is still at Gean Oak. Bert Cocking's head was bad last week, & he was not at work with Fred. Bert called here this morning. I have finished the book entitled "Fifty Mutinies, Rebellions & Revolutions" which Bill Purdy gave me. I have written the following verses:-

WHAT IS THOUGHT ?

- 4 It seems to be a conscious force
That sent each proton on its course
To concentrate & scatter
Unseen electrons, whence arose
The mighty atoms that compose
The substance men call matter.
- 3 What clever scientist can find
The origin of conscious mind
In microscopic creatures?
Or how brisk animation springs
From tiny, elemental things
Devoid of form & features ?

That old enigma still remains
 To puzzle philosophic brains,
 And still eludes solution
 By scientists who ponder o'er
 Huge tomes of Darwinistic lore
 And prate of evolution.

Did lifeless atoms seek & find
 The means to gain both life & mind
 By slow & easy stages,
 And then unitedly resolve
 That men from monads should evolve
 In prehistoric ages ?

Such supposition is absurd,
 For naught impossible occurred
 In Nature's vast extension.
 The origin of life & thought,
 Though long by wisest sages sought,
 Seems past Man's comprehension.

Yet nought exists without a cause;
 And Force & Matter never pause
 In making & destroying,
 Apparently with fixed design,
 All evil things, & those benign
 Which millions are enjoying.

July 6, 1947. Last Thursday I posted, for Mum, a parcel to Florence, I got an injection from sister McCann. I paid the electric light bill at Nesca House. Our pensions were raised last Thursday from £ 3-0-6 each fortnightly to 3 pounds ten shillings & sixpence each. The new 40-hour week law is now in operation, & there is trouble over the question of whether the 40 hours shall be worked in five days or in six. I have finished reading again the book entitled "Missionary Heroines", by Charles F. Hayward.

Thur. July 10. 1947 Yesterday we received this from Florence:-

"Nyngan 7-7-47. Dear Mother & Dad, First of all I must thank you for the money & the birthday greetings you sent to Robert & myself. I will get a cardigan for Robert: no coupons are required for that, & I haven't decided what I shall buy with the money you sent for me. I often think how lovely it would be to have so many shops as you have over there. I have tried in Dubbo to get a cardigan & here, but they haven't my size. We didn't give Robert a party (eggs are so scarce) but I made a birthday cake. I intended sending a piece over, but it doesn't seem good enough for that. He was delighted to receive the telegram from Noel on his birthday, also a very nice card from Ivy, Jose, & the nippers to-day. He will be out with it to show all his mates to-morrow. It was too late when Bill came home to-night, or too cold. We only get the mail 3 days a week now, & it only goes 3 times so you will understand if the letters are a bit slower in reaching you. I missed getting a letter to you by Saturday's mail, so it has to wait until to-morrow (Tuesday). We are hoping to move next Saturday week (19th) & are looking forward to the prospect of getting out of here. We had very heavy rain last week, & the roof leaks so badly. The housing shortage is still very acute here & there is almost a fight when a house is vacant, so many are wanting to be the new tenant. I can imagine you would get plenty of dust from the new roads being made over there, but if people settle up there the transport problem should be solved. More buses, or perhaps the tram lines extended, although I think the buses will win; they seem to be taking the place of trams in most places. It's good to think that Fred is such a good help to you. I'll bet you look forward to him coming home at the week-ends. Robert & Joy are well. Robert is looking better & much fatter now than at Winter is here. The cold weather agrees with him much better than the summer. He is very proud of a new football we got for his birthday. He is playing with it, or nursing it, all day long. The first night he wanted to take it to bed with him. He has a small football, but it only has packing inside, but this one has a bladder & is so much bigger. He thinks it's great to be 6. I think Joy must be cutting another tooth, for she has been a bit worried & cross to-day. She only has 3 teeth so far. She is a good little talker, & has that loud, hearty laugh like Robert had

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when he was a baby. Everyone says she is just like me, but then they haven't seen Jack. She is more like Jack than anyone, I think. Her hair is growing very thick, but I can't see any ginger appearing in it, Dad; I don't think you will have a red head in Joy. This house & the one on either side are to be sold any day now. I hope that the sale is delayed until after we leave. At least the problem of hunting for another house is over, seeing that Mr. Matthews obligingly got his move at this time. Bill heard of a house to-day out at Girilambene (one of his ports of call) that, including furniture, that is to be sold for £ 320. The house is old, Bill says, but if there are no white ants it should be worth that.. It's the first time I have heard of the furniture being sold with the house out this way. Well, I'll say cheerio, it's after 11 p.m.,. Thank you once more. Thank Ivy & Jose for Robert.: tell them he was delighted ~~XXXXX~~ to think that they remembered him. I'll write to them one of these days, But we have a moving job on our hands shortly, so we will be busy. Our love to you all.. Do you ever see Mrs. Rees now? Or does she live in Maitland? Florence."

Mon. July 14, 1947..To-day this letter came from Walter:-

"Tattersall's hotel, Townsville, 9th July 1947.
Flinders Street. Dear Folks, I have pur-
Sd. Ramage Proprietor. posely avoided writing un-
P.O.Box 247. til I had definite news of
Tel. No. 941 my transfer, & to-day I have seen notice of my appointment
as Senior Mechanical Engineer for Western Australia published in the Commonwealth Gazette. Actually my successor, a 49 year old Mr. Ford, took over from me on the 1st of the month, & I am now in the process of showing him over the Northern jobs. We are going on to Cairns to-morrow & will probably return to Brisbane at the week-end.. I will then spend a further couple of weeks clearing up things here, & expect to get on my way towards the end of the month, & will, of course, see you on my way through. Everything with me is fine, & I was glad to know that you are all well. The weather here is quite cold, but both at Rockhampton & Mackay there was a decided nip in the air first thing in the mornings. This is more in the nature of a holiday for me, in fact I'm reckoning on looking at the Johns Woods zoo here to-morrow. Cheerio.
Wal."

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"£". 253.

Thursday 17th

XXXX Sat. July 19, 1947. Last ~~Friday~~ I got an injection from sister Mc ann, I bought a 1/8 drill, a 3/16 tap & a 1/8 tap at Sorby's for 3/9. I called at Williams' & got a cheque for 6/4 from Mrs. Williams.. Fred came home as usual yesterday evening am studying arithmetic again, for I have nearly forgotten all of it that I learned at school.

W Wed. July 23, 1947. Yesterday we received this from Art -

"196 Illawarra Road,, Marrickville, Saturday. Dear Folks, We were glad to get your letter, but sorry you were so upset by Wal's going, Mum, & that you were prepared to confess to offences which you have never committed. I've no recollection of you being impatient with neither of the kids ; you have all been the soul of kindness & generosity to them. Maybe, Mum, you got a bit narked with Doreen, thought a mighty lot, & then thought you had said something out of place We wouldn't have been narked if you had shown some sign of peevishness with her, but you haven't. What you've thought at times I can only guess; but it's a free world & there's no harm in just thinking. We often think what hounds our kids are, you know, when they're out. They're pretty good in their natural haunts, where we wish you could see them more often, but they are never at their best, somehow, in Mayfield.. So, please, Mum, no more apologies about the way you treat the nips; we know you love them like anything & we will inflict the little brutes on you the first opportunity we get. I'm writing to Wal this week congratulating him on his appointment. No, we didn't care whether he thought Marrickville was a slum or not. All I remember was that I thought the M'villeites were a mighty sight better than the Rose Bay -- Pott's Point mob, & if Wally wants a wife he'll get a much better one round here than he would among the snooty dames of the "better class" suburbs. (A fine example of the foregoing statement is my own wife). Inserted by Phyllis.

The inspection is on at school now, but I'm hardly even interested. I'm on the maximum teaching mark for one of my experience as a graduate, so that, unless the 'spec thinks I'm positively useless, I can't lose, & even if he thinks I'm a world-beater, I can't gain. Young Dago Basil still comes for coaching, & the 3 uni. blokes come about once a fortnight now. The uni trio had to

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have put in the necessary wires, & all we wait for is the actual phone to be connected, all the other preliminaries being complete. With a bit of luck, we'll give you a ring after 9 next Saturday or Sunday night, & we'll be able to keep in more intimate contact regularly from now on.

Mrs. Witheridge is sorry at having to postpone her visit to Mayfield, but thinks it will be better if she comes to see you the last week in August. It will then be the school holidays, & I will be at home with Phyll to help her out with the kids & messages... Mrs. Witheridge is a great help with both problems at present, & I will be able to relieve her of the responsibility during the next holidays. I will, however, slip home & see you all some week-end in the very near future. Any further news may reasonably be left until that auspicious occasion when we ring you up-- perhaps next week-end. The same as ever, Little Artie."

This telegram came this morning:-

"Leaving Saturday arriving home about Monday.. WAL."

Sun. Aug. 3, 1947. Walter arrived from Brisbane, by car/ last Sunday, with young Mr. Scorber., who went on to Sydney by train. Wal stayed at home until last Wednesday & then left, by himself, in his car for Sydney. He called on Art & Phyllis at Marrickville. He went on to Melbourne probably by car, & has to be at Perth by next Sunday. Art has just had a telephone put in to the house he lives in at Marrickville, & called us on it last night. Fred came home as usual last Friday night, & yesterday he helped Jose to paint Jose's house in Carrandotta street. The weather was lovely yesterday. Last Thursday I got my usual injection at the hospital from Sister McCann.

Mon. Aug. 4th 1947. The following letter came some time ago, undated, from Gladys:-

1st Avenue, Warrawong, Sunday 25th. Dear Mum,, We are pleased to hear that you are all well. We are all well & I am much better. My word, Keith did have a lucky escape, didn't he?. It's a good job it was the bike & not himself. We read about it in the paper. I wouldn't worry about Fred not writing: no news is good news, they say; anyhow, he mightn't be fond of writing letters; he's not the only one either. We're pleased to hear that Flo & Robert

are well. Dell came first in the Leisteddfoed for French verse speaking under-14. She got a nice medal. There were 11 children entered & she beat them all. Madam Malon, a French woman from the Conservatorium was the adjudicator. She entered in 2 verse-speaking choirs in English & they got 1st & 2nd place. She was in a singing choir & they got 3rd, so altogether she done well. We received her report on Friday, & she has come first in the class; her Dad is very proud of her. The Brothers had a concert on Tuesday night; it was very good. John done his parts well; Jack reckons he was the best of the lot, but of course Jack's a skite; I tell him so, anyway. I don't know when we will be seeing you all, so I'll say good bye & all the best to you all from the Cockings at Warrawong.xxxxx."

This letter came from Art & Phyllis:-

" 196 Illawarra Rd. , Marrickville 27-7-47. Dear Mum & Dad, Whope you have not been sitting up too late this week-end waiting for the phone call that didn't. Although the necessary wires & cables have been laid this end we are still waiting for the mechanics to come & install the phonekll

We were told he would be here on Friday, & as he did not arrive then it will probably be ~~XXXXXX~~ within the next few days; so by next week-end everything should be well &

truly connected & you will hear our melodious voices calling you. We are all at the "sniffly" stage down here --

in other words we have all a nice little cold each.

Arthur & I are just recovering from ours & now the kiddies have it. I have been rubbing every nose, chest & back that I can find with "VICKS" & dosing every one with cough syrup, so the place resembles a chemist's shop.

Doreen commences Kindergarten to-morrow after being away 3 weeks with mumps. She likes it there very much, so I'm not expecting any trouble in getting her to start again..

She has improved in every way since going there, especially in her eating. She enjoys her meals & often asks for a second helping. Judith is quite her old self again & although she has a cold at present she looks the picture of health & still enjoys 3 meals a day. Mum is looking forward to

her visit in about a month's time. She thought it better to wait until then, while Arthur is on holidays, so that he can help me out with the messages, as Mum is a good help to me in that direction. We will let you know more about that

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at a later date., so I'll close now with love to you both.
Cheerio for now. PHYLIS. "

This letter was written to us by Florence;-

"36 Cobar Street, Nyngan, 28-7-47. Dear Folks: The address is just in case any of you feel like calling on us some day. We moved in last Friday week & are very pleased that we did. The place is much more comfortable than the last. It has 2 bedrooms (both a bit small) a big lounge room about 23 feet by 13 feet, a nice kitchen & pantry, good bathroom & ~~XXXXXX~~ laundry & nice wide verandahs on 3 sides. The verandah on the Western side is gauzed in & a door which I can bolt, so I'll feel pretty safe when Bill is away. It's great for Robert too living here, as one of the school gates happens to be just opposite our front gate. Joy spends a large part of the day out on the verandah.. We have been having such good, sunny days, but the mornings are pretty cold & frosty. At last Robert has a little poultry run of his own. We only have 6 fowls (black) but they are laying pretty well, 7 eggs in 2 days. We are hoping to get some more. Bill has visions of going in for poultry in a big way, but I'll be satisfied if we get 6 more fowls. I suppose by this time Wal has been home. It's great him getting such an important job, isn't it? He should like W.A.; it's a pretty good place (Perth) by all accounts. Bill's sister Joyce is coming out here to settle as soon as she can get a boat. She intends to live with her sister in Adelaide. She is the youngest of the family, married last September. We had a letter a couple of weeks ago. I have just been reading over your letter, Mum, & I can't understand you when you say that you only get what you deserve, when you refer to so many members of the family living so far from you.. We don't live away because we want to-- at least I don't, but circumstances make us leave Newcastle. Where is Jose thinking of going to? I think the best thing for you to do is to pack up & go & visit "your kids", as you call them: that will break the monotony for you. You can start on a visit out here first. Our little laughing daughter would cheer anyone up. She is a little "beaut"-- a real little "fat puddin'", as her Dad calls her. Robert is very anxious for her to walk. He is very proud of her. Your shopping problem now, Mother. I know that is a problem for you, & I certainly wish I could do things for

as you say. I was thinking about it to-day, & it occurred to me that one way out of the difficulty would be to get Marcus Clark's traveller to call-- Mr. Jenkins from Beruda street. He will give you a catalog to choose your goods: you can pay cash for them (it won't cost you any more this way) or pay the things off 1/- in the £ if you have terms

XXXX terms. Tell him you can't go to get things yourself, & ask him to send the goods out on the delivery van. Tell him you have a bad leg & can't get into trams. He is a nice chap & he will only be too pleased to oblige. Don't wait until you are out of the goods before you order, but give them plenty of time & then they may bring small parcels out. Explain to him about the leg & you being unable to go in, otherwise they may not deliver anything under a certain weight. If you can't get a catalog there we will send one over XXXX XXXX,--& in fact I will send one over with this & it may help you out.. Bill says not to tell the traveller that it is being sent from here. I knew you wanted table damask when I was over at home. It is procurable now, plain white. I made 3 new cloths myself recently. Anyhow, you can try this method & if it doesn't suit you need not have any more orders. We were glad to know that you are all keeping well. We are O

K here. Hope Ivy's parents are well again. I thought the duchess set was very pretty, Mother. A lady out here -- at least a friend of her's out here, met Daphne in Scott's recently & mentioned the fact to the Nyngan lady (Mrs. Warner)). I hope Daphne is still liking her work. Well, it's time to close now, so I'll say cherio. Don't get upset, Mother, at what I said, but I hate to see you downhearted, & I would like to find some way to cheer you up,. I think a trip would help a lot. Our love to all including the Hillbillies. Florence.
P.S. Robert went to his first circus on Friday night & thought it was wonderful."

Thur. Aug. 7, 1947. To-day I received from Bill purdy 3 " Digest"s-- 2 being Reader's Digests & the other a Magazine Digest for Oct. 1944.. The others are for June & July/. Yesterday I received this letter from F. Duley:)

"Mrs. L. Duley, 259 Prince's Highway, Dapto.

Dear Aunty, Uncle & Family. No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from me.. But I have often thought of answering your letter I received before Christmas. But I

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have been very ill for the last 3 years. I did not think that I could bring myself to do it. "Better late than never" they say, so here it is. Well, I had better tell you I am improving now & putting on weight. My heart never gives me much trouble, & my nerves are better. After Dad went so suddenly my nerves went to pieces. I have had 2 holidays in Sydney hospital. The first time they found I had 2 tubes to my left kidneys which were giving me all the pain, but I was too bad to stand an operation. The second trip was last ~~XXXXX~~ March I was getting better, so thought they might do my operation. But still I have & I am getting better with it still in my body. The doctor told me 3 years ago I might live 10 years. But it seems that God has other plans for me. At the present time I feel I will have as good a chance as anyone else. Well, a bit of news now. My eldest daughter, Vera, was 21 last month. Joyce was 18 the same month. Melville is his second year at High School. He will be 14 next month. Melville says he is going to be a draughtsman. John, our 6 year old baby, goes to school & is the pet of the family. But the bad heart seems to be thrown down to us. John was born with a murmur in his heart, but he is not affected in any way. He is very big & hearty looking, & will be another Jim in build. Les is very well, still working at the Steel works shift work. He has a garden of peas as a side line which we are picking now. Nell & Pearl are both well. Pearl is working, & living at home with Nell. Jim & his wife also live with Nell. Jim has bought a new house, but the people cannot get a house, so Jim has to live with Nell till later. How are you people keeping? Well, I hope. Also I hope to hear from you again soon, Uncle. Give my love to all. I remain your loving niece, Florrie (Duley) & family."

This letter is from Florence:-

Box 15 Wyngan, Z8ZZZZZZZZ 4-8-47. Dear Folks, Thanks for the medicine you sent over. We shall write to Wal as soon as we have his address. Bill has commenced taking it, & it's terribly bitter; but if it is a sure cure I am sure he would take poison. The atomizer keeps him pretty well, & if he is the slightest bit breathless he uses that & so wards off an attack. Things are pretty well with us at present. We haven't got things properly settled here yet; there are blinds, curtains, & floor-coverings to buy, but even now we are very much more comfortable than in the old place. Even though it

Even though it is an old place it is in pretty good order & I would very much like to buy it, but the owner won't sell. Wal, it seems, is having a good time on his way to perth, visiting all the capital cities. I suppose he will spend some time with Art. We had a letter from Art recently with the poetry & the illustrations. Our poultry farm (6 chooks) is doing well; sometimes 5 eggs a day, usually 4. Robert runs from anything he happens to be doing when he hears a cackle, & takes great pride in getting the eggs each day. We have a very big yard here with a spare allotment, & he gets fresh surprises every few days finding the eggs in a new place. I have to promise before he goes to school that I won't collect the eggs. Joy is well & fat & happy--spends most of her time on the rug on the back verandah, where it is sunny nearly all day. We have very heavy frosts nearly every morning, but the days are lovely. Bill's youngest sister (Joyce) leaves England about the end of this month for Adelaide. She is bringing a little son with her, born in June. She says she will see Bill when she comes, but I don't think she realizes how far Adelaide is from here. I thought Bill had sent you the catalog, Mother, & he thought I had, so you missed out, but I'll send it with this, & will send the new Spring one when it comes. I'd give old Marcus a trial if I were you, then you would get something you want. Robert says to send you 10 kisses. He is still a bit of a smoozer, even though he is 6. Love from all. Florence."

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"BEHEADED" — BUT STILL ALIVE



A MAN who was "beheaded" by a Japanese swordsman, and buried in a grave at Singapore after the execution, has come to life again. He is Private Colin Brien, of Drum-moyne, who is expected to arrive soon in the Duntroon. Brien carries a livid scar which runs from one shoulder to the other and across his neck, as proof of an experience which must be one of the most amazing of the war.

Private Brien said he was wounded in action at Singapore, taken prisoner and on March 1, 1942, was led out for execution. A sword was stuck in the earth near a freshly-dug pit.

"I was told I was going to meet my God," he said. "I realised it was all up, but tried to be as calm as I could. I prayed very hard. I was blind-

folded and made to sit on the edge of the trench. A Jap pulled back my shirt. I felt a dull sensation in the back of my neck, then realised with a shock I was still alive."

Brien rolled on his side and pretended to be dead. When he recovered consciousness he found the grave had been partly filled. Although weak from loss of blood he levered away the earth with his toes, escaped from his grave, and staggered into Singapore, where eventually he gave himself up at a police station.

The doctors at Changi camp found that the sword had penetrated the bones of Brien's spine, but had not touched the spinal cord.

He was only 19 at the time of his almost incredible adventure. It is only a few days since his mother was officially notified that he was safe.

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