

Diary 1941 1942 1943

This is really an acute exacerbation of a desire to keep some sort of record of my doings. It is nearly two months since I left off from the other book.

Since then we have had Xmas and New Year and the whole of the month of January 1941. To remember xmas (1940) all I need say is dinner in the men's mess and in the Sgt's mess and again in the Officers Mess and then make mention of Don Mc Diarmid and a motorcycle trip to Helwan and back.

New Years eve is connected with a party in the Orderly Room and the Sgts Mess. Big McKechnie and Don were the chief names in that too.

Early in January I acquired a motorbike which I have used a lot and also Major Plimmer went off with A Coy to Ikingi Marqut which left me with a car as well. This was very convenient and on two occasions I went to Cairo with Don and on another two occasions went with Logan to hear the Palestine Orchestra.

During January I went to some new places in both Cairo and Helwan. In Cairo, the Americano and in Helwan, Jenny's Palace and the beer garden opposite the hospital.

On the 29 January I left Helwan and came to Moascan to do a course in Malaria. Left Helwan at 0625hrs and caught a train at 0710hrs from Cairo Main. In the night 29/30 we had an air raid and magnetic mines were dropped one of which exploded rather close. This is meant to fill the gap between the last book and today which is 2 Feb 41. Very scrappy but my memory can fill in the details.

Sunday 2 Feb

Today was a late rising day. By 1000hrs however I managed to get going on a push bike down the Suez Road as far as the 1914-1918 monument. To get there one has to go around the inlets of Lake Timsah on which Ismailia is situated. It is very pretty altho' the shores are sand. This afternoon Alec Boyce and Hershaw and I went off to Flrry Point and the back thru the town of Ismailia and settled at the Greek Club. After a couple of drinks with to Tommy officers we went to the US Club and then home. After tea went round and collected Alec and went to see Pinocchios at the Cooperative. This is the third time I had seen the show. First in Chch next in Perth and now in Ismailia. Went to bed quite tired and with a cold which has been very annoying for four days

Monday 3 Feb

Played games with mosquito larvae all day. Went off down to Nifiska this morning and collected larvae from nasty swamps. This afternoon we chloroformed some and mounted them for microscopy. Set the rest of the little buggers to hatch.

There has been a lot of bombing practice going on on the Sinai side of the canal all day.

I have to go easy on cash - this place would be very expensive if one did much.

Went to a film at New Garden with Leslie and Hobson - "Ski Patrol" Rather poor

Tuesday 4 Feb

This morning we all embussed and went out to the small native village caled El Sahara which is in the desert west of the Suez Road. The native malaria doctor organised a mass examination of about 100 children. We took blood films and palpated their spleens..

It took us from 100hrs to 1245hrs. There was a hitch and we waited on the Suez Rd for over an hour for Col. Macdonald.

It was rather tiring and my cold hasn't been behaving itself either. This afternoon we spent in the lab.

After dinner at 2030hrs had an air raid alarm. Nothing happened here and the all clear went in half an hour. The moon is just past the half and is very bright.

Wednesday 5 Feb

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Worked in the lab all the morning. Feeling pretty ghastly today so didn't go out in the afternoon catching larvae. Went to bed straight after lunch and slept until 1630hrs. Had dinner in bed.

There was an air raid alert at 2000hrs Nothing happened.

At 9.30hrs this morning, a 5000 ton ship (Ranee) struck a magnetic mine in the canal opposite the monument. There were a number of casualties and the ship has blocked the canal.

A total of 28 mines to date have been exploded in the canal. The Suez Rd is under guard and is impassable except to military on duty.

Thursday 6 Feb

Again worked all the morning in the lab. In the afternoon half the class went out catching larvae and the other half did next Sat mornings work. I was one of the latter.

Worked in the evening. The cold still lingers on.

Friday 7 Feb

Cold better today. This morning in the lab again and then out to a swamp in Nifiska area. Did Paris Greening of an area. After lunch went out again to see the results after the mornings work. Larvae all dead. Did a spot of oiling and were back for afternoon tea at 1600hrs.. Alex dropped around after lunch.

We heard this afternoon that Benghazi had fallen during the day. This is the capital of Libya gone now - hot work!

Alex came around at 1845hrs and we had a few drinks; by dinner time we were very bright. After dinner we went to the ASC Mess and had a few more there. At 2100 we went to the Gym Club in the the camp here to a dance given by the Sgts. It was all a lot of fun and we danced with Australian nurses and local Greek and French girls.

At midnight we made off to the French Club and met some new chaps there. Cresswell joined us and we drank more. It was good to get into bed at 0145hrs feeling very tight.

Went to sleep immediately.

Saturday 8 Feb

What a hangover! Couldn't get out of bed for breakfast. Old Harry knocked me back.

However made the lab by 0845hrs. after being in thoroughly sick.. Slept most of the morning and had a good dinner and felt grand after it.

Went around and found Alex in bed suffering too. We must have been given bad drinks last night. Had a lazy time this afternoon. Then we had an early tea and goy ready for the party.

At 2045hrs people began to arrive. We drank all sorts and the Benghazi Bomb was very popular. Alex boldered along and we got a couple of Aussie sisters, Jean Hood and Ailsa Storrer of 4AGH. They were a lot of fun. At about 0100hrs they broke it up. We were all in good fettle and I dropped into bed at 0215hrs . A darn good party!

Sunday 9 Feb

Started the day at 0930hrs and no sign of Harry Simpson. Consumed a good breakfast and listened to the Palestine Orchestra on the radio. Also did a spot of swat. After dinner Alex drifted around. I borrowed his bike and sailed into Ismailia but all the shops were shut. Had a look at the maps in the AIO's office

Did some more swot. Had afternoon tea in the ASC Mess. At tea at 1930hrs went to the pictures " I was an Adventurers" Lozina was very good and they did Swan Lake. to bed at 2300hrs

Monday 10 Feb

The morning was fully occupied by an exam. We finished at 1230hrs.

I mucked about in the afternoon. I packed and after having a cheeris ginger beer with Alec.

picked up the car and went to the station. The train was one and a half hours late. Sat down to dinner in restaurant car at 2145hrs. Then slept until we reached Cairo at 0100hrs. Its a very slow journey for an express train, but they are all like that in Egypt. Robby was on the station to meet us and we got going as quickly as we could. Eventually tumbled into bed at 0215 hrs . It was a good break at Moascar but it was good to be back. Took quite a time to get off to sleep - possibly due to sleeping in underpants as I couldn't find my pajamas in the dark.

Tuesday 11 Feb

Was up at 0715hrs and diving? the morning was pleased to see the lads about. There was an ambulance accident yesterday and Parker McDonald and Mathews landed themselves in hospital.

This afternoon MacAlister and I went down to 2GH to see them. No serious damage. Today I got four airmail letters and a large number of papers. It was great after a miss of a fortnight. Bert has been seconded to the POW camp as PMO and Bill Carswell is at 19Bn. Went to bed early - with rain pattering on the tent.

Wednesday 12 Feb

Today has been a routine Helwan day. This morning took drill and lectures and a run up to the ADMS. After lunch went down to see the football - we played Div Amm. Coy and they beat us 9-0 Then Major Plainner and I went out to reconnaissance the area of the stunt tomorrow morning.

Bought a film today so will be able to send some snaps to Tessa. She was asking in letters for more snaps

Thursday 13 Feb

Left at 0300hrs for the desert and did a march until 0415hrs.mucked about until 0500hrs and then set off for the MDS stunt. At 0630 hrs had breakfast. Later Don's grid caved in so we came back to camp and I went out on mine. Arrived back at 1030hrs

The rest of the day has been routine stuff and I went to bed at 1030hrs rather weary.

Friday 14 Feb

Hospital MO today. Had a busy day and in the evening got tiddly. Don and the two Merryless lads and I went down to Helwen to the Excelcior Hotel and had a few drinks. When we got back did a spot of frugelling in the bludgers tent.. At midnight I was called to and accident down the road. Two lads were cleaned up by a Don R. Sent them to 2GH. Went to bed at 0030hrs.

Saturday 15 Feb

Ord of today.- Did sick parade at RAF and then spent my time mucking about. Had a busy morning in the Ord. Room and in the afternoon wrote letters. Went to bed early.

Sunday 16 Feb

Church Parade and I played hymns at it. After that did a spot of work and went down to 2GH After lunch Isy, Al Bal and I went into Cairo and then Isy and I went out to 1GH at Helmieh. Saw Betty Jackson and a number of sisters and had afternoon tea there. Then we made it for the Turf Club and after getting very happy had dinner. It was a good show. Then rather late we set off for home. I slept all the way. However on arrival I decided to pull Sgt. Penn out of bed and kicked a bit of a din in the Sgt's tent.

Went to bed and slept like a log.

Monday 17 Feb

Ordinary working day. Took a trip thru to Nasdi to Pay and DAG in the morning with MacAlister. In the afternoon to @GH and saw Major Doctor. In the evening I rang Alec. It was rater fun talking to him after the week back here. Went to bed early.

Tuesday 18 Feb

Spent the day digging in a tent. It was quite the hottest day we have had since winter. We had a beer in the hole during the morning and had the tent up by 1600hrs.

Wednesday 19 Feb

Training today.

Went to 2GH and looks around our lads. to bed early.

Thursday 20 Feb

Spent the morning getting all our gear loaded on the lorries. At 1330hrs we set sail for the desert. I went out on the grid. We had a difficult time getting the MDS going when we got to our point.

Late evening meal then the fun began. I had drinks with the ASC in the ambulance and was feeling very bright. Turned car 9 over on its side at one stage of the journey. The boys lifted her straight. We had an amazing party in our mess tent. Simply a breakup! Got into the Valise and slept under a bright starry sky.

Friday 21 Feb

Began the day with a bunch of casualties and we were kept working until midday. It was very hot and the lads worked like blazes. ADMS had lunch with us and then we continued with the evacuations. At 1500hrs we had finished so we all sat about and rested.. I organised some beer for the lads in the morning and after tea they soon sparked up and songs went up and down the wadi. I joined in and dashed about on foot . This time between the car park and the boys on the hill.

Got to bed at midnight and everything was quiet.

Saturday 22 Feb

We packed up in the morning and arrived back in camp at 1000hrs. Had Joay parade and got the show away on leave. I had little bits and pieces to attend to in the afternoon and at 1830 hrs left for the Turf Club. All the officers met up there and we had a dinner party which I managed to intersperse with trips down to see Porky and Alf. We all dined very well and then went around to the Metropole Dugout and I got muddled up with the band. I seemed to be the only one to really enjoy myself there.

Then back to the Turf Club and at 0230hrs we set sail for home. Alf drove us back to Cairo Main and we sat there till 0600hrs at which time the Port Said train got in.

Sunday 23 Feb

And it was all for nothing because Alec who was returning from Ismailia just didn't turn up. Got back to camp in time to hold sick parade and go on to church parade. For the rest of the day nothing happened and Alec arrived back in the evening.

Monday 24 Feb

A busy day from the training side. We down to 2GH in the evening. To bed early.

Tuesday 25 Feb

Another busy training day. However in the evening Alec, Isy and I went to the Turf Club where we got mixed up with some gimlets (gin?) Had quite a lot of fun. Home at 0130hrs.

Wednesday 26 Feb

Nothing much happened today but Alec was marched out to the Div Supply Rhodes was marched in.

Went to the pictures in the evening.

Thursday 27 Feb

Ordinary training day

Friday 28 Feb

Ordinary day again but in the evening there was a party for Alec in HQ mess room. It was a very bright show.

Went through to Mardi with Alec.

Saturday 1 Mar (Written on 12 June 41)

Mucked about in the morning but in the afternoon went to Cairo. Rod McDiarmid? drove

me in and after afternoon tea with Penn and Ford we went to a Greek bar and sunk a few. We got happy enough there so the others went to a picture and Rod and I went to another bar for a meal. Then we went to the Americano and sank a few more. Feeling good by now.

Then to the Metropole Dugout and I had crack on the piano and saw a floor show- a few drinks and we started for home. A good night.

Friday 6 Mar

Moved camp to Amireya. The detached with Curtis and Haydon as MO

Arybank which sail for Greece on the 12 March. Went around the Western end of Crete.

On 16 March disembarked at Pireas - to Hymettus Camp and then to Katerini. Don got smashed up at Katerini and was evacuated.

13 April transferred to 4Fd Regt. Olympus Pass

17 April went up to Rapsani.

18 April was the Rapsani battle and at 9pm got ambushed on the Larissa Rd. Stuck off across the flat to swamp and 19 April made Kanalia. Crossed the Lake (Limni Karla) at 2230hrs and arrived at Velestino at noon. Got to Volos at 5pm - straight on to Afissos by 0100hrs and Chorto at 3am.

21 April to Trikeri by boat same day. Left for Oreoi by Carque at 0100hrs and left Oreoi at 1600hrs 22 April. Lay off Molos 1800 - 2000hrs Arrived Khalkis at 0600hrs on 23 April.

Left by MT 1500hrs and train to Athens arriving 24 April. Straight on to Korinthos and Argos arriving 0200hrs 25 April.

At 2000hrs to T beach 26 April lay under olive trees to embark at night. Aussie panic left NZers on the beach. On 27 April lay under trees but destroyers failed to arrive that night.

On 28 April Jerry arrived in Argos and Navplion - left by row boat at 0930hrs with gunners Cecil Stevens, Stac Hay McKay and Toby Trollop and other to a total of 11

Rowed over to Astos on the Peloponnesus. Reached Leonidio at 0800hrs. 29 April but put into small village just south as Jerry in Leonidio.

Reached Kyparissi at 1600hrs and joined up with Smith-Dorien. Left by Carque and passed Monemuasia to a small cove just east of South Cape - Cape Malea. Lay up for the day Engine would not start at night. On 1 May 41 Flavell 21 Battalion arrived - lay up all day and left for Crete at 2030hrs. On 2 May very heavy sea and 10 miles from Cape Kastelli (Crete) engine swamped and had to sail back to Antikythira. Arrived 1700 hrs

3 May lay up all day waiting for sea to subside. Left at 2100hrs for Kastelli Kissamos.

4 May arrived at 0400hrs (*probably on Nautilus Beach*) - MT to Chania and joined 4 Fd Regt. On 5 May reported to ADMS and sent to 6 Fd Ambulance. Good to be back with the boys.

On May 17 left Chania by hospital ship *Aba*. 18 May two attacks by air. Navel escort.

19 May arrived Haifa - to Beer Y'akov 23 Scottish hospital?

20 May Blitz on Crete began. During stay at Beer Y'akov had two trips to Tel Aviv.

Left Beer Y'akov on 7 June

From Kartara West to Cairo by car arrived Turf Club at 2300hrs. To No 3 Gen Hospital at Helmieh. 9 June To Helwan saw Don in hospital. Back to 6 Fd Ambulance 10 June 41

Wednesday 11 Jun

Mucked about in the Ord. room and in the evening went to 4 Fd Ambulance to hold the fort for them.

Thursday 12 Jun

Lecture in am. Friday 13 Jun 41 Move to Garawi. Saturday 14 Jun 41 To Cairo.

Sunday 15 Jun Church parade.

Monday 16 Jun

Major Speight took over unit.

Started leave by going to Cairo in afternoon and staying at NZ Club.

Tuesday 17 Jun

To Maadi in the morning and then back to Cairo. In Afternoon went out to Heliopolis and arranged for trip to Abu Sennan.

Went to "Gone with the Wind" Good Show.

To Turf Club and then home to bed.

Wednesday 18 Jun

0930hrs left Helio by Oxford (car) for Abu Senna., Jumped military convoy to Moascar To 1 Convoy Depot. To Ismailia areodrome but Olive Groves not there.

To United Service Club and met Hume (RASE) Met Squadron leader Basham and MacDonald.

To Port Said and aboard *Aba*. Drinks with sisters. To Simon Artryn and back to French Club, Ismailia. Slept at Con Depot.

Thursday 19 Jun

Met some 26 Bn lads Bill Ryder Chas Gatenby etc. To US Club and then dinner at French Club and then by truck to Gneifa? Good show - Officers mess at Gneifa ? me in.

Friday 20 Jun

With Bill Foley to POW camp. Huge show with good sculpture work. In afternoon to 112 Squadron at Fayid by M/U and saw Jack Groves. In the evening to 107 MC and saw Squadron Leaders Basham and MacDonald. Arranged car lift to Cairo.

Saturday 21 Jun

To 107 MU and MacDonald showed me over assembly show- Glen Martins mainly. Interesting morning. Left for Cairo 2pm. Passed large South African convoy on road, Arrived Cairo 4.45pm. Drinks at NZ Club with some of the boys - MacLean of 4Fd Regt.

Sunday 22 Jun

Stuck around NZ and Turf Club . To Turf Club in evening and met a couple of HQME air force chaps - drinks and home to bed.

Monday 23 Jun

Peterson and Owens of 36 Squadron (Wellingtons) had drinks at NZ Club. Then to Turf Club and later in pm gathered up gear and left for Helwan - straight to Al Garawi.

Tuesday 24 Jun

Routine day. Posted OC A Coy.

Wednesday 25 Jun

Routine day

Thursday 26 Jun Routine day. Very hot and sandy. Sunstroke Plain in the wadi is awful at times.

Russian German show confused according to radio.

Friday 27 Jun

Routine day. Went off to Helwan in evening. To Officers mess. 2GH. Later to Burt Lovell's flat and had a shower.

Saturday 28 Jun

Usual business in the morning. Left for town at 2,30pm Bought boots at Kasr-el-hil. Went to various record shops and bought one record at 30 Egyptian pounds. Very dear. Drinks at the Turf Club with Alan Smith. Mick, Dick Dawson. To the Regent but did not eat there. Wandered off with Dick to St James - Then Kursaal. Dined with David Dysant and Mark Lister there and MacDonald and Basham. Also South African Sgt. Power. Home in various stages - hopping cars.

Sunday 29 Jun

Church parade- damm awful. Slept the rest of the day and wrote letters. Very hot.

Monday 30 Jun

Monday 30 Jun

Writing large no. of letters to relations of boys POW.

Got boil on bottom - damm awful

Up until 11 Aug 41 lived at Al Garawi and did nothing but train. Had one week in hospital with boil on bottom and Bruce opened it under Pentothal.

Monday 11 Aug

Part of the Coy. came to Helwan camp to take over from 4 Fd Ambulance

Tuesday 12 Aug

Came down to Helwan and we ran the hospital.

Wednesday 13 Aug

To Cairo in the afternoon - mag. going well -still sometime before it will be published.

Thursday 14 Aug

Spent whole day in camp arranging training programs and doing hospital rounds.

Friday 15 Aug to Mon 1 Sept

Routine training and then back into hospital HQ. Out on brigade maneuvers today (1 Sep)

Written on the 20 Jan 42

Sept 41

A week after after HQ and B did their exercises with the Brigay went out and had a one day show. Then about mid Sept the unit moved to Baggush with 6 Brigade. Went up in Unit Transport by desert road. Natrum, Daba, Baggush were the stops. We occupied the 4 Fd Ambulance 1940 lines at Baggush.

Oct 41

Routine training with one Brigade exercise involving night moves, occupying 3 days. During Oct Lovell Webster, Wilson (QM) and I went up to forward areas, over desert. Shaffers Wadi, 4 Indian Div. Ado ca HQ - through minefields and back via Sidi Barari and Matruh main road.

Nov 41

During period up to 12 Nov we were beginning to pack up. On Wed 5 Dick Dawson and I went by rail down to Alex on leave. Stayed at Cecil until Friday. Out to Aboukin to take plane to Baggush but failed to take off.. Back to Alex on the Friday I stayed at Mrs Mrs Alexanders English Pension. At night to the Union Club and Monsergneuir - good party. Saturday - in afternoon to Aboukin- left by Blenheim converted fighter at 1600hrs. Arrived Baggush 1700hrs. Jolly good 4 day leave.

On Thursday 13th we moved out from Baggush. Tessa's 1st birthday. Went up Matruh road- Matruh bye-pass-down Siwa track and into desert just south of Rome road and arrived there well after dark - to sleep.

Friday 14 Nov

Gen Freyberg's conference for all officers down to Coy. comders. Told us of impending operations - Rommel's resourcefulness and referred us to escarpments south of Tobruk.

Sat 15 Sun - Mon 17

Moved at night towards frontier.

Tuesday 18 Nov

After previous night moves which were nightmares. Moving over open desert - soft sand and rocky or scrubby country, getting stuck and parts of the brigade being lost and turning

and rocky or scrubby country- getting stuck and parts of the brigade being lost and turning up in the morning, being enveloped in dust and not being able to see the vehicle in front was a great strain. There was something fantastic in the view of the dispersed units coming into right formation at dusk; a brigade on the move is a tremendous looking thing. In the late afternoon A Coy split from the rest of the unit.

We went on with Brigade and during the night we passed thru the frontier wire into Libya. We went NW for about 5 miles and then formed a leaguer. On this move we had anti tank flank protection and on all subsequent moves. A few sick came thru and we sent to 5 Fd Ambulance MDS on eastern side of wire.

In afternoon brigade conference and on afternoon of..

Wed 19 Nov

we left at 5pm and did 12 miles just east of north. Overshot the mark and had to turn back for one and a quarter mile. The going now was good.

Libya seems to have drawn the line between itself and Egypt just where the good surface ends.

At about midnight we were all bedded down in the Coy.

Thursday 20 Nov

We had a few odd cases in. Two battle casualties from Div. Cav. and at 1400hrs we were moving north again. As we passed on west side of the Sidi Oman fort our right flank was shelled but no casualties.

We pushed on into the night. At midnight we struck a bog.

There had been heavy rains further towards the coast and this was the first encounter with the result. It was daylight before we all got out of the bog. It was like the Whangamata road at its worst.

Shortly after dawn we set off again going due north, and arrived with Brig HQ sitting on Trigh Capuzzo. Now had tanks with us.

Friday 21 Nov

The morning move just mentioned brought us to the Trigh Capuzzo. We were now a Bde Group, the other 2 bde. groups had gone East to the frontier positions, Sallaum, Capuzzo and Bardia-Tobruk road.

Sat 22 Nov.

In the afternoon the Bde move west. I sent the Coy off under Joe Clayand I took Ron Easton and staff Wilton and made off south east to contact 6 Fd Ambulance which had moved up. We did 22 miles before we found them and I gathered up a couple of ambulances as as it was getting dark made off on a bearing for Bin Cleba (*not found on map*) across desert as fast as possible. Luckily I turned north onto the Trigh Capuzzo instead of going to Bin Cleba as the place was held by Jerry.

Rejoined Brigade and after conference we went south and round Jerry the next morning.

Sunday 23 Nov

At 0300hrs we left Bin Cleba and out flanked the main position and at first light landed right in a Jerry position. We had a skirmish and captured some trucks. Left prisoners and wounded and pushed on up the escarpment and settled down in leaguer waiting for the night.

At about 1600hrs rear of leaguer attacked by 4 Honeys, manned by the enemy. We were in the rear of the leaguer area. One 18 pounder chased them off after we had had a shelling and machine gunning.

Before dark we had moved forward about 1 mile to catch the Bde. which had gone on when the tanks attacked. We closed up and set up full HDS. During the night 25 Bn attacked Pt175 and 26 Bn went off south to contact South African 5 Brigade.

South Africans over run and 26 Bn returned.

Night 23/24 Nov

NIGHT 23/24 NOV

We were absolutely swamped with patients. Mainly 25 Bn. Some 24 and a few 26 Bn. Some tank people (RTR) We were showing a bright red light and Padre Willis did the navigation over the mile up 15 the @% Bn RAP 290 - 300 cases held until first light. Col McNaught CO 25Bn and Frank Ollivier, Frazer 25th among casualties.

Monday 24 Nov

At first light we started filling all available transport with casualties and considerable shelling developed. Mainly anti tank stuff and we got most of it. Tank battle developed about half a mile away so after sending convoy off to 30th Corps, we got out smartly and caught up with Bde. which had moved west about a mile.

The convoy of 290 casualties reached 30 Corps just as it was being attacked by tanks and they all dispersed and they never formed up again.

However all trucks and Ambulances got back into Egypt.

The Coy settled down in the Wadi Escioman (*not found on map*) later known as Whistling Wadi (ref. Google) We were there all day and casualties were piling up again. Just before dusk a convoy of 250 South Africans was bought up to the brigade by a Jerry car.

These were bought down to me .

At 2000hrs we were going flat out again and I was beginning to despair as we now had over 300 casualties again when Col. Kenrick arrived told me that the rest of the 6 Fd Ambulance was with him. I set off then with him to lead them up, but Lovell had started off up with them.

It was a mad night that night coming back from HQ leaguer. There were Veery lights of all colours shooting up all around, except east and the red glows of burning transport which we found to be some Jerry and some of our carriers . The air was strangely still after the din of shelling and tank battles. Only isolated distant explosions were here. One of these was an ammo truck and later we got the driver . He was badly burnt.

Then on arrival back at ADS we found that HQ and B had not arrived.. They did arrive at something after midnight. They set up and at 0400hrs took over all the casualties and A Coy went to bed.

Tuesday 25 Nov

A Coy rested all day till 2pm and they certainly needed it. At 3pm we moved forward about 5 miles to a point just east of the block-house. Shelling was solid during the move and as soon as the Brigade conference was over we prepared for the night attack.

We set up ADS much happier now that we had an MDS behind us which had an MAC to evacuate it. The night attack involved 26, 25, 24 and 21 Bns and they were to take Sidi Rezegh and El Duda -stay in leaguer on 26th and meet Tobruk perimeter on night 26/27.

We had intended evacuating El Duda casualties by 3 ton truck convoy with tank escort. However the attack failed and we didn't get Sidi Rezegh, let alone Duda. We got a number of casualties from 36 and 24/25 Bns. now combined under Col Shuttleworth. N casualties from 21 Bn. went too far and was chewed up. Evacuation to MDS satisfactory at night using red light.

Wed 26 Nov

At 0300hrs we were on the edge of the escarpment ready to move with the Bde. but as the attack failed we had to stay. We were treating a few casualties at first light when shelling started close on our transport. We were on the skyline. Soon got off it and found ourselves a spot just below next escarpment above Sidi Rezegh.

We had a quiet day with very few casualties and I had a think about ADS's in general.

There was inadequate morphine and Pentothal Sodium. Also a large number of red crosses for trucks going off with wounded would have saved a lot of casualties being shot up by tanks. Had we not captured a large quantity of Jerry morphine and other medical stuff we would have been scuppered.

I was pleased with the water position as we had 200 gals still not touched.

Night 26/27 Nov

Sidi Rezegh was taken this time. Evacuation of casualties still proceeding smoothly.

Again a fair number of wounded brought in - largely 26 Ba. which was the strongest Bn now.

Thursday 27 Nov

During the morning we moved up to the edge of Sidi Rezegh airfield. Set up ADS again and then did a tour up to RAP's with ambulances, saw 25 & 26 Bn Mos Sutherland & Jennings- not for time? For rest of morning received few casualties including Col. Page. We also did some burials of men found among scuppered tanks and planes on drome. Coursay acted as padre for these.

Then we took the big Italian tent back to set it up with our show. Late in the afternoon there was a tank and motorised infantry attack from the escarpment above Sidi Rezegh but it was beaten off.

Night 27/28 Nov

Bishop Gerrard arrived in late afternoon and I persuaded him not to return to MDS till we had OK from Bde. that it was all clear. Also I held ambulances that night as we were now 8 miles west of Whistling Wadi and it was uncertain what was in between. Nothing else happened. The usual Verry lights of Jerry's night jitters were shooting about.

Friday 28 Nov

The morning found us in the same place with casualties mounting up and now no lines of communication. The MDS 2 Coys of 6th & 4th & 5th Fd Ambulances and Mobile Surgical all captured on the 27th. Now we had Padre Willis as well as Bishop with us.

In the afternoon there was a determined attack from West and South and East. We held the North. The attack from the West overran 24th Bn outer defenses but was driven off. That from the South came down the escarpment and an Italian armoured car got to 400yds from ADS when it got shot up by Maj. Suttons' tank. It burnt merrily. Our tanks stopped any further infiltration from that quarter.

There was a great old tank battle to the East too. It was about a mile away but Jerry was stopped. At dusk there was a lot of fires burning around the leaguer and I was called to HQ for conference. It was a matter of a move.

We now had 100 patients and it meant carrying them with us.. Nothing to do but to pack up. I told the wounded as they lay awaiting loading onto the 16 3 tonners and the ambulances that they would have a hell of a journey but it was either that or staying behind and becoming POW. They gritted their teeth for the bumps. I set off due East for 3 miles and met the tanks. I left them to go North down the wadi. A German tented hospital was in the wadi but of course abandoned.

Incidentally my car leading the convoy run into slit trench and wrecked the radiator, so I was towed from then on.

It was bad going down the wadi but we got the convoy down. We were leading the whole B echelon of 24Ba. We arrived at our new leaguer area at something like 0400hrs - set up the Italian tent got the serious casualties into it and then we all turned in.

Saturday 29 Nov

At 0900hrs we got cracking on getting the show up again and unloading all the trucks. Driving the morning a supply column came in and there was also one brought by the Poles from Tobruk.

Some prisoners were taken and we got the wounded ones. THinks went quietly at Brigade leaguer but all afternoon attacks were made against our positions from Pt. 175 held by the remnants of 21 to Sidi Rezegh and the El Duda position held by Tobruk perimeter troops. In the evening at 1710hrs the 21 Bn was overrun Jerry tanks masquerading as ours- and El Duda was retaken by Jerry. This last attack overran our and after getting a convoy off to Tobruk with all the remaining cases I went to Brigade for orders.

Night 29/30 Nov

Some of the Coy got some sleep but we had casualties coming in in bunches irregularly during the night.

Sunday 30 Nov

Communion at about 0930hrs with Bishop Gerrard. During the morning we were subjected to heavy mortar bombing - no casualties in ADS although tents ripped a bit with the spray. The rest of the day was reasonably quiet but at 1700hrs a determined attack came from Sidi Rezegh. El Duda was back in our hands by midday. At 1800hrs the attack which had

finished off our frontline and left us with no infantry was beaten off. In the evening there was a tense conference at Poda. I sent all casualties into Tobruk and moved and moved a mile North onto the slopes of Belhamed.

Then I returned to Bde HQ and had a session with the Brig. We for it the next day. At midnight we were waiting around Bde. for line to be put thru to Div. When it was put thru orders said "stay where you are" Saw Col Kendick at about 2000hrs. He had come out with the convoy returning from Tobruk from the night before.

Monday 1 Dec 41

At 0715hrs 35 German tanks came into view over a crest 250 yds away. We were now between 48BG 6Fd Reg and the tanks. After fierce fighting and smoke screen protection for the tanks we were raked with M?G fire and 2 of my men were killed.

I grabbed a Red Cros and made out to meet the supporting infantry and fortunately missed all the stuff that was flying about.

One tank put a 6lb shell into an ambulance and it burned out.

A Jerry officer put us all together and when we had received all the POWs mixed infantry and artillery we started off on a two and a half mile trek to the mosque where there was a Jerry RAP. Jae, Ron and I worked there all morning on our own wounded. My leg, R leg, which had a tiny bit of shrapnel in it was causing some difficulties by now.

About 3pm the battle was still going on at Belhamed where the remains of the 6th Bde had joined the 4th and were holding their ground. At this time I took Cpl. Ashworth and made off in a Jerry truck back onto the old 6 bde area to gather in some British wounded.

We got them but when we got back to RAP all the crowd had been evacuated. A few minutes after we arrived concentrated shelling began right on the Mosque vicinity which was the Jerry battle HQ. We got the truck going up the escarpment and from there watched Maryland bombers give the tanks near HQ below the works.

Then at about 1700hrs we started on our way to to El Adem. Why El Adem? It was the only place I knew to tell the driver who had no idea. It was a hell of a drive there and on arrival it was dark.

I was taken with the wounded to the reception room where I found Sgt Nicholas Pte Nell Holmes WT and Bayack. Among the patients was Padre Willis. He was evacuated on 2nd. Then the Jerry MOS gathered me up and took me to have a wash and gave me a cubicle - then at mess at 1930hrs I met Brig Mils and David Klass (UDF)

Went to bed after looking around the British wounded in the reception. Nick got locked in my room by the door slamming so slept on the floor.

Mess was a very strained meal and we ate tunney fish - awful muck.

The "Heils" nearly made me laugh outright - it was like Chaplin (Charlie)

Tuesday 2 Dec

Klass and I tried to cover the British wounded in the various buildings. It was difficult.

Noticed a large number of Gas Gangrene infections in both our and their casualties and complete withholding of Sulfanilamide. Midday mess was also attended by Brig Mils but he was taken away in the afternoon.

There was sporadic shelling from the guns in the hospital and shells came back from the Tobruk perimeter.

At mess today we were drawn into arguments with the Jerrys. Subject was the use of coloured troops - "where was our culture to make the Aryan German fight the black man" Also radio. Their mess radio ad "Abhonen Auslandschi sender ist verboten" written on it. Had a long chat to David in my room and went to bed early.

Wednesday 3 Dec

Today started well and the shelling increased. At lunch we had learned that Duda and Belhamed were our affair and we were advancing towards El Aden.

At 1600hrs Klass and I were making for the mess or Casino for coffee when a shell landed 10 feet away and knocked us both. I don't remember clearly then.

I was taken on a stretcher into reception and then and dressed.

When I woke I was in one of the double decker canvas slung beds and faithful Nick was there. It was dark then and soon after the next lot came in the form of a 6 hour RAF attack. The bombing was appalling - a more concentrated nerve racking blast I had not experienced. And the fighters strafed everything in the light of the flares they dropped.

The raid started at 2030hrs and finished at 0230hrs next morning.
I was then told the Klass had died on the table 10 minutes after the shell landed.
The Jerrys hated us by now and I was the only officer who had mixed with them, they let me know it.

Thursday 4th, Friday 5th, Saturday 6th Dec

Nothing new during this time. Blumenthall arrived from further back to look after after British casualties. Lionel was a SA and was like an overgrown pup. Sgt. Nicholas and his orderlies did all the work. Bombing occurred each night and the show was in the process of evacuation. It was an established Axis bas and it took some cleaning up.
WE all had a fair amount of morphine during these days.

Diet -Mint tea - awful
Tunney Fish - awful
Rye bread - awful
Tinned lard - awful

Sunday 7th, Monday 8th, Tuesday 9th Dec

Our spirits rose daily - but we were scared stiff they would evacuate us further back.
No bombing or shelling now.

By the 8th there were about a dozen Jerrys left in the place.
On the 9th the last Jerry MO left with the little coffee house artist from Frankfort.
By the night of the 9th we were completely on our own.

Wednesday 10 Dec

At 0730hrs Nick reported infantry approaching. Where upon he went out to investigate and came back with some of the Border Regt patrol. We were no longer POW and the rest of the day was spent in the trip via El Duda to Tobruk. We got to the Tobruk caves at dark and I found Isaac Kayser there. He was a Polish MO who was on *Aba* during our trip to Haifa. Had morphine and wounds dressed and had a grand sleep. The next day Stan Wilson took my orderlies off to make an MDS behind the 5th Brigade at Gazala. This night they had a good feed and a sleep.

Thursday 11 Dec

In the afternoon we were all transferred to the Town hospital and put between sheets in established wards. In the night there was an ineffective air raid on the town.

Friday 12 Dec

At 0900hrs taken down to wharf and by lifeboat out to Somersetshire and we sailed for Alex at 4pm

Saturday 13 Dec

Floating along on a sea of glass and quiet uneventful. Very comfortable - shared cabin with Capt. Humphrey of RTR.

Sunday 14 Dec

Arrived Alex - Ambulance train to Cairo- very comfortable. To No 3 NZ Gen at Helmish. Put in Hut 6 under Keith Davidson. Major Wells came to see me - friend of Aunt Nell's

1942

Monday 15 Dec - Sunday 1 Feb 42

In 3 GH - passing time as well as one may. Had many visitors and among them Col Kenrick and Brig Barrowclough and Brig Mc Cormick.

Only one air raid alert to date. Letters and parcels arriving satisfactorily.
End of Jan had pentothal and bit of shell taken out of right thigh.

Monday 2 Feb Helmish

Got out of bed and stood on both legs without assistance this morning. At midday was

visited by Buster Smith and Tom Tomlinson, Don-Rs of 6 IB HQ.

Tuesday 3 Feb

Wrote letters and read all day. went to mess and played piano in the morning.
Sgt Ford visited in evening.

Wednesday 4 Feb

Morning tea at Mess - to Maadi in ambulance. Saw Brig McCormick - lunch at 6 Fd Ambulance. With leave truck to NZ Club. Saw Mc Manaway, Neville Rolleston and Harvy Wilkinson.

Went to "Fantasia" at Studio Mise with Sgt Ford, Jackson, Prescott and Noel Ashworth.
Taxi back to Offices Mess.

News good in Russia - bad in desert and Pacific.

Japs launched attack on Singapore Islands.

Thursday 5 Feb

Stayed in bed all day - rather stiff

Miles Lampson's camp - Nahas Pasha in power.

Friday 6 Feb

Up all day - Nick and Cpl. Smith came to see me.

Saturday 7 Feb

In evening to Rathles for party at Koubbeh Gardens. Met Chiha girls and Raymond Pupilani - ate funny Syrian foods. Danced. Home and very weary at 0130hrs

Sunday 8 Feb

In bed all day - leg stiff.

Singapore Island invaded.

Sat 9 Feb to 18 Feb

Went to Cairo twice but mainly mucking about hospital - playing piano.

Thursday 19 Feb

Nothing much during the day but in afternoon to Sisters Mess for tea and then Doug Carrachan and I went into Cairo. Saw "Sun Valley Serenade" and then to Regent for dinner.

Then to Dolls, Junior Officers Club and the Dug Out. Saw Hume in Dolls.

Had a lot of fun. Leg stood up to it well.

Friday 20 Feb

Again not much during the day. In evening to concert "Girls in Uniform" Very funny. Then to Mess and drank beer and played piano.

Home to bed at midnight. Doug was in good fettle.

Saturday 21 Feb

Left with Dave Thompson for Celmaza turn off. Joined 6 FD Ambulance at 0830hrs. To Kabret. In afternoon to Div. HQ - saw Col Kenrick and Alistair McFarlane. Stayed there that night.

Sunday 22 Feb

Went off Bean to various units - Saw Alan Sutherland and Sam Rutherford - Visited engineers and anti tank.

In afternoon left with Bill Thornton for Cairo - One and a half hrs saw us back.

Brg. Barrowclough left 6 IB today great shame to.

Monday 23 Feb

Packed in afternoon. Went to tea party with VADs Officers Mess. To Kiwi Concert Party in evening. Saw Terry Vaughan.

Tuesday 24 Feb

To Rest Home in Garden City. In evening to strike up the band at Kursaal. Home early.

Wednesday 25 Feb

to town with Doug and Geoff Kirk. Listened to records and then went to Junior Officers Club and played piano. Had dinner there and few drinks. Home 11pm.

Thursday 26 Feb

To NZ Club with Jean Gilmor to Junior Officers Club.

Received news of MC.(Military Cross) Met George Lydia, SAAF. Home 12pm

Friday 27 Feb To bed early. Wrote letters

Saturday 28 Feb

To Maadi. Saw DDMS, ADMS and DADMS

Lunch at Camp Hospital. To NZ Club with Alastair McFarlane. Rest Home for dinner, back to NZ Club. Saw concert. Talking to Jean Gilmor and Chris Farrer. To bed 11pm.

Sunday 1 Mar

Left Rest Home in Kasr el Ali for 3 GH Back to bed.

In afternoon Doug came out and bought some beer. We wetted the MC

Visited by Doug Barton Div Cav. Bet, Bill Thornton, Jan Sloman, Tim Thompson.

Went to sleep early.

Monday 2 Mar

In bed all day

Tuesday 3 Mar

In bed - Xrayed - Jean Gilmor came in afternoon. Sleep early.

Wed, Thu, Fri 4-6 mar

In bed. Friday afternoon Doug came over.

Saturday 7 Mar

Charles Reed came out and in afternoon I met him and Ben and Majors Sawyers and Lambourne at NZ Club. To Metro to see "Philadelphia Story" - very good. Then to Turf Club. Back home early -7pm

Sunday 8 Mar

Over at Mess playing piano.

Monday 9 Mar

Left early for Maadi. Got boots - webbing etc. Lunched with Eric Anson at B Mess

To Camp hospital. Went to Comp Trg. Depot- could not find Doug - to town in ambulance.

Collected washing from Rest Home - to Rosi el Nil to NZ Club. Meal there with Alec Borrie then home. On feet most of the day and stood it well. Saw Stubbs at NZ Club.

Tuesday 10 Mar

Tessa's (he means Elvira) birthday today - hope compact got there. Just mucked about the ward and played piano.

Wednesday 11 Mar - Fri 13 Mar 42

Nil

Saturday 14 Mar

Saturday 14 Mar

Mucked about in am. Went over to Maadi with Walli Colton and Selwyn Toogood. Up to DDMS and saw Major Russel. Tea at B M. To Comp.Trg Depot and found Jack Rose there. Doug had gone to Helmish. Went to Cairo with Rose and Lloyd Morgan. Th NZ Club met Doug. Then to bar with Jack Williams, Aithen and Bowell and Jory and Len Stubbs arrived. To Schindler and had yarn with Co 9. Then to Juniors Offices Club with Len. Had dinner there - then to Taverne Francois and met up with Doug and Jack. Arrived home at 0700hrs in a taxi with Almaza airforce crowd who were very drunk.

Sunday 15 Mar

Nil

Monday 16 Mar

Sent for by DDMS - to Maadi. MC announced officially. Lunch at 1 Camp Hospital - to Comp Trg Depot. Swa Doug. Back to Maadi. Train to Cairo. Shopped. - to 3GH. to Officers Mess for dinner and evening.

Tuesday 17 Mar

Discharged from hospital to 1 Camp Hospital. In afternoon to Comp. trg Depot. Party in the Mess. Met Gran Kaye. Had a lot of fun. Came back with Doug on push bike.

Thursday 19 Mar

There had been another gap and this is being written o 24 June 42.

Fortune has gone both with and against us in the Desert since 19 March.

On that day I collected Carbis and we set off at 3pm from Cairo main for Haifa. Then we picked up the next day day at Haifa and went by truck to Beirut. We landed there in heavy rain. It was a grand trip up the coast. In Beirut we lived at 2 Mal. Fd. Lab with Lt. Col MacDonald, Major Lerson, Maj O'Driscoll Doug Adamson and Iles.

Had a lot of fun at the AIF Club. with Bill Moffett (also doing Mal - *I think short for Malaria* course) At the end March beginning of April we moved up into Lebanon to Ain Sorfar.

Then Mac and I went up to 9 Aust. Div. and stayed with Dr. Abe Fryberg. Had interesting time and met a lot of Aussie units. Went all over Tripoli from Chekka and up to Latakia and Qassab, which is on the the Turkish frontier. Went a few yards into Turkey.

After a week we returned to Ain Sorfar and after a few trips to Beirut and Baalek and one into Palestine through Marjeum, O'd, Doug and I set sail for Aleppo, via Baalek Homs and Hawa.

Had 3 weeks working in Aleppo area from Qanye, Jisi ech Charloun and Idlib over Medaine Eklas to Akkerine and Djerablous on the Guphrots.

Early in May we returned to AinSorfar after having done Spllen Rotus on water surveys in a large number of villages and living with Bns. On 12 may I returned to Div. HQ at Baalek. After 10 days in Labonie - Djeidide, Zabboua area I left for Aleppo again and went via Tripoli. Had night in Tripoli.

Once to Aleppo started in on 22 Bn. in Katma, ElHamman Radjon parts as they were highly malarious.

Early in June I set sail for Baalek again and was there when Div. got orders to up sticks and out. Went over to Tripoli to see DADMS 9 Aust. Div (Jim Perkins) and on return left with rear div. convoy. Came down thru Zahle, Marjoun, Tiberias (very hot) Nazareth to Youl Keren. Spent night of 20 June there. Next day via Lydda to Asluj in the desert 25 miles south of Beersheba. On 22 Jun left Aslij for Ismailia - crossing the Sinai Desert - inland. I drove the ambulance a considerable distance of the whole trip. At ismailia got orders to come to Maadi so came on down with John Boyd - following Bill Thornton the whole way. Arrived at DMS at 8pm after travelling since 0430hrs.

23 Jun

Mucked about-settled in at 1 Camp Hospital. Al Lomas now Major and DC

24 Jun

Started MI room work

25 Jun was Thursday

Went into Cairo and did some shopping. Met Jack Strang and Isy Wilson.

Went to music for all for coffee.

26 Jun Friday

Sick parade in am. Doug Cannachan came down later in the morning. Sleep in afternoon.
Lecture at 4.30pm by Major Bronlie - To bed early - Wrote a lot of letters today.

27 Jun Saturday

Sick parade in am. Lecture at 9 Gen at Helio in afternoon.
Dinner at NZ Club. Met Cecil Stevens and Jack Strang. To party with Doug and a few
M/G (machine gun) blokes. Home 1am

28 Jun Sunday

Sick parade in am
Nil else

29 Jun Monday

Left at 1230hrs for Sarfaga in an ambulance driven by Don Bell.
Crossed Nile and went down through Beri Suaf to Asuit, 213 miles, arriving at 1930hrs.
Interesting trip through the cotton and sugar fields of the Nile Valley. Saw other Pyramids
and cave relics on E side in the escarpment.
Bunked in American Mission College and had dinner in town.(Asuit)

30 Jun Tuesday

Left Asuit at 0600 hrs and made Qena at 1130hrs. Similar country. To RE camp there.
Straight on to Port Sarfaga and contacted 19 Army Troop, OC. Major Lambean. Arrived at
1400hrs. Left for Qena at 1600hrs arriving 1830 hrs
Sarfaga is a new port with a tarmac road through the copper mountain country just south
of Jebel Abu Shan.
It is complete and utter desolation with scorched rock mountains of all colours. It is
fascinating in an ugly way. The Red Sea comes up like a lake amid this on first seeing it
from the pass through the mountains where the road emerges. Went to bed early on
arrival at Qena.

1 Jul 42 Wednesday

Left Qena 0500hrs and made a non stop trip the 348 miles back to Cairo and found the
situation in the Western desert the same. Jerry had made no progress
Reported to DMS and went to bed pretty tired.

2 Jul Thursday

Up late and wrote letter. Lazed about all day. looking for news.
Counter attack in desert

3 Jul Friday

Nil

4 Jul Saturday to 11 Jul

Few air raids on Cairo area - had dinner at Carlton one night with Col. Hunter and Allan
Douglas. To Maadi Club once - saw Marsh Lister. Desert stationary - yesterday a 5 mile
advance by the Aussies. Brig. Gray and Dick Chesterman killed during the week.
Wrote several letters during the week.

30 Aug 42 Sunday

Its a long cry from 11 July to today but there have been few events worth mentioning.

Trip to Tura Caves to assist in handling casualties from explosions still raging when we
arrived. Only lightly wounded.

Few Air raids about the area.

Heard William Walton Symphony twice - once with John Halligan and once with Terry
Vaughan

Mr Churchill was in ME early this month and Duke of Kent killed on the way to Iceland.

... Churchill was in the early this month and back of returned on the way to Iceland.

Allan Erenstron shared tent with me for a few weeks.

Stayed about the lines and read "Into Battle" (Mr. Churchill) most of the day and listened to the Radio. Wrote to Tessa.

31 Aug Monday

In the morning heard news of Jap defeat At Milne Bay (NG) (*New Guinea?*)

In evening John Boyd arrived and we heard news of Jerry attack at 0300hrs at Alameine
Drank Gin and Soda with John and then to bed.

1 Sep 42 Tuesday

In the morning debate with the men. Nil else during the day.

2 Sep Wednesday

Small raid at 2am.

Did very little during the day. Listened to news for information of battle in desert.

Tank engagement in progress 35 injured in last night's raid - some fatal.

Appears to have been at Maadi.

3 Sep Thursday

Mothers birthday

Anniversary of Declaration of War. Desert quiet - tank battle stopped.

Orderly officer today. Nil of interest. Luc Rais' funeral

4 Sep Friday

Pay Day - Received letters up to June 22. Had already had others of July.

Met Bill Butland at Pay office. He came to Mess and then we went and saw "Babes in Arms" - Judy Garland very good.

5 Sep Saturday

Went to town with Mess Cpl. in the morning to buy lino for the bar. Got it at Sednoui.

Had hair cut and then back. Spent afternoon in preparing Mess notices. Had long yarn with Don Sutherland after 9pm news.

6 Sept Sunday

Nil

7 Sep Mon - 10 Thurs - Nil

Mess at Art TD with Osborne, Cliff Dodds, McNash. Home 11.30pm

11 Sep Friday

Pay Day. Busy all morning.

In evening Alf Simpson and Ossi Osbourne over for Mess. To pictures.

12 Sep Saturday

In afternoon Gen. Alexander visited lines and Noel Ashworth arrived. He is now T/S/Sgt.
Don Sutherland and I took him into town in ambulance and met Allan Douglas and party at Tommy's.

Dogie Dawson arrived there to. went to Metro and saw Loy Powell film "Love Crazy" - good show and then to Sauers for a meal. To Juniors Officers Club and found Doug Cumming and Doug Cannachan. Had a long search for transport but got about 1.00am. A good night.

13 Sep Sunday

Orderly Officer. Got camp ready for 4 Fd Ambulance. They arrived at 1500hrs.

In evening to Mrs Nutsays to hear one of her Safagio.? Nil after that

14 Sep Monday

Nil during the day. To pictures at night in camp. Toby Trollop came in and told me McKay's being killed in desert.

15 Sep Tuesday

Nil all day.. Lecture in am. Cpl. Adams marched in under arrest.

In evening Bob Elliot in for drinks. Over to Artillery Mess - chatted with Osborne, Brg Weir, Cliff Dodds. In afternoon to Helwan and saw Isy Wilson. Going to NZ tomorrow - also John Downs. Cliff off tomorrow to.. To Bed

16 Sep Wednesday

Nil

17 Sep Thursday

Nil. To music for all at 9pm

18 Sep Friday

Pay in am

To "Hellgapoppin" with Dan, Pat and Colin. Dinner at Regent - to Metropole Dugout. Home

19 Sep Saturday

In Evening farewell dinner for Brig. Kenrick

20 - 23 Sep

Nil

24 Sep Thursday

Nil in am

Went to All Saints Cathedral and heard Messiah. Very good but I get tired of Handel!

25 Sep Friday

Pay in am. Wrote letters to POWs in afternoon and mucked about in evening.

26 Sept Saturday

Went into town at 10.30am and bought birthday presents for Tessa and Janet and a cap for myself.

Lounged around the Club - lunched with RTO Cairo.

In afternoon played piano - saw ken Given and Jean Gilmor.

Had drinks with Stew Brown (PO Commander) and then Jack arrived in (Jack Demouth)

Went to pictures feeling a bit lite Snack at Americardia and beers- acted the goat!

On way to Kasr el Nil got caught up in an air raid. Nothing in the centre of town.

Had hilarious ride home in jeep - I drove part of the way - got to bed 11.30pm

Damm funny evening!

27 Sep Sunday

To town in am in Jack's jeep. Saw McRae and he put me on to Walter Beck at Continental.

Not in. Returned to camp and spent the evening looking after Jack who was sick.

Left him feeling much better at 2200hrs

28 Sep Monday

Orderly officer. to Helio in am. with Jack and got knocked backon our West Africa - Miami project. Then to Continental but Beck was out. Back to camp.

In pm to townat 4 and round to see Walter Beck. Got him and he is going to do his best to get us to Euitrea? Back hereand up hill - saw DMS re posting. re Euitrea? Latter ok

Back to town in ambulance to see Mrs Blackford. Saw Chris Farrer to and then back home to bed.

29 Sep Tuesday

Nil in am. In after to town with Joh and played piano in Club.
Back to camp and after tea chatted till 2200hrs.

30 Sep Wednesday

Nil in am. In afternoon to town with John and Tommy and again played at the Club.
Saw Lady Freyberg who conversed considerably. Home to bed early.

1 Oct Thursday

Still waiting for message re plane. To HQ ME RAF in evening. Omlette at Regent with John and cracked leg in midar?. Sulieman Pasha - Home mostly.

2 Oct Friday

To 1 GH. Xrayed. Ext Tib Coolyle - Spine and Int. Left Lig gone - admitted.
Till 14 Oct in hospital - Discharged to Maadi. To Cairo and got shoe made for plastered foot.

15 Oct Thursday

To Helwan. Wrote letters in evening.

16 - 18 Oct

Nil

19 Oct Monday

to Cairo with Celan Wilson Ted Young, Pat Howden and Jack Demouth.
To "Corsican Brothers" at Diana. Pretty poor! To St James with Jack to "Major Barbara"
Good Show! Back to St James and home about 11pm.

20 Oct Tuesday

To Helwan in am. Saw Kennedy Elliot. In pm to Maadi in search of French teacher. End up at RC convent. Had coffee with nuns and then home.

21 Oct Wed - 11 Nov Tue

Battle of Alamaine

American landings N Africa.

Bit dithery cause I don't know whether I'm to be sent home or not. Quiet life in camp.

11 Nov - 2 Dec Wed

Absolutely nothing!. Waiting to hear when I can go back to NZ. Abi Freyberg and Max Halliday arrived in and that cost me 100 ackers. DMS to decide at noon today when I can go.

3 Dec Thur - 6 Dec 6

Nil. Still not definite till on Sunday DMS sent for me and gave me the option. Obvious answer.

Did shopping Got Alescandrettas? and was delighted. Out of plaster.

7 Dec Monday

In evening the boys turned on a turkey dinner for me. John Demouth arrived in in the middle - also later Ian Murray. Had a grand dinner - Alan Lomas said a toast to me which would make your hair stand on end. It was a jolly good evening and very good of the Mess.

8 Dec Tuesday

7.30am Left with Col Muir and MS for Suez.

Disappointed and relieved to find Hel not on ship.

Came aboard and was kept in bed owing to synovitis.

9 Dec Wednesday

Sailed at noon. In bed till Wed 16th

On sat 19th we deviated to collect 3 German escapees from Goa. They were in a small sail boat trying to make the Andamam Islands (in the Bay of Bengal) and join the Japanese.

20 Dec Sunday

Arrived Columbo. Went ashore with Col/ Nicoll. Shopped in bazaar and in Chinese shops. Snack at Grand Oriental Hotel. Sailed at 4pm leaving one patient behind.

Xmas at sea - Big dinner and little else.

30 Dec

Arrived Fremantle at 6am. Ashore and to Perth thru the King Gardens overlooking Swan River.

Taken in by ladies of West Aust. Red Cross.

To Pastoral Building and found Margaret Walsh - now Mrs Kenkins.

Shopping. Toys skinned out - to Boins and got teddy bear for Tessa.

Could not get camel in Cairo or Elephant in Columbo or Koala in Perth!.

Bad luck but Teddy is a beaut.

Had lunch at Red Cross with Margaret.

Picked up with Col Nicoll, Geoff Cooper, Bob Cheyne and Tony Tikea Barrett at the Esplanade.

Back to the ship at 2.30pm (12miles) Sailed at 5pm after being played ou by an Aussie band. Cpt. Daniels chased us in a launch and was was taken aboard as the pilot got off.

Left three others ashore at Fremantle.

Rolling a lot in the evening.

31 Dec.

New Years Eve.

A few glasses of beer, a sing song in the lounge and to bed.

1943

2 - 3 Jan Saturday

One week today we dock at Wgtn. and I wonder if Tessa 152 will be there.

Thank heaven that thought is there, otherwise without letters for so long it would be pretty depressing

5 Jan

Doing boards skill. At night put on a concert I had been writing the script for and got a great hearing. It was fun on the microphone.

Albatrosses still following and Mother Carey's chickens about the ship.

Rolling a bit but it has been a very smooth journey

7 Jan Thursday

Wrote music for "Storm Clouds at Sea" today.

I think Tessa will like this music.

We are told that tomorrow afternoon we spot land. The next day will be Wgtn.

Oh Boy!

