

Action front

Journal of the 2/2 Field Regiment

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THE REGIMENT'S FIRST TRIUMPH 2/2 Produces First Printed Newspaper in 2nd A.I.F.

THIS XMAS we possess two facts of which we are fully entitled to be more than proud. First and foremost is the fact that we are gunners and members of the 2/2 Field Regt., and, secondly, that we have cut our first niche in our climb to fame, inasmuch as that we have produced the first printed regimental newspaper in the 2nd A.I.F.

We have heard that the A.A.M.C. at "Pucka" have produced a multigraph newspaper, but—after careful checking—we firmly believe that Action Front is entitled to be called the first newspaper of the 2nd A.I.F. Justly, may we be proud of the boast.

Action Front was created in the mind of S/Sgt. Colson "Chilla", Q.M. of the 3rd Bty. He approached Sgt. Liddy, cartoonist and journalist in past civil life, with the idea of editing it. Ted Liddy was more than eager to accept the privilege of becoming Editor to the newly-born chronicle of the 2/2 Field Regt.

Our editorial policy is easily expressed—it is simply the policy of the Australian Soldier: his ideals, philosophy and humor are also our very own.

To avoid complications (if any) it is the desire of the staff to state that whilst Action Front is one of those semi-official privileges that are not frowned upon, it does not necessarily express the opinions of the Regiment, its officers or its troops. If there are any kicks coming—which we hope to avoid by common sense—the onus will be on the editor, Sgt. Liddy, who accepts all responsibility.

We respectfully invite contributions from all members of our fighting forces. Original contributions of a topical nature, clearly written or typed are preferred.

We will not accept articles on politics, religion or articles of an obscene nature.

We aim at a paper not only for the barrack room, but one that we can send home to our people.

Action Front will be a bi-monthly publication; and copy should be in our

STOP PRESS

Apropos of the well-known story that Napoleon wore a red coat so that, had he been wounded, the blood would not show and so discourage his troops.

Our Intelligence Corps have reported that Herr Hitler, since learning that the Diggers are again coming into action, has taken to wearing khaki breeches.

hands at least one week before the date of publication. (For dates see Troop notice boards.)

The staff feels it would be very remiss not to pay a tribute to the Herald & Weekly Times Pty. Ltd.—who with typical digger spirit—so generously donated the printing of this issue.

In conclusion our special thanks are extended to Col. Kitto and Sgt. McKay for the wonderful help they have extended us. Without this we feel sure that Action Front would still be in its embryonic stages.

A.A.O.C. LEAVE SEYMOUR

Back to the Showgrounds!

At 0430 hrs., the Australian Army Ordnance Corp sent their main body to the Showgrounds to attend an 18-day school.

The rearguard—under S/Sgt. McLeod—remained to return stores, and by a desperate attempt made the 1100 hrs. train on the same day.

The Artillery miss their friendly neighbors.

"WE ARE GRATEFUL . . ."

"Mother" McLeod's Fond Farewell

With a sob in his voice, a fluttering in his heart (if Sergeants have that portion of anatomy) and beads of perspiration on his manly brow, S/Sgt. McLeod, I/C of the A.A.O.C. said farewell to the 2/2 Regiment.

"But, honestly," said Mac, as he had his last meal in the mess, "we are really sorry to go. We—that is Frank Hawkins, Harold Westcott (known as 'Aroid wiff eyeful of arrow'), and myself—have been treated marvellously both in and out of the Mess. As for the boys...well, the gunners have treated them like fellow members of the Regiment.

"Colonel Cremor, your second-in-command, has been like a father to our lads. In fact, after a few weeks with him it's hard for us to realise that he isn't OUR 2nd I/C!

"The A.A.O.C. would like to bid the Gunners Au Revoir, and to extend to them the compliments of the season."

(It's just the way we have in the Artillery. Thanks, Mac—Editor.)

A Page From The Padre's Diary

Saturday, Dec. 2nd,

One must be born to this life of shrill whistles soon after dawn and the stirring of men who a moment ago were so peacefully slumbering—but there it is, Reveille calling us to another day of...what?

For me, a day of adventures which are going to take me into strange paths. Each day I feel that I am entering into someone's life, learning the confidences of their home and personal life.

This lad, —, is really under age; but he is very game. Finds army life tough, and is unaccustomed to the "hardening up" process of military routine.

He mistakes the rough sympathy of his older "cobbers" for lack of it. So, he comes to talk things over. Does he want to quit? Oh, no! Just a friendly word of encouragement....

I notice the real comradeship of these "diggers of 1939" as I make my customary round in the isolation (hospital) tent and lines. "Cobbers" were making calls upon mates—bringing writing paper, books and the daily papers. In almost every case the "cobbers" would linger to have a yarn.

"Bill Jones" comes to see me after the last parade. He comes, is invited to sit and has a "gasper." His trouble is to make up a domestic trouble of long standing. Will I write to "Her"? Yes, I write—with a prayer that Bill and his missus may be brought together again.

Was it the sun that upset my physical equilibrium today? I felt while umpiring the cricket match that the "going was rather hard"—perhaps, after all, it's the army tucker! The "plum duff" I encountered in my nightly tent visiting! This digger's sister certainly knows how to make a pudding. There was something almost sacramental in sitting down in that tent with a fist full of "plum duff."

Well! another day has gone—again that whistle, and the lights go out.

And as I lie in my bed, so narrow and so hard, and my heavy eyes scan the "Herald," I know that that whistle will rouse me again tomorrow—to carry on. Thank goodness my preparations for Sunday are made. The few words for Church Parade jotted down, and the motor trucks ordered for the afternoon swimming parade.... Yes, it's all worth while.

EDITORIAL AN OLD MILITIAMAN LOOKS BACK

By "ICI"

"It's Good to See the Guns Again"

"It's good to see the guns again." The senior infantry officer who made this remark went on to tell us how, after a day or two "out in the blue" without artillery support, there grew a feeling of confidence and security when the guns behind them began to speak again.

His little anecdote seems to crystallise the task before all of us in this 2/2nd Field Regiment. Some of us have trained for years and have a certain amount of knowledge of the gunner's art. Others have started at the very beginning. But there can be no doubt that everyone is resolved to learn his own particular part thoroughly. When we have done this, we have to work into a team. There must be team work among the gunners in a detachment, teamwork among the drivers, teamwork between the troops and between the batteries.

Even our 2/2nd Field Regiment is only a part of the Greater Regiment — the Regiment of Artillery. The traditions of "the Regiment" are there to inspire every young gunner — we must give our comrades of the infantry all the support and protection they want, when they want it and where they want it. And that support we must give, often regardless of the cost.

Now in less serious vein! There are many lighter moments in this soldiering business—in fact, when you look back on it all in after years, the lighter moments are the ones that stick in the memory. Because this paper will produce some of these lighter moments, we welcome it and look forward to further numbers.

— COL. RAMSEY,
C.O., 2/2nd Field Regiment.

The First Division of the First A.I.F. owed its efficiency mainly to those Citizen Force officers and N.C.O.'s of the pre-1914 years who had learnt something of soldiering and army organisation — and what a tradition it created! Twenty-one years later we have to thank the ex-militia officers and N.C.O.'s for doing the same job for the 6th Division of the Second A.I.F. Against every kind of discouragement, inexcusable stupidities and hopeless conditions, these chaps persevered in learning their job and in keeping their units efficient — and today they are available to train us. From one brigade alone came 13 of our officers and 14 N.C.O.'s, all imbued with the idea that a gunner is a soldier par excellence and one who must know his job thoroughly. And so it is with all of them. Then, hats off to the ex-militia man.

However, in our ranks are many who will equal and even surpass our militia friends. In one sub-section of the First Division in 1914 were 18 men of whom 14 finished with commissions and two of them became battery commanders so, in the years to come, we will remember the pleasant training days of Seymour and come hail or come sun we will also remember the good blokes we met in the 2/2nd Field Regiment.

Soldiering is like that. The writer has served since a youngster of 12 in the junior cadets, but the good days have outnumbered the bad. On one occasion a 4.5 shell improperly rammed fell out of the breech and the detachment scattered immediately; but a very shamefaced set of lads listened to the G.P.O.'s blast of sarcasm anent their ignorance. Then there was the sergeant when Nos. 1 were called out by the B.C. to mark a battery position. On an unmanageable horse he could not pull up, but when galloping past he was greeted with a blasphemous inquiry as to where he thought he was going, cheerfully waved his hat and said to his major: "All right, sir, back in a minute."

Then one remembers the night in Paris when two young gunners were properly lost and one, fancying his schoolboy French, inquired of an elderly French gentleman the way to the Rue de la Republique, to be annihilated by the courtly reply, "If monsieur will kindly speak English I shall tell him what he wants to know." Or the day in the convoy when the "Marathon" dropped a medicine ball overboard and six other perfectly navigated ships did a swift turn

to avoid the dangerous mine! Then the day when all the army staff were congregated on a hill. The telephone line, a mile long, worked perfectly till 1500 hours and the battery started to shoot. One gun consistently dropped its shells on the shoulder of the hill, the army staff conducted a dignified flank retreat — and the telephone line wouldn't work!

Such is soldiering! Happy nights in the estaminet, grand times on leave, "wind-up" when the ironmongery bursts around, pleasant chi-ack in the billets, extra fatigues because the sergeant has a liver or catches us out, and an intense pride that we are gunners. "Quo fas et gloria ducunt." Where honor and glory lead. Can you think of a better motto? And then "Ubique"; everywhere. There has never been a battle where the artillery has not been. For that reason, we have no battle colors. But so long as we believe in ourselves, and our infantry trust us, what matter whether it is a wooden cross or service ribbons! We have proved to ourselves that we are men — and GUNNERS.

THE FIGHT FOR THE SEYMOUR ASHES

Regimental history was made on the afternoons of 13th and 14th December, when a stirring battle was fought. The occasion happened to be a cricket match between A and B troops. It has not yet been ascertained whether the persons taking part are actually cricketers or whether they entered the team to get out of battery foot drill and P.T.

However, as there have been many diverse reports on the play and results, we publish the following as the official B troop version:—

Up went the coin and off went the shirts. A troop won the toss (and probably won the match), but much to the amazement of A troop cricketers (oh, yeah!). B troop was sent in to bat on a sticky wicket. Off went B troop — it was a case of action front, back, side, in fact, all around. Captain (Gnr. Pallamoutagne) had the fieldsmen on their toes and finally on their backs. He carried his bat, even after the 17 umpires had declared him out. Tony (Gnr. Galloway) went in amid great applause and, as is customary in the artillery, doubled here, doubled there, and finally doubled himself into a knot.

Gnrs. Larter, Merles, McClure, Lees, McPherson, James, Bowden, Forbes, and Beyer all contributed to B troop's huge score.

B troop now fielded and what with the brilliant fielding of the trees and rabbit warrens A troop found runs very difficult to get. After much hard work they probably would have won rather easily, only the orderly bombardier could be heard in the distance calling for mess orderlies. Thus the match finished in the best of spirits, probably due to the thought of mess and also the absence of bombardiers.



ANY VACANCIES FOR A COLONEL, SARGE?