



NEWSLETTER

GENERAL SECRETARY

The only nomination received in response to the notification in the last Newsletter for the position of General Secretary for the year 1974/75 was that of Charles Carthew. As you are aware, Charles is the Victorian Secretary and has been the General Secretary for the last 12 months. The year has brought renewed activity and interest in the Veterans' Association, no doubt due to a lot of Charles' hard work. He has corresponded with overseas affiliated organisations and has kept a close liaison with the various State Secretaries. During the year, through the courtesy of the General Manager of O.T.C., he was able to visit Sydney and Adelaide for their General Meetings. He also did a lot of work in getting the Western Australian Association off the ground. Charles is to be congratulated on his first year of office and there is no doubt that the State Committees will accept his nomination for the forthcoming year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

New South Wales

The N.S.W. Association will be holding their Annual General Meeting on 24th May, 1974, in the new O.T.C. Terminal Building at Broadway. It is hoped that members will be able to see the well-planned and up-to-date facilities being provided in the new building. Also to see some films in the theatre. Interstate members who are in Sydney at that time are cordially invited.

Victoria

Victoria's Annual General Meeting is set down for Friday, 31st May, at the usual venue.

South Australia

The South Australian Association will meet on Monday, 27th May at 7.30 p.m. The venue is the Public Service Club at 73 Wakefield Street, Adelaide.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

As advised in previous Newsletters, a number of variations to the Constitution were required for the provision of a General Secretary. The amendments were considered at extraordinary General Meetings held at the end of last year and all items were approved by the members except the proposed clause on eligibility. The proposed clause was passed in all States except N.S.W. and a Notice of Motion has been submitted for consideration at the next Annual General Meeting. The Notice of Motion submits that the eligibility clause be amended to read, "25 years in overseas telecommunications for males and 20 years for females and all officers who retire from the service of the Commission. The State Committees shall determine eligibility for membership.

Your Committees have considered the proposed amendment and do not recommend the amendment as it is their considered opinion that the Veterans' Association is a unique organisation and that 25 years service is not unreasonable

to join such an organisation. Should the amendment be approved, the Association, in a matter of time, would virtually change to an O.T.C. retired officers' association, and it is felt that this was not the purpose of the foundation members of our Association. It has been pointed out that various retired officers of O.T.C. had such as 23 years service and due to reaching the maximum retiring age did not have the opportunity to gain the extra 2 years. Many of these people would like to keep up acquaintanceships with their old colleagues and are denied this by the present eligibility clause.

A point of view brought up at the committee meeting was that retired years could be deemed as serving years and therefore when the sum of working years and retired years reached 25, that person should then be eligible. A number of the committee agreed to this condition and felt that it should be recommended to the meetings for discussion and if favourable, for adoption.

Further arguments brought up were that if O.T.C. retired officers with under 25 years service were allowed to join, why not include similar folk from A.W.A. and any other associated organisations. Also that members may approach the President at any time to invite non-eligible people as guests and those that come under the above categories could no doubt be invited to the functions as paying guests.

Another problem associated with eligibility is that in the Western Australian area where the Cottesloe Cable Station was closed down, staff were given the opportunity to join the Post Office service rather than make a new life in the eastern States. A number of these have a total of over 25 years if their Post Office service is included. Therefore your committees recommend that these officers be deemed as retired from the service from the date of closure of Cottesloe and the period of time since the closing be counted for eligibility.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION

It is with pleasure that we advise that a Western Australian Association has been formed. A number of the members are from the ex-Cottesloe cable staff group who have met regularly for a number of years. Unfortunately, some of these members do not meet the present eligibility clause for membership of the Veterans' Association and it has been suggested that the Veterans' Association and the ex-Cottesloe group band together and run their functions concurrently. It is felt that such an arrangement would bring together two groups closely associated and also prevent any ill-feeling. Until the Western Australian Association hold their Annual General Meeting, Geoff Warner has accepted the post of President and Brian Morrell the post of Secretary/Treasurer as an interim arrangement until they can have a formal election. Geoff has not been in Perth very long after many years away from that State and is the Manager of the O.T.C. stations in Perth. Brian Morrell is an ex-Cottesloe member now in the employment of the Post Office and it is due mainly to his untiring efforts that the Association in that area has now been formed. Brian has been one of the driving forces behind the regular annual Cottesloe staff gatherings.

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The late Lou Sherburn of Cottesloe and Melbourne fame, regularly turned out verse and was the writer of a great deal of the material for the Wagga Weekends. You may remember one of his verses sung to the tune, "I will still love you".

"If the Commission paid us double and COSCLO1 gave no more trouble,
I would still love you.
If the CAO got lax and the Commission paid our tax,
I would still love you.
If a decent rise was given to reduce the cost of livin',
I would still love you.
If we only got promotion which would lessen our commotion,
I would still love you.

Applecross staff nearly fainted when inside their homes was painted
 They hope that very soon,
 O.T.C. will gladly say "paint the outside blue and grey
 to match the transmitting room."
 If they want some sound advice on how to get things at cost price,
 A secret I'll impart.
 Carpets matching curtains bright, color schemes are his delight,
 Just contact our Moss Hart.

If Len Michell could only find all the things he leaves behind dear,
 I would still love you.
 If Brian Morrell was not so strenuous and he even gave up tennis,
 I would still love you.
 If the office workshop door was left open after four
 Then I would still love you.
 If a certain member of the staff cut his phone calls down by half,
 Then I would still love you.

Now at last this rot is ended and we hope none's offended,
 No offence was meant.
 The items now have all been rendered
 We hope the day will be remembered as one that's been well spent.
 Come again this time next year and help us drink up all the beer
 Your company is fine.
 To each of us who's present here, we wish good luck throughout the year
 In nineteen fifty-nine."

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REUNION

The South Australian Association held their Christmas "get-together" on 3rd December at the Public Service Club - we are again indebted to Ken Collett who made it possible for us to meet there, it is more satisfactory in every way than going to a hotel.

Those present were:-

Ken Springbett	Gerald Shaw	Alf Kerr
"Longun" Evans	Charles Smith	Norm Giles
Leo Gleeson	Bert Dudley	Cecil Shortt
"Brax" Horrocks	Ralph Matthews	Norm McKay
Ron Ward	Cliff Birks	Geoff Cox
Harold Oates	"Muhlie" Muhlhan	Ken Collett
Keith Roberts	George Rowe	Charles Carthew

We were glad to see Cliff Birks again as he had been unwell during the winter. It was good to see Muhlie again too, he has 89 summers behind him and looks remarkably well.

We welcomed Geoff Cox to our Adelaide Branch - Geoff has settled near Port Noarlunga and we hope he will be able to come to future meetings.

Charles Carthew made a special trip from Melbourne to talk to us regarding the functions of O.T.V.A. Charles has written many times over the years and it was good to meet him.

Bruce Sutherland in New Zealand and Pat Sykes in Western Australia sent their greetings and wish to be remembered to all. Missed at the reunion was Eric Symes who is back in hospital. He was recovering from his illnesses when he unfortunately fell and broke his hip. Also missed were Bill Lemon and Rocky Gordon who were not well enough to travel.

F.L.Brown
D.F.Batten
M.Wilton
E.M.Dennis

Robinson
C W Stewart
Mc Blain
~~S R Lind~~
Mervyn Fernando
Gordon Baileys
W J Treacy
W D Morris
H E Mershaw
L B Brown
Brian Williams
R J Turnbull
V Ingleton
J Sprungitt
Max Fernando
A L van Oortbeek
J Isakov
Tom & Willem.
Male Short
Read

VICTORIAN REUNION

The Reunion held on 9th November, 1973, was once again its normal successful function due to the untiring efforts of Charles Carthew and his many helpers, not forgetting the ladies. A special General Meeting was held prior to the Reunion and all amendments to the Constitution were adopted unanimously. A list of the signatures of those attending appears on Page 4 of this Newsletter.

Highlight of the Reunion was a phone hook-up with the C. & W. Veterans' Meeting at Worthing. The hook-up resulted from a suggestion by Chris Fox and was fixed up in London by Les Purnell. The Public Relations people took photos of the occasion.

Guests from Sydney were Tom Molloy, Joe Collister, Wilf Ellershaw and Allan Cupit.

N.S.W. REUNION

The N.S.W. Reunion was held on 23rd November, 1973, in the new G.P.O. Functions Room. This venue is ideal for our needs and the evening proved very successful. Prior to the meeting, an extraordinary General Meeting, re changes to the Constitution, was held and all matters were finalised except eligibility. This has been notified elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Highlights of the night were new members Joe Hawkins and Stan Ellis; the attendance after many years of Alf Agius; and the presence of guest, O.T.C. Chairman, Sir Arthur Petfield.

The following attended:

Harry de Dassell	Joe Hawkins	Percy Day
Dick Osborn	Jack Bullen	Jim Neylon
Roy Doohan	John Hodgson	John Grosbard
Don McIntosh	Ted O'Donnell	Trevor Thatcher
Hedley Caswell	Fred Hinds	John Creswick
Keith Vincent	Gordon Cupit	Reg Towner
Kath Morgan	Norm Harris	Alf Culloden
Eileen Haran	Ken Walker	Stan Gray
Claude Dalley	Norm Alderson	Charlie Swinney
Jack Guthrie	Arthur Oliver	Fred St. Julian
Wilf Ellershaw	Cec Watson	Dick Christoffersen
Bert Waugh	Jack Creswick	John Mulholland
Ron Godfrey	Bruce Collett	Fred Doolette
John Lee	Eric Cockle	Arch Barrie
Alec Griffiths	Des Kinnersley	Phil Chapman
Keith Oxley	Frank White	Ken Stone
Randy Payne	Tom Molloy	Bill Luke
Abe Sharland	Jim Shore	Bill Brown
Dave Fleming	Vin Sim	Jim Donnelly
Alf Agius	Des Woods	Cyril Manning
Stan Ellis	Ray Carragher	Charlie Raecke
Ted Gunning	Charlie Barden	Nellie Donohue
Rus Welbourn	Tom Hughes	Bill Hickling
Joe Collister	Gareth Thompson	Jack Simpson
Ray Baty	Ernie Anthoñey	Tufty Baker
Jock Cowie	Marie Casey	Charlie Maiden
Alec Batten	Orm Cooper	Keith Bondfield
Tony Ebert	Ron Smith	Ces Bardwell
Frank Briggs	Eric Richardson	Ced Dale
Bill Jenvey	Bill Day	

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REUNION

Ex-employees of the Cottesloe Cable Station held their annual gathering on 10th December, 1973, at Ron Cocker's residence at Myaree. It was one of the best gatherings for many years; the most notable feature being the attendance of Alan Gilmore, a D/N employee who later served as Overseer in the Warwick House office.

The actual attendance was 16 personally present with another half a dozen or so being there "in spirit", namely Charlie Watt, just out of hospital following "observation", Frank McCay, waiting to enter hospital for tests (Frank just could not come along and sit there and watch others taking an occasional ale!!), Alf Birmingham in the Silver Chain Rest Home, Hilton (he would appreciate a card from anyone knowing him, I am sure), Des Else working as usual with the A.B.C. (T.V.) - and friends from the Eastern States - Ken Springbett and George Rowe, South Australia - Len Vella, Sydney - Charles Carthew and George McDonald, Victoria.

A minute's silence was observed in memory of Vernon Gibson who passed on late in the year.

Did no-one spot that unforgettable name "Fred McNulty" out here on leave - another reason why this year's gathering was so outstanding.

Pat Sykes was welcomed. He has been to every station in and around the Indian Ocean and always has a good story to relate. Those in attendance were:

Jack Thomas
Tony Hanson
Gerry Tacey
Bill Wells
Geoff Warner
Brian Morrell

Tim McCarthy
Alan Gilmore
Hercus Clark
Norm Odgers
Arthur Black

Harold Burdett
Pat Sykes
Fred McNulty
Harry Bromley
Ron Cocker

AUCKLAND VETERAN CABLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Annual General Meeting and Reunion were held as one function at Auckland on 7th December, 1973. Those attending were:

R.T. Atkins,
T.B. Condon
O. Crossley
H.J. Fox
F.N. Harry
R.G. Marchant
L.H. Russell
C.L. Smyth
W.J.W. Steward

H.C.C. Bradnam
P. Cowlshaw,
L.H. Davison
B. Giles
K.J. Healy
A.G. Miller
L. Sedman
F.C. Studman

R.J. Collins
W. Craig
H.G. Evetts
L. Gladding
R.K. Hosking
C. Nielsen
R.L.C. Sextie
D.J. Thompson

The Chairman, Bill Craig, addressed the meeting and extended a hearty welcome to all present, particularly the Post Office guests, Jack Potter and Bob Martin, who were attached to the Cable Station for a number of years. Bill said that he had recently had a trip to Australia where he had met many of his former colleagues and made acquaintances with O.T.V. (A) Secretaries, Charles Carthew in Melbourne and Gordon Cupit in Sydney.

One matter of business brought up at the meeting was a proposal that the staff of the satellite station at Warkworth be invited to join the Association. It was unanimously decided to retain their present arrangement for it was felt that to enrol new members might lose that spirit of comradeship created over 40 or 50 years of close association in the service. When the older veterans move on, it is expected that the younger Telcom members will maintain the Association for many years to come.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

We have received a few historical records and bits and pieces and would appreciate any other matter members might wish to dispose of. John Mulholland brought in some very interesting documents and Eric Richardson brought an old numbering stamp of monstrous dimensions.

Brax Horrocks, the President of the South Australian Association, has indicated that he would like to procure (buy if necessary) one of those old hand-punch blocks which were operated by using two metal punch sticks. He realises that the punches would be a museum piece these days but when he was in Darwin in 1924/25 they were used to perforate tape for feeding into the BW cable. Later the punching progressed to the KP mechanical perforator. In addition to the punch block, he would like to procure two of the punch sticks if any are available.

TO PASTURE

Bill Shea - Bill joined the Eastern Extension Cable Company in 1923 as a messenger and rose through the ranks in the Melbourne Operating Room to the position of Shift Controller.

His outside activities have been centred around bands where he has been playing since the age of 10. Even though he is retiring from the service, he hasn't lost his wind and he has led bands through several championships. It is understood that his sons are following in his brassy footsteps.

Norm Alderson - Norm joined the Eastern Extension and China Cable Company in 1923 as a junior and during that time, until the takeover by O.T.C., served in most operating room clerical type positions such as service clerk, despatch clerk, circulation clerk, counter clerk, transmitter clerk and abstracts clerk. On the takeover, Norm joined the actual clerical staff of O.T.C. and served in the Accounts, Engineering and Properties Branches. Outside his work, Norm has taken a very active part in community affairs particularly P. & C. Associations.

Bill Brown - Bill joined the Coastal Radio Service in 1940 and served at Townsville, Darwin, Geraldton and Perth. For many years Bill has been a C.R.S. officer-in-charge and Manager.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our O.T.C. members on their recent promotions. Graham Gosewinckel to Assistant General Manager (Corporate Services), George Maltby to Director (Foreign Relations), Dick Christoffersen to Director (Secretarial Services) and Randy Rayne to Director (Commercial).

Also to Charlie Raecke on attaining 58 years continuous service and still going strong. Is this a record?

SICKIES

From time to time some of our members are unfortunate enough to require hospital and other medical attention and so are out of circulation for a while. Those we hear about we endeavour to cover in the Newsletters but if your name was missed, a note to the editor will rectify. Also some of those we do advise we trust by the time this Newsletter is published that they are out of hospital and well and truly recovered or on the way to complete recovery.

Tiny Greenlees (Sydney) - Tiny Greenlees has been a very sick man and is at present at the Princess Juliana Convalescent Home, Bobbin Head Road, Turrumurra. He was admitted to the North Shore Hospital in November to undertake an operation for a brain tumour. He is now well enough for visitors and he would particularly like to see any of his old colleagues. ✓

Arthur Black (Perth) - Arthur has been three weeks in the Royal Perth Hospital where they fitted him with a completely new hip. He now has stainless steel balls and plastic coverings in his hip joints and can walk without a limp. One of the miracles of modern surgery. Trust you are soon back on the bowling green, Arthur.

Jack Burgess (Sydney) - Jack had a plumbing job done and was missing from the "ham" and bowling scene for a while, but pleased to report he is now back in business.

Bill Ringrose - Bill, that active "ham" at Forster, has been having ticker trouble and admitted to hospital.

Sid Zuber - Sid has had to give bowling away due to arthritis and is entering hospital for treatment. Hope to see you back on the green very soon Sid.

PARTICULARS OF SERVICE

Some of the members have completed their Particulars of Service forms and it is amazing the information we are gleaning from these forms. It is noticed that one of our members, Bert Sharpe, served on 29 vessels during his career in the A.W.A. Marine Service. Surely this must be a record but can you better it? If so fill in that form and let us know about it.

BOWLS DAY

The Veterans, in conjunction with the O.T.C. Social & Sports Club, will be holding a bowling day at the Dee Why R.S.L. Bowling Club, Pittwater Road, Dee Why on Sunday, 5th May, 1974. Veterans wishing to apply should contact Keith Vincent on 20333 Ext. 610 or Bernie White on Ext. 239. Entries close on 26th April, 1974. Ladies are invited.

If you are a bowler and wish to be placed on the distribution list for bowling notices, please contact Gordon Cupit.

VALE

It is with regret that we advise the passing of the following Veterans since our last issue of the Newsletter.

Don McIntosh - Don commenced his career in 1916 as a telegraph messenger at Bowen and 12 months later began telegraph operating duties at Townsville. In 1920 he resigned from the P.M.G.'s Department and enlisted in the A.N. & M.E.F. Wireless Section which was controlled by the Navy and he was given the rank of Chief Petty Officer. He remained in the expeditionary force for 2 years and during that time was stationed at Bitia Paka and Kieta.

Early in 1922 Don went over to the Island Radio Services which were under the control of the New Guinea Administration (later taken over by A.W.A.) and in 1923 transferred to Coastal Radio where he remained until 1925 when he was selected to undergo training for the proposed Beam Wireless Service. Part of the training was to study traffic handling overseas and to do so spent 6 months in London.

The remainder of Don's service was in the Sydney Operating Room where he held positions of Telegraphist, Senior Telegraphist, Supervisor, Assistant Traffic Superintendent and Traffic Superintendent. He also relieved the Traffic Manager from time to time. Due to Don's extensive Beam experience, he served on a number of committees studying traffic techniques and problems.

Bob Inglis - Bob became interested in wireless at a very early age and was only 19 when he took up duty at the A.W.A. Pioneer Ship-Shore Communications Station located on the top floor of the Hotel Australia in Sydney. This was in 1912. Later Bob decided to go to sea, his first ship being the S.S. "Moeroki". He was selected to join an early antarctic expedition but turned down the offer.

During the early part of World War I, Bob ran the gauntlet of submarine attacks in the Indian Ocean and at the age of 22 decided to enlist and therefore signed off as a ship's wireless officer to join the 3rd Signalling Troop, 1st Signal Squadron, A.I.F. on 2nd February, 1915. On completion of training, Bob sailed for Egypt but landed at Gallipoli and later going right through the Sinai campaign.

Returning to Australia in 1919, our late colleague resumed his marine service in A.W.A. and still keen to gain experience, volunteered for a transfer to the Willis Island Meteorological Station. This was in 1926 and there is a story in this issue on his term at Willis Island.

Throughout his Coastal Radio Service, Bob spent periods at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Cooktown, Flinders Island, King Island, Hobart and Adelaide. Bob was taken over by O.T.C. and in 1948 was selected for transfer to Darwin but decided that he preferred the ship's life, resigned and rejoined the A.W.A. Marine Service where he remained until his retirement in 1958.

Vernon Gibson - Vernon joined the Cable Service in Adelaide in 1915. As usual during his service, Vernon was moved around a great deal and for various periods he saw service at Perth, Cottesloe and Pedang. On the formation of O.T.C., Vernon was taken over from C. & W. and until he retired in 1963, remained at Cottesloe.

Charlie Featherstone - Charlie joined the Beam Wireless Service, Melbourne, in May, 1927, from Western Union at Valentia Island and immediately impressed upon everyone a happy personality not only contagious but consistent over the years.

At many early Aktug concerts in the now demolished St. Patrick's Hall, Bourke Street, Melbourne, the late Jack Chalkley teamed with "Feather" and their comic acts and flagrant disregard of script convulsed the audience with uproarious laughter.

Charlie always had a joke to tell and his fund of humour appeared inexhaustible; the art of mimicry inborn and practical jokes an irresistible urge he will most certainly be missed at future Victorian "get togethers".

Sir Lionel Hooke - Sir Lionel, so well-known to many of the members, started his career in radio communications in 1914 at the age of 17. One of his first tasks at that early age was wireless operator for the Shackleton South Pole Expedition. During the expedition their ship became icebound for a period of 10 months. After a period of 7 months in the icebound condition, due to many hours of calling and listening and tenacity, Sir Lionel finally got a message to the outside world.

During World War I he served as a Commission Officer on submarine chasers and later he was selected for a training course at Greenwich Naval College, followed by the command of armed rescue patrol boats in English waters. He then thought of flying and became a pilot in the Royal Naval Air Service and even gained the rare distinction of piloting a World War I airship. At the cessation of hostilities, he returned to Australia and in 1919 took up duty as Manager of Melbourne's A.W.A. office.

In the late 20's our colleague transferred to Head Office and was appointed Deputy General Manager under Sir Ernest Fisk. In this role he took a leading part in guiding A.W.A. through the depression and to its important role in World War II. It was his activities that quickly geared the company for war-time operation and was selected by the Government as Chairman of the Manpower Board. During the war, A.W.A. employed 5,000 staff and not only manufactured radio communication equipment but produced such things as navigational equipment, aircraft instruments and artillery fuses. It was also during the war years that Sir Lionel was promoted to General Manager.

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At the end of the war, A.W.A. continued on with many of its service contracts but immediately geared for peace-time operation and extended its participation in consumer products. At this time, A.W.A. also lost the Beam and Coastal Radio Services to O.T.C. However, the Company supplied O.T.C. with a great deal of communication equipment. In 1957, the Government recommended Sir Lionel for his services to the Radio Industry and he duly received a well deserved knighthood.

Whereas many people retire at 65, Sir Lionel remained in harness but in the latter years his son John has taken his place as Managing Director of A.W.A.

In addition to his untiring efforts and activities within A.W.A., he was connected with other organisations and held directorships with many companies including the Gas Company, Email and Channel 10. He was also Chairman of the Electronics and Telecommunications Industry Advisory Committee and for a number of years was on the senate of the University of Sydney.

Sir Lionel was a foundation member of the Veterans' Association but unfortunately, due to illness in the last few years, has been unable to attend any of our functions. He was a real pioneer in radio and it was pleasing to see the number of Veterans and other radio pioneers who attended a memorial service held at St. James Church, Sydney.

Jack Chesterfield - An old pioneer, who unfortunately was not a member of the Association, Jack Chesterfield passed away late in 1973. Jack was well-known to all the old A.W.A. people.

George Dowd - Another well-known identity, also not a Veteran, George Dowd passed away suddenly. George was well-known in the Melbourne Office where he was Staff Officer.

New Zealand

From the Veteran Cablemen's Association in Auckland, we have the deaths of the following pioneers:

Stan Meeks (P.C.B.)
J. Nicholson ("Iris")
Bill Coates (Eastern)
Harold Norton (P.C.B.)
G.K. Richmond (P.C.B.)

Sympathy

It is with regret that we have to advise that our colleagues, Bill Jenvey and Bert Sharpe lost their life's partners. To these gents we extend our deepest sympathy.

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- PIONEER NEW GUINEA -

Ted Bishton of Coastal Radio fame was in New Guinea for the period between the two world wars. He has written a book-length story on some of his experiences and one of these was setting up the radio station at Edie Creek at the time of the gold rush. His story is as follows:

"After the Montoro arrived I was very busy unpacking the wireless gear and re-packing it into 40 or 50 pound loads for the trip into the field. The wireless set was a small lifeboat set and the engine and generator were the heaviest portions of the set. As far as I can remember, these portions were about 100 pounds and were carried on a pole by two carriers. The smaller parts of the set were made up into 40 or 50 pound packs and strapped onto a carrier's back. All packs were wrapped in good heavy canvas to protect them from the weather. My food bill with Burns Philp was over £80 (\$160) and this all had to be packed as well. The wireless set needed 74 carriers alone, then carriers were needed to carry food for them. A couple of week's after the Montoro's arrival, I was ready for the trip into the goldfields. In the meantime, district officer, Major Skeate, had arrived in Salamaua and was in charge of the district. He supplied me with four police boys and directed me to go in via the Buang track as dysentery had broken out on the Gadagadu track and the carriers were dying like flies. No one had ever been to the goldfields via the Buang track, so of course I had to find my own way. I was supplied with a map showing the track as far as the village of Mapos, it also showed Kwasang, which was further on, but no european had ever been that far in. Just when I was ready to leave, Archie Whitburn asked if I could take him in with me - I readily acceded to his request and we were ready to go.

Major Skeate supplied a schooner and we got all our gear and stores aboard and set sail for Busama which is somewhere about 10 miles from Salamaua between Salamaua and Lae. Of course Lae in those days was just bush, no europeans there at all. When I left Busama I had 187 carriers and our first obstacle was a big river. It was so deep that the carriers had to put their packs on their heads. Fortunately the river was not a fast flowing one, but I remember standing on the river bank watching the carriers crossing. All the carriers were following each other and at approximately a yard apart, so the river would be approximately 200 yards wide as I had just on 200 carriers. This river was only a few miles after we left Busama and, on the present day map, could be the Bwussi river, but in those days I could not find out the names of the rivers and creeks. I know before we reached the goldfields we had crossed hundreds of them. The first village we stayed at was Lega. The going, as far as I remember, was fairly good to Lega. The next village we stayed at was Bulantim. This part of the trip was very rough. I put in more time sliding on my backside than on my feet. The next village we struck was Mapos. The Luluai of this village was a character named Tom. They had very big gardens here and to conserve my rice, I bought as much native food along the route as I could. A "balun" (a stringbag net) which could hold about 50 lbs of taro (Kau Kau) or sweet potato cost me a box of matches or a 2 ounce tobacco tin of salt. We were getting into wild country now and the natives were salt hungry. Their substitute for salt was the ash out of their fires. By the time we got to Mapos my potatoes and onions were beginning to grow. The onions were no good, but I showed Tom how to grow the potatoes. Over 30 years after, in about 1956, I was staying with friends Ernie and Florence Britton in Lae and at dinner time I remarked at the nice new potatoes and Ernie informed me that they came from Mapos village and that they practically supplied Lae with potatoes. When we left Mapos, we were getting into real cannibal country. From now on, Archie Whitburn stayed in front of the line of carriers and I brought up the rear. Some of the mountains we crossed were up around the 10,000 ft. mark and at that height it was bitterly cold. From the time we left Mapos, from morning to night, the sound of the Garamuts (Native drums) never seemed to cease. We would hear them in the valleys and gullies and on the mountain tops.

After leaving Mapos village, we lost all contact with the natives. Every village we entered we found deserted and some of the villages contained

anything up to 400 or 500 huts. Although we were not in contact with the natives, we were never without their company. As soon as we left a village, the garamuts would send out their message to be answered by garamuts from the village ahead. As we toiled from one village to another we were escorted by hundreds of natives who were on each side of our line of carriers. We could see them darting from tree to tree or fleeing through the kunai grass with their bows and arrows and spears held above their heads. The snake river was on our right, thousands of feet below and there was a huge waterfall which we kept in sight for days. This waterfall was on the far side of the snake river and seemed to have a fall of two or three thousand feet. We generally travelled on the tops of these mountains and some of them were real razorbacks. I remember going along one of these razorbacks - it was so narrow - about 18 inches to two feet wide. The native carriers were so sure-footed they thought nothing of it, but I handed my rifle to my boy and got down on my hands and knees. I must have travelled for some hours like this, but I was not game to stand up, especially after seeing one of the carriers drop his pack, which careered thousands of feet down below. On another day we seemed to be for hours crawling around a cliff face which was about two feet wide. One false step would have meant a fall of thousands of feet into the gully below. Some mornings we would start off from a mountain peak and fall or slide down for five or six thousand feet, then ascend the opposite mountain by climbing and pulling ourselves up on vines. By evening, when we would have reached the top, looking back to where we had started from in the morning seemed only a stone's throw, but that short distance had taken a lot of hard work and exertion. We eventually arrived at a very large village which we learned later was called Kwasang. There were several hundred houses in this village, but not a native to be seen although we knew they were in the vicinity and not too far away.

From the time I left Salamaua I had given strict instructions that my carriers should not invade any of the native gardens and I think this went a long way towards our peaceful trip so far. By this time a lot of the carriers had deserted and had tried to make their way back to the beach, but how many succeeded will never be known. In all the houses I inspected at Kwasang, they all seemed to be well made and as far as native huts were concerned, quite good. They each contained a large Purakin (wooden basin) which contained some sort of a seed from some tree. This seed was about the size of a walnut which was pierced by a stick about six inches long which the natives would twirl round in their hands and let it roll round in the wooden bowl, like a top spinning.

I was now getting short of carriers, so I decided to send the carriers on ahead with as many packs as they could carry, then return to Kwasang and pick up the remainder of the packs. This arrangement took 3 or 4 days before we finally left Kwasang. All the time we were there no native showed himself, but they were never far away. The trip from the coast to Kwasang was mostly through bush country, but after leaving Kwasang, the country opened out onto large Kunai grass plains. It was a delightful change to get out into the sun after being so many weeks under a canopy of trees. Most of the way we had to cut our way through the high Kunai grass. When the wind was propitious I would set fire to parts of this kunai country, which at times made the going much easier. After some days we came upon a large native garden. We made camp here and constructed make-shift lean-to shelters. These lean-to shelters were made by forcing two poles into the ground about ten feet apart, then fastening a crossbar on top at a height of about 8 to 10 feet, then placing smaller poles from the crossbar slanting to the ground at a distance of about 12 inches apart, then criss-crossing these with more poles and covering the whole lot with Kunai grass. These lean-tos made very good shelter from the weather and kept our gear dry.

By this time we had about 10 or 12 sick, sore and lame boys, so we decided to remain here with these boys while the remainder of the carriers went back along the track to where we had hidden the rest of our gear, stores etc. I sent the four police boys back with the carriers, Archie and I staying with the sick, sore and lame. There was a big village perched high up on the cliffs above us and the first day we were awakened to the sight of 3 or 4 hundred wild looking cannibals watching up from a knoll about 300 yards away. The name of this village I heard later was called Katamani. Each day while we were waiting for the line of carriers to return, these men of Katamani were getting closer

to our camp, so Archie and I decided that we would move on as soon as the carriers returned. These men of Katamani were gradually closing in on us. We could see them brandishing their spears and bows and arrows and they were getting close to within range of us. After about 5 days the carriers arrived back so we decided to move off immediately the following morning. By this time we were running short of food as we had been over a month on the trip. Up to this time we had not touched the native gardens, but now we had no alternative but to load all available carriers with as much native food as we could carry. We placed a good quantity of salt, matches and other trade goods alongside the garden in payment for the native foods we had taken, in fact we paid more liberally for what we had taken.

The following morning all the wireless gear and all the foodstuffs were loaded on to the carriers and the remainder of our gear we had to leave behind. As we began to move out at daylight, the men of Katamani swooped down on our camp and within minutes all our lean-tos were ablaze. Our carriers were moving out very quickly while Archie and I and the police boys brought up the rear. Most of the Kanakas were busy looting our camp and those that followed us were soon turned back after they had showered us with a spray of spears and arrows. We fired a few rounds back at them which steadied them in their tracks. We travelled fast all that day and I think it was late that afternoon that we arrived at the Bulolo River. We looked round for a place to camp and more or less decided on a nice green grassy patch of land on the river bank. Just then I remembered reading about the Diamantina River in Queensland where so many people had been trapped. However, we decided to camp on a small knoll just above the river. Although we had had no rain during the night, the following morning the Bulolo was a raging torrent and the spot where we had contemplated camping was 10n to 12 feet under water. It had rained higher up the river during the night. Just below where we were camped we could see where the Watut River joined the Bulolo. On the way to the Bulolo River, I could look down to the valleys below and the trees were dotted with white cockatoos. They must have been there in millions, as it looked like a cotton field. My cookboy shot some and made a curry out of them. It was the first time I had ever eaten cockatoo and the last. Whether they were too old I cannot say, but a rubber shoe would have been easier to get one's teeth into. We stayed here a couple of days to give the carriers a rest and, in the meantime, Archie and I did a bit of prospecting.

I pegged out a lease on the Watut River, which I think I called the "thunderbolt". I had a miner's right which I had taken out in Salamaua before starting on this trip. Archie and I decided to do a bit of prospecting on the far side of the Watut River, but the trouble was to cross the river as it was running pretty fast. We could see a small beach about 50 yards down the river and we reckoned if we went a little higher up the river and dived in we should be able to make this little beach. So we went a little higher up the river and dived in. Archie made the beach, but I got carried on. I was making remarkable speed but could see no way of getting out of the river as the banks on both sides were too high. Eventually things looked desperate and I got scared when in the distance I could see where the Bulolo and Watut rivers met and I realised that if I did not get out of the river before that I would be lost, as the rocks and boulders and the seething mass of water was like the bottom of the Niagara Falls. I tried several times grabbing the side of the bank, but to no avail. At last in the distance I could see a small branch of a tree overhanging the river and I thought - This is my last chance. As I neared this branch I nerved myself and with a supreme effort I reached up and grabbed the branch. The force of the water threw me up into the side of the river bank and I knew I was safe for the moment. The bank of the river was still very high and I wondered whether the branch was strong enough for me to pull myself out of the river. Fortunately the branch held and I got out of the river. I remember I was pretty shaken up by this ordeal, so much so that I didn't do any prospecting. In the meantime Archie had gone on to do a bit of prospecting and I decided to get back to camp. I still had to negotiate the river crossing, but this time I picked out a beach, then went a good way up river before diving in. This time I made the beach without any trouble.

I noticed on the first day we arrived at the camp that at about 5 pm the sun was more or less blacked out by the swarms of flying foxes passing over. They must have been in their millions as it took at least half an hour for them

to pass over. The following day I decided to go up onto a spur of a hill and have a shot at them. I thought they were flying a bit too high and out of range, which is why I went a bit higher onto the spur. They were flying over in a thick mass and I fired two barrels into them. I saw a number of them twist and turn and expected to see some of them fall, but I was mistaken. I had fired practically perpendicularly and the next thing I felt what I thought was the shot falling back on me, but I soon realised that I was wrong and made a hasty retreat to the river and dived in, clothes and all.

We were now getting very close to our goal. We struck camp and proceeded up the Bulolo River. We did not know it was the Bulolo River until a couple of days later when we came upon old George Arnold's camp. When we left our camp at the junction of the two rivers (Bulolo and Watut) we set off up the Bulolo. We crossed and criss-crossed it several times and in places where it was too deep to cross and where it was a raging torrent, we had to cut down pine trees, which were felled across the river. The Bulolo was fringed on both banks with these beautiful Klinka pines. Some that we cut down must have been over 100 feet long. Sometimes when we had to cut a big pine, we were held up for 4 or 5 hours until the pine was cut through. When we arrived at George Arnold's camp, Archie Whitburn decided to push on alone, as we had already been on the track over 5 weeks since we had left the coast at Busama. George Arnold was on good gold, but only a few ounces per day. The gold on the Bulolo was practically pure as the further gold travels along these rivers, the more silver is rubbed off and practically pure gold remains. The gold in the Bulolo was then worth about £4.15.0 (\$9.50) an ounce as compared with £2.7.0 (\$4.70) per ounce for Edie Creek gold. George was an old Papuan miner and after staying the night with him we pushed on. Next evening we reached Doris Booth's Cliffside mine. Her husband Charlie was away at the time, either recruiting or procuring stores. We stayed the night at Cliffside and Doris Booth entertained me with her stories and experiences. She told me that when digging holes for the posts for her house, she was getting good gold from the holes. Cliffside was very rich and the Booths made a fortune.

We left Cliffside the following morning on the last leg of our trip. We were at the foot of Kaindi mountain and it was steady climbing from daylight until we reached a height of eight thousand feet and arrived at Edie Creek. The higher we climbed Mt. Kaindi, the thicker the moss grew on the trees and on the ground and after a certain height we were just pushing our way through moss about three feet deep. Naturally, the higher we went, the colder it got, although we had passed over much higher mountains. It must have been that we were a bit footsore and weary as we arrived at Edie Creek just five weeks and six days after leaving Salamaua. The few miners who were on the field were very pleased to see me. I think there were about 30 or 40 miners at Edie Creek at this time. They told me that the administration officials at Salamaua had reported me missing as no one had heard of me until Joe Bourke had come across two old fellows who were behind me making their way to Edie Creek. On one of the occasions when I had sent the carriers back to relay some of our gear, I received a note from Major Power saying that he and his mate by the name of Erskine had been stranded owing to their carriers having deserted them and asking my assistance to get them into the goldfields. Unfortunately, I had not the time or the carriers available to help them and it was at this stage where the men of Katamani had jumped us. Joe Bourke was a police master patrolling the Buang track along which I had come and he made arrangements with the natives at Mapos to get Power and Erskine back to the beach. I believe Erskine died on arrival at Salamaua and Power was shipped to Rabaul, where he died. I understand they were both Englishmen and pretty old and New Guinea was not a place for old men.

Among the stores I had brought from the beach was a two gallon demijohn of whisky. To mark my arrival on the Field at Edie Creek, I invited some of the miners that I knew to come along and celebrate the occasion. We lined our enamel pannikins along the ground and I opened the demijohn, but to our dismay and astonishment, the contents were green, like Creme de Menthe. We tasted it and it tasted like whisky, but we were too far from medical aid to take any risks, so it was all poured back into the demijohn and I sent it back to Salamaua and asked Burns Philp to credit my account with same. A day or so later, Bill Royal (the discoverer of Edie Creek) invited me down to his hut for

a drink. When I arrived there he produced a demijohn and out came the green fluid again. I asked if it was alright and he said he had been drinking it ever since he came to the fields and up to date it had had no ill effects. I had several drinks with Bill and cursed my luck in sending my demijohn back to Salamaua without first ascertaining whether it was good or bad.

On arriving at Edie Creek I pitched my tent on a small knoll overlooking Bill Royal's hut, which was on a flat at the junction of the Edie and Meri creeks. Fortunately, all the wireless gear arrived in good order and within a week I was on the air. In the meantime, since I had left Salamaua, a wireless station had been erected there and I made contact with Betts, who was operating the station. I pegged out a claim adjoining Darby's Eldorado lease, which was right alongside the wireless station. To get water on to my claim, I had to go about 100 yards up Edie Creek and dam a small creek, then cut a water race from there to my claim. Whilst cutting the water race, I cut through some very good gold. A few days later, a friend of mine, Hall Best arrived on the field. He had come in on the Buang track behind me and told me that the natives at Katamani had jumped him and he had to shoot his way out. He was looking for a bit of ground to work, so I put him onto the spot where my water race cut through. He did very well, but got onto something better later on."

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- EXPERIENCES ON FANNING ISLAND -

We are indebted to T.B. Condon for this story on his experiences at Fanning Island.

Serving two terms of two years and more were experienced by me as a cableman on this atoll which comprises one of the Line Islands, 228 nautical miles north of the equator. Roughly oval, the island is 9.5 miles long by 6 miles wide with an area of 8,500 acres with the enclosed lagoon having an area of 42.6 square miles. The rim of the island is very low, made up of a beach crest, about 10 or 12 feet high, within which much of the land is only 2 or 3 feet above sea-level. The climate, although warm, is very uniform and healthy, with the mean temperature 83.5 (73 to 92) degrees F., modified by nearly continual trade winds. These blow from the southeast 45 percent, from the east 30 percent, and from the northeast 13 percent of the time. The annual rainfall is variable, but usually is between 80 and 100 inches, with as much as 125 inches.

Fanning was discovered by Captain Fanning in 1798 and since then various adventurers have called including the French, Captain Legoarant de Tromelin, whalers of many nationalities, and one Father Emmanuel Rougier, who had a hand in forming a copra company together with nearby Washington Island. This venture, due to the low price of copra, folded up and was subsequently sold to Burns Philp Co. Ltd., trading under the name of Fanning Island Plantations Limited. The island, known by the natives as "The place of the heavenly footstep", has a link with Tonga for Kenneth P. Emory, Bishop Museum anthropologist, describes (1934 and 1939) some ruins, adzes, a fishhook and other ethnological specimens found on Fanning. He concludes that the Island was populated by people from Tonga about the fifteenth century. A cable relay station was established in 1902. This breaks the stretch from Bamfield, Vancouver Island, Canada, to Suva, Fiji.

It is worthy of note here that the Bamfield-Fanning span is the longest continuous cable length in the world, 3,458 nautical miles with soundings for a great part of the route from 2,800 to 3,400 fathoms. The Fanning-Suva span is 2.043 nautical miles. The soil is fertile and breadfruit, bananas, figs, pineapples, taro and arrowroot grow readily. Soil has been imported from Honolulu for vegetable gardens. One member of the staff, Harry Colliver from Adelaide,

did have some success growing tomatoes successfully using the hydroponics method. Marine life is abundant along the reef and also in the lagoon. Land crabs are numerous, making burrows in the sand. It has been reported by a sober member of the staff that he witnessed a singlet disappear down a burrow? There are the usual sea and migratory birds, the latter chose Fanning as a stopping place on their flight from Alaska to points south. Giving them time to become fat, where they rested on the few lakes on the atoll, they proved to be a welcome change to the diet. It is interesting to note that a highly coloured parrakeet and a warbler also adopted Fanning as their home.

Fanning lies far from any of the regular tracks of ocean-going steamers but, in spite of its isolation and its restricted area, the station is not an unpopular one with the staff as the following experiences will endorse. Fanning has, through the years, been staffed by Australians, New Zealanders, Englishmen, while I can recall with pleasure four men from Norfolk Island. All combined to make a competent and worthy team. All were trained in their respective countries and were rigorously schooled both as operators and engineers. This thorough training was most necessary for messages of vital importance to Government and commercial interests alike passed through their hands. Errors were something to be avoided. Moreover until the advent of advanced technological knowledge, cable signals were unstable and experience and skill were needed to translate them correctly.

As at other cable stations, shift work was necessary and it took some twenty-five men to man this station, some were married, but the majority were single. Today with the advent of the relay, magnifier and other engineering skills, the personnel would be one quarter of this figure. Until 1931, the Union S.S. Co. freighters stopped with supplies. Since then, however, the island has been supplied from Honolulu, the S.S. "Dickenson" making quarterly trips, captained by Captain Piltz. The "Doris Crane" also plied from San Francisco primarily to lift copra from Fanning and nearby Washington Island. We gladly welcomed this barquentine coming as she did between the trips of the Dickenson. Captained by the legendary McCullough, a typical Nova Scotian blue nose, with the green sea in the marrow of his bones. Great was the interest in this man who was in the mould of other sea dogs, tough but nevertheless kind. He told some rare stories of the sea, of ship-mates and experiences in various ports of the world.

The "Crane" also brought much needed fresh food and although we always were adequately stocked, freshness was always appreciated. Merchandise too, particularly clothing, from the shelves of Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward were eagerly sought, after perusing the catalogues, which were presented in a most illuminating manner. Unlike the freighters from the Antipodes who made the station, Whalers Anchorage, their port of call, the "Crane" invariably berthed at English Harbour bordering the passage and the headquarters of the copra company. From this point the cargo was either brought to the cable station by whale boat, via the lagoon, or the ocean route, whichever one was suitable at the particular time. The lagoon did present difficulties in that coral outcrops exist and this made navigation hazardous as the passages are narrow and tortuous. However, handling and the unloading presented no difficulties as the labour was abundant and skilful and a system of tram rails minimised handling, conveying the cargo direct to its destination whether it be the Mess store or the refrigerated chambers. Most of the cargo was destined for these two points. It was indeed a revelation to see the Gilbertese handling the whale boats in the heavy surf and swell, manoeuvring to just the right time when the opening appeared, then letting the boat ride calmly through the opening to the haven of the quiet water and the beach beyond.

Harking back to comforts on the island, many were provided. They included radio, refrigeration, electric light (derived from Diesel generators), a doctor, tennis court, library, and even a branch of the New Zealand Post Office Savings Bank. Where would you in such a remote outpost find such a range of the comforts of modern living? I did mention labour. This was recruited from the Gilbert and Ellice group every two years and they were worthy types, both male and female, adept at handling boats as well as serving as policemen, servants and the general run of labour to be found on copra plantations.

One outstanding figure on Fanning was one Hughie Greig, a part Manihikian. About 1857, a whaling ship brought to Fanning an Ayrshire Scotsman, William Greig. A short time later he was joined by an American, George Bicknell. Both married native islanders, Greig's wife being Teanau Atu (1842-1917), a sister of the King of Manihiki. Both men died on Fanning, Greig on July 27th, 1892. The three sons of Greig remained on Fanning but the descendants of Bicknell gradually moved away. In September, 1914, the German cruiser "Nurnburg", slipped up to Fanning, flying the French flag. They landed and wrecked the cable station, cut the cable and destroyed a cache of spare instruments. No lives were taken nor prisoners. With the assistance of Hugh Greig who dived for the ends of the cable, communication was re-established within two weeks. This was a herculean task for there were no aids in those days to deep sea diving and for this effort Hugh received £20 as a bonus. Incredible! In all other respects Hugh was a man above men and when I think of him my whole being swells with pride at having known such a man.

It may be interesting to record the manner in which the officers at this lonely outpost of Empire occupied themselves after disaster had befallen them. They were completely isolated from any means of communication with the outside world and there was little prospect of early relief reaching them. The station had no equipment for handling and repairing cables, and there was no spare cable which could have been used for bridging the gap due to the dragging apart of the ends. Moreover, a mass of wreckage represented all that remained of the instruments and plant. However ingenuity, courage and resource were forthcoming and this is the vital part wherein all were grateful to Hugh. Cable repair work is a specialised field but these men succeeded in buoying the ends to platforms contrived from planks and barrels and above this shark infested area successfully communicated with Suva, Fiji, by means of a piece of covered wire stretched between the severed ends. This was of course but a temporary measure. Just fancy an ordinary pickaxe being used as a grapnel? Much skilful work was also carried out by the staff in reconstructing instruments by piecing together serviceable parts from the debris of those damaged and preparing the Station for the permanent reopening of communication. A great feat.

Reverting to Hugh Greig. He was at one time a cableman living at English Harbour, a distance of some six miles, but made the trip either day or night by canoe for he knew the passages as the back of his hand. A typical attitude of him in handling the outrigger alone was to have the main sheet rope between toe and big toe, steer oar under his arm and smoking a cigar. Serene and unperturbed was he.

In the mention of stores earlier, I forgot liquor. We imported a large range of ale, whisky, gin and other such beverages as well as liqueurs as Cointreau, Benedictine, Cherry Brandy and others. At the request of one staff member, "Hairy" Hinton, we imported a cask of overproof Ballater whisky from Scotland and breaking down this potent fire water was exciting as experiments go. I can well remember my hangover after imbibing too freely of this "fire". From memory whisky was somewhere in the region of U.S.\$4.00 per bottle while other beverages were similarly priced. No duty in these golden days. This is a far cry from the exorbitant prices of today.

Dress about the station was informal with shorts and singlets predominating, and as a consequence in this wholesome atmosphere we all had a very healthy tan. For more formal occasions, however, we wore longs with bow tie while for lounging around our quarters we invariably wore a "sulu" which was so very comfortable.

We did have some experience of coral poisoning and this was a hazard we all took in our adventures about the island. We were, however, quick to obtain remedial measures which were usually effective. From time to time we had many medical men but the one whom I can recall with enthusiasm was Dr. O'Keefe from Sydney. This man, greying at the temples, aged over the three score years and ten, always took a very deep interest in the events of Fanning and the outside world. In the latter respect he always took a keen interest in the events leading to the outbreak of World War 2 and I can well remember his deep interest in the Austrian putsch, the subsequent events in the rise and fall of Hitler's Germany. He gave us all a tremendous boost in what would be the inevitable outcome. Retiring from Macquarie Street, Sydney, as a specialist, the Doc was very keen on his chess, walking and tennis, at all times keeping himself very fit. Everyone loved him and many are the words of wisdom that I

devoured in my many walks with him. A freighter called requiring urgent medical attention to one of its crew members and the Doc duly obliged, performing the operation successfully. I can recall him telling me that he had not done this particular operation for some years and that he had to consult his books to refresh his memory. At all times he was extremely thorough. During the sports on New Year's Day, wherein we all took part, the Doc customarily seated himself on the verandah overlooking the finishing line to view proceedings with his usual aplomb. Seeing the children devouring icecream and lollies, which are so dear to the young palate, he stroked his chin in his customary way and said, "Oh yes, castor oil tomorrow". My daughter Nancy had the misfortune to cut her instep rather badly on a broken bottle and the Doc, a strong believer in the healing qualities of ether, but knowing its sting, soothed Nancy by saying, "Here is some of that cold stuff, Nance, but it will make you better". He had a great way with all, particularly the children who congregated every morning at surgery hours wanting the Doc to put some "niggers blood" on their imaginary wounds. This was in fact plain Meurocrome. Great too was his belief in sunbathing before 9a.m. and after 4p.m. and he instilled into us the virtue of this. We were grateful and I feel that some uncomfortable sun burnt bodies were thus saved by this sage advice.

From time to time, we had visits from the Royal New Zealand Navy doing patrol work and keeping a watchful eye on Fanning and nearby British Possessions. American coastguard ships also made their appearance and these were all very welcome. Visits from pleasure yachts, although rare, did occur, and this afforded us with the chance to fraternise with other humans. Just before the outbreak of World War 2 we had a visit from a New Zealand cruiser and as a result we were blessed with a Lewis gun which we were told we had to man and protect ourselves from any enemy who had designs upon us. Just unbelievable. To further our defence technique, the old rifle range was re-opened and this proved to be enthusiastically received by the staff. We had some capable exponents, not perhaps up to Bisley standards, but nevertheless good. Fortunately our training in defence was never needed. One day before the outbreak of war, however, a small contingent of permanent staff personnel from New Zealand arrived for our protection and for this we were very thankful. They stayed for some time until eventually the defence of the island was handed over to the Americans who really got down to business transforming the island's defence, making roads and an airfield, besides other protective arrangements. These were anxious days but we boxed on keeping the communication links open. We fared a lot better than our counterparts in Singapore, Penang and other Far Eastern areas.

Cable ships also came from time to time mostly for repair work. A new cable was laid during my stay which caused some consternation until a new "balance" was established. Housing was very good, particularly the new concrete married ones which were constructed by a Sydney firm who also made alterations to the office itself. Verandahs, wide and spacious, were a feature with big airy rooms. The single men's quarters were good and built in three separate sections and such names as Snobs Alley, Posh Lane and the Bastards Retreat, gave them added significance. "Jumbo" Lorking, an Australian who had a keenness for fishing, had a room very easily found by the smell of stale bait and the noise of Cussy crabs, used for bait, crawling around in a biscuit tin. We, however, always welcomed Jumbo's catch which, together with others, was always "spot on".

The library was excellent with a wide international range including the English Tattler, Sporting Dramatic, Sydney Bulletin and the New Zealand Weekly News. Reading was well catered for. The standard billiard table was very popular and filled in a very much needed diversion. Some of the exponents were very good and from time to time we held tournaments. The tennis court had its fair share of adherents too and painted green to minimise the glare on the concrete base proved easy on the eyes. Tournaments were held from time to time and I can well remember one final between Bill Christian and Tom Bailey, both Norfolk Island men, wherein Syd Morris acted as "second" complete with towel and bucket and sitting in the corner as in a boxing match. Great days, yes sir, indeed.

Vivid is my memory of one Cockney Chandler. Chan was the handyman attending to various jobs which embrace this position and, true to his London

upbringing, possessed a ready wit and succeeded in placing his h's and a's in the wrong place. On one occasion the Superintendent had trouble with his septic tank and Chan was called in to rectify the trouble. His diagnosis was that it was due to the "hair in the pipe not the 'air on your 'ead but the hatmosphere". He also related that he had a brother in London who was a "heggler" and when questioned as to what this profession was, said that it was a man "who 'awked heggs". Chan made an outrigger canoe, quite a feat in itself, all bound and without a nail in its construction. When we had the launching ceremony and as the craft slipped into the still waters of the lagoon, Chan remarked "there she goes and she won't leak a 'heggcup' full". Chan added a lot of humour to the island life and with his one solitary tooth looked a fearsome customer but was in fact a very human and kindly man. What a far cry to be posted to Fanning after his native London.

I wonder what happened to the Piscatorial record of the various species of fish caught, their weight and whether caught in the lagoon or ocean. Fishing was always good but at times the lagoon became foul and gave off a very offensive smell. We avoided fishing there at this time. The ocean side produced some beautiful fish, fresh and juicy, and Mulleteer was a popular variety.

Illness was rare and colds or any of the many virus infections known to city folk were not present at Fanning. Mosquitoes were troublesome, at times, but sleeping in a bed with a covered net kept them at bay. Insecticides were not known but joss sticks were found to be helpful. Temperaments were varied and although there was the odd flare up life went pleasantly on. On one occasion, the Royal Mail Steamer "Niagara" was diverted from the Vancouver-Suva run to pick up an Army man who had shown some inconsistency and as the war had taken an adverse turn I thought it desirable that my wife and two children would be safer in their home in Auckland. Plying slowly up and down with the five knot current to contend with, Captain Todd handled the big craft skilfully and as the whale boat drew alongside the four passengers were hoisted aboard by means of a bosun's chair. During this dramatic event as evening fell the passengers crammed the rails of the liner taking photos of something that was not on their itinerary. Once more tribute must be paid to the Gilbertese boatmen who handled the whalers with dexterity in the current and swell which was quite considerable. Accompanying the passengers out were the Manager and other dignitaries who had business to attend to aboard but we did not reckon on their return being loaded with goodies as lamb, sponge cake and other eats dear to the palate. As it was now becoming dark, I joined this group in their whale boat and as we passed through the passage, now in a deep swell, I, being aft, could hear them dividing the spoils without any concern for me or my colleagues ashore. I therefore, quite legitimately I think, secreted a leg of lamb and some cookies under my seat and when we grounded on the beach I made off to a familiar spot and deposited same. Picking them up later I conveyed them to the Mess. At this time I was the Manager's clerk and the next morning I was questioned as to whether or not I had seen the lamb and goodies. Innocently I replied, "surely no - were there some". Naturally this episode caused quite some amusement from the rest of the staff.

In the early days, about 1914, there was a tragedy on the island when the then Japanese cook, Yamma Gouchi, becoming depressed, was found hanged to a tree on the lagoon side. There is a passage between the ocean and the lagoon and a current of some five knots flows either way with the tide and it was in this rip that three staff members, Doug Passmore, Izzy Towner and Charles Bennie, having canoe trouble, were swept clear of the island and out, alone, in the vast Pacific ocean. However, one Japanese fisherman, Harada, employed by the copra company, was fishing on the bank of the passage and in the gathering gloom noticed a glint on the water which was in fact the glasses of Towner. Then detecting a voice calling for help, he tore up to the launch ramp and enlisting the help of Hughie Greig who had the launch through the passage in short time and, being familiar with the current, located the lads by this time well on their way to places beyond the horizon. This was indeed a very, very lucky break. Incidentally Doug is now retired in Sydney having made his mark as a Doctor of medicine in New South Wales. His hobby is breeding horses in which field he has shown considerable skill. The others have settled down in retirement in various parts of the world.

On two occasions I walked around the island with other colleagues staying at different huts built for the copra employees during the "cutting" season. This was indeed a treat and I can recall these two adventures with pride. You did seem to be so very far away from everything around that coast line. Walks along the "trails" were plenty, mostly bordering or deviating from the lagoon. During these excursions, one often heard the swish of a coconut falling but to my knowledge, no one has ever been struck by one. However, there must have been some very near misses. Can you imagine the excitement on boat day, after three months, with fresh stores, mail and a change in personnel. At times for various reasons the boat was late and we had to subsist on fish and rice but these occasions were rare but we always measured up to any eventuality. The staff Mess was run, in the first instance, by Gilbertese and latterly by Chinese under our supervision. These Chinese were indentured from Hong Kong and were very efficient both as cooks, servants and labour generally. They were very clean. However, you could get nowhere with them when it came to any dispute, their inscrutable nature was really something. On one occasion during World War 2, Stuart Macdonald of Adelaide and myself were the only two in the Mess and for one month we endeavoured to live as cheaply as possible. We managed on three dollars each which was really cheap living. Our fare was naturally fish. We all lived great lives but at Fanning it was something extra.

It would be impossible to portray all that happened at Fanning during the years since 1902 but each year as I cast my eyes around the room at the re-union in Auckland, and I well know that this exists elsewhere whether it be London, Sydney, Darwin or Singapore, I think of all those great blokes, some now passed on to the Great Beyond, who have graced that Island of the sun. For those able to re-live it all again is really something and perhaps the same old stories have had added embellishments but nevertheless it was a great experience and life. They followed a very noble calling, they kept together, they had their differences but they were men to let that pass over their heads and become noble and grand with memories that will never be effaced from the book of time. God bless them all.

I'd dearly love to walk those trails again, to fish the lagoon and the ocean side, yes to walk around the isle once more and feel the aloneness far away from the rush, tension and smog of modern living. Thankful am I that I am able to record these pages of an epic experience. Rupert Brooke puts it concisely when he says, "If ever you miss me suddenly, you'll know I've got sick for the full moon on those little thatched roofs, and the palms against the morning".

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SURGERY - EARLY NEW GUINEA

By:- Ted Bishton

Giles was a very keen orderly and rather good. He would do minor surgical operations such as taking off a toe or a finger. I generally assisted him in these operations. One day he asked me to assist him on a particular operation. I asked him what it was and he said one of the Marys had cancer of the breast and he was going to cut it off. He told me that when he cut the breast off, whenever I saw blood spurting I was to jab the forceps into the spot and clamp them. He seemed to do a very good job and was quite pleased with himself. A few days later I happened to ask him how the operation went. He said, "it was a huge success." I said, "that's good, how's Mary?" "Oh", he said, "she died". I said, "I thought you said the operation was a success." "Yes", he said. "The operation was a success but she died of heart failure. I suppose she would have died in any case."

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- OLD DAYS AT FISKVILLE -

Charlie Carthew has ferretted out the following extract on a book by Graham McInnes called "Humping my Bluey", page 200.

"Back at Ballan, the parties went further afield. Sunday tennis now alternated between Bungeeltap and Lanes' station, Moorac, about eight miles across the plateau. Whereas Bungeeltap snuggled comfortably down in the cleft surrounded by great pine trees and majestic white gums, Moorac stood bleak, forlorn and windswept on the edge of the plateau. To reach it, one passed the spidery three hundred foot tall lattice towers of "Beam Wireless". This, together with its twin at Rockbank down on the plain, was the Australian end of the ambitious globe-girdling "All Red Route" whereby wireless communication was to be ensured between the "great Dominions" from Daventry in Britain to Yamachiche in Canada and Ballan in Australia. Although the manager of the "Beam" was a good family man, by virtue of his position he was invited to all the parties.

More with it, partly because they were bachelors, were the two radio engineers, undoubtedly the worst tennis players I've ever seen. They were so bad that even I could beat them at the age of sixteen and they were grown men. I had once been invited to spend a week-end at the "Beam" with the engineers and as a special treat mounted to the top of one of the enormously tall towers. I horrified them all, including myself, in retrospect, by crawling along the lateral beam which capped the tower like the cross-bar of a T and there singing 'It had to be you', suspended three hundred feet over the iron hard grass."

We know who they were.....do you remember? Also, we spotted THE ALL RED ROUTE blue!!

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- MORSE PROFICIENCY -

Here is a small story submitted by Octogenarian, Ellis Smellie.

"Being able to sound read morse code (dots and dashes) used to be a sure way of being called smart and clever. I did this twice.

The first was a few months before I joined the Coastal Radio Service in August, 1912. It was when, with a few hundred others, I was outside the Melbourne Radio on opening day. As it was built in the heart of Melbourne in the Domain, there was plenty of room. The Queenslander, Graema Balsillie who fitted his own Balsillie system in the Coastal Radio stations (except Sydney and Perth) did not have to worry about the birds and bees and flowers when he selected the site.

When the first long message was sent to a warship, the roar of the spark gap was loud and clear. I yelled the words as they were sent and soon had a circle of astonished and admiring audience. It really got them in. Miracle of miracles. How did I do it?

Had they asked me now, sixty years later, I would have told them that it is easy. I do not listen to code any more than a person hearing "God save" from a band listens to crochets and quavers. He hears a noise and that noise is the words "God save the queen". In the same way the noise of a sounder or loud speaker is the actual words and not morse translated into words. All you

have to do is write them down or say them aloud. But I was 18 then and loved it and let them call me smart and clever. I also tried to look smart and clever.

The next was, as a passenger coming down the Queensland Coast in quiet waters one perfect tropical evening, I made one of all those aboard, lining the rail watching a Dutch tanker pass the other way. Their lamp blinked a request to our bridge. "Would we please exchange six women for six bottles of gin". Again, in a loud voice I yelled the words out as they were sent. Quickly six lovely ladies were herded up the stairs to the bridge to demand from a young shy blushing third mate, to be sent over immediately before the ship got too far away. I was in my forties then, alone, and loved it, as I was far better known next day and a thousand times more popular than before. It was a long lasting mirth provoker.

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- CULINARY ARTS - EARLY NEW GUINEA -

By:- Ted Bishton

When in Kieta, I spent some time trying to train a lad of about 12 years of age in the gentle art of cooking. I would sit down with the cookery book on my knee and read the ingredients of the article we were about to make. We had moderate success with pies, custard tarts etc. In those days we had no self-raising flour, only plain flour, so we made our own self-raising flour by adding cream of tartar and bi-carb of soda. On one occasion, I ran out of cream of tartar and bi-carb, so I used eno's fruit salts instead to make some scones. They rose beautifully and were good to eat. After coaching Pikai for some months, he was pretty good but only under supervision. One day I told him to make a rice pudding and he said yes. So I said, "well go ahead, and put a couple of eggs in it." After I had completed my dinner, I told him to bring in the pudding. I must say when the pudding arrived, I was more than mildly shocked. He had cooked the rice already but like most natives, he had forgotten to put in the eggs, so as to carry out my wishes, as an after thought, he had broken two eggs on top of the rice and when he brought it onto the table, it was just boiled rice with two fried eggs sitting on top.

I had another boy who used to do the housework and the washing and ironing. I taught this fellow how to make starch and he must have loved the stuff for he used to starch my handkerchiefs that I would tear them trying to get them open, and my socks were so hard they would stand up and look at me.

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- OVERSEAS TOUR -

In the latter part of last year that intrepid old sea-dog, Dave Fleming, did an overseas world tour. His letters to the Secretary read somewhat like a travelogue and it is thought that it would be better to run them in serial form. Trust it does not make you jealous and the mention of some of the towns visited may bring back memories to Veterans who have been fortunate to move around.

"Greetings from the Emerald Isle where I have spent some interesting weeks of my sentimental journey on a visit to endeavour to locate surviving members of my late dear wife, Madg, and any of my own. However, to retrace me steps and describe, briefly, my flight from Mascot to London.

I left Mascot by BOAC 747 on 30th May, 1973, at 1.30 p.m. - up and away at about 525 m.p.h. and 38,000 feet and hardly knowing we were off the tarmac. At 4 p.m. W.A.S.T. we put down at Perth to "drop and pick up" passengers and have a fuel checkup. There were many hundreds of visitors there to meet friends or just have a look at the "giant" jet. Perth Airport compares very favourably with some of the best. Airborne again at 5 p.m. W.A.S.T. for Singapore where we touched down at 9.40 p.m. again to drop or pick up passengers and have a more comprehensive checkup which gave us about 2 hours to "browse" and "fend off" the numbers of peddlers keen to sell souvenirs. Up and off again about 12 mid-night for our last touch down before London - Bahrain. Here, about 2 a.m., we touched down and had about an hour to contemplate upon the future and think, "well here we are and so far a journey which was more comfortable than a taxi ride down George Street." Yet we are something like 14,000 miles away. The world is certainly being brought closer together, at least insofar as distance is concerned - what a pity the differences in many other spheres are not so easily bridged.

At 8 a.m., 31st May, we touched down at London Airport - Heathrow - and one is immediately struck with the busy scene and the immensity of the place. The routine Customs and Quarantine checks were formal and quickly disposed of without any fuss whatever and one wonders why we hear so many complaints about these. Through the check points one is given a " cursory " bodily search and a " geiger " test then on and up to the Colonnade - a 300 to 400 yards hike - but if you feel like taking it the easy way, step on to the centre of the pathway and you ride along, it is a moving roadway so to speak. Now for the crush. The baggage pick up places, grouped into Flight No. positions, dozens of them, where you wait while the " hirdy girdy " brings your bags. My wait was over an hour and by that time there were no porters or trolleys available. Then the stampede! The chaos that is here reminded me of an Easter Saturday at the Royal Easter Show plus!! Queuing up for hotel reservations or to enquire about them, a most frustrating and temper testing experience with only two girls attending to the many hundreds waiting. A foreigner, oblivious to those behind him, lolling over the counter and posing every question he could think up and, the girls not quite sure what he wanted, caused some, not very polite comments particularly from an Aussie and Yank in behind me. Their remarks and suggestions were typical of the people of certain areas.

My turn eventually arrived and here I also became the "target" as I had mislaid or lost my "Exile Club" address and the girls, all kindness and "slow motion" itself, searched lists and phone books to no avail. By this time, very frustrated and eager to get away, I suggested to the girl to try the "Camberland" - sorry, full up - the "Adelphi" - same result - the "Imperial" - sorry, no vacancies - and finally the girl suggested the "President", one of the "Imperial" group and finally I had been booked there and said, "good holidays boys" to the now very vocal queue.

Now for a bus! "Sorry, sir, not that way, you go back that way". O.K. - bus full and yet another bus full. Oh well, a taxi, "Sorry, sir, go back that way and turn right and you'll get one perhaps." So back and around, lumping my cases and a porter arrives - God bless him - "A taxi sir, where to?" "The President thanks," "Blimey Guv' that'll cost you 4 quid!" Anyway I took the taxi and it cost me £4.10 and was happy to get away from the chaos and frustration. After settling down, I found my way around the London I remembered from World War 1 days and found myself checking up "old haunts". Trafalgar Square, Marble Arch, the Leicester Lounge, the Provident etc. etc., places where, as a "prankish" and possibly "inquisitive" young serviceman in 1914-18, I haunted during my "flighty leaves".

Standing there gazing up at Lord Nelson and wondering whether he too noticed any change, I, a much more mature and saddened old chap, my day dreaming was interrupted by a tap on the shoulder and a real "limey" voice saying, "Don't look up Guv' while the pigeons are hovering over your 'ead, you might cop one!!" "O.K., thanks mate." I replied, and the "limey" turned quickly and said. "Blimey a Dinki Di Orsey - have a good 'oliday."

So on I wandered, Hyde Park, Whitehall and finally the mecca of millions - Buckingham Palace - one still sees the hundreds with their faces poking through the fence grills, probably noting the severe, austere palace

with every window blind drawn to a fixed straight line position and, oh yes, the nice looking, if saucy, lass posing for her photo alongside the good looking young Guardsman, tempting him to smile and show his dimples. He does so and his mind too is possibly on "curves and dimples"!!

London has that "something" which holds you despite its serious architectural facade.

My 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ days there this time was a happy period and I hope to repeat my stay on return from Ireland in about a week or so. Hope to locate the "Exile" on my return to London. I found out where the Cable and Wireless office is but it was closed, and being on my way to Dublin, could not look in.

Here I am back in the "big city" after a very interesting run around Eire and Edinburgh. I was fortunate in that the weather, with the exception of about 3 days, to have been blessed, throughout the whole period, with real Aussie sunshine.

To continue my story from my earlier letter:

I left London on 4th June, by Air-Lingus - Irish 737 jet for Dublin. The first half hour airborne, like the Belfast sector of this lovely country, was very turbulent. Running into heavy cloud we were tossing and bumping around violently until we climbed to about 35,000 feet where conditions were much better. Arrived at Dublin Airport and met by a relative. We spent the day looking over the lovely city of Dublin and later entrained for what would be my home for the next three weeks or so, Dundrum, County Tipperary.

After settling in, I set out on my sentimental journey of trying to locate surviving members of my own and my late wife's families. A visit to Galbally, my wife's hometown, was rewarded only with finding one or two who remembered her vaguely. My visit to my dad's and my own birth place, Emly, County Tipperary, was fruitless as all of the original family had passed on; their tombstones were proof of this, and surviving members of the clan left the country many years ago. A visit to Thurles, my mother's birthplace, was, likewise, futile.

I found several of my wife's aunts still in other parts of the country and as a result, I was given a very kind welcome. When visiting relatives had been completely satisfied, I decided on some tours to get a better picture of the many beauty spots and places of interest. I did the 5 days tour by C.I.E. (Tour Coaches) which cost only £6 for the 5 days; totally about 65 hours sightseeing. The first day took in Toynes, War 2 U.S.A. base and now a thriving tourist resort and industrial area. Tarbert, Listowel, Tralee where we lunched at the nice Grand Hotel - remember the ballad, "The Rose of Tralee"? Then through many interesting and pretty villages to Killarney where tea was taken and a sightseeing tour of the lakes. The second day, Tuesday, took us through Tipperary town, the beautiful "Glen of Aherlow", Cahir, Mt. Melleray, Middleton, Cork, Blarney, Mallow, Charleville and we took lunch at the "Galtee Hotel", Cahir. Visited several other interesting places including the "Blarney Stone" and had tea at the C.I.E. Buffet, Cork.

On the third day we took in Tarbert, Listowel, Tralee, Killarney and visited the many ancient ruins of the castles and a more comprehensive tour of Killarney Lakes and Mackross House, the starting point of the lakes tour. The House, an ancient one with furniture etc., still there on exhibition. The grounds are a perfect picture and a blaze of colour. From here you can take the tour of the beautiful gardens and walks by "jaunting car". I did the 700 acres or so by "shanks".

Fourth day, Thursday - via the Shannon, Lis-doovarna, Cliffs of Mohr, Spanish Point, where a visit to the Donkey Stud Farm was made. Through Kilkee, Kilrush, Lissycassy, Ennis and Shannon again. The run up the Limerick

side of the Shannon, a distance of about 90 miles is really a lovely run and across the river is Clare County which is now reached by vehicular ferry from the mouth of the Shannon.

Fifth day, Friday - via Cashel, Kilkenny, Waterford, Passage East, Dunmore East, Clonmel and Tipperary, to complete a very comprehensive tour of the South of Eire.

Left Dundrum and arrived at Dublin (by train) where I spent 5 days looking around this old and beautiful city. During my stay here, I made some bus tours of the city and a coach tour of the beautiful Vale of Avoca and historical Glendalough in lovely Wicklow and taking in places like Dun Laoghaire, Black Rock, Rathdrum, the meeting of the waters where nearby the composer of the "Last Rose of Summer" got his inspiration. A very interesting and comprehensive tour of this really beautiful countryside.

My next move is to Edinburgh in an endeavour to locate any surviving members of my "Stewart" clan, whom I last teamed up with during the 1914-18 war and where I was married in August, 1918.

On 3rd August, I arrived in Edinburgh after a quiet trip of just over an hour. The run in to the Airport was really beautiful over lush green and gold meadows. Harvesting under way and completed and very pretty - comparable with Ireland's glens and valleys. Book in at N.B.H. and resume, in memory, journeys of 1914-18. Trying to locate remaining relatives of those far off years, hopeful but not optimistic. Second day visited St. Mary's Cathedral where in 1918 I married Madg. Very little change there. Edinburgh looking at its "summer's best". Gardens groomed to perfection and everywhere a blaze of colour. City thronged with visitors, predominantly American. Queen and Royal family visiting tomorrow and thus much dressing up. Visited the Firth of Forth and environs, where during 1914-18 I was based, mainly with the second B.C.S. The base is now wholly industrial and no longer a naval base. The old Forth Bridge, looking as majestic as ever, still spans the Forth but is used only as a rail bridge - another suspended bridge has been built, parallel to the old for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Large industrial plants now extend over the whole area from the Firth to Edinburgh.

I located the last of my relatives on the third day, just prior to my intended departure for London. A cousin, whom I last saw as a young kilted lad of 15, now retired and grand-dad to 4. This meeting was a pleasant one and in my stay of 9 days I was given a real V.I.P. welcome and shown over the spots of interest, which are both numerous and lovely.

So it was to pass the away again to London. This time I chose to take the more leisurely way. By Eastern - Scottish coach tour down the East Coast and taking two days. This route takes one through some very lovely South Scotland and North England areas including: Dunbar, Berwick, Alynwick, Newcastle, Durham, North Allerton, Newart, Grantham, Stamford and Huntingdon. Staying overnight in the historical and beautiful old city of York. We were booked in at the Royal Station Hotel, a lovely large place standing in its own immense parklands which at the time was a riot of colour.

A tour was made of the places in and around the city and were most interesting. Moving off after breakfast we were given a goodsight of the most interesting places including the famous Sherwood Forests, a magnificent area of immense acreage of beautiful Beech forests. The home of the famous Sherwood-Forestiers, an English Regiment of renown and who still do their training at a base in the area. The forest is now under control of the National Authority.

After leaving York, we journeyed through some of the North England spots, Newark, Grantham etc., and Cambridge where we were given a look over the famous University and other centres of academic and cultural importance; quite nice and interesting. I feel like "sitting" for my "leaving" before re-embarking for London.

The trip down was really interesting from every viewpoint and not the

least tiring.

We arrived back in London about 7.30 p.m. and so to home and looking forward to further exploring "London town" and then to Paris within the next few days.

(MORE IN NEXT NEWSLETTER)

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- BRISBANE RADIO 60 YEARS AGO,-

It was interesting to see an A.W.A. "Radiogram" dated 1936 with a photo of the Brisbane Radio staff in 1914. The staff consisted of A.N. Stephens, F.C. Mulligan, C. Lemon, Jack Vouse, A. Barker, J.B. Stoyale and George Scott.

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- WILLIS ISLAND -

The following story on Willis Island was submitted by Bob Inglis shortly before his death.

"Brought up on a mental diet of Robinson Crusoe and similar novels, the prospect of living on a desert island with one other companion appealed to my sense of adventure, and at the age of 34 found myself with Fred Flexmore early in May, 1916, standing on the beach of Willis Island surrounded by a mountain of stores watching the ship disappearing into the distance returning to Australia and civilization.

Feeling lonely and rather sorry for ourselves wasn't doing any good and as there was a terrific amount of stores and equipment to be stowed away (quite a big job for two men) we got stuck into it. By the time everything was under cover, we were only too pleased to crawl into bed, tired out, but satisfied with our introduction to island life.

Work started next day soon after dawn and quickly settled down to what became routine; for me, radio with Cooktown, periodic readings of barometer, thermometers, rain gauge, changing of graphs on various instruments etc. Fred did most of the cooking (but as all food came out of a tin, the ability to wield a tin opener was of paramount importance) and being a carpenter, all the general maintenance.

When the metro and radio station was established in 1922 by the late Captain J.K. Davis, ably assisted by Leveret and Dunne from the C.R.S., it was treated very much as a temporary measure and the various working parties sent out to do necessary maintenance jobs were highly successful in doing just as little as possible except souvenir most of the very complete set of tools originally supplied; by 1926 few tools remained.

The 1926-27 wet season produced a cyclone, the early report of which from Willis enabled Cairns to take precautions and thus save many thousands of pounds and establish Willis as a permanent metro station.

Some years ago a new building was constructed, properly equipped with diesel powered generators, refrigeration and all the amenities that can be provided by modern science. Indeed a far cry from the make shift conditions of 50 years ago.

The R.A.A.F. came into the picture and, to give pilots from Townsville flying and navigational experience, mail, papers, fresh meat, fruit and vegetables etc., airdropped periodically.

To anyone interested in wild life, Willis is a fascinating place and the study of birds alone can be of absorbing interest. The sooty tern is the most abundant, nesting on the island in untold thousands, the noise they make is impossible to adequately describe. Other birds are noddies and crested terns, booby and brown gannets, frigate birds, land rails, eastern golden plover, then there is always the chance of a stranger turning up, of sufficient frequency to make a constant look out worth while.

The booby gannet is always of interest, being the main food supplier for the frigate bird; a poor old gannet having spent a strenuous day fishing and staggering home to feed a hungry family is set on by a vicious predator and made to disgorge his load of flying fish; the ability of the frigate bird to collect the fish in the air is remarkable. Brown gannets at times receive the same treatment but are not as easy prey as the boobies.

Mutton birds, slightly different variety to those of Bass Strait, nest on the island and make the nights hideous with their eternal noise and squabbling.

Land rails are interesting. These are flightless swamp birds, and there is no explanation as to how they got so far away from the mainland.

Turtles (green back) in their season come ashore to dig a large hole, lay 150-200 eggs, fill the hole in, and back to the sea, leaving the eggs to be incubated by the sun and warm sand; when the young hatch out they know instinctively where the beach is, most of them being good tucker for waiting fish.

The only vegetation (natural) on the island is a coarse grass, except for a few trees which have been planted and looked after.

I was very successful in growing iron bark pumpkins, the first of my daily chores being to collect pollen from a male flower and transfer it to a female (no bees or other insects to do the job). I believe that since my time some keen gardeners have produced tomatoes, beans and other vegetables.

All things eventually come to an end and my twelve months were completed. I returned to Melbourne and joined the newly started Beam in May, 1927. But that's another story."

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- COTTESLOE CABLE STATION -

An item appeared in the Perth "Civic Centre News" in January, 1974, headed "The Cable Station - Historical Note". The article read as follows:

Following the success of the trans-Atlantic submarine cable in July, 1866, scientists and businessmen foresaw the advantages which would accrue from a network of submarine cables which might finally encircle the globe.

By 1870, England was linked via the Mediterranean to Aden and India and a year later the network was extended to Penang, Singapore, Batavia, Peking, Hong Kong, Amoy, Shanghai and from Banjoewangie in Eastern Java to Darwin. The latter cable was laid to connect with the Overland Telegraph from Darwin to Adelaide, the Centenary of which was celebrated in August 1972.

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In 1900 the Pacific Cable Board, sponsored by the British Canadian, New Zealand and Australian Governments, was established to lay and operate a cable system across the Pacific Ocean to meet competition with the existing system of the Eastern Group of Companies. The Pacific Ocean chain of cables, the "All Red Route", was completed in November, 1902.

The Eastern Group, in anticipation of competition with the Pacific Cables and in order to give better service then extended its London-Cape Town cables across the Indian Ocean via Mauritius, Rodrigues, Cocos and Perth, to Adelaide. The cables Durban to Perth were laid in 1901 by the Cable Ship "Anglia" and Perth to Adelaide by Cable Ship "Scotia", the latter completed in 1902.

The Cable Station site in Perth (near the junction of Marine Parade and Curtin Avenue) was an area of 10 acres of State Crown Land at the southern end of the road through Cottesloe, then known as the "Esplanade", on the southern boundary of the suburb of Cottesloe, leased to the Eastern Extension, Australasia and China Telegraph Company, owners of the cables, for a period of 99 years or operative as long as the site was used for communications at a pepper corn rental, if demanded, per annum. The 1902 cable was terminated on the site in a cable hut from which an underground landline was laid to Perth to the T. and G. Building, where the Company's accepting office and cable operating room were established.

In 1926 when the Cottesloe-Cocos section was duplicated by laying of a high-speed unidirectional loaded cable, the cable station was established on the Cottesloe site and the original and new cables were terminated in the new building thereon. The new cable was laid by the cable ship "Colonia".

The cable ship "Colonia" one of some 600 listed in a recent publication, "Cable Ships and Submarine Cables" was specially built in 1902 to carry and lay the world's longest cable of 3,459 nautical miles between Fanning Island and Vancouver for the Pacific Cable Board. Her career was a long one during which she laid more than 80,700 nautical miles of cable. In 1928 she was sold and used in the Antarctic whaling until she met her end during World War II.

On the obsolescence of the telegraph cable system, the laying of multi-channel telephone cables, the ever increasing progress in electronics and wireless communications and the communications by satellite, the Indian Ocean system to Australia was abandoned in June, 1966, and the Cottesloe cable station site reverted to the State Government in terms of the lease.

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