

For God, King and Empire.

THE AUSTRALIAN Y.M.C.A.

PATRONS
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL
SIR R. MUNRO FERGUSON.
THE HON THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE
SENATOR G. F. PEARCE



NATIONAL COMMITTEE
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA.
ARMY AND NAVY DEPARTMENT
ELIZABETH HOUSE,
ELIZABETH STREET,
MELBOURNE.

WITH THE AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES. MELBOURNE.

Reply to No _____ Coy _____ Batt _____ Brigade _____

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I will endeavour in the following lines to give in detail & briefly the events as they will occur day by day on the voyage of Troopship *SS Euripides* from Sydney N.S.W. to _____ via Panama leaving Sydney Heads behind on the evening of 31 Oct 1917. Just my luck the sea had a bit of a swell on. I amongst a good many others soon had a turn at feeding the fishes after a while we were served out with ham necks and there was a little more but all passed off well.

I had a fairly good night. At 8th on the morning reveille sounded ^{with} ~~at~~ 5th I stowed hammock by 6th still feeling a bit squirmish I went on deck. It was a most beautiful morning & the ship sailing smoothly on the water. I went below & sat down to table not feeling very peckish, but forced a little down, but it was only waste of good stuff for it all came back, feeling better at dinner time I made another attempt with better result from then on I got the better of my attack. Of course there was much surmising as to our destination, they all knew as usual, but as one knew anything not even our position or route.

2nd day Low morning nearly all cases of sickness have recovered & appetites improve. The Menu is varied & good. In fact much better than in camp. A good supply of

butter which does not at any time make its appearance
to the Tommy while in Camp. What has surprised the
majority of the men is, that all Gambling is pro-
hibited, dissapointing to many but in the end
I think they'll all be the better off for it. To-
wards evening we sight a sailing ship away
on the horizon on Starboard side. That of course
raised many comments, has to its destination.

3rd day Ship going well scarcely any motion detected she
is a beauty. Is said to be the best & easiest ~~to~~ travel
that has ever been in Australian Waters her tonnage
is 15000 tons, on board there is quite a little township
somewhere about 2500 souls. Today serious trouble
has commenced if German was arrested last night
in attempting to ^{get to} the gun & questioning the guard.
It has you may well imagine put all on their
mettle anyway he's safely under lock & key the
trouble now is; has he any confederates. It makes each
one eye the other man with suspicion.

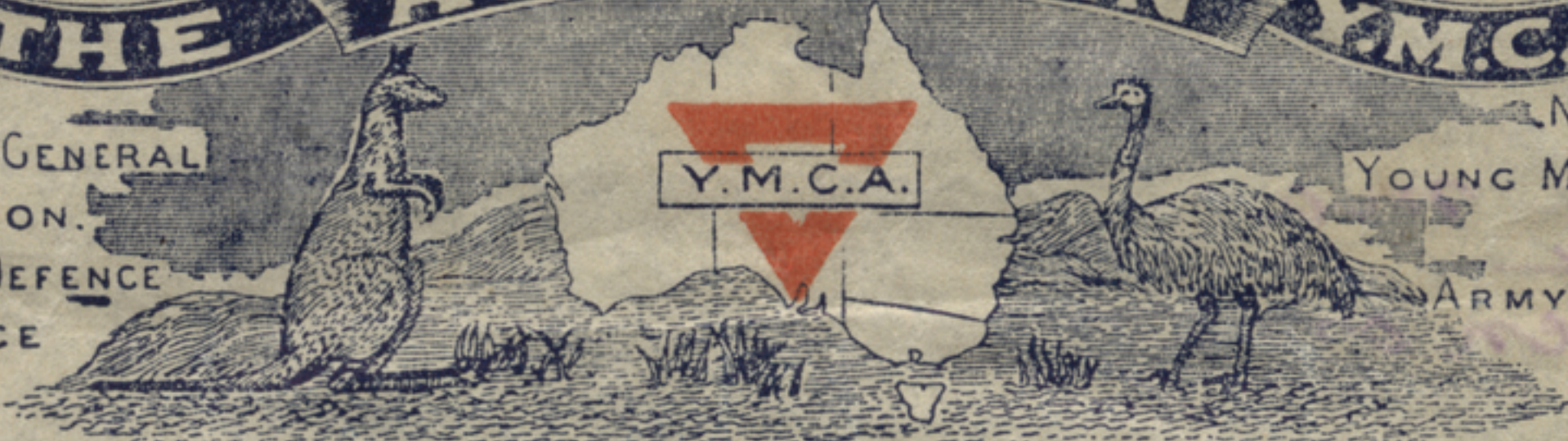
4th Still calm, Our troubles are added to today, by having
got some Meningitis contact on board. Precautions
have to be taken, Every man has to sniff up his
nostrils, & also Gargle with Condy's Crystals. Amongst
our comforts were Slippers. I have a pair of white Rubber.
We are in one of the best parts of the ship, with plenty of
light & Ventilation. For some reason by travelling
the way we are we have lost a day & so this one
strange as it may seem is of 28 hours duration &
poor Tommy loses a days pay 1^s for 28 hrs not good
enough. In the evening our attention is attracted
to an island in the distance. Many guesses as usual.
5th day Still going well & every ^{one} making the most ^{they} possibly

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can of the time on their hands. We are of course paraded regularly morning & evening, and go through various drill, exercises such as our cramped space available allows, heard further disquieting news, that the imprisoned German, was possessed of certain Comicals, which had they come into contact with the Guns & Ammunition, would have sent the lot of us off this Planet. He also confesses to have been an Ex-Prisoner in Queensland. He was in the 1st Coy. Unfortunatly for him & the reverse for us, he played his leading Card wrong. He would of course travel'd with us on the other route but evidently didn't mind taking the risk, in the interests of his Country.

The day weather keeping A. B. Our thought are often turning towards our loved Ones far away, & we can also imagine their thought of us. The fire alarm sounds & every man takes his place & stands by. An armed guard on duty by each boat & every man has donned his lifebelt. The roll is called & we all go our various ways. No sign of any other vessel. If we have any escort at all they keep well away & I suppose communicate by wireless. From time to time we receive a varied assortment of goods from the Comforts. Hats. Fruit

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lime juice & a strong wind is blowing right in our face 4
of the day. Today the July Reinforcements (that is) take
on their first Guard which last from 8 AM to 8 AM
24 hours each man going on for two hours off
for four then on again. Of course during that
period we have to remain fully clothed. We have
the advantage of getting splendid weather.
From time to time there are some brief details
posted up as to what is going on at the various
front up to date things have not been too good
as far as the Allies are concerned & we long for
fuller details.

8th day still going well. A few nights ago, I forgot to
mention there was a rumour that the ship was about
to call somewhere & give off mails &c. So I with lot
of others scrambled over a few lines to relieve
the dear ones minds as to our welfare &c but
unfortunately the news proved false. & I mess
ages are still travelling with us I suppose, that
is if the Censor allowed them. They have had
such a volume of Correspondence that the
Y.M.C.B. man has received orders to issue no more
writing material till further orders. Our Menu
still keeps good & varied. We have lot of reading matter
books, magazines &c supplied by Comfort, Y.M.C.B. &c.
9th All night the ship has been travelling her utmost
I suppose for to get far away from some islands
which during last evening we were close to & saw
some light on them. All light were obscured & cloud
down at Sunset & no striking matches or smoking
allowed. Precautions were I suppose taken so that

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should any reader be in the neighbourhood 191
no tell tell messages would float around. I suppose
as we continue our journey things will get more &
more cacophonous. All the fellows that previously had not got
a hair cut have now to have a compulsory crop with
the clippers. some are very sore over losing their fore
lock, other have made themselves look ridiculous by
going one better & shaving over the top part of
their head, like so many Monks from a Monastery.
We have several nurses on board to administer
to the wants of the sick, which happily are few
compared with the number of men on board.
We had a shower this morning after clearing up
our turn came to wash. then there was some fun
& many & various were the ways & methods adopted
& utensils used. also with drying the decks assumed
a picturesque appearance. Good humour prevail
ed & we got over or under the
10th day All going well. Today we were issued with our
10th day pay books. This afternoon there was Sport on deck
boxing, Pillow fight etc which proved very amusing
to the spectators. In some cases the reverse with
the competitors. In the evening previous to sun
set (after which all is supposed to be quiet)

There was a concert, a very good programme
was carried off. 6

11th Sun. The only Parade today was for church
the various denominations holding their
different services in different part of the
ship. There is plenty of music on board
pianos, an Engineers Brass Band & several
other instruments to while away the time beside
having a pretty good talent amongst the men
themselves. The same programme was carried
out last Sunday but I omitted to mention it.
When the fire alarm sounded the other night I had
just finished shaving & had to scramble my
traps up together a bit lively. The next day I
opened the case for the razor & it was absent
Not thinking what had happened the previous
evening I quite thought it was stolen for the time
but on the ship's list of articles Lost & Found
a razor was listed. On applying to the orderly
room I was pleased to find my lost friend. So
all the Tommys are not rogues. In my hurry
I must have left it in the washhouse. The
health of the men keeps good & one unless having
a occasional game on the water, can scarce
imagine that they are afloat, so easy is the
motion of the ship. And the weather delightfull
These next few days we are expecting to get
warm, for we think we are approaching the
Tropics. Time will prove. Good night dear Ones all
12th day Somewhere at sea, in beautifull weather. Saw Some

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flying fish today, previous to this have not seen fish of any 1917 description during the voyage. Caught up to & passed a sailing ship, which drew much of the attention of the troops during the time she was in view. I had a look at her through some field glass & could plainly discern the men on her decks & see her figure head. There was some flag talking between the two ships. Today our Company's turn came around for to do the various fatigue work on the ship. Some of us (me included) have been getting ready the canvas air shoots ready for to ventilate the lower decks, & I might tell you here that the temperature is rising and things soon get stuffy below, as we are getting on to the equator. Light out & ports holes all closed, all other lights darkened. Lots of the men are sleeping on deck in the open. This evening we had fire alarm & all donned life belts.

13th day Beautiful weather with the exception of a couple of sharp & short showers. During the day our wireless was taken down, I suppose for some examination, so I suppose for a short time we were isolated & cut off from the rest of the world. We must have got into fairly safe waters for instead of lights being all obscured ^{at sunset} permission is given for light until 9^{pm} tonight. We have had our kit bags up from the hold, to give

any of the fellows an opportunity to get any &
article out they might require. From time to time
we occasionally parade & sniff up nostrils &
gargle our throats with seawater. It's not very
palatable but I suppose it's for our own good.
14th day Wed. Somewhere at sea, in the Pacific Ocean I believe.
A beautiful calm sea almost like unto a pond. Today
they have rigged up the canvas awnings over the decks
for the sun during part of the day, being directly overhead
beats down a bit severe. We must be steaming far away
from the usual trade routes, so little craft of any kind
have we seen since leaving Sydney. This morning we
turned out with our full pack on, ~~and~~ we all found it
a bit severe owing to the heat. Taking things generally we
are not too hard done by, for there is plenty of leisure time.
This afternoon was devoted to a boxing tournament.
And after tea a concert. I omitted to say that there was a
cricket match this afternoon between our Co's team of the
Army Service Corp. Our team were severely beaten.
15th Day. Still at sea in beautiful weather. Today we sighted a whale
for the first time during this trip. Each morning during parade
hours all men are lined up & inspected by the ship's captain & our own
chief officers. Our company had a lecture on how to keep fit
&c this afternoon. We are still traveling with a fully lighted ship
at night. To while away some of the time during the evenings
the gramophone is kept going, as well as various other
amusements. All is supposed to be quiet by 9^{pm} but the rule
is not rigidly enforced up to now. This I daresay will all
prove rather monotonous reading & uninteresting, but
events on board ship are not too varied has you already
known. We got a feather in our cap today, being complimented
by the C.O. of the ship for smartness & attention.

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16th Day. All well & somewhere at sea. Today is washing⁹ 191
day for us & a great game it is. I might tell you, the drying
part of the business does not take long, that one thing that
much in our favour. A submarine guard has been ap
pointed & they practice firing with rifles at boxes & other
articles which are cast adrift, held captive & then hauled up
to see the effects of their practice. Concerning the religious
part of the business, the Catholics hold their mass every
morning, & the church have confirmation classes at
times. Carry on next line

17th Day. I still see some ~~at sea~~. I am beginning to
think that this voyage is likely to be a non stop one like
my last trip was, I for one always find life at sea
& rather monotonous after the first few days. Getting various
drills & exercises help things a bit. Our time is altered
each night the matter of about 22 minutes. Cannot think
of any more to tell of today's doing so I'll wish you
all a fond Goodnight

18th Day Sat. Sea with a bit of a swell on; otherwise
everything all right. Had a turn at rifle practice
& drill this morning. The usual half holiday
this afternoon. Some sports were held during the
afternoon & as you may well guess were well attended.
This evening previous to retreat sounding a concert

was held & a prize given for the best comic song which was won by one of our Sergeants. I'll finish up tonight & see if I can find a bit of cheese & biscuit.

18th Sun. Today instead of having a spell, our turn comes around again to take on the ship's guard for 24 hours. some of the posts are important & others are no more severe than watching a fresh water tap to prevent waste. Our floating town keeps going remarkably steady her size & weather conditions both contribute to her steadiness. I think 2 boats like the one I took my previous in could be stowed away on this one. Nothing extraordinary has occurred so I'll now turn in and get a snooze before my next shift.

19th day. Have had the night out dressed & on guard some of the time, one shift my post was patrolling the ship across under the bridge a very stiff wind was blowing & I could almost lay my weight against it. One of our lads made a grave error & went to sleep during his watch & the sergeant went round & caught him napping. moved his rifle & bayonet. then woke him. He was put under arrest & during today he was brought up & fined 14 days pay & 7 days C.B. It was young Murphy, a lad that comes from Ballarat.

20th Tue We are still getting fine weather but a bit cooler. During the day we have been chased with a supposed to be a submarine

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4 men with ball cartridges fired at a tar 191
get thrown in the sea, while the ship done a
bit of manouevring round so as to get the
firing party on to the target. We have an idea
that we are not many days from the Panama
& today I have posted a letter to you in the event
of such a thing happening, but we may possibly
be all wrong. What a maze of mystery we live
in. Not much doing so I'll bid you all a fond Goodnight
21st ^{Mid} Day. This morning I witnessed a beautiful sun
rise while bursting through ^{the} clouds, the rays on the hor
izon, made the water to appear like unto breakers
rolling on a beach. But no land of any description has
appeared. It fell to my lot to be on fatigue & assist in
cleaning up our troop deck. Ship shape is an old stand
ing word & it is applied to the letter here, ~~which~~ when the
time for inspection arrives all has to be spick &
span. Today has been our midweek half holiday &
during the afternoon there has been some good boxing
contests. This evening a concert. During the whole of
this trip, there has been very birds seen around. We
are still traveling with a lighted ship by night. To
night we have had messages, given us in the
morse code from the mast head light.

22nd day Thur

Well at last we have received some news as to our whereabouts which has proved that the surmises of the majority of the troops have been correct. We are told that during the next few days we will arrive at the Panama Canal so I suppose we'll see that great engineering feat & I'll be well on the way towards completing my trip around the world. This morning we had a very interesting lecture from the R & C Chaplin about the Canal. The whole ship is getting up a Sweepstake as to when the first American Official shall step on board. The one that draws the correct time to be the winner, I'll be a good pick up for some one. Lets hope it will be your humble. Also this Lecture this afternoon & that has been from the Dr. on first aid. taking one of our men attired in Adam's outfit for to demonstrate on. I'll now leave this for tonight & get on deck to have a blow before turning in. Su Su

23rd day. Rather dull during the morning. brightened up during the afternoon. With beautiful calm sea. Directly after breakfast the alarm sounded. & the gun began firing. All rushed for & donned lifebelts. took up their proper stations. some thought by the gun firing that it was a fair dinkum go & we much concerned about it until convinced otherwise. We were told after that we had crossed the line when the gun fired. 7/45 AM Our variation in drill reminds me of a game Win. Grace & the other play. Drilling & trying to catch us by putting Peter said before some commands & not others. Washing day again & got the furs to go dry all right. but not quite so white as they would have been, if another party I know had washed them.

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24th Sat. We have had some heavy tropical showers during the 191 day. But a beautiful calm sea. The rain cleared off for a time this afternoon & the usual sports were held. The atmosphere has got awfully muggy & we are kept in a constant preparation. During last night a large ship was sighted, we were travelling with a lighted ship. So the alarm was raised & all lights were quickly obscured. In the morning all were ordered to don & parade in life belts. From now all hands have got to continually carry their belts & keep them at hand day & night. I fancy we must be now running parallel with the coast. All though not in sight, we have been visited today by some land birds, swallows amongst them. Some poor Johnny Sharks have been hovering around during the day, & sticking their periscope above the water. I'll now go up on deck & get a bit of a blow if possible before turning in Good night.

25th Sun. This has been the day of days. We are now through the Panama Canal & are now tied up at Colon. After a rather trying & almost unbearable night, I turned out & got on deck for a breath of air about 2 1/2 till it was then quite dark, so I lay on deck with life belt for a pillow for a time at first streak of dawn. Away on the horizon was the outline of land which as it got lighter kept getting more distinct. Then several boats began

to make their appearance through the mist, for the ¹⁴
morning was very dull & the sun obscured from view
All hands were of course terribly excited. Time went
on & land gradually became more & more distinct
we were paraded for church, the service commenced
& almost simultaneously with the commencement
of the first hymn, the Pilot stepped aboard, close
to where I stood at 9^{1/2} & our monotonous voyage was broken
soon we were in the fair way of the Canal & passed the line
of booms (with fortifications all around on islands connec-
ted with the mainland, by an artificial roadway across
to them) at 10^{1/2}. Proceeding on our way with much inter-
est as on either side, we were held up at the first lock
another British vessel being just ahead. We entered
the first lock on the Pacific side at 12.0. Miraflores locks at
this particular place we get 2 lifts one just after the other
52^{3/4} ft lift in the two. Passing along all greatly interested
in the vastness & great engineering skill the methods
they have of keeping the ship in position while in
the lock & while hauling in 8 miles farther on we
enter another lock at 1.30 with a lift of 30^{1/2} ft this is
Pedro Miguel Lock, you see we are now a long way
above the level of the ocean. With much tropical vegetation
on the either bank & being Sunday the niggers with their
pins & picannines were all out in their Sunday best
& there are not a few of them either it does not look
as if they are at all likely to become ^{an} extinct race.
11 more miles of canal & we enter the Culebra Cut &
had you may well guess by what we had previous-
ly heard about it much interest was ~~placed~~
taken in all that we saw, it's really a marvelous

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piece of work the hill on either side looks very 191
threatening & treacherous & many thousands of tons
of stuff lay all about that had slipped & slipping
its marvellous the many & vast appliances they
have to cope with the trouble every thing is electri-
fied. the power being got from the water. In the
cut there are some very pretty waterfalls the cut
is 9 miles long. Then we enter the Gatun Lake that
is 2 1/2 miles through & I think about 90 ft deep in the
channel. I'll have to cut a lot out & most likely some
day we may have many a chat about travel & sight
around the fire side. The Canal itself is 52 miles in
length. We enter the Gatun Lock (which is a pair of
locks, with 85 ft drop in the two) at 5:30^{pm} & pass out
as the bugles sound the last post. 6:15^{pm}. Now we are
on the Atlantic, you see while travelling through the
Canal you are a long way above either of the Oceans.
One Ocean I think rises 10 ft at high tide & the other 2 ft
So passes from view the most interesting sight I have ever
seen. I had rather a set back being placed to go on guard
at midday, but happened to strike a good post, & from a
point of vantage saw the sight quite nicely. It marvellous
to see the elaborate plant & arrangements they have
to cope with any disaster & everything electric.

a railway runs along ~~the~~ some part of the Canal. ¹⁶
Soon after reaching the open sea we take a turn at right
angles & make for the harbour of Colon which we draw
alongside of & tie up at ^{7 1/2} 7 1/2. & proceed to coal. Here
again all is electrical. The coal come along in an end
less procession. empty into hoppers & the coal is carried
on an endless band to empty into the coal bunkers.
^{26th day}
I was talking to one of the White bosses at ² this
morning & he told me that with the elevators they
have at hand, ~~they~~ it's possible to coal a ship
at the rate of 3,600 tons per hour & I can quite
believe it. The papers are eagerly sought for to
see what's been going on lately, but they did'nt
enlighten up much. Up to the afternoon before our arrival
they had been having the roughest weather that they
had ~~be~~ at any time since 1906, but it calm now &
the heat is well nigh unbearable, even the niggers
were overcome while trimming the coal in the ships
bunkers, they have made the ship & everything
else as black as themselves. Some of them caused
much amusement; the boys got them on to sing
& it wasn't too bad either. They all appear to speak
fairly good English. Lot of them brought on post-
card, views & various other things as souvenirs. &
they got rid of them very readily. During last
night the first death we have had, occurred, he was an
infantry man. This afternoon another Transport
appeared on the scene with Australian troops
it was the *Arneas*. she anchored about 1/2 mile away
from us. Just as it getting dusk we cast off from wharf
& while passing the other ship there was much cheering.
but it was too dark to discern or recognize anyone.

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Reply to No

Co

Batt

Brigade

we have dropped anchor in the harbour just behind
hind their boat & now they are moving in to take
the position just vacated by us. We are all very sore
at not being allowed to land so as to have a look
around & then we could have said we had set foot
in America. This afternoon a coffin wrapped in
the Union Jack & lowered over the side on to a steam
boat while the buglers blew the last post & we stood
to attention, the remains were taken out to sea.
I forgot to mention that I shaved off my nose
stach last Sat & the boys have flattered me that
I am looking ten years younger.
27th Tue. A very oppressive night & not to clammy all together
to get any sleep. Not a breath of air this morning & we were
all laying & hanging about dead beat. No plan at all
this for any white man. A little breeze did spring up
this afternoon and we breathed again. During the day
several boats came alongside with niggers bringing
Bananas & Oranges. but the authorities forbade
us making any purchase, owing they said to
disease being to prevalent on shore. A good
many official motor launches, have been com-
ing & going all day. They are similar ones to
those we used to see on the Thames at Henley

We have had several gun boats hovering around & 18
a couple of submarines. During the day an aeroplane
has been dodging around & this afternoon an hidro
plane went ~~flying~~ ^{skimming} along ~~over~~ on the surface
of the water. Having finished taking in her
coal & water the other Transport (Coneas) crept
out & anchored about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from us. There was
much cheering going on from each boat, but we
were not close enough to converse. I think
the men on board are from Victoria. From
where we were the we could see the waves
continually dashing up on to the breakwater
which encircles the harbour. with the exception
of a opening left for ships to pass to & from when
not in use is closed with booms. The whole
place is raked with searchlights. The breakwater
consists of concrete blocks piled up ~~at~~ random
above sea level. At 4:45 to the tune of the
National Anthem we weighed anchor while all
stood to their boat stations. We passed out the booms
at 5:00 into the open sea. Hugging the South American
coast for a while we sighted a lighthouse & then
land gradually faded from view. With the Coneas
following in our wake.

28th day Wed. A beautiful morning with a nice
breeze blowing & a heavier swell than we
had at any time while in the Pacific. Land
faded from view, and no sign of our Cobbers
but I suppose they are close on our heels. We are
now to settle down to our old routine again.
As usual all sorts of rumour are afloat as to our destination.

For God, King and Empire.

THE AUSTRALIAN Y.M.C.A.

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29th Dec. Nice weather, beautiful breeze blowing but a heavy sea running. We are now running again with a darkened ship. It fell to our Company's lot to take over the ship's guard today. A lot of our fellows are going sick, we attribute it to the tropical weather we have been having. I for one don't feel to fall on it, every thing being so clammy & oppressive. Several are down with measles. One of the lads of our Company had a look to share in the draw as to the time the first American steamer stepped on board his share was 6-10-0. While having dinner today we ship a heavy sea & those sitting on the port side, had an unexpected shower bath, also a plate full of salt gravy.

30th Fri. Sea much calmer & nice bright day. Feeling much better myself. The last day or two we have been getting a little war news - being in touch with Washington. During the afternoon a steamer passed us on the starboard side going the opposite direction. Washing day again & this afternoon most of our lads have been inoculated. I escaped owing to having been previously done 3 times. Have seen no sign of a convoy of any description with us yet. The breeze was righted away astern yesterday morning.

1st Dec ^{31 days} I still keeping fine. During dinner a wave broke into the port hole, this time it was my turn & I was saved the trouble of adding salt to my plate of soup. Just after dinner, the boat

Station alarm sounds & the gun commenced firing, causing some ²⁰ alarm amongst the men, who lost no time in donning their life belts & taking up their positions, some thinking it was a fair dinkum go, for away to the stern could be seen what looked to be a periscope. But after all it was a target that had been thrown out. Had it been the real thing it would have been very short lived for the charge dropped fair on to it. We sighted a sailing vessel & mast & the sun shining on her sails set her off grand. Land has been sighted several times during the day, & we have come to the conclusion that we will soon pull up again somewhere. During this evening the ship has been play playing some funny pranks, by suddenly doubling back on her own tracks for almost 2 hours & then turning & going ahead again, making us think that there is some thing or other unusual going on.

Dec 2nd 32nd day out Sun. Upon deck at 4/30 ^{up} this morning in the moonlight I could see the dim outline of land which got plainer & more distinct as dawn appeared I have heard & read of a glassy sea. but never before have I seen one. The sea is almost as if a plain had been run over it, not a bump or ripple left, & very close & oppressive. We creep along & things keep getting plainer & could see that the district was under cultivation. & through glasses could be seen oranges bananas & growing. fishing boats & others appeared on the scene & fish innumerable could be seen sporting on the glassy water. We were getting into Port of Spain Trinidad. The coastline is rugged but looks lovely as we glide along. 2 Dingys approach, they

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arrive alongside both at the same time & two dark eyes are
struggling with each other as to which of them will climb
the ladder lowered over the side, for a pilot. eventually one
succeeds & he has the job. Steps aboard ^{all} 9/10, we are of course all
studying the landscape which is very pretty. We drop An
chor at 9/30. Not far away the Anens is anchored, & we are
mystified as to how she got in before us, she must have
crept by during the night. As you may well guess we
are very much annoyed at being so close to shore & not being
able to set foot on it. I'm sure it would do us all the
world of good.

Dec 3rd 33 dayton. We can all in our imagination picture some of you
wives & mothers & holding consultations as concerning our well
fare & our whereabouts wondering what part of the globe we
are in. Well here we are anchored off Trinidad all well & fit
casting longing eyes towards the shore. The monotony
being relieved by watching the niggers, comical attitudes
while coaling & watering the ship. also various other
antics. giving us songs & gigs. The coaling methods here are
vastly different from those at Colon. Here it takes as long
to put 1 cwt on board as it does to put a ton or more in
at Colon. We are getting a fair amount of war news
each day & also the Trinidad paper. This morning we
were assembled & told that shore leave would be granted

ed. One half of the men to go today, the rest tomorrow
our, our turn comes tomorrow. Well the boys went &
by what they tell us, they had a great reception. The
people we taken by surprise not having been
notified of them coming. So with favourable weather
I suppose we'll be in for something great. for they
know of our approach. It's a bit to hot here for the aver
age white man. One's garters is about all that wearing
apparel that is wanting, even they are a burden.

Dec 4th 34th day Tue. Have had a very quiet day & a dissa
pointment too. Our trip we were expecting to get, did
not come off, We all got ready & paraded, the sky
had been very overcast & dull all the morning, &
just my usual luck, the rain came on & looked
has if it was going to be a regular soaker, so
we had to abandon all hope of any likelihoods
of going ashore today at any rate. which dissa
pointment of course prevailed. If all goes well we have been
promised that we'll be taken ashore tomorrow

Dec 5. 35th day Wed. Now I have got a big task on, &
I scarcely know how to begin to tackle it, so
much has been crowded into such a short space of
time. This morning we left the ship at ^{4M} 8/15 to
take our promised trip ashore, we done the trip
in several large flat bottom barges, being towed
along by a launch, a tiresome & rather tiring jour
ney (for we were a bit too crowded) we got along
side the wharf ^{4M} 9/45. The natives knew of our
coming & there was a dense sea of faces, all
the colors imaginable were there & we had
a right royal time. The whole town was

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en fete. Decorations, flags & bunting every where. We were in a perfect storm of flowers, 191
cigarettes, cigars, post cards, books & no end of other articles the people went fair mad & I think it was infectious & we got the disease to. We went through the city into the park. There again all was ready for us, dice & five were broken off, the ladies took us in hand & showered & pressed upon us no end of luxuries. For all of us the time was far too short. They clamoured for autographs of us brave Australian boys. Possibly you may hear from one or the other telling you of having seen me. The town is a real fine place with good solid built houses many of them brick & tile, cement &c. Good roads & paths, asphalt most of it. On the Island there is an asphalt lake. I'll get some of the views home for you to see if possible. The population is very mixed, but there is a good percentage of white there but not all English. Tho the language generally used is British. Some of the black seem to be very well educated. The various colors all mixed up together look real funny. For lack of paper I'll have

to cut my tale short, though there is much more I'd like to tell. Anyway it will be another addition to talk over by the fireside at some future date. The native police & the fire brigade looked real smart, their natural color showing up in such a contrast to their white Uniform. All we saw of the island looked to be in a very fertile & prosperous condition. The Iced soft drinks they gave up were very welcome & there was plenty of bottled beer & stout for those that required it. The native hawkers had a very dull time, for the boys were showered with all they required gratis. To night things begin to look like business. A large French Cruiser has arrived I suppose to be our Escort. During our stay here numerous little gun boats, submarine chasers, have been patrolling round & round the ship.

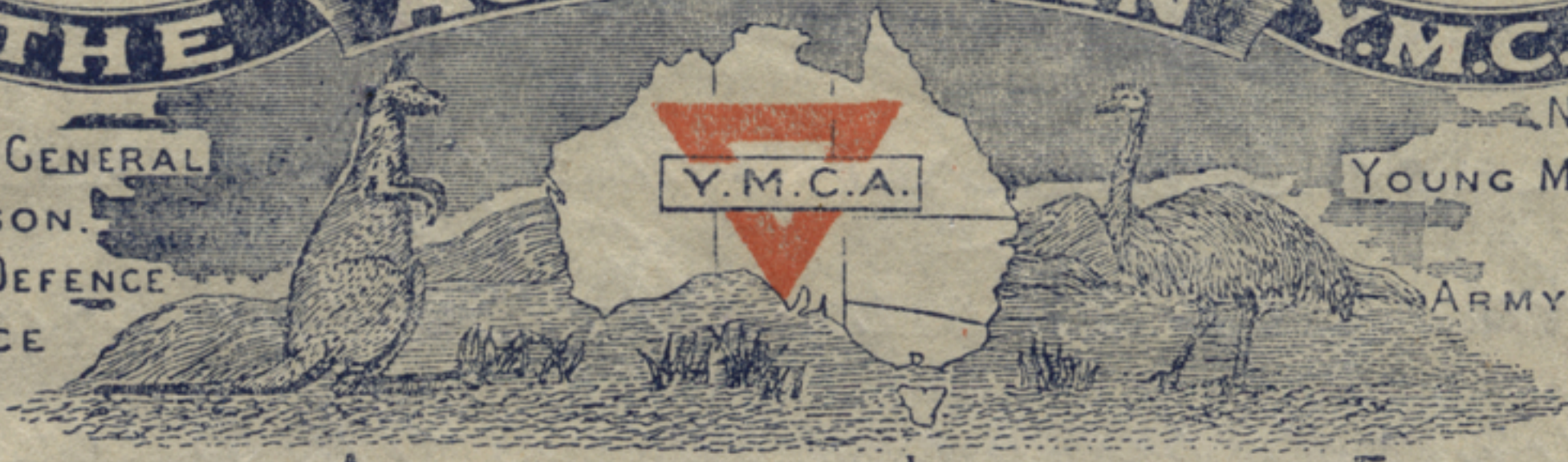
Dec 6th 26 day Thur. We have had a pretty lively day again the ladies of Trinidad have entertained us today. Giving us a real good Programme. They came across to us on several motor boats & brought an nigger string & reel band with them. The black police have a good brass band & gave us a turn yesterday. We have heard today that a ramour is afloat in Australia that the A 14 Curipides has been sent to the bottom. We have another transport lying close to us, loading up with the native troops from here to the front. One of the lads of the Infantry has been taken ashore today, to the hospital in Trinidad suffering from Appendicitis. My luck was good part of the day. Lots of the boys got left ashore & some others got off on various nigger boats. So the M's are kept busy finding & bringing

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them back, by what we hear they have been 191
playing up lovely. The few of course spoiling
the character of the whole lot.

37 Day Fri. We have had a much quieter day
A nice cool breeze has sprung up which we wel
comed very much. These folk say this is their winter
if that's so I pity the white population in the summer
It's been ships washing day again. There are
signs of our departure from here, But we are
kept in such an air of mystery that we never
know what is going to happen next, & the
suspense creates all kinds of yarns to get afloat.

38th Sat. Still anchored in the same spot. The transport
with the black troops on board slipped off sometime
during the night. We are about tired of this, being anchor
ed out, in sight of so many interesting things,
not being able to get to them & all through just a
few running wild. The same old tale the inno
cent punished for the guilty. Our Company
& one other were the only ones that returned
the other day without having anyone A.W.L.
A very remarkable thing about this place is
the sea all around retaining its calm
& glassy surface

39th day. Early this morning, great activity prevailed ²⁶
on board & one could see that we were about to make
a move. The French Cruiser & both transports seeming to
have a full head of steam. At ^{8 AM} 7/30, the cruiser began to
creep out, followed by the Angus & the Curipides
in the rear moving off at ^{8 PM} 8/0. So we steal away
from Trinidad within a few minutes of completing
an whole week anchored in the Gulf of Paria.
We go out almost by the same route as we got in &
much speculating is going on as to our next stopping
place. Hardly had the island faded from view, when
more land could be seen away ahead & it eventually
turned out to be the Island of Grenada. As we ap-
proached it we could see it was pretty well inhab-
ited & in harbour ~~was~~ lying waiting for our arrival
was the transport that had left Trinidad a day or
so ago, she had evidently gone ahead to pick
up some more troops. I forgot to mention that
when we had got well under way, one of the
small gun boat (that had been continually
patrolling around us while in port) could be
seen approaching at full speed. We have a few
colored men that we brought from Sydney & one of
them it appears is a native of the West Indian islands
& he had gone A.M.S. & had been having a good time.
The gun boat was bringing him aboard. Having
collared him only just in time to catch up to us.
None of the ship stop, but the formation is changed
& the other transport creeps out & takes its place among
us & we leave Grenada behind. It looked to be a very

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nice place & fairly well populated. At sunset 1911
we have darkened ship. The Cruiser alone showing
a rear light so as to ascertain her whereabouts &
occasionally we get a few flashing signals from
her. I suppose giving each other their positions & where
abouts

40th day Mon. Sea a bit choppy. All day we are pas-
sing islands on either side of us, some quite close
• others away in the dim horizon. They all appear
to be well covered with vegetation of some sort &
mostly more or less inhabited. They all belong to the
West Indian Group. It has fallen to my lot today to
be Fresh Water Tap guard on our troop deck, so as
to prevent any unnecessary wasteful use of drinking
water. The cruiser & two other transports are keeping
close up the whole time & from time to time signal
each other with flags of various colors which I
suppose read something or other. This evening a two
funnelled steamer has joined us. We are now 4 Ships & a Cruiser
strong

41st day Tue. The first thing we do in the morning is to look for the
Mother duck & her brood, Well they are all in sight & within easy reach
of each other, the Cruiser taking the lead. The day is fine, but a
rather heavy sea running. The cases of sickness are a bit on the

increase, especially measles & mumps, & as you may well 28
guess lots of us are getting tired of sea life.

42nd day Wed. Fine day rather heavy sea running. We are still
5 boats strong. The weather is getting decidedly cooler & by
the wireless message that is posted up, there is a terrible
blizzard in New York, also we here of a terrific explosion
in a Canadian Munition factory. The days are getting
shorter. All ships are travelling with light out after
sunset. A good many flying fish are seen. I suppose
now we are got well away from land again, for
none has been sighted these two days. A sailing ship
crossed our track last evening. This afternoon has been
the usual half holiday, with various sports to fill
up the time.

43rd day Still running a rather heavy sea, other-
wise beautiful weather. Our ships during
the day execute various different manouvers
& formations. Signals are taken from the
cruiser by running up various colored flags.
During the last day or so, there has been a
considerable quantity of seaweed floating around.
The event of the day has been the receiving of
the 2nd pay we have had during the trip
& we are told that we dont get any more while on
the boat. They have also issued out to us our
(Meat Tickets) Identification Discs. For with
name, number, unit & co. For us to hang around
our necks, a most beautiful locket I can
assure you.

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44th day Fri Somewhere at sea still, accompanied by 3 other ships & the French Cruiser. I have ascertained the names of the boats they are the *Arcturion* with chiefly Victorians on, the *Magdalen* with the black troops aboard & the *Perou* is a cargo & passenger ship. This has been the usual washing day & with the stiff wind blowing, things were dried very quickly. We have got our Suit Bags up from the hold so as to get any extra clothing out we might want for we are told that in a very few days time we shall be running into cold weather. What has rather surprised us has been that we have not had to carry Lifebelts since we entered the Panama. Previous to then for a few days we carried them with us & were told from then onwards we would allways have to keep them at hand. We are still supplied with a little war news each day, It comes through from Washington. All our fellows are getting fidgety thinking about the suspense the folks at home are kept in, not being able to hear of our welfare or whereabouts for so long. I can well imagine something of the kind going on, with a certain party. I'm most intimately acquainted with.

45th day Sat. Heavy sea running getting decidedly cooler. We are ³⁰ continually watching the other boats riding plunging & dipping as they ride or cut through the waves, their decks often being awash. It is very seldom we dip sufficiently to get a sea aboard, as we stand so high out of the water. Today has been the usual half holiday's spell had a few sports & the final of the Jug of war was pulled off, Our Co coming off winners in the final pull. The days are now getting much shorter & the boys have nearly all had enough of sleeping on deck. Boat station blown & all take post

46th day Sun. Early this morning we received orders to don life belts & from now on to continually have them at hand, which considerably hamper ones movements. Church parade as usual. With the pitching of the ship it's difficult to ~~take~~ a firm foothold. Today one of our fellow came out of hospital, it's his first appearance since we left Sydney, having been through an operation for appendicitis & had rather a bad time.

46th Day. Today an extra Submarine guard is posted around the Saloon Deck armed with ball cartridge. That means we are deprived of our parade ground, & makes us very much more congested & very little elbow room. A very heavy sea is running & pitching us about a bit. The Wireless message we received today was from Eiffel Tower Paris.

47th Day. Very heavy rain storms all day & decidedly colder. An extra Emergency Wireless has been fixed up today & other extra precautions taken. Things generally are very monotonous & time hangs very heavy on our hands. We'll all be glad when it's over. A lecture is given on the gold fields of WA & early exploration by Minister

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48th day Tue. Guard posted on the Sun deck at top of 191
the ship they are supplied with megaphone & field
glasses to scan the horizon around for any likely
Submarine, its very misty, or almost a fog &
I suppose very suitable weather for an attack to be
made on us, we have struck this part at a rather
bad time, entering it just as there is a new moon so it
will be light every night. We are drawing nearer to our
destination for today the Wireless message was from Cornwall
Crossing frequently, but our position is not
is always in the lead, Being the flag ship of the flotilla
All bugle call are stopped & conversation after light out, to be
in a undertone, a lecture this evening on future Australia.

49th day. Today all bulk head doors are fixed up & the ship
prepared for emergency. During the afternoon we have held
the usual midweek sports. The sea is much calmer than
we have had it for some time. This evening we passed an
island which we think was the Azores. I've not been feeling
too good the last couple of days. I think we are all about
fed up with the trip. A Lecture has been given this evening
on aviation, we have several aviators on board with us

50th day Thur. The sea has settled down & become quite
calm, there has been several heavy showers during
the day, coming up very suddenly & obscuring

the other ships from view. in that case the chicks hieg ³²
in closer under the Cruiser's wings, Monotonous as
we find this journey to be, it must be 10 times more
so for our German prisoner, having been shut up
for so long. This evening I went to lecture on ~~the~~ ^{old dart}, by
unfortunately I had to leave in a hurry, owing to the force
of nature.

Fri 51st. Paraded sick again, instead of me having Diarrhoea
it turned out to be dysentery, so I had orders to go into hos
pital, so now I'm in a nice comfortable bunk instead of
an hammock, I have often longed for a feed of fish while
on the boat, today I had some for dinner, ^{& but sea & puddling} but unfortunately
I hadn't much of an appetite, feeling quite scoured out.
During last night we ran into a regular snorter &
we pitched & tossed & twisted all over the place & it has
~~continued the same throughout the day, it throws~~
ones stomachs all over the place. The sisters & orderlies
are all very nice.

Sat 52nd Steam still going strong, but in a sense it
is in our favour, for submariners cannot operate so
well in rough seas & the danger increases as we
proceed, all patients that are able have to don their
clothing & lie with it on. I'm feeling a bit better & am
forcing a little tucker down. Didn't get much sleep owing
to the tossing about. During the day the ship we quick
ed up last left us, she turned out to be an armoured
liner so I suppose she can look after herself, but at
the same time it leaves us not so well protected. I
suppose some will soon come to meet us from the
old dart. I don't think we can be too far away, for

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coincident you being in hospital last Christmas & my turn this. My thoughts are continually with my dear ones today & am thinking that the Compliments are being returned we are still well escorted by destroyers & very close to England. Our C.O. has told us that probably we will disembark tonight if so that previous Cable gram will have paid though. While I've been absent George & Edward have held the reins & got the money together from the various men & they have I'm glad to say all pieced up. Good I have become great pals & contemplate having our holidays together. The sea is very calm, just a submarine weather. At 4/30 we pass a fleet of battle ships, looking very grim & business like. Land just ahead, we pass Edystone Lighthouse at 6/15, in the dim outline we see the coast line, & lots of small craft about. At 7/0 p.m. we drop anchor in Plymouth Sound, another coincident. I left this same place on 28 Dec 6 years ago. We are staying on board tonight. The Anas has dropped anchor a short distance away

5th day. Boxing day Wednesday. Spent rather 36
a rough night. having no bed or blanket so
had to walk about the greater part of the
night, to keep warm as a very keen wind blowing
& we feel the cold a bit after having had
tropical weather the greater part of the
journey. We fall in with our packs on at 8 AM
on the Sun deck, right on top of the ship. so we
get a good view of what is going on. Shortly we
make a move up stream & proceed to Devonport
to disembark. There is great activity going on all
around. plenty of warship all sizes, steaming
about & going under repairs. Being close to
us are two large ship that have been
torpedoed. One has its screw & rudder blown
completely away & the other has an awful hole
that a motor could easily pass through in her side.
It made us consider ourselves very fortunate to
have escaped such a fate while in the deep sea. Some
considerable time & our fellows began to get off into
GWR trains along side, we were in the fourth train &
did not get away until 3:30^{pm} arrived at Sidmouth Station
about 10^{pm} had a 4 mile walk to camp & arrived there feeling
tired it was a beautiful Moonlight night, clear & frosty
& there had been a slight fall of snow. In Devonport
ladies were driving the Motor Ambulance cars. Telegraph girls
& postwomen. While riding through the folk gave us
a great reception. The stations were all in shaded camps
and at Exeter the ladies had tea ready for us to fill
our water bottles. This concludes a short & brief history
of our trip. I hope you'll be able to read it