

January

- 4th Spent at Solloum. Bardia still holding out
- 5th Solloum, had a swim, but working hard. Bardia fell 1200 hrs.
- 6th Went through to Tobruk. Working, carrying ammunition.
- 7th Tobruk, working
- 8th Still working at Tobruk
- 9th working
- 10th Working, rain. Truck off the road, but nothing broken and nobody hurt
- 11th Working outskirts of Tobruk
- 12th Drove all day and all night
- 23rd Still working around Tobruk
- 24th Tobruk fell
- 25th Camped near Derna
- 26th Visited an old Egyptian pyramid about 15mls this side of Derna
- 30th Italians evacuated Derna
- 31st Went around Derna in a big detour, pass was blown up

February

- 1st Arrived at Bent, first of the cultivated country, green grass, nice buildings and Italian settlements
- 2nd Blew a gasket on cylinder head
- 6th Passed through town of Barce, best town we have seen so far, nice farms near here
- 7th Passed through Barcelona
- 9th Lockra, mostly natives on coast
- 10th Went to Bengazii
- 25th Went surfing at Lockra in morning and working on our trucks in afternoon
- 26th Arrived at Barcelona and stayed there all day near an Italian farmhouse. Slept there in our trucks
- 27th 180 mls past Bengazii, drove all night to the 8-kilo post outside Bengazii. Slept there
- 28th

Had a look at a giant Italian bomber plane. Had dinner at an Italian café. Arrived in camp at 9am

March

1st Spent at Lockra. Reading, nothing startling happened. Tried out some (? rissoles) and cooked a damper

2nd Arrived at Derna. Had a swim in the surf and slept there that night

3rd Arrived at Tobruk. Air raid but otherwise a quiet day

4th Spent at Tobruk. Nice harbour, which is main attraction of the place. Many sunken ships

5th Stayed at Tobruk, dust storm but not bad, A quiet day

6th Met Bob (brother) at Tobruk. First time I've seen him for 3 months. Stayed there for the night

7th Tobruk to Bug Bug. Stayed there, a desolate place- no cultivation

8th Arrived at Mersa Matruth. Went to the Yellow Duck and got a few drinks to celebrate with Bob

9th Camped at Mersa, warm but a bit windy. Went for a swim with the boys

10th Still at Mersa- expecting to move anytime. Sun-baked by the beach

11th Camped at Mersa. Windy and a slight dust storm

12th Still at Mersa. Warm day, went for a swim with Harry (dads childhood friend) and some of the boys

13th Spent the day at Mersa Matruth, waiting to move out, fine day

14th Started out from Mersa Matruth, terrible dust storm, held up for 4 hours. Broke an axle at 4pm. Fixed it at midnight. Arrived at Alexandria at 4 am

15th Spent the morning settling down and in afternoon we went to Alexandria where we got a good bath

16th Had a days leave with Bob and some of his mates- had a good time

17th Had another days leave in Alexandria. Saw Deanna Durbin in "Spring Parade", at The Royal Theatre

18th Spent the day at Armaria, near Alexandria

19th Paraded before General Wavell today and heard a very stirring speech. A fine day

20th A fine day. Went to Alexandria and got a new uniform. Had some mail from home, waiting to move out

21st Wrote some letters home. Just another day in camp

22nd Officer Commanding Parade. Nothing startling happened

23rd Had a good days leave in Alexandria. Met Jim Pomeroy there

24th Marched 3 miles, to the train, with full pack. Landed in Alexandria and boarded the "Berkenshire" transport boat and awaited our departure

25th Left Alexandria at 5.30 and I was pleased to see the last of it. Slept out on deck

26th Fine day and the sea was very calm. Just missed a mine. Sighted land near Greece

27th Landed at Port Pyrus, near Athens. A very nice port. Camped 10 mls from Athens that night. I had 10 shillings. Harry Hall had nothing cause he got fined for speeding and breaking the axle. 10 shillings = 40 drachmas. 1 midi of beer = 7 drachmas

28th Camped at same place, a great place. It is not to be compared with dusty Egypt

29th Went to Athens. Had a days leave. Visited the park and the old part of the city

30th Left Athens early and passed through many villages, fertile country. Camped on the roadside for the night

31st Started out early in the morning. Passed through marvellous country, looks like a map from the top of the mountains. We crossed a river, arrived near Mt Olympus. Camped the night

April

Camped near Mt Olympus. On guard duty that night and saw Harry
2nd Still camped near Mt Olympus. 1000 feet high. Went for a swim in the creek

3rd Went to the shooting range and then went for a swim in the creek. Nice warm day

4th Went to the shooting range in the afternoon and saw Harry

5th On guard in camp. Fine day and warm. A really cold night

6th On guard in camp. Rained that night. Blankets got wet. Everything got wet. Very uncomfortable night

7th Lit a fire and dried the blankets in the morning. Shifted our camp late in the afternoon

8th Put our tent up and got settled in camp. Rainy day and we were on guard

9th Rainy day and very cold. Guarding ammo. Boys up all night

10th Still raining. Hundreds of Greek evacuees from Solonika

11th Guarding the DID at old camp. Speaking to Greek evacuees from Solonika

12th Went to Elasson, about 6 miles back. Still raining, it was pretty near snowing

13th Fine day, but still a bit cold. Seen Harry

14th Fine day, warm. Enemy planes over all day. Machine gunned by the enemy (planes), Messerschmitt. We fire on them with our rifles

15th Enemy planes again today. Fired on one with our rifles. Warm day

16th Shifted camp back about 25 miles. Climbed a big mountain and watched 50 bombers bomb Larissa. Went with Vic on truck

17th Larissa in ruins. Machine-gunned truck by enemy, while carrying infantry through Larissa. One killed, two wounded. Lasted 1 and half hours. 7 raids altogether. AAS got plane who attacked it

18th Left infantry at Larissa. Few raids. Carrying supplies west to port east of Larissa and camped at an old aerodrome, at Larissa

19th Dive bombs. Raid, 300 bombs. Big raid. Camouflaged our truck. I was left behind that night (five of us- me, Wally, Charlie and Victor)

20th Air raids all day. About 3 pm Fritz (the Germans) came along with tanks, battle, walked back. Passed through Larissa about 11.30. German..... Passes all blown

21st Camped in infantry lines. Machine-gunned. Set out at night for camp. Picked up by Bob Roberts, after a lot of walking

22nd Arrived in our camp at 130 am. Slept in an open truck. Got another truck. Destroyed our gear and set out for the front

23rd Arrived at the front. Fine day, a few planes. Machine-gunned with Captain Mitchell. Pulled out that night- drove all night

24th Camped at Argus during day. Fine day. Aerial activity and hit the trail again at night. Hundreds of dead mules and people, killed by planes

25th Camped during the day, and drove at night. Large pass and a rough road arrived at foot of Greece at dawn. Passed through Conrith Callamatto

26th Camped near foot of Greece, in village. Fine port town. Bombed by heavy planes

27th 2am, on board destroyer "Costa Rica"- bombed 3 times and sank. Picked up by "Herawarol", a destroyer. Full speed, at 35 knots, for Crete. Arrived in one-hour with Bobbie and 2/11 chaps- saw Bill McCall -machine gunned on wharf

28th Marched 7 miles to camp. Saw Harry and we re-joined our unit. Fine day. Aerial activity

29th Still on Crete. Mountainous country. Fine day. Air raid- four down. Warm days and cold nights. Went for a swim in the creek

30th Still at Crete. Spent the day resting and swimming in creek which comes down from the snow topped mountains

May

1st Still at Crete. Warm day. Aerial activity. Cold night. Our planes are doing well here

2nd Warm day. Clear sky. Creek dries up. Aerial activity. Warm night

3rd Dull day and the creek is running full stream. Big raid on the harbour- warm night

4th Fine day - but the creek dried up. Aerial activity- waiting to leave the island. Mostly our planes about. Big air raid

5th Still on the island. "Doomed Man" name given by Lord Haw Haw. Germans patrolling the skies all day- went swimming

6th Quiet day and no enemy planes about. Went swimming with Rigg and Harry

7th British patrolling the sky and keeping it clear of enemy planes

8th Rainy day and had to sleep in it all night

9th Still at Crete and a bit of aerial activity

10th Aerial activity today, went for a swim

11th Moonlight air raids starts but no damage done

12th Air raid again at night- went swimming during the day

13th Shifted our camp in the morning. Went for a swim and at night there was another raid

14th Daylight air raid on Luda Bay, but no damage done. No night raid

15th Fine day and no aerial activity up to date. Had some cherry brandy and some crassy

16th Went surfing at Suda Bay. German Reconnaissance plane over at 6pm, big raid on Bay. Two bombers crashed together in flames. On guard duty tonight

17th Fine day. Went for a swim in Luda bay, in the morning. Big raid over Bay. One oil tanker on fire. Quiet night

18th German planes over early in morning. More raids after dinner- over 100 planes all day. 2 down, one ship hit

19th Still at the old camp near the Greek ancient monastery- aerial activity

21st German parachutes dropped and we evacuated our camp on the flat, to a little gully. Stayed there all day

22nd Moved out and issued with rifles and we took up a defensive position around Suda Bay. Bombers over all day. Air fleet shot down 100 (? enemy) planes

23rd Fine day. More troop carriers over earlier. Our troops still doing well

24th Moved into a forward position, on the island road. Great aerial activity. Saw one of Goerings "Circus Planes" fly low over us- black with yellow markings

25th Still occupying our positions, near D.I.D. Quiet in the morning but great aerial activity in the afternoon.

Saw twochase 3 and shot them down

26th Took over the artillery positions, still further back. Fine day but windy. Built a shelter with Shepherd

27th Big blitz over valley. Bombed village. Walked all night

28th Arrived dispersal area, after being bombed on the way. No food and the water is bad

29th Marched down to gully that night. Messerschmitt's (German planes) over. Found water but it is not too good

30th Camped in gully. Not much aerial activity. No food except some green mulberries

31st Still in gully and no food. Boys killed a donkey and ate it. Terrible anxiety, and ever bodies nerves were bad. Terrible experience. All tired out and hungry. Messerschmitt's machine-gunned the gully

June

1st Evacuated Crete at 2am boarded the HMS "Jackal" and we left at 3 am. Quiet trip and we arrived at 5pm. Had a feed on board "The Jackal"

2nd Arrived at (?) Amiriya and we got a blanket and a good feed but still tired out and weak

3rd Caught the train for Palestine

4th Arrived at Jules camp where we settled for the night

7th 4 stroke motor, Otto cycle. Induction

Inlet open. Compression both closed. 90 degrees

8th power spark both closed. Exhaust open

28th Started off on tour of Palestine, Haifa, Nazareth, Tiberious. Had a swim in the Sea of Galilee

29th River Jordan- Jewish agricultural colony, followed the Turkish railway to (?) Nathonya, a seaside resort

30th Started off for Jerusalem. Had dinner and a swim at the YMCA. Visited Tel Aviv and Rehovat

September

- 4th Prepared for a short trip. Drew pay and new equipment
5th Reveille 4 am. Arrived at Sarafan at 6.15, picked up C.Chev artillery carriers and headed south. Passed through Beindt - Sheba. I camped a few miles further on for the night
6th Went through Sinai desert. Crossed a pontoon bridge across the Suez Canal and drove onto (????)
7th Went to a Greek canteen and in the afternoon went into Ismailia. Had a good time with Mac, Leo and Roy
8th Reveille at 4 am. 6am on our way back, arrived at Jules at 7pm

October

- 13th Settled down in our new camp. Went for a march down to the local stream
14th Set out from our camp to the railway siding. Loaded with hay and went into Baalbek. Some...runs there
18th Set off for Rayak with our truck. Arrived at Rayak and camped the night
19th Set off for Damascus. Passed through Chatuna at the junction of the Rayak road on to the Beirut -Damascus road
20th Camped at katana, about 15 miles from Damascus- carrying concrete
21st Camped at Rayak
22nd Loaded with nails at Rayak and went to Dimera
25th took barbed wire into Katana from Rayak. Came back the short way through the hills

December

- 23rd Bit of an act tonight
24th On guard duty Xmas Eve and its raining and snowing
25th Christmas morning and its snowing. First Xmas I 've ever had in the snow. Had a good dinner and Harry visited me afterwards. We had a drink for Xmas. Had a yarn with Harry and his mates

31st Came into Baalbek for the 6th division Xmas sports. Harry started in the 44D and ran second. Went into the town and had a drink and a talk with Harry

Memorandum (last section in dads diary)

On the 30th August, Friday, at 3am we sailed from Sydney Harbour and our first port of call was Fremantle, Western Australia, on the 4th September

We left on the 5th September and reached Bombay on the 15th September., HMS "Canberra"

Left our convoy on the 13th September.

We sailed from Bombay on the 19th September and arrived at Port Suez on the 29th September.

We disembarked on the 30th September and arrived at Gaza on October 1st.

We went into camp at Duir Senied November 5th.

We left and went to Barbara.

We stayed there about a fortnight and then went to Egypt.

September 2nd went to Ismalia taking down trucks, arrived back on Monday 7th.

Left Syria on 26th January 1942

Left Palestine on the 6th February

Left Egypt on the.....