ORAL HISTORY RECORDING

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INTERVIEWEE: DR LLOYD CAHILL

INTERVIEWER: DR JOHN MITCHELL

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START OF TAPE ONE - SIDE A

Identification: This interview is with Doctor Lloyd Cahill in Sydney on 26th February 1991. Doctor Cahill, during the war, was Captain Cahill of the 2/19th Battalion, NX35149, and he served with F Force.

As far as I can remember I left on the third train load from Singapore for an unknown destination and we finished up five days later of course at Bampong. I don't think there's any need for me to go into the details of the trip, it's been well described by others. After a night there - I think it was a night's rest we had or a day's rest - and then we pushed off. And, like most of the other prisoners, I found the first part reasonably easy going but after several nights we ran into the rough country and the monsoon and things were very tough going.

As we got up into the hills and walking at night it became impossible. The only way we could keep going was to tie a white object on the back of the person in front of you so that you could follow them and see where they were going. But in spite of this a number on the various nights fell over, we had broken arms and other injuries which were rather hard to deal with. We dealt with by cutting bamboo and using it as old [Goote] splinting, which I don't suppose a lot of people would know what Goote splinting is now. That helped them considerably. And after ... I gradually found that I was fortunate in as much as I was able to carry on most nights except for the regulation one night rest every now and again, so that eventually I found that I passed through the second party and finished up with the first party and we were the first to arrive up to what then turned out to be Shimo Sonkurai.

Now after we'd been there about twenty-four hours I saw the first case of what subsequently turned out to be cholera. I had been warned that we were in an endemic area so that it didn't take a great deal of clinical observation to realise what the trouble was. Soon after this a few other fellows went down. I had no medical equipment except the odd thing with a few instruments I carried and there was no camp. We were just sleeping in the open on bamboo slats. And fortunately these two - the first two or three - weren't too bad and I was sound asleep one night when suddenly I heard a commotion outside and I turned around and to my amazement there was Bruce Hunt and John Taylor who had heard that the medical officer in the first camp had died of cholera. And so started a long association with Bruce and John, both of whom were magnificent colleagues.

Lloyd, just a couple of things. That first MO was a British one, was he?

John Taylor?

Oh, it was John Taylor who died?

John Lindsay Taylor. He was an old friend of mine from Sydney.

The one who died? No, you said ...

No, they thought that I had died.

It was confusion, right.

The word had got back that I had died. Yes.

Sorry.

And they had marched for about three or four hours through the night and arrived at midnight and I was tucked up in what little bed I could find of comfort and safe and sound - perfectly all right. But that's who the medical set up in Shimo Sonkurai started. It was just by chance that the three of us came together.

So about four hours walk for them.

Yes, on the road I think getting up there. That of course made things much easier for me then. We could at least could get organised medically with the help of Bruce and John and fortunately the peak of the epidemic didn't arrive for some weeks later and by that time we had a few slats made or a few stages made to after these people.

Bruce decided that the obvious thing to do was to move the cholera patients up to what subsequently was known as Cholera Hill. And I found myself ... I decided, or Bruce decided it would be just as well for one of us to stay on Cholera Hill and the others to stay in the camp. I don't know how we arrived there but I was eventually up there. I spent most of the epidemic up on the Hill. I didn't work down on the camp proper at all. It was a most extraordinary experience because these poor fellows, you know, you'd know them well but within twelve hours you had no idea who they were, they were so dehydrated.

The only way we could treat them was to run in saline and this was done, fortunately we had a chemist in the camp - a pharmacist - and we also by that time an English medical officer ... no, he was actually Malay, an Englishman working in the malarial institute at Kuala Lumpur, Tom Wilson, arrived in the camp. Tom was an expert on malaria and he had a microscope with him and some field stain. To his amazement he found that by using some water from the stream that flowed down the hill was exactly the right ph for the field stain to work, so that he was a great help. He and the pharmacist used to make up saline with salt pinched from the Jap kitchen. And I'd just run this in intravenously.

It was extraordinary, you know, when you think now of all the care that's taken when giving any intravenous fusions and when you think back to the way it was run in there and yet it amazes you. And I can't remember having any reactions at all from it and I used to run it in through a little [Becton Dickinson] syringe and stethoscope tubing. I've still got the thing upstairs - the syringe upstairs.

Really. Well, just a few questions if you would. That was the monsoon time, was it?

Oh the monsoons were going all the time, yes.

So you got fresh rain water for the ...

No, actually it was a stream coming down the mountain.

Oh, the stream water, right.

The stream coming down the mountain and they used to get the water from this stream and this turned out to be ... Now, from the point of view of malarial diagnosed this was a great help because he could use the field stain. But he was also very good with ph. He could work

out the ph roughly.

> That's extraordinary. I was wondering about the saline injections. What salt you would use?

The stuff they pinched from the Jap kitchen. They go up and pinch a bit of salt and just make up a ...

> So it wouldn't be too refined would it?

Oh no, no. That's what amazed me. You could run fluid, I don't know how many litres I ran into the ... I don't know, we had about 200 cases in all I think of cholera and all of whom had stuff run into them. But, in all, I don't know whether it was the dehydration or what but nobody had reactions. There was no way of taking much care about them. We used to boil the water up but apart from that it was probably boiled up in the dixie that we'd breakfast - the rice cooked in.

> I suppose the men's response was so jolly flat they weren't going to react to too much.

That's right. Nothing there. Fortunately the mortality was just under fifty per cent which, I suppose, under the circumstances was not too bad.

> Without modern antibiotics.

Yes, that's right, with no antibiotics.

> Because they'd be dead otherwise.

The Brits up in the next camp up the road, their mortality was extremely ... much much higher. I think that's probably the fact, the poor fellows, they'd never lived in the bush; they couldn't look after themselves; their hygiene was nothing like ours, they just had no idea of hygiene. They were nearly all from London or from Liverpool and they'd never seen scrub of any kind at all.

Yes, so having spent some weeks there - I stayed there until the epidemic was over - and I think it was probably about a month in all before I came back. I used to come down just at night. My batman used to have a fire ... well, we had to have fires going at night in the huts because it was so cold and he used to wait until I came down and he had boiling water there. And I had a pair of boots at that stage - army boots - which he used to put into the coals and get my short, what I had, and boil those up every night and I'd have a good wash down. But otherwise you're up there all the time with them.

One interesting thing was when that epidemic broke out we were short of staff. There were no trained personal at all; very few. But a dozen RASC - the Royal Army Service Corps - a dozen volunteers, privates, arrived from one camp, a British camp down the road, and they volunteered to come up and nurse these Australians. And I had quite a number of them died with cholera; they got it themselves.

> Pretty well deserve a VC each, wouldn't they, knowing that the chances were ...

They certainly do. Yes, they really did because they knew what they were coming into. Yeah, they were great fellows. Didn't shirk at all.

And how many of the twelve died, can you remember roughly?

I can't remember. I wouldn't like to say but I think quite a number, several of them did. But I subsequently meant one of them in England many years ago, a fellow called Joe Higgins who was an absolute character. He used to work in a nightclub in London pre-war, well-known as the bag of nails, and he used to regale me with stories of the bag of nails. And I was at the test match at Lords and I was walking past the Royal Pavilion and somebody called out, 'Captain Cahill' and I turned around and here was Joe Higgins sitting in the Royal ... he was a waiter in the royal enclosure. So Joe just went on in the same way. And they were grand fellows. And then the other ones I just had as orderlies, troops who volunteered to come up and some of them became very adapt and were very good nurses.

You can't remember any of the Australian names, I suppose?

Yes, the Australians? Who they were?

Mmm. Do you remember some?

Now I don't know. I couldn't really say who was actually on the Cholera Hill with me all the time. I don't know, no. Some of them, there was Ken Marshall. Ken Marshall, he was there part time with me. Who else was there? No, I can't remember anybody else because they don't ...

Don't worry. Most people can't.

I wouldn't like to say names because I'd miss some out and if they ever knew ... I can't remember because they used come and go.

Yes, well I'd hate to ever be caught in another cholera epidemic under those circumstances but I suppose you'd get better results now than ...

How many weeks were you up on Cholera Hill?

I'd reckon about a month - a month in all probably.

And the boots lasted a month, did they, with the cooking in the fire?

No, I finished up walking around in clogs - wooden clogs. Then we got another - there was a break for a while - and we got a secondary ... a small bout again. Now that was okay until towards the end - do you remember when Bruce Hunt moved up to [Thanbya]?

Yes.

I forget what month that was. He took all the sick up to the hospital in Burma and left behind in Shimo Sonkurai just a small number of very sick who were too sick to go. The more or less fit moved up to Sonkurai itself and I was left behind with this small bunch and the Nips put us up into about a third the space of the camp and then to my horror they brought in a whole lot of Chinese and impressed Indians and all sorts of people and, of

course, cholera broke out again immediately and they were just separated by a bamboo slat. Now the unfortunate thing is they wouldn't let me into see these people or do anything about them for about three or four days but by that time the babies were dying and it was really ghastly business. And even then, they wouldn't let me treat them.

There were women and children in that group, were there?

Women and children, babies. Babies trying to wake their mothers up who'd died. And then suddenly they just kicked us out and sent us all up to Sonkurai, so I don't know what ever happened to those poor people.

And when that cholera first broke out when you first arrived, did the Japanese revaccinate ... give you the vaccines for vaccination?

Oh, there was none there. They did eventually, after the thing was more or less over. Some came up and Colonel Banner went off and he did get some more vaccine so that that was over. But even after that was over the second bout was not as bad as the first so maybe the vaccine had some effect.

I suppose natural immunity too would build up but with a vaccine there'd be a delay of several weeks for it to take effect.

That's right. See, the other thing is Bruce Hunt, with his driving force, the sanitation and the hygiene he brought into the camp was extraordinary so that every man ... there was boiling water and for every man, before you had any food at all you had to put your plate into the boiling water and then have the rice - we didn't have much more than rice. So that they all became very very conscious of it.

And Bruce Hunt organised it?

He was the driving force. He was an incredible fellow, yes. Even the Japs admired him. They were hard on him but they would call him. When there was trouble they would call for Hunt.

Is that right?

Yes, oh yes. They wouldn't call for the commandants, they'd call for Hunt.

And yet he'd stand up to them I'd gather, if not fight ...

Oh he did. And he got hit. On the way up he got hit was the number eight iron and fractured his metacarpals.

How did he get on after that? It would be a pretty painful thing. Did he have some sort of splinting or ...

Yes, he had a sore hand for quite a while when he arrived but nothing would stop him. He just went on. Now he got the whole camp, the hospital organisation, the so-called hospital organised in the camp was really first class. He picked out officers who weren't at that stage when they first got there weren't allowed to go out on the railway line and he picked out the ones that he considered were the best, and he made them ward masters, he called

them ward masters. They had a 2IC and then he had a sergeant who'd do the clerical work and it was run like a hospital, the whole thing - records, everything were kept. And he had the cooks, he used to go and inspect the cooks so that the cooks became hygiene conscious; everybody became hygiene conscious. The latrines, they were built so that they were more or less fly-proof. And I think this was really reason that the death rate with us compared with the British was so much lower.

And of course then he'd go up from one camp to the other. He didn't stick only to Sonkurai, he'd be up to see how the Australian soldier camps were going.

How far north and south did he go, do you know?

Usually about five miles apart. And he'd go off and sort of talk his way into it. He'd bully the Japs and if he heard the Japs were going up to another camp he'd be on it. Oh, a man of colossal energy, colossal. Extraordinary man. So altogether to the end unfortunately the rations got less and less because the monsoons came, the rain became ... the roads became more impossible and eventually they couldn't even get the little carts that were dragged by the men, couldn't get them through the mud. So the only way we had of getting rice was to send the light duty men up who'd bring back about forty or fifty pounds of rice on their backs. This was an extremely onerous task because most of these men would have been marching without boots in bare feet through mud up to their knees. A distance of five miles to the nearest camp up and five miles back. This went on for some weeks before the monsoons eased off a little and once again they could bring rice in with the elephants or these little drays, little carts.

Because of the shortage of rice the Japs then decreed that apart from the ordinary reduction in our daily issue the sick were only to have about half the quantity of the fit men. So that the rations became almost impossible. This resulted in an increase in the number of beri-beri cases - both the wet and the dry - which were terrifying things. It was quite extraordinary at times to be actually talking to a man and he would suddenly sit up and just fall back, just out a little cry, fall back and he'd past on. The amount of cardiac irregularities was just extraordinary. It's a great shame that we didn't have anything like a ...

A cardiologist, an ECT ...

A cardiologist outfit there with us because I'm sure there would have been rhythms there that had never been seen before. The wet beri-beris were horrisome things to look at with this gross oedema of their legs, their scrotum was so large that they couldn't move, their chest filled with fluid and a most dreadful death. The other thing that caused a great deal of trouble was scabies. Now we were up at about 3,000 feet I think so it was hot during the day and cold at night. We used to have fires lit on the earth between the sleeping decks so that they could keep warm. Now the people with scabies had to keep warm, so they'd stand by the fire and as they got warm the itching would increase and the poor devils just scratched themselves and they became infected. And there was one great friend of mine there who had been captain of the Bondi Surf Club before the war who literally died from scabies. A magnificent athlete but he just couldn't stand up to it.

The other extraordinary thing was that fitness really had a great deal to do with the number who succumbed or the people who survived. It was quite extraordinary the little thin wizened up fellows would survive and the men that you thought were really big strong fellows would succumb. So it was extraordinary. I don't think there was any reason for this.

Others would ... the desire to live obviously played a part, others just felt they just couldn't handle the situation and past on.

The other thing that also has amazed me is that there were no suicides. There was every reason for suicides but there were hardly any suicides until after the Jap capitulation. And the first week after the capitulation there were quite a number of suicides. I don't know why that was. I don't if there has been any explanation given for it.

Everybody sort of confirms this.

Is that right.

Yes.

One dentist committed suicide by diving headfirst down a bore hole - a most terrible way to ...

That wasn't the latrine one was it?

Yes. Yes. Extraordinary. There was one chap I remember on the railway line, because he was at school with me, and he went round the bend but he survived but ... the poor fellow. But again there were no cases of schizophrenia or anything at all. I suppose that everybody was so exhausted by the time they got back from work that they just collapsed and went to sleep. You didn't have time to worry about what was happening other than the outside world.

The hours got longer and longer. I used to start sick parade and then when I came down from Cholera Hill with - Colin Juttner had joined us by that stage - and we'd start sick parade at somewhere about four in the morning as I recall. Four ... and they'd be going out at six. And they'd then have to march down to wherever they were working, again without boots. Some, you know, were just so sick that it was terrible to have to see them going out.

In spite of this I think we did pretty well in the Shimo Sonkurai. Later on I went up to a British camp and things were not really so good there. They were literally sending out men who died on their way to work which was a bit grim. They lacked the discipline or something there and a lot of responsibility was put onto the junior ... they had Indian Army doctors there who were not commissioned - they were non-commissioned officers. One very fine fellow, he had to take the brunt of this and I always admired him but if the Japs wanted a certain number out they had to go. I'd better not say much.

Yes, well, inevitably some surgical conditions cropped up. The worst of course were the tropical ulcers. Fortunately we were able on many occasions to have these moved south to where facilities were better for surgery because in Shimo Sonkurai there was just nothing. I did have to amputate a couple of legs but to my horror there was gangrenous appendix I had to do which was rather unusual. We had nothing apart from a large green mosquito net that we'd sleep under during the night. The operating table consisted of an ambulance stretcher on poles. My anaesthetist was a dentist. And I had carried a mixture of chloroform and ether in ampoules which the Scots used quite a lot and this was our anaesthetic which was rather exciting in itself. We had to boil out instruments on each occasion in the dixie that the rice was cooked in for breakfast. For sutures on the amputations we had to steal from ... we managed some string from the Japanese kitchen

and we managed to get a couple of handkerchiefs for side towels for the appendicectomy and he fortunately, after a rocky convalescence survived, and I subsequently saw him in Sydney after the war and he'd grown to a great big fat healthy fellow, but he was a very lucky man.

Gosh, if only he'd realised of the absence of materials.

Yes, that was a hair-raising one. Fortunately the Japs' xxx would come down and have a look and then they'd go for their lives. The question somebody asked about blood transfusions. We used to borrow the Jap bike - push bike - and we had a few little tubes, and thanks again to Tom Wilson whom I mentioned earlier, this Englishman, we used to do crossmatching by spinning the blood and little ampoules on the back wheel of the bicycle, spin it down with that and then he would crossmatch it. And we used to use then the victim just to transfuse it straight over, fortunately with no ill-effects. But it was, again, hair-raising surgery and I wouldn't like to ... and I often get the horrors when I think of those days having only having been through a few years and the things you'd undertake.

Lloyd, did you have any way of estimating haemoglobin or was it just in the clinical appearance?

None at all. Just in the clinical appearance. Clinical appearance and blood loss.

In the case surgery.

Yes.

You mainly use the transfusion for amputation?

Mainly for amputations, yes.

Coming back to the amputations, was it Mac Winchester who was the anaesthetist?

Max was there, yes. Max if think gave some for me, yes.

And you can't remember who else. One of the other doctors, was it?

There's another one too and I can't think of his name.

Not Stuart Simpson?

He subsequently died. He died many years ago. He was a Queenslander. But Max did. Yes, Max gave me some and of course Max has passed on too.

And coming back to the amputations, I'll just ask you a few more specific questions. Did you make flaps or was it more or less a guillotine-type operation?

Tried to make flaps, yes, tried to make flaps but they weren't very successful. Having done that I then offloaded them providing they were well enough, as soon as they were well enough to travel down to ... down south where they had better facilities.

And did you use string for both the vessels and the skin, did you?

Yes. We found some linen, linen thread. They had some linen thread there and I just used this linen. And I had some sutures myself that I carried. I had been on Pulau Bukum before we came up on F Force and Pulau Bukum was the Shell Company island and the last days of Singapore we, the British, had shelled the tanks with aviation fuel in them but they had only knocked out about half of them but they'd then set up what was allegedly the biggest fire the world had seen. There was an enormous fire. I can well imagine what the Gulf is like at the moment because the same black smoke went up and I can remember this black smoke over Singapore in the final days which gave it a very eerie appearance.

When I went out there I found the hospital on the island was untouched. It was full of drugs. So I was able to get hold of quite a lot of these and I took some back to Changi but I kept a supply of Emetine and chloroform and ether and some M and B and various things of that nature for myself, and some sutures. And I carried these in a Johnson and Johnson dressing tin; I can remember it very well. So I had some sutures that were useful, sort of gut, so it wasn't all ...

And how about needles and ...

I had some needles too and I had a needle holder. I had some rudimentary instruments and they had given us a kit so that I had an amputation saw and hammers and so on - chisels - and so I wasn't altogether devoid of things, but they weren't the best in the world but they served their purpose. But it was rough surgery.

Successful though.

Well, yes. Unfortunately the appendix was the one that really worried me because it was really a nasty one, a really gangrenous appendix. And without antibiotics, because we didn't know what antibiotics were. I learnt about penicillin when we got back to Australia.

When you still think it's got a significant mortality rate these days.

That's right, yes. I'll mention one little story about M and B. There was one very clever fellow in the camp who'd been a fitter and turner and he had recognised the value of M and B, particularly with the Japs who had a dose of gonorrhoea, and they were up there because they used to bring the girls up to the camps. So he fashioned a little punch and a dye and he'd go up to the Jap kitchen and pinch the chalk and he used to make these little tablets M and B 693 and sell them to the Japs at a dollar a go. And he made quite a lot of money. The Japs were very keen to get this. He built up a big trade. They were very clever the things they got onto.

Is that because of what they'd collected from the ladies - the Japs?

Yes, that's right. I always tell a story about Adrian Curlewis, the late Sir Adrian, who was an old friend of mine and after the railway was built we were all pushed very hurriedly down to Niki, the big junction. And of course trains were going to move off immediately they said but about five days later we might have left. But one night I got fed up with sleeping on the ground and I crawled up onto a heap of railway lines which were BPH lines and found it was much more comfortable up there than down on the ground. So I said to Adrian, 'Come up here. It's much better up here than down below'. So he came up and we were sleeping there for a few nights and one night about ten o'clock a Jap sergeant came up whom I'd

been treating for something or other and shook me and in no uncertain fashion indicated that something pretty exciting was happening and it was obviously some sexual thing. Then I heard the train arrive. And it was a train with little rice trucks on it, enclosed, and pulled in and the door were open and out got out all these little girls - this was, what, nearly 200 miles up into the jungle - all dressed like nurses and all the Japs were given little tickets, their book of tickets, for their services that were provided. So I woke Adrian Curlewis, I shook him, and I said, 'Adrian, wake up. The travelling brothel has arrived'. And Adrian was an absolute gentleman and he said, 'Oh, oh. Where's my hat? Where's my hat?'. (laughs) Yeah, but there they were. They stayed for a few days. So they were still getting their doses up there.

It's more important than the food supply.

Oh definitely, definitely more important. We were lugging rice but they were bringing other things. Yeah, they certainly looked after them. They had the girls in most camps.

So I gather.

Yeah. Well, that's the story of the amputations. The rest of it of course was the unfortunate business of beri-beri, malaria. Unfortunately with malaria we had Tom Wilson who kept us in touch with the MT and BT malaria and we did get the odd drugs for malaria from the Japs, but nothing very much.

Dysentery we could only treat by crushing the charcoal from the wood we burnt. Really there was very little else.

The ulcers, the tropical ulcers were dreadful. I remember going up to Sonkurai and you could smell ... I could smell the ulcers about quarter a mile away from the camp they were so ghastly. I don't know what the right treatment of those would have been up there. Some used to do the spoon which I thought was ghastly but then they got down so bad they had to be amputated and I suppose amputation was the answer in the long run to the really bad ones. Ghastly things.

Yes, it's certainly interesting the tremendous spectrum of treatment for those.

That's right. I used to treat them more or less conservatively and wrap them in bamboo leaves and banana ... bamboo leaves mainly and cover them.

Just cover them.

But then others would say, well the flies, they like the flies to get on them. Well, where was it, in the Weary's book they'd go down to the river and let the fish feed off them.

Certainly the description of curettage must have just been absolute hell going through that.

Absolutely. You know, the fellows used to shake in horror. They just didn't want it. They'd rather put up with the pain. But once the bone became exposed, that was the finish then and I had to amputate. Dreadful conditions.

Then there was some smallpox. What else was up there?

Was that with our people, or the British people?

The Brits. I found ...

Why was that? Because our people had all been vaccinated or ...

I think that our people had been vaccinated, yes. Yes, I saw about a dozen cases of smallpox up there and they were all just in suspended animation - they were dying.

They were really ill; they were really ...

When I saw them they were gone. They'd just push them out into the scrub, the poor devils.

Now you mentioned earlier about the women and the children who were working on the line or came up with the men. Did you find that commonly? I haven't got much of a record of that.

No, that was uncommon. That was very uncommon because we had just been left in Shimo Sonkurai, a handful of us, with the very sick and Bruce Hunt had gone on and taken all of the others on up to Burma. So that we'd just settled down there and actually the sick were beginning to get a little better because they weren't being pushed about. There was no railway. We didn't have to go out and work. We were just there resting. And then, to my horror, they suddenly brought in about fifteen hundred of these Asians.

As many as that?

Yeah. Oh, packed them in. And that was a dreadful business but, again, fortunately for us, we only had to stay a few days and they moved us on. They got some trucks and moved the sick on to Sonkurai.

And did the Japs provide any medicines for those people?

No, they had nothing; they had nothing at all. We still had the funeral pyre going, cremating, and was able to get hold of a lot of the bodies and take them up and cremate them. But I don't know what happened after we left. But they were just hopeless. They were dying like flies. They were just lying on the floor, lying on the ground, lying anywhere, but I think the pathetic thing was to see the babies trying to wake their mothers. So I presume they all perished. But when we left and there was nobody - we had this pyre, this cremation pyre, that went for months. I don't know how many we cremated on it. It would have been half the size of this room, a third of the size of this room, and huge. And we had one old fellow there, a sergeant, and he was an old Scot, and he was in charge of it and he became completely fascinated with the thing. He subsequently finished up on the despatch department at David Jones in town. I used to see him in town. But, I don't know. It's a wonder he didn't continue his army occupation after the war, he was so keen on it. (laughs)

He'd hardly offer that information when he applied would he?

No, that's right. Vast experience.

Despatch was the correct word.

That's right. Yes. Despatch, still in that area.

But not in the same sense.

I mentioned earlier that you couldn't recognise people, even your best friends, so we used to tag them with bamboo as soon as they got it and then to see the look on the face of the fellow when you tied - he was still all right - but once he got that bamboo tag on he knew he was dicing with death. That was the first time I'd ever really seen that kind of thing done. It wasn't done in hospitals, not in Sydney to my knowledge before we went away, but of course now everybody's tagged, aren't they? You all get a little thing round when you go to the theatre or something or other.

That's right.

But some clever person said, 'Oh, this is the only way. We don't know who we're burning otherwise. Just put these on'.

So it was beri-beri, dysentery, malaria. You could come over the malaria. Bit of scrubtyphus I think but we had no way of telling that, whether it was scrubtyphus or not. But there were some mysterious fevers.

They were pretty sick, were they?

Oh the scrubtyphus men, they were very sick. Some of them got strange things like [petechial] haemorrhages and I just was never sure what they were. Some of them recovered. All sorts of funny things. But I suppose it all boiled down to the simply things like dengue didn't matter at all at that stage. That was almost par for the course. So it went on then. Then we eventually back to Changi which, when I saw ... Actually we went down to Bangkok and I lived on the wharf - we lived on the wharf for about a month. And then one day they brought a barge in and dragged us out to the China Sea. There was an old Jap tramp there and a thousand of us were put on as deck cargo and Col Juttner was on that trip down. We didn't know where we were going. Flat out at four and a half knots. Now they had - the only decent Japs I ever struck - these were professionals, they'd been fighting in Manchuria.

Sorry?

These were professional Jap soldiers and they'd been fighting in Manchuria. They'd come from the north. And they, one of them, was a little lieutenant and he could speak very good English and he had no doubts that they were losing the war. And he used to ask me to meet him after the meal at night under bridge. And I'd meet him down there and he eventually said to me, 'What's going to happen when the war is over?'. And I said, 'Oh well, I'll go back I hope to my home'. And he said, 'Can you be able to go back to your country?', and I said, 'Oh yes', and I said, 'Why? Won't you?'. He said, 'I can never go back to my country'. And he said to me then, 'I can't understand how you can go to your home' and I said, 'Well, I can't understand why you can't go back to your home'. And he stopped and he pointed to a star on the left and he said, 'Do you see that star?'. I said, 'Yes'. And he said, 'Do you see that star?', and I said, 'Yes'. He said,
'That star's your god and that star's my god', and I think that's probably one of the closest I

ever got to them. He had no doubt at all, he had no doubt that they were losing.

Yes, we got back to Singapore and when I saw the old gaol tower I thought, 'Thank God I'm home'. Changi itself was not too made. It had it's drawbacks but it was certainly much better than some of the working parties. There again it depended entirely on the Japs you were with. I was very interested reading Weary's book. It seemed to me that Weary was up - because he was there longer than we were - he was more settled. He was in an area that was settled whereas we were nomads. We were wandering around all over the place; we had no home; we had nowhere we could settle. We were just in virgin jungle miles away from the senior Japs and it depended what the cove in charge was like and we were inclined to get the bottom of the barrel. So that I think things were much tougher up there.

Well you were at the end of the food supply ...

We were at the end of everything. See, and the people, A Force coming down, they kind of came into us, but we were the meat in the sandwich. Of course that's what we were there for, to fill in the gap where they weren't proceeding. So I think that's the way it was. It was tough.

END OF TAPE ONE - SIDE A

START OF TAPE ONE - SIDE B

Identification: This is the second reel of the interview with Doctor Cahill.

Another thing that was a problem was the morale. On the whole they were very good. I don't really recall anybody doubting that subsequently we would win the war somehow or other. All sorts of furphies that arrived, every now and again there was a furphy that was bad news and then the morale would go down. So I found one way of dealing with this was to start a ridiculous argument. We had no ways of discovering whether the Harbour Bridge was heavier than the Queen Mary but that argument went on for lord knows how long. Another thing was that I always felt very sorry for the married men and my particular men in this little bay that I slept in were all bachelors like myself. So at one stage the married men were bemoaning their misfortune to be away from their wives and I said, 'Well, hang it all, old Booth here my great friend and I will donate a cup when we get back to Australia to the first of you married men who can produce a child'. Well the news of this got round and the Padre, [Patti Wass] said that he'd be in this too and he'd give a case of beer. So this caused great amusement and great mirth and the news of it got round to the troops and then the troops started betting on it as to who was the favourite. One cove was a hundred to one because he was no good and some other officer was six to four on because he'd already produced four children, and so it went on and on and this caused great mirth and merriment. Eventually one of my great friends, when we came back to Australia, did produce a child. He was the first and we had a great presentation. We had a lunch at the Australia Hotel - the old Australia - and presented this cup, the Sonkurai Cup.

Can you mention his name?

Yes, Des Karney, the black prince, and he produced this gorgeous daughter who is now grown up of course. But the stipulation was that she had to produce this cup on her twenty-first birthday party and I think that caused a certain amount of trouble. However, eventually we presented the cup and it was David McNickle got hold of this story and wrote

it up in the Telegraph and then later on, many years later, it came up again because somebody said when she won the Sonkurai Cup that it was up to us to present one for the first grandchild. So once again we presented a cup, this time it was smaller, and another friend of mine, Hendy, won this cup for producing the first grandchild and we had a special night for this and a dinner and Hendy was terribly proud of it but as a result of his xxx he at one stage had to go out to the toot and he closed the door - and put the cup on the floor and went into the toot - and what happened after that we don't know but somebody ... a hand came in and took the cup and it's never been seen from that day on. So I don't know what ever happened but that finished the cups, the Sonkurai Cups. But they served their purpose, it was a lot of fun.

How about the argument about the steel, the weight of the metal?

Oh the steel, yes. Well didn't know ... one argument I put up: which is heavier, the Queen Mary or the Harbour Bridge? And all the experts, you know, the ship builder said one thing and the scientist said another and the steel merchant said another and they argued for weeks about this and nobody could possibly know. It was a silly thing in any case. But some of them were absolutely ... And the other thing was: what was a thirty-two pound railway line or a forty-eight pound railway line or something like that, I forget the exact figures, but again they argue about it. But these arguments got their mind off their misfortunes and it did seem to keep them going. There were lots of other arguments but I can't recall what they were now but a lot of them were very funny - caused a lot of fun.

But you found as a technique ...

I found it, yes, very helpful, yes. When they were down in the dumps I'd just start some silly argument or what won the Melbourne Cup in such-and-such a time or, it doesn't matter what it was, you could think of something which you knew nobody would ... The Melbourne Cup of course, all the experts, they could recite the Melbourne Cup winners from the year dot but if you got them onto who rode at that time then you'd find all the experts differed. They had different jockeys and then there'd be another argument. But, on the whole, the morale of the Australian troops was extraordinarily good. They were grand blokes. They stuck to each other like glue. There were very few bad hats among them; very few. And the odd ones that were there were dealt with one way or the other. It's a long time ago now.

Lloyd, would you tell me something about Bruce Hunt please?

Well now, Bruce Hunt was one of the most extraordinary men I've ever met. I well recall the first time I met him was when I went down to the 13th Hospital when they were at Johore for the day and at lunchtime - I didn't know any of the mess, people in the mess in this unit because they'd only recently arrived - and I was seated opposite Major Hunt and Captain Frew, Joc Frew, both of whom I got to know very well later on. But Bruce, when I came out from lunch I remember saying to a friend of mine, 'That man would be the most arrogant man I've ever met in all my life. I just can't understand how people get on with him', and that was that. However I met him several times later and I didn't change my opinion until, as I told when I recounted this story, he arrived up into Shimo Sonkurai one night when he heard that I'd died from cholera. After that I was associated with him throughout the railway line and all the time we were back in Changi and back in Australia of course I became a very great of his and a man I respected enormously. He was a man of colossal intellect, incredible energy, absolute determination that I don't think I've ever know in any other

person and I think ... Actually, when I decided to go to England to do post-graduate work in eye Bruce heard I was going over and he wrote me and said, 'Well look, when you and your wife come through Perth I'll have a party for you'. And sure enough, when we hit Fremantle, there was Bruce waiting in his newly acquired big black Buike car, of which he was inordinately proud and he took us off and we raced around Perth and every part that you could see until four in the afternoon, or four thirty - the party was supposed to start at four - he got there half an hour late as usual. All the guests were on their way and the party got going properly then. I said to Bruce about five, 'Look Bruce, we better get down to this ship' - we were on the Stratheden, the P&O ship to go to England after the war - I said, 'They won't wait'. And he said, 'Forget it Lloyd. No P&O ship has ever left this ship if they know I've got a friend here and I'm entertaining them. Old so-and-so, the boss of the P&O is a great friend of him and I'll get in touch and he'll stop it' and all this nonsense. So eventually even the other guests said, 'Look, you'll have to go. You'll have to take them'. So off we went at a colossal speed in this new car and Bruce had had a few gins, I think he was drinking, and we got down to the Stratheden to find all the gangways down and eventually my wife and I had to crawl in through the vegetable hatch. But this didn't worry Bruce at all. Then he would say, 'See, I told you. No P&O ships have ever left', and this is the way he carried on his practice.

The medical fraternity in Perth, apparently when he first hit there, were divided into two parts, like xxx Gaul. I understand that the first thing he did was to throw a great cocktail party and invite every medical person he could find. He didn't know them but he turned on this great party and made himself known straightaway. He was an amazing man. Unfortunately, you know, he was very keen on diabetes and that, he used to say, was his specialty. And his bible was a book by an American called Huston and 'The Art of Treatment', and I would say that in most conditions Huston would dedicate about eighty per cent of the chapter on how to handle a patient, the management of the patient, and maybe fifteen to twenty per cent on the actual therapy and this was his way. And I think this was why he became such a successful consultant because he just took over the patients and the management of them and lo and behold anybody who didn't carry out his instructions as far as the ordinary way of living was concerned.

As I mentioned on the railway line, he arrived with John Taylor - John Lindsay Talory, on old friend of mine who subsequently did obstetrics - and he prevailed upon John to go to Perth where he became a very successful obstetrician. He tried hard to get me to go to Perth to do eye but I decided that perhaps my work lay in Sydney. Then whenever Bruce would come to Sydney after the war when I came back from England, the first thing he would do would be to come up to my home and step straight in through the door and before I could do anything he'd be out to the kitchen, into the refrigerator and he just put on more weight, more weight, and he developed diabetes which unfortunately I think has led to his death in the long run. But he was a great man really; a man I have an enormous admiration for.

When you were up on the line at lower Kurai did you see very much of him?

Oh yes, even when I was up on Cholera Hill I'd come down and see Bruce a couple of times a day.

He stayed at your camp?

Yes, he stayed with me all the time. No, he stayed with me all the time. And it was interesting he ranged up and down the whole line where F Force was. If he could find a Jap

party or he could find an excuse to go up to see how they were getting on in another camp, he'd go. And when he'd go he'd say, 'Right, Lloyd, you're in charge of the camp' and I could bet your bottom dollar that within five minutes something had gone wrong. I remember one night, he had gone in the afternoon for a couple of days up to ... I think it was up to Burma when he was arranging for the transfer to this so-called hospital which he was establishing, and that night at midnight the Japs came and, you know, called me up, and I had to go up to the sergeant and the lieutenant who was in charge and some bright character had got a yak and knocked its head off and put it at the steps of the castle. And when I got up there there was hell to play. The old sword was swishing and I thought I was going to be decapitated but fortunately the old Japanese interpreter, [Koriass], was an old gentleman and he quietened this mad lieutenant down and I finished up, everybody was quite happy when I wrote a letter to [Teno Hika] saying that I was entirely responsible for this unfortunate incident and that was forgotten.

And you didn't lose your head.

I didn't lose my head but I presume maybe I've got a letter to the late emperor somewhere up there in the records. But at every time he left the camp somebody would do something stupid. I forget the other occasions when they stole something. Yes, another one was when ... eventually they issued us with some Indian Army patterned tents to put over the leaking huts or even while we were getting the huts under control. These things rotted away gradually. And we had a taylor in the camp and he became very adept at making shorts out of the Indian Army patterned tents. And after he'd got rid about three quarters of them the Japs decided that something was happening, they didn't have the cover, and Bruce had gone and I had another session up there in the hut with the mad sergeant. This time he was on the sake in the middle of the night and he insisted on it. My penalty this time was to listen to him sing Japanese opera and he was so full and he had a candle was the only illumination. He was sitting in a yoga position singing this wretched song to the music at midnight and he would fall forward and the flame would hit him on his xxx and he'd withdraw it again and this went on and on and on. It was like one of those toy things that you used to see. But as long as he was about the troops behaved themselves and the Japs were happy.

What was the Jap attitude to his singing the song?

I don't think they had to worry. They behaved themselves when Bruce was there but when they knew I was in charge, I was in trouble - I got into trouble.

They were fairly apprehensive about him, weren't they, I gather?

Yes, they respected him. Because he always wore his 14-18 (war) ribbon and, see, I was a soldier, and I think that impressed them. He was a big man, like Weary, a big man. I can remember the only time I saw Weary was when we were marching up when we had arrived and Weary was established in his camp and we got to Weary's camp in the late evening. I don't know how that happened but we were there and Weary was almost impeccably dressed as far as we were concerned. I think I was with Frank Cahill - and I forget who else - I think Bruce Hunt. I don't know, anyway, we were talking to Weary and a Jap came up and said something to him and Weary didn't even look at him. He just looked straight over to where we were and this annoyed the Jap and he started screaming and Weary still didn't take any notice. And with that he produced the bamboo and he started whacking Weary around the knees and legs and he couldn't get any higher and Weary just carried on talking

as though nothing was happening to him. Weary probably wouldn't remember it. But I think Weary had a very well organised camp, from what I saw of it. But unfortunately we had to move on next morning.

Yes, they had the reticulation showers and soap, but even so ...

That's right. Now actually a great friend of mine, Dick Allen, was Weary's purchasing officer and I see Dick very frequently. And Dick's got an enormous admiration for Weary. Actually if you see Weary you can tell him that I see a lot of Dick.

How about Major Stevens? He was actually SMO but was he sick at this time or what?

Stevens was down south of me and I never saw Stevens but Stevens was not terribly popular with the troops. I think Stevens was with Roy, wasn't he - with Roy Mills? I think Roy was in his camp.

He hasn't actually spoken of him I don't think so. Although I knew Stevens after the war at the xxx where he is xxxologist, I never hear much about him.

No, well he wasn't very popular, why I don't know. Was he with the Field Ambulance? I don't know what he was with.

He 2/12th.

Yes, he was the Victorian Field Ambulance. Now he was quite senior in rank and he started ... he was one of the great advocates for the spoon treatment for the ulcers and of course the troops hated him for that. And I don't know, I think some of the medicos found him a little difficult to get on with. But I had very little to do with him and he didn't cross my path or I didn't cross his which didn't worry me.

Yes, I was just wonder whether virtually Bruce Hunt acted as SMO in a way.

He did. He did, virtually. He was not only SMO, he took over from Pond, he took over from Cappy, he took over from everybody. He was the gun. He was the gun. The troops took note, as long as Hunto Ti was about they were happy. But he controlled the whole xxx box. He decided on the feeding and the hygiene and, oh, he'd have arguments with the other people and they would defer to him. No, he was the man. Quite extraordinary how he just virtually took over from the [commandant], all of whom respected him. They couldn't do anything about it because the troops would do anything for him. So, as I say, as soon as he went there would be trouble. It was quite remarkable. He was an amazing fellow.

He represented survival to them and I guess they realised that.

That's right. They'd to say, 'I can't eat this. I can't have this', he said, 'You will eat that. You'll eat to survive. Stuff it down your throat or I will', and he would make them eat and he was really ruthless and I think he saved lives by being ruthless.

Was he ever seriously ill when he was on the line, do you remember?

No, he didn't. He had the trots and had malaria and so on but, you know, those kinds of

things just rippled off him. He didn't say much. Then he went up ... I was very sorry when ... he took Frank Cahill with him up to the hospital in Burma as the surgeon. I was very sorry that I didn't go with him but he said, 'No, you've got to stay behind and run this show down here', so that I was separated from him then and much to my dismay ...

The sequel to that, to tell you what he was like ...

This is Frank Cahill, was it?

No, this is Bruce. When the war was over and we were back - I was back in Changi - I'd been up on another working party, no sooner did I get back into Changi, after the Japs had actually capitulated, I got herpes of the chest and I was in the so-called hospital. And after I'd got over the acute stage the first ship, the [Oronya], the hospital ship arrived in and Bruce came up to the hospital and said, 'Come on, you're coming on the Oronya with me'. I said, 'I'm in hospital I can't go. I'm just about to be discharge. I've got no orders to go'. He said, 'I don't care', he said, 'You're coming on the Oronya with me, I'm going on it and an old friend of mine, an old buddy of mine from Perth is here, he's in command - Brigadier Lloyd. I'll go and see Lloyd. You'll be on it'. He didn't see [Glynn Wyatt], he didn't see anybody at all and before I knew what was on, I was on the ship and off you go. So that's how I got back to Sydney, purely because Hunt decided. He didn't care a damn about Glynn Wyatt or anybody else. Oh no, he and Glynn didn't get on.

Go to the top.

Go to the top. Everybody in the camp go to the commandant who's come in, Brigadier Lloyd. He was an extraordinary man. He was like that at everything he did. If he couldn't see how he could get it legitimately he'd get it some other way.

You're painting a most vivid picture of him. This is all something we haven't got.

To me, as I say, having started off on the wrong side of the fence, I think he's one of the greatest men I've ever known.

Yes, that's right. As you say you feeling was one to extreme.

That's right. Joc Frew used to say to me, 'Underneath it all he's a colossal guy', which he was. And if he'd like you, he'd do anything for you, anything for you: but if he didn't like you you could just pack up and go. Extraordinary the way he handled people. They either hated him or loved him. A lot of the troops, even my friends, even those who worked with him, some of them just didn't like him. Now my batman by the way, my sergeant, he hates him, yeah, didn't trust him.

Did he say why? Did he give a reason?

No, he didn't say why, he just didn't like him.

Well, how about Frank Cahill?

Oh Frank, he's a delightful fellow. As I say, you know, his family and my family, although we weren't related, his father was a GP in Melbourne and mine was in Sydney and he had ... there was John and Henry, his brothers did medicine, and I had four brothers who did

medicine and we were all about the same time and he was a Vincents down in Melbourne and I was Vincents in Sydney. And we met on the Queen Mary, Frank, then he was in the hospital so I didn't see a great deal of him because I was with the unit but when we got on the Queen Mary I got to know him very well. He was a quiet and delightful fellow, Frank, very kindly man. Too soft to be a surgeon I think. But I always remember one thing about Frank he got very sick marching up on the railway line and I think I went through. He was so sick he couldn't go on. Well he was in a party ahead of me and he was so sick that I went on the next day instead of resting. And that night I laid down and I said, 'All right, Frank, I'll go on with the party tomorrow and you come on with mine'. And we laid down beside a great clump of bamboo and Frank - Frank's beloved possession was a water bottle, he had his water bottle with him and he used to take that everywhere because he was anything but well, he had the dysentery and he was very thirsty and he used to drink this thing. The next morning we woke up and he went to get his water bottle and he picked it up and it was like a japati, it was a little pancake, it was flattened. We hadn't looked to see but on the other side of this great bamboo clump we were sleeping there was an elephant tethered to it and the elephant had come down and just stepped on this thing during the night ...

And missed you people.

Poor old Frank. Frank was there but they're such gentle things the elephants. But, you know, it just flattened it completely and poor old Frank I don't think ever recovered from that.

It could have been his arm or him, I guess.

Yes, poor old Frank. And then back in Changi he used to wake up every morning and say, 'Another dismal dawn, another dismal dawn', he got very xxx. I think it was part of an act - a bit of an act. But he was a delightful cove. But I was saying, he got this trouble later on. He became a senior surgeon at Vincents xxx and then he retired, resigned, and he went into Box Hill. I never worked out why that was.

I had, a couple of years ago, a letter addressed to me from a man called Dennis East from England who is professor of music at the London University and he said he was so glad to know that I was still alive, that George McNealy who had been a Red Cross man in Changi had recently been over, and who was very keen on music, and a became a great friend of East's, had been over to see him and he asked, 'Was Captain Cahill still alive?' and McNealy said, 'Yes, he's there', and gave him my address in Sydney. But when I read the letter I realised it was Frank he thought he was writing because he was writing to Frank to thank him for preserving his fingers when he had tropical ulcers to enable him to go on to become professor of music at the London University and that only for that he would never have succeeded as he did. So I sent the letter the Frank and I never heard any more, but this was when he was sick and couldn't use his hands. Poor old boy. His wife died too, didn't she?

Of xxx.

Don Taylor who came with Bruce Hunt to join me at Shimo Sonkurai was an old friend of mine from Sydney. John had been an extremely good golfer, in fact he was champion at Killara Golf Club in Sydney and was quite an outstanding person. He was MO to the 2/30th Battalion, Black Jack's unit, and was extremely popular with both officers and men. John got the Military Cross for his work in action at Gemas and subsequently in prisoner of war days carried on as usual, and to be expected when he came to Sydney - he came back to Sydney

after the war - he decided to take up obstetrics and gynaecology, which he did, and he came to England the same time I was over there and I went to his wedding down in the Cotteswell. Instead of coming back to Sydney, he was fascinated by Bruce Hunt, and Bruce lent on him to the extent that he decided to practice in Perth, which he did, and in no time built up a very large following. But, unfortunately, he developed carcinoma of the pancreas at an early age and succumbed. It was the end of a very promising career.

Now another fascinating and quite outstanding man was Kevin Fagin whom I think was probably the most loved man of all Australian officers and men in Changi. Kevin was a kindly person, extremely able, most considerate and a very good surgeon. Kevin spent some time on the railway line; he was on Hell Fire Pass I think.

No further up your way.

Further up, was he?

Mmm.

I didn't see him up there but the troops came back with glowing stories of all the work Kevin did because he was involved in a great deal of surgery. The further south they were the more surgery they had to do. I think I've read it in the paper or in some book, but he once told me that one of the worst things that he ever had to do was to pick out a certain number of men for some ghastly task which he was quite certain would lead to their deaths. Kevin, like a number of others, like Frank Cahill, retired from the hospitals in Sydney and Melbourne prior to running their full courses of consultant surgeon. Kevin retired to his property in Yass and there he is still, I understand, is doing quite well.

Now the others, you've probably got Joc Frew. You probably know about Joc.

Would you like to talk about him.

Joc I got to know very well later on. Unfortunately our paths did separate during prison camp but I saw a lot of Jack after the war when he too had made a name for himself in Melbourne as a consulting physician at the Royal Melbourne. Joc, unfortunately, like a number of prisoners of war, succumbed to a coronary on the airport I think it was. He was getting on a plan and he died. It's interesting. There's been some work done I think, hasn't there, on this on prisoners of war compared with sudden deaths with prisoners of war in Europe?

This is right.

I haven't heard the results. I don't know ...

I can show you some notes about it.

Good. Well these are the fellows that I was largely associated with in the railway line and elsewhere. There were a lot there that you could say something about but there are so many.

How about Roy Mills?

Roy, yes. Well Roy, of course, was at the hospital and he was just behind me at the university. Roy was a loveable fellow. He always reminded me of a big St Bernard puppy. The troops always called him Baby Roy and they loved him too. He was an energetic, conscientious fellow who couldn't do enough for anybody. It didn't matter what it was, Roy would do it. He made quite a name for himself and later on, unfortunately, he became rather ill ... or he was ill when he returned to Australia and after a long convalescence he took up practice in Newcastle where he then succeeded and did very well. I see him occasionally but our paths don't cross very much these days.

Yes, I've spent three very pleasant days with him, I think I mentioned.

Yes, yes. And then there's Peter Hendry. Peter, a rascal from way back, he and I were in the same year and when I joined ... yes, we were in the same year. And then, as I say, I went to the showground and there was Peter 2IC. And the first thing, when I went to the showground somebody said the first thing you've got to do is ask for a billet. I was given my billet and showed and it was a horse box. So I said to Peter, 'Well this is no good because I go home every night, I go AWOL?'. He said, 'Never mind there's a colonel over here who has one of the cottages outside the jumping ring and he doesn't know where the key is but I do, so we'll get that'. So we used to have to go in at night after lights were out at night and then get out in the morning before the lights go on. But we lived in there quite satisfactory for quite a number of nights until somebody learnt that we had a phone on there and some chap, some [mater], and by a bit of blackmail got in to use the phone of the Commonwealth Wool and Produce I think it was and more and more and more had to come in because there was more blackmail applied to Peter every day. So eventually after a fortnight the company got an enormous bill for a thousand pounds or something - there were people ringing Darwin and God knows what. So Peter taught me an enormous amount about the army, I learnt very quickly, and then I ran into him up in the railway line; he's always the same, he's a great character.

He certainly is. I had Sunday's lunch with Peter at his sort of weekender at Macquarie Lake, is it?

Yes, that's right. Oh he's a funny fellow, there's no doubt about him. He's been a very successful practitioner.

Hasn't he, yes. I'll elaborate on that. There's a couple points about him we may not know. How about Victor [Brand] then?

Victor. Well Victor of course was with me at Muar. Victor was with the 2/29th and Muar was a terrible debacle and he joined me at the battery crossroads where we were being shelled and where I had an enormous number of casualties including many Indians from the Indian brigade that was there. So Victor was a great help to me. There was little we could do. We couldn't do it, we didn't have time to do anything really except give them morphia until our supplies of morphia dropped. We eventually got a message through somehow to Singapore and suddenly out of the sky an old plane came which I thought must have been a Jap bomber and it was a Dutch Vildebeests I think with these strange markings on it and they dropped two canisters down and everybody thought - we were fighting the Japs - and we all thought something they were dropping bombs they were dropping from the sky but it was supplies of water and morphia that had been dropped for us. But even that, the morphia just ran out and we were in just a hopeless position. But Victor I got to know very well. He's a great man, great character. One thing always amused me about Victor. When

we were back in Changi at one stage and he was in the same hut that I was in and Victor had a pipe and he had run out of tobacco and there was no chance of getting any so he decided he'd cure some hibiscus leaves which he did very acidulously by painting either side of the leave with [gilamica] and then he constructed a little press and he had put them in this press and he hung them up over his cot and these things eventually went green and the stench from it was terrible. No matter, we couldn't get him to do anything with it. And one day after we'd had our bit of xxx rice for lunch, we were sitting outside this hut, which was known as the Vatican City and which I was in charge of because all the padres were on my left and all the medicos were on the right and I had to keep the peace. But out of the hut, out of the Vatican City came Victor's batman. He collapsed, he was green, pulseless and looked as though he might succumb. And Victor quietly walked over and said, 'Oh he'll be all right', and we said, 'What's the matter with him Vic?'. He said, 'Oh, I just got him to try my tobacco'. I think he'll probably deny that story but it's absolutely true.

I might play it to him. (laughs)

Yes. Another time - I haven't seen Victor for a long time - but many years later, it must have been in the mid-fifties, Victor came into my rooms in Macquarie Street one day and my secretary said, 'There's a Doctor Brand outside who'd like to see you'. I was reasonably busy at the time and I said, 'Oh gosh, I'll go and see him'. And there was Victor standing outside and I said, 'Come in Vic'. And he came into my room, consulting room, and we started talking away and forgot the patients. Eventually my secretary came and said, 'Come on, you'll have to hurry up. They're all waiting out there'. I said, 'Well, Vic, what are you doing?'. He said, 'I'd better go off and see my wife'. And I said, 'What, are you married?'. He said, 'Yes, I'm on my honeymoon'. I said, 'Where did you leave her?'. He said, 'I left her down the street half an hour or three quarters of an hour ago', or something another. Yes, you can play that to Victor.

I certainly will.

I trying to think what her name was.

I can't help you there.

Well, Vic got the MC. Again the 29th all thought Victor was wonderful. He was, he was a great fellow, a very good MO. All the regimental MOs were reasonably good. They were all good, the regimental MOs.

Well this is the thing the men thought so highly of.

Yeah, you were dealing with pretty good fellows on the whole. You know, one of the salt of the earth most of them. The crowd I was with, my particular unit, came from the Riverina. They were huge men, big men. At one stage when we had little to do, when we were in Bathurst I think it was, the three medical officers of the 18th, 19th and 20th Battalions, we decided we'd measure them up, weight and so on to see how they were, and the North Coast - the 2/18th came from the North Coast - on the average was somewhere between half an inch ... a bit over half an inch taller than the thousand men from Sydney and then the Cootamundra men in turn were about half an inch taller than the fellows from the North Coast. They were big fellows.

Interesting. I've never heard that before.

Yes. It was just a survey of three thousand men from different areas and most of them did come from those related areas. They didn't move around then like they do now.

Well, can you stand a few more? This is wonderful material.

Sure.

Well now, Tom Crankshaw you mentioned earlier.

Tom. Well, I got to know Tom really it was only when we got to hospital and Tom was the anaesthetist of course and he was a real gadget man, he loved gadgets. I always remember he was one of the first people I ever saw with an electric razor and he used to sit down with this electric razor, terribly noisy thing, and he'd shave away all day long. He'd bring it out at any tick of the clock. It must have been in Changi, yes, Tom was there.

Early days.

Early days of Changi. The early days of Changi were pretty ...

It would have been early days of electric razor too.

It was, it was really early days of the electric razor. Yeah. Actually I do remember him with it in the 13th AGH and I'm wondering how in the devil I saw him in the 13th AGH because I only used to go down there as a visitor. But he was a real gadget man and he could tell you all sorts of things about any electrical things.

That was his unit, 13th AGH?

He was the 13th AGH, yes. He was the anaesthetist of the 13th AGH. The other men were [Frank Claffey] from Sydney, he was with the 10th Hospital, and [Graham Orr] was the 13th.

Neither of those was on the line though.

No. No, they stayed behind and they had a pretty hard job to do because it was devastating. You know, they'd know they couldn't do much at all and they could only feed them with grass soup and a terrible ... just do fields of vision all day long. It would drive you mad.

Graham Orr was another. Graham Orr, he loved model trains and he used to build these model trains.

Even there?

Yes. Yes, Graham used to send his cases, you know, came up from Melbourne to Sydney to live. He was a bachelor, wasn't he, Graham?

I think he probably was.

Frank was a bachelor. He died a bachelor.

But Graham Orr was a member of the model engineers society which built railway working models. In fact I have seen one of the trains he built, about six feet long I suppose. A scale model.

Yeah.

A friend of mine has it now.

Has he?

Mmm.

I liked Graham. He was a most unusual fellow.

I think as you say, he probably did stay a bachelor.

I think he did. But he was an unusual man. I got on very well with him. I don't think he made me do eye. See I only did eye when I came back. I decided to take up and do eye.

And how about Drev. I think you mentioned Drevermann too.

Well I got to know Drev because he was a great friend of Joc's - Joc Frew. I thought Drev was a ... I thought he was perhaps barking up the wrong tree going to be a resuscitation man, that's what he wanted to be at that stage. But he was a far seeing boy, but he was just mad on this resuscitation in Australia.

It's interesting, Frank Mills who went to Borneo as a surgeon, but he got on. He decided he was going to do cardiac surgery when he was over there and he had it all worked out when he was in Borneo. He worked the whole thing out then. It's funny how they did these things but they were there.

At that stage, there again, exceedingly early days - pioneer days.

That's right. So he was one of the pioneers of cardiac surgery in Sydney. Frank's still around.

I didn't realise he was. Yes, I know the name well. Yes, coming back to Drev, why I shrugged, made that gesticulation, I would have thought with that background resuscitation would have been the last thing he'd go into because he was just so thin and he was up all night working.

That's right. He was as thin as a rake.

You know, as his background as a POW that was not the life to go into.

No. No, the other extraordinary thing was John Cade who was the trick cyclist. John was the one who discovered lithium.

Yes, I knew that.

And worked it out when he was up there in Changi. Now how he ever did that I just don't

know. John was a quiet reticent, you know, you wouldn't get anything out of John at all. He was a very nice fellow but quiet and he didn't say anything. I thought, well, you know, the poor devil he's ... Well, as I said earlier there weren't that many mental cases in Changi that I can recall.

So what did he work on?

I think he must have been thinking about lithium.

He became a world famous expert, didn't he? And he taught us psychiatry. He was in charge of the Government receiving hospital.

He was a very serious fellow.

He had wonderful demonstrations on Saturday mornings for about twelve weeks.

That would be John.

The patients would virtually present themselves and, oh, they were animated, they were very well done.

Were they? Well, there you are. So a few things came out of the incarceration.

It was a famous finishing school, wasn't it?

A finishing school one way or the other, that's right. Yes.

Not exactly for naughty school girls though. It certainly went on ...

No, the other interesting thing for instance, you know this fellow Ronald Searle?

Yes.

He was my orderly at one stage and he used draw me ... he used to always come out with little sketches. He had a whimsical sense of humour. I used to just look at them and throw them away, and if I'd kept them ... And I always remember one when we were out in this little X3 camp and the men were then digging holes into the hill, you know like they do now, and he gave me this thing and it was a picture of a British officer coming out with all he had was his epaulettes on his shoulder and a bit of something around his neck - I forget what he was, a major I think - and nothing else, just a bit down here and a pair of shorts and a pair of boots and he's coming out of this hole, this tunnel they'd been digging and the caption was 'I am the captain of my soul'.

You've got his book of drawings haven't you?

I've got his book.

On the Kwai.

Yes, I have. And then all his St Trinians. He used to do those girls on the backdrop in the concert party theatre when they got that theatre going.

As you say, if only you'd thought to collect those.

If only you'd have thought to collect it. See, all those things that were done there were quite extraordinary. I was rooting around the other day and I found a bit of a pencil drawing of myself which a Dutchman had done and I'd forgotten I had it. But then I found a card from a Korean guard who wrote to me, all in Korean, I don't know what he said.

That was nice. Thought highly of you. I think you've covered most. Did you have any contact with Bruce Anderson?

No, very little. See Bruce was with Glynn most of the time and he did go out eventually. He went out on a working party but Glynn kind of kept Bruce very much by his side I think because he was very valuable to Glynn, so I didn't see a great deal of Bruce.

While I'm looking, excuse me, we're just on the end of the tape. We've suddenly come to the end.

END OF TAPE ONE - SIDE B

START OF TAPE TWO - SIDE A

Identification: This is reel three of the interview with Doctor Lloyd Cahill.

Well now, Frank Murphy, I see here he was with the 2/10th Field Ambulance. I was right. Frank was a most unsoldierly looking fellow: he was very myopic and quiet and soft and always smiling. He spent all his time in Changi in the convalescent depot. I don't think he left there at all which couldn't have been the most stimulating place because they were amputees or osteos and things of that kind and they just worked in this one building. So he really did a great job. I suppose he was ideally suited, situated for that because he was a soft quiet fellow. After the war he did allergies and he built up a very big practice in Sydney and I used to send quite a lot of people to him.

And the other thing which surprise me, he became a very keen sailor outside, you know a blue water sailor, and the thing he loved above all else was navigating so he loved to get out test the elements but he just didn't look the type to do that. He and his wife used to go out on these long cruises in this boat and he loved his allergies. Again, obviously very patient and he is a very ...

Had he been in the classic, the Sydney to Hobart, because everyone asks ...

I don't think he'd even taken that. No, he was a longer in many ways, Frank, but a very nice guy. The other one I notice here is Jeff Davies. Have you got anything on Jeff?

A little but we could do with a lot more.

He was a pathologist in the 13th AGH and was very highly respected in Sydney. He was much older ... miles ahead of me. But he did post-mortems in the most appalling conditions. You'd have to be an absolutely keen pathologist to do the work that he did. I think a lot of it was very useful, particularly with the amoebic and bacillary dysentery. And I remember at one stage I was out on a working party and I got dysentery and eventually

found my way back to Changi and when I woke up I recovered and the first thing they did, they said, 'You'd better come down and look at Jeff Davies doing a post-mortem'. And I went down and he had transverse colon there and I just look at it and I thought, 'God, there you go but for the grace of God'. So Jeff ... I didn't see much of Jeff when we came back. He went back to ... he was a staff pathologist at Prince Alfred.

At Prince Alfred I think.

Yes, that's right.

And then he retired to Melbourne, didn't he?

Yes, he did, because he disappeared.

He apparently was pathologist up there for years.

He was, he was. He was pathologist there before he went away. He was the staff pathologist before he went away. Yes, he was well-known even before he went. Marsden was also from Prince Alfred. He had been the superintendent at Prince Alfred. He was a character in his own way.

Let's hear about him.

Ernie. He went away as registrar of the hospital I think and he stamped on everybody's toes. A lot of registrars have to. I always found Ernie a very good bloke but he was unusual. When he came back ... Oh he went up to the railway line and I remember passing through hut and he was sitting down when I went to see him in this hut which was surrounded by mud. He had a pair of boots which were an ordinary pair and he had them polished as though he was on parade ground. How he did it, I don't know, but he always had polished shoes. Yes, it was a thing with him. When he came back, what did he do? I don't know. I can't think what he did.

We'll look it up later.

I used to see quite a bit of him. Mad keen on horses, loved the races.

Did he.

Yeah. ... Crankshaw, Anderson, Davies, Hogg. Well, you've got Hogg. Frew you've got.

You didn't put Hogg on the tape, did you?

No.

Have you got a few words?

Well, Tim was one of these another pleasant cove. Tim was in as a surgeon in the 13th I think, wasn't he? A junior surgeon or something like that and I think he just didn't get a great deal to do in the hospital line because it was pretty limited afterwards. So I really haven't seen Tim since we came back but I told you I saw him. Somewhere on the line coming back I saw him when he had a nice little bamboo hut and seemed to be living in

comparative comfort in those days. I think you've probably got the rest of them now.

Well, how about Bon Rogers and Colin Juttner?

Oh well Bon, yes. Yes, well the first night on the Queen Mary. Do you want that about the Queen Mary?

I think so, yes.

The first night out from Sydney on the Queen Mary I got a message to say to report to Major Rogers in the State Room of the Queen Mary which was then in almost its original state. And I went down and here was this little ruddy faced major who introduced himself and said, 'I was at school with your father', and this turned out to be Bon who almost became a father to me then and throughout my prisoner of war days. He had been in practice in Hobart and had graduated just at the end of the 14-18 war and always felt that he had actually enlisted but didn't get away and this really worried him. So that as soon as he could possibly enlist this time, the 39-45 war, he was in. He was loved by the troops; he was quite unorthodox; he was as game as Ned Kelly; and he was in the Con Depot - Convalescent Depot. He went to the railway line and he worked at Kanchanaburi most of the time, down in the southern end. The number of troops that passed through him were enormous and everybody knew Bon. And he was known as Bon by the troops, everybody knew him as Bon. Subsequently I've become a great friend with his son, Peter, who worked with me in hospital. He is an ophthalmologist too. So it's an interesting thing. You go through three generations. Bon only died a few years ago, I think at the age of 98, or something like that. His birthday was just before Christmas.

About a year ago.

Yes, he was a great character and he loved the Army when he was in there, he just loved it.

Yes, he died in a nursing home in ...

Hobart. And apparently, you know, he was a bit away with the birds but every now and again he would remember people, particularly if somebody came in that he had known years ago in the army, he'd recall them.

Really.

Mmm. He'd call a name or something like that. But he was a great cove.

How's the voice? Can you stand another?

Yes.

Colin Juttner?

Oh Colin. Well, Colin was with me Shimo Sonkurai and he came down on the old rust bucket of a ship to Singapore - you must ask him about that - it was quite a trip. And I don't know where Col went after that. I lost track of him a bit but we were together for a lot on the railway line and, as I say, on this voyage back to Singapore. I don't know where Col went after that. I know we had a lot of time together one way and the other.

I only dealt with his time on the line. I thought he went back to Singapore but I'm vague here because ...

What, after we came from the railway line?

Yes.

We were taken out to the China Sea.

On a vessel?

This old tub. This old Japanese ...

Where were you put on it?

They dragged us out down the river out into the ocean, the China Sea, and there was this old tramp that had been brought from Britain about twenty years beforehand and the first thing that I noticed about it was the plimsoll line was about a foot below water. It was loaded with rice and we didn't know where we were going and we were - a thousand of us - were deck cargo and Col was on that, I'm sure.

But when I got on board I told the Jap sergeant who was the dead image of George Robey and the troops christened him George straightaway, and he wanted to know why they called him George and they told him. He thought it was the funniest thing of all time because he liked George Robey too. And he was a good old fellow, the Jap. So, anyway, he told me the captain wanted to see me and I went down to the captain's cabin on this old tub, it was incredible, and there he was sitting down with his underpants down below his shorts and all the rest of it and he was - couldn't speak English - and he was making signs like this. And eventually it turned out that he wanted to know where I came from and I said, 'Sydney', and then he'd go, that, that, that. And he was describing the Harbour Bridge and indicating that he'd been to Sydney several times. And then I found out through the interpreter that he'd lost three ships had gone down under him or something or other which didn't give me much cheer. And then he decided that I was the doctor and I would have to go and sleep with his crew, not with my men. So I was forced to go down and the other honoured guests were Cappy - Colonel Cappy - myself and I think Carnie - somebody else. And this was in the coal bunker. It was a most dreadful ... down below waterline and you kind of crawled into a thing something like a coffin and there were a few fifteen watt lamps and the biggest rats you've ever struck in all your life. They'd crawl over you at night. And for being an honoured doctor I was given the privilege of sleeping down in this place while the rest of them were quite happy up on deck.

But eventually it took us ... We set sail, we didn't know where we were going. Four and a half knots flat out and we got down to Singapore eventually and came back to Singapore. Ultimately we pulled into Kepple Harbour and there were six ocean-going German submarines moored beside us as we went in. And all the Germans came on board, or at least on the deck of their subs, and when they saw the prisoners of war - white men - they started cheering and clapping. And it turned out that they'd had a dust up with the Japs the night before on the wharves. So we got quite a welcome from the Germans.

That would be rather nice.

It was, yes. Rather good.

The axis.

The axis path and then eventually of course we got the Italian prisoners going xxx too. They were another interesting crowd. They brought in a lot of money.

And did they have their own compound then when they ...

No, they elected to come in with the Australians. They arrived looking resplendent in white uniforms and spaghetti all over their caps and so on and we were going around in tatters. But they were good fellows.

Yes, I've heard that from other camps too. As you say, the Japs didn't segregate them for long anyway.

No they didn't. They gave them a choice of going with whichever country they wanted. See, half of them were royalists and half of them were fascists. So the royalists were sent to us and the fascists stayed with the Japs. I don't know whatever happened to them.

Oh is that how it worked. I've never understood that. Mmm.

Several of them had the Iron Cross. The Italians had the German Iron Cross and one of them was 2IC to [Prem] I think was the great German sub man. And there was an Irish sea captain there who had lost his ship and had been brought in and he was giving a talk one night - they used to have these people come in and give you a talk - and this Italian 2IC ... or the Italian was the CO of one of these subs, he was there and they got talking to each other and it turned out that the Italian had sunk the Irishman up round Murmansk or somewhere at one stage.

I guess they were friends, were they?

But they finished up in Changi together which was rather funny. Extraordinary, things like that.

I've just thought of two or three others and maybe we could put you off the hook then.

Right.

Phil Millard, we didn't speak about.

Well I didn't see a great deal of Phil in the camp. Phil had been in practice at Wagga. He was a surgeon in Wagga. He was a young man, one of the early specialist surgeons that had gone to one of the country centres. So, really I'm trying to think when I first came in touch with Phil. I think it was probably only after our capitulation and it was probably with Siddy Kranz. I think that's where I first struck Phil. But I didn't see him, I didn't see him on the railway line at all. No, I didn't see a great deal of Phil.

I don't think we talked about Siddy Kranz.

Well, Siddy was one of the others who I really got to know after our capitulation because Sid was very keen on music, particularly jazz, and I was a bit interested in it myself at that stage. And with the English division that arrived just at the fall of Singapore there were many musicians because this was the division that was sitting on the defence of England on various beaches around the island and they included quite a number of players or members of Jack Hilton's orchestra and several of the other big orchestras. And before many weeks they had either fashioned double basses out of tea chests and one thing and another and the Japs provided the piano and they had quite a band going. It was very good. And I used to sit down at night and listen to these fellows play because they were just like - particularly when they got on the jazz and the southern music they'd play all night long if they could. So I got to know Sid very well. He was a good surgeon, what I saw, a very good surgeon.

You did see him operating, did you?

I saw him, yes. He was limited because he was a bit frustrated because the colonels got most of the surgery and it was the old, old story. So that Sid was a bit like Kevin Fagin; they were limited in what they were allowed to do and it must have been very frustrating for them.

I'm not sure what force Sid went on, do you? What did he go on?

A Force.

Oh, that's why. He went on A Force. That's right. He went up as surgeon, offsider to Bert Coates, up to Burma. That's why I lost track with him. So I didn't ...

Did you know those whilst out in D Force?

Hazelton?

Mmm.

Well, Hazelton. He's an ophthalmologist who practised down here in Chatswood.

I'm going down to see him.

Yes, I've known him for a long time. He was with Field Ambulance and I didn't really see him much at all. Alan Hazelton. I think he was in my year in fact. Parker - Dad Parker - he was a GP at Rose Bay and he was in my year too. A very nice cove. He was quiet, he wouldn't say anything. Old Dad, they always called him Dad. Slow moving and he went away on A Force with a lot of the 2/19th. The 2/19th of course had a lot of casualties. Didn't he go with ...

The 2/10th ...

Yes. Did he go with A Force?

No, with D Force. No, he served under D. But they got mixed up.

After the war somehow or other he got mixed up. There he is, 2/19th Battalion. D Force, they went to where?

Mainly Tarsau region - Tarsau, Hintok and that region. Only halfway up.

Well he must have been up on the xxx. That's right, he would have been up with a lot of the 19th fellows who went on that party. And at any rate, he became an adopted medical officer of the 19th like I virtually became an adopted medical officer of the 30th afterwards because the camp that I went to Shimo Sonkurai was largely 30th Battalion. And John Taylor was 30th Battalion so that they had two medical officers.

I'll make a note.

So that Dave would have been associated with a lot of the 19th on that camp - D Force. And after the war he always kept in touch with them and he died a few years ago. He practised at Rose Bay and a quiet fellow - a very pleasant fellow. Very little to say. He'd just look at you and say, 'Yes, yes'. Nice cove.

And then Ian Duncan is the other one.

Well you know Ian.

Yes, I'm going over to see him in a week.

Yes, Ian was very much mixed up in the prisoner of war thing. It's his life. He spends all his days and nights I think working one way and the other for the prisoners of war. He was a GP out in the western suburbs somewhere or other. That's right. He did very well. He had a good practice. I think he's got a slight chest problem so he gave up his practice a few years ago to devote his energies to the prisoners of war. He's become the fellow that does it all. He's really completely engrossed in it. I didn't see Ian much in prisoners of war days at all.

In those days themselves.

No. Roly Richards was at hospital with me. A bit behind me, a year behind me. But Roly was always a busy little man, very busy. I didn't know him that well as a student and he was not a resident with me but when I was up in Malaya in the first twelve months suddenly Roly appeared and he was then the medical officer to the gunners, to Brigadier Callaghan. Now Roly was always keen on the army. He didn't join the Sydney University Regiment but he did join a militia unit and subsequently received his commission as a gunner. So he held a substantial rank of lieutenant. In addition to that he has a great organisation ability and for this reason he became one of the outstanding regimental medical officers up there because everything was perfect with Roly. He knew hygiene, he knew drill, he knew the lot and he loved records. He had an extraordinary career as a prisoner of war because he was - what force did he go away with now? He was on the railway. He was in A Force. He came down south through us, through Shimo Sonkurai when we heard the completion of the railway was near completion. He then went to ... I don't think he went back to Singapore at that stage. He went to Saigon. They took a bunch of them to Saigon. And then I think they put them on two ships and even the Japs wouldn't go on the ships because they ... And then he went on a third and was taken up to Japan but he was sunk on the way. And then he had all these experiences up there. Now he has really an extraordinary story and he wrote that book. He's written his book which I've read.

When he came back he, I think, went back to St Vincents or to St Vincents for a while and he

then started practice as general practitioner down at Seaforth. He soon built up quite a large practice. He was on the Manly Hospital. He got interested in obstetrics and he soon had a partner and then it grew to a three. It was a large partnership developed he suddenly got the idea - or I wouldn't say suddenly - he got the idea of becoming a medical officer who would deal with the executives of companies - examine the executives of companies on a yearly basis and I think he was one of the first to do it. And this, I think, was through his friendship with the late Mac Leonard who was then the chief of Ampol. So he set up his rooms in the Ampol building and Roly developed a big practice. He still practises in this capacity. But no matter what Roly does, he does thoroughly.

At one stage his boys were at Scots College and my nephews were at Riverview and the Roly knew them all and View beat Scots in the regatta and Roly decided that this was no good, that Scots weren't being coached properly. So he went to the university and he got an engineer ... a mathematician and engineers, to work out the mechanics of rowing, rowing in eights. And he subsequently knew more about the theory of rowing than anybody who was rowing. He got completely wrapped up in it. He then got so mixed up with rowing that I think he went to the Olympic Games as the medical officer - or to one of the games - as medical officer to the rowing. And he carried that on for a long time. He's written papers about it. Then he got interest in the Sydney to Surf Run and he's very much mixed up in that. So no matter what he does. And then he's been decorated for his work with St Johns Ambulance and he's got all sorts of decorations he wears and he's just as enthusiastic now as he was when he was in the army. He still runs the 2/10th Field Regiment - he's still the boss although he was the medical officer. He's quite an extraordinary fellow.

Someone like Brigadier Maxwell then.

That's right, yes. Something the same. More energetic perhaps than Duncan but just the opposite - he's small. He's just been responsible for the raising of enough money to pay for a new bronze that has been given to the War Memorial for the 8th Division.

Right, I know about that. Did you say that he was the agent though or one of the early ...

Well, he was the driving force in raising the money. What happened was the 9th Battalion - the final fighting was at the bridge at Parit Sulong River where the Japs got over the side and we couldn't get across. After the war the 19th Battalion put up a little disc on this bridge. Now the son of one of the officers - the, I think, 2IC of Roly's ... the 2/10th Field Regiment - as a Duntroon graduate went up - and of course interested in these things - went to the Parit Sulong Bridge and found that the little plaque was missing. And he came back and thought that this was a disgrace. So he got onto Roly and said, 'Well, look, we want to replace this plaque'. In actual fact what had happened it was it was in a state of disrepair and the 19th Battalion who had originally put the plaque up had it removed and Roly didn't know this. So there was quite a bit of fun about this. And, any rate, it was all smoothed over and Roly and his committee raised $10,000 or something and had this rather lovely bronze dedicated to all the troops in Malaya and it's now somewhere down ... I don't know, I saw it. I went down to the opening - the dedication.

Yes, I knew of that. I didn't know his part in it though.

Oh yes. Roly was the one. Roly and his wife, they organised the lot. I said to him when it was all over, 'Now what in the hell are you going to organise now because you'll get onto

something, there's nothing more certain'. He's extraordinary. He's just got to keep going. He knows all the men in his unit; he knows just where they are, what they're doing. He's the really [pater familius] - really good soldier.

Ted Fisher was another extraordinary character, an unusual man. He was always known to the troops as the 'Fuhrer'. Ted was a bachelor who had never had anything to do with army until he joined up - like many of us - and he became completely besotted with the army life. He knew army history, he knew the law, he knew everything. There was a thing he knew and didn't know about it. I didn't see a great deal of Ted during prisoner of war days. I used to see him around the hospital occasionally but I did see him when he came back to Sydney when he really started to make a big impression because he became the man who really looked after the returned prisoners. He was a man of great determination and he applied himself to medicine in the same way as he applied himself to the army. So that he was a first class physician, a very good consultant, hard working, but not a loveable character. I think many people found him a little hard to get along with. I think he was absolutely fair in every way but he was just abrasive in some ways. I suppose in a way he was something similar to Bruce Hunt but there was some difference which I can't exactly explain. I don't think Ted was quite so ambitious perhaps as Bruce. Bruce was more ambitious - he wanted to be the top but whereas Ted Fisher just wanted his interest in, being a bachelor, lay in the well being of the returned prisoners of war and he fought very very hard for them. And it was rather extraordinary that he died when he was a comparatively young man because he really had done a great deal of work and I think even his critics were being to relent a bit and respect him. I think he was on the staff of Sydney Hospital and he was the same. I'm sure that was their opinion of him there too. First class physician, very good colleague but not a man to be taken lightly.

Yes, I have the history of the hospital ...

Oh yes, yes. He was a perfectionist, an absolute perfectionist. Always immaculately attired. It was a great shock when he died so young. Rather a pity. But I'm sorry, I didn't strike him in the prisoner of war days because he was working in Changi most of the time. I think he did go away. Oh no, he went away. He went away in A Force so he came down through. I always get mixed up with the A Force because they went so early.

He was at ...

He was with Coates, yes, he was with Coates. Yes, that's right. I think he wanted to go. Again, he had the colonels above him there and I think he wanted to get away. He liked to be the boss too. Cotter Harvey - Cotter was a delightful fellow - a very smooth, very gentlemanly, popular with everybody and he was - a chest physician primarily - but a very good good physician altogether. He, like Charles Anderson ... Charles Osborne was the surgeon.

That was the one you were trying to remember earlier, was it?

Yes, Charles Osborne. They were both very, you know, they were the colonels and they were the senior men and everybody had to respect them. I didn't see a great ... I saw Cotter in hospital at various times but I saw him afterwards when he came back in practice. Actually I was with him the day before he died. He was perfectly well and there was a big reunion here for him. I had lunch with him out at the racecourse where the reunion was and he died the next day quite suddenly. But Cotter was a great man. He started the

nibbling of hibiscus leaves to get vitamins and he used to go around like a rabbit chewing hibiscus hedges.

Then there was Carl Furner. Did Pete tell you anything about Carl Furner?

Only a little. He didn't go on the line.

Well he was a Newcastle man. Yes, he would have been a friend of ...

That's correct ...

Yes, Tom Hamilton, yes. Yes, well, Furner was a major and he was more or less second to the others too. But, again, a very quiet little man, good fellow though.

That completes the interview with Doctor Lloyd Cahill in Sydney on 26th February 1991. Interviewer Doctor John Mitchell.

END OF TAPE TWO - SIDE A - END OF INTERVIEW

11/91