

VX 44559  
Pt. S. S. W. Denmark.  
"21" B. 11

A. 17.

"*Coelocnemis*"  
On Board the ~~boat~~ *Coelocnemis* at sea.

Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 1945.

Dear Ann,

Just a few lines (which will seem like gold to you!) letting you know that I am still alive & well. We sure have had a rough spin but are now enjoying life as it should be enjoyed - <sup>at</sup> night.

hoping that you are keeping health so that these long 3 1/2 years can be made up. Give my regards to all the family. I received 1 letter from you, written on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> 1944.

Don't be surprised; I got it 17<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1945. & also one from Margaret. "same old". She is one responsible for it; we are bringing with us. You will have to excuse the writing:

The crew are giving an every thing you can think of. I will try to get home for the 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. but at present I am not so sure of any thing. There is heaps so tell you

2.

but I just can not get the pen to write it. Sgt. Tobias & Teddy Kinnell are the only other 2 Kangaratta chaps left. Phil Coakes died about June. I suppose Kang. has changed a fair bit since I left. I sure have given up work, all play now, to make up for these lost years. If Doreen is still single & alive you can let her know how I am. I have just had a bowl of soup, a plait of jelly & custard. No more rice! You could not believe how good our food is after the Jap. "shit" The last 6 months they never even gave us rice. Sweet potato tops & "wales". Any thing you read about these Jap "Bastards" you can believe. I have plenty to tell, but not know. I had 2 other mates. One died June 1944 & the other May 1945. The last one, he was a wonderful mate & believe me, I sure did miss him. A lot of things we did to-gether got my-self out of the camp. He got sick & died with in a week.

Before we left London, I had dinner to  
 price up & lay a couple of weeks. I  
 intend to write to their people when  
 I reach Australia. Well I had to have  
 a little spell then. It was done for  
 after-noon tea. Not much. Some thing we  
 have not had for 3 1/2 years. Cocoa, Fresh  
 Bread, Butter & margerite. Take a Short-Bread  
 biscuits. The clergy are can cook bread,  
 last night <sup>10<sup>th</sup></sup> it rained a little & I caught  
 a small flying fish so I took it down  
 to the kitchen so see if I could get it  
 cooked. The cook told me to wait 10 minutes.  
 The next thing I saw was my fish in  
 butter, covered with tomato sauce & chips; a  
 slice of fresh bread & butter. Oh God was it  
 good. It will be to hard for - any one  
 else to stand - what in our  
 food seems like. Heaven has nothing on it.  
 The sea is a little rough but not sick yet.  
 Be on just covering the home way line now  
 so won't reach port till 10 - 12<sup>th</sup>.

The only thing we haven't had so far is  
 beer. You will want have to worry much  
 about cooking. Fresh potatoes taste like  
 roast chicken. Food has been our main  
 worry so you can guess just what they  
 mean to us now. When war finished, there  
 was only 30 men going to work. I was  
 one of them. I was only 8 stone 4 lbs. My  
 normal weight while in camp was 11 - 12. On  
 the 9<sup>th</sup> day of Sept. I had gained to 6 lbs  
 putting 16 lbs in about 3 weeks. The Japs.  
 gave us plenty to eat, mostly rice, after  
 the 16<sup>th</sup> of Aug. It was in hard work trying  
 to write after 3 1/2 years. I got a lot of  
 words. I speak & use a lot of Jap. &  
 Okalaga words, so when I get some don't  
 think me a real hater. I have had to  
 work for about 1 1/2 years in bare feet, but  
 it makes a lot to kill an amblyopia  
 that is bad the night away. I am more  
 than proud of my amblyopia & fatigue. After being  
 through this war.

all those little hard ships we had during  
 life sure played a big part, for me  
 to be on good Mother Earth to-day.  
 Xmas 1942 we had 420 Australians  
 at the Salala P.O.W. Camp. Food & conditions  
 not bad. Plenty of work. Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 1943. The  
 Janks bombed us & scored a direct hit on  
 a bomb dump in the camp. Only 120 -  
 2000 lbs bombs went off at once. 13 were  
 killed. Our camp was flattened so we  
 had to rebuild it. A few more died off  
 through sickness. In Aug. 1944. 100 planes  
 bombed Cmbon & 20 bombed our camp again  
 killing 3. This is when the hate session  
 started. We got corn-flour so to eat &  
 plenty of work. Start 5:30<sup>A.M.</sup> finish 8 P.M.  
 digging tank traps. ~~Look~~ Our own planes  
 strafing us most of the time. Feb. 1945 food  
 extra scarce nearly all sweet-potatoes  
 boiled in salty water for soup. This is  
 when the boys started to die.

b.

The faps did not let up. The men died out on work parties & ~~they~~ after they were dead they beated & belted them for dying. He left Simpson with 120 men. That is only ~~83~~ ~~80~~ died. ((4 out of 5)) died.

May 13 1942. Time of our planes carried out the most daring raid of our war. They came down through A.H. fire & got their boats & then brought up. ~~They~~ ~~got~~ ~~part~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~planes~~ ~~carried~~ ~~out~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~daunting~~ ~~raid~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~war~~. They saw them still meet mine.

Spring 1 plane & covering 3 faps. There is hundreds of other little things I could tell you but will see them this heart is going too big the way so they are taking these letters for us. Well hoping they reaches you in the best of health, for it won't be long before you see that son marching in through the ~~for~~ front gate, who older in looks

but fears in the brain, coming home  
to stay. Rent & plenty of it. Well I  
must know love, love Luck. & kisses  
Galore to that our loving Mother  
of mine

from your Son

Frank

X  
X  
X  
X  
X  
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X

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P.S. Hoping Chagnard, Red & Dallas + Dad  
are all in the best of health. All  
them so buy up big for Xmas. Plants  
of books Batts + a umbrella. I hope  
I will supply the "Rice". ← White South

Give every-body in Gang my kindest  
Regards,  
Frank.

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