CATHOLIC WELFARE ORGANISATION

C·W·O·

4 August 19

Northam W.O. 19

Dear Jim,

No doubt you see all my letters not long after they arrive home so there is not much need to go into too much detail re my doings.

I'm still being punished here waiting to return to the unit & hope for my own sake I'll be back this week. However I have had the same hope each week for quite a while now.

I received your letter dated 28 June a week or so back, which had been readdressed about ½ doz times. Did you receive my little booklet on the Mullewa chapel alright. I conside

the booklet to be a very poor illustration for its simplicity & quaintness could never be reproduced. I don't think it states in the booklet that it was designed & constructed entirely by the Parish Priest although I understand he had to employ a helper to erect the bell-tower. Moreover since the booklet was constructed a porchway has been erected leading from the sacristy to the "PRIEST HOUSE", all of which is built from the same rock in the same quaint manner. The whole of the porchway is lined with statues of B. V. M., Sacra Cors etc.

There are no two ways about it, this little chapel is definitely intriguing.

What is the position with Dad's health? Is it in any way serious? Please God he'll soon be his old self again.

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Naturally it is months since I last saw the Broderick but no doubt I'll see him again when I get back to the Bde & will pass on your message. Since leaving I have been well off as far as Mass is concerned. At Claremont we had Mass on both the Sundays at the Y. M. C. A & here the C.W.O is a beautiful building & of course there is at least one Mass each Sunday. During the week there is a curtain drawn at the rear of the stage, it is raised on Sundays to display a very nice mahogany (P) altar. The building itself is very nice, tiled roofs an interior almost resembling a hotel writing room it is so modern & so well equipped, as also are all the other huts. This letter-pad is an example of the way they do things over here.

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Did you get to Fr Halloran's Ordination? Apparently they are keeping you pretty busy. You certainly must have had some rain over there; the weather here is simply wonderful. I'm glad to hear C.Y are still battling on & hope the school cleaned up the Tech & the High. Things are at a low ebb when girls' basketball have taken the limelight.

You evidently have the wrong impression of our "camp" & "camp hospitals". Think of it this way! Imagine it if about 200 hundred trucks drove off the road into a fairly wooded & well camouflaged area such as "One tree Hill". Knocking or cutting down ~~—~~ sapplings or trees in the way, clearing the undergrowth here & there in order to erect a tent & chopping down trees to make tent poles. First thing each man does is dig a slit trench for himself about 3' deep & long enough to be in flat out - this is done immediately whatever the hour

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As soon as the tents are erected & drains dug about them, a party is detailed to dig a latrine about 10' long by 3' wide by 8' deep. ~~Thence~~ Another partly helps erect the kitchen portable stove, trench fires etc, whilst another gets wood etc. Another gets the office in ship shake order whilst machine gunners set up their ack/ack defence usually in a circular trench about 5' in diameter & 6 feet deep; this usually takes a while & is carefully camouflaged & always manned. We sleep on ground, usually fully dressed & in general live like pigs on rotten tucker & crook water, carted many miles. Of course at present this camp is much better fitted & more elaborate than any over East, but I'm speaking of battle stations.

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the "camp hospitals", M D S (Medical Dressing Station & C C S (~~Camp Casualty~~ Casualty Clearing Station) are many miles behind lines & apart and are merely a collection of tents, with a limited supply of medical equipment.

You probably knew I intended to ~~try to transfer to Navy for~~ there was a wonderful opportunity in the offing in this land of opportunities. However ~~although~~ Dad's consent is lacking, after I rang home last week to ask him to send it on. I was wondering if you had anything to do with either his refusal or hesitancy in the matter. It is probably too late this time & I'm letting it go, but I don't intend to do so again, for they don't bother checking the age given or the ~~name~~ given.

You must realise by now that the war is not going to be one by concentrating troops on our shores waiting for the enemy to take us by surprise.

THE SALVATION ARMY
RED SHIELD WAR SERVICES
"The Army that serves on every front."

DO NOT [illegible]ER TO: The name of your ship or other ships in the convoy or [illegible]sco[illegible] the date of sailing; ports of call or probable destination; the description of troops [illegible]d; or any other information which, if intercepted, would be of value to the enemy.

From No. ..... Name ..... Unit .....

Date .....

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The only method of defense is attack & the [illegible] we realise it the better. It has been brought home to me in ~~every~~ many ways lately. If I can't get into Navy, I'll try "Air Crew". To stop me I'm afraid you'd have to produce some pretty convincing argument, for I'm itching to see a bit of action & get the thing done with. I feel that [illegible] ilities are negligible & I'll transfer to the [illegible] if my other efforts are unsuccessful.

At present I'm in the pink touching the [illegible] at about 11-9 & my muscles are rippling. Our daily routine at present is as follows. Reveillé 0630, "Belty" Parade 0640, 10 min. run round area, Break 0730, Parade (fully polished up & shaven huts swept out) 0800 - 2 hours solid P.T. without a break & nearly ready to drop - 10 min "smoko" - 2¼ hrs machine gun instruction & lectures by returned men. We commenced a route march at ¼ to 2 & march solidly till 5-30. The country side is very hilly & rocky but very picturesque & the weather perfect. Each afternoon we cover between 12 & 14 miles & are kept at it all the time.

Our present instructors have all been in the thick of it overseas, some wearing decorations. [illegible] us working.

very solidly, but know their onions through bitter experience. However we work twice as hard for them than for our previous lot who were all old chaps stationed here since the beginning of the war & who talked a lot of copy book stuff, that was all hooey. These men now are Australians to the bone, are real white men & are very popular. The meals at present are terrible after what we've been having & I'm spending quite a bit at the canteen on pies, cake, biscuits, coffee & occassional "quick'ens". [illegible] wonder I feel in the pink eh? Our dress by day is merely shorts & shirt although it is a bit cool before the sun comes up properly & we have to dig a bit more when the sun goes down. With emphasis on the cold I might add that I hop under a cold shower immediately we are dismissed from the route march each day. After it however I feel quite warm & refreshed although it certainly takes the breath away.

Well, Jim, I'm feeling the need of a snooze so had better make for bed. I might add that, whilst thanking you sincerely for your remembering me, I dont forget the rest of you although my surroundings aren't the best. The last two Sunday nights I've been lucky enough to be in a position to get to Rosary & Benediction at St Joseph's Northam. I have beads, prayer book (supplied by Fr Broderick to all Bde Catholics) & piety bag thanks. When I return to unit I should be equally well placed for although "bushed" we will not be far from Perth. Pat.