

Australians at War Film Archive

Patrick Bradley (Paddy) - Transcript of interview

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<http://australiansatwarfilmarchive.unsw.edu.au/archive/1853>

Tape 1

00:37 **It'd be great for starters if you could tell us where you born, when you were born and your early childhood.**

On the 24th of the 12th, 1920 at the Women's Hospital in Carlton. We lived in South Melbourne in a street called Law Street. When I came home.

01:00 And we moved from Law Street and lived in Bank Street. My father had been mixed up in the racing game many years ago and he used to take me of a Sunday to a cousin's of his - the Glennon family who were well known. Pat Glennon who was a cousin of mine, rode an English Derby Winner and two Melbourne Cup winners. And naturally there were stable boys there. I'm a little kid. They taught me to swear and I was pretty adept.

01:30 I learnt very quick. My mother unfortunately was deaf all her life. And we lived in this house and the houses in those days they were built with a dividing wall. And I used to sit out on the front fence and air my swear words at people apparently going past. A little kid, 3 or 4 years old. And they could see my mother working at the bottom of the passage in her laundry - you'd call it these days, wash house in those days.

02:00 And the next thing she'd know was someone tapping her on the shoulder. They'd been hammering at the door and she'd taken no notice. And then she's got to explain to them that she's deaf, she nearly had a heart attack with these people tapping - and explaining to this kid out the front that's given them a mouthful every day, as they go past. So she goes and sees the local priest, we being a Catholic family. And they had one answer. Put me in a boy's home which they did. Me mother did, out at a place called St Joseph's

02:30 in Surry Hills. It's now taken over by the Uniting Church, they bought it. It's in Middlesex Street over in Surry Hills. I've been back and had a look at the place over the years. I was only there for 6 month but vivid memory of one nun. The cruellest and ugliest woman I ever saw in all my life, her sister was Sister Aloysius. Today they wouldn't let her near a child, she was a sadist as far as I was concerned. Scared me to death and I've

03:00 never forgotten it. The rest of them I couldn't tell you who they were.

What did she get up?

Well us kids - it was a bit of a bush sort of a place back in those days. We'd fetch a stick into the classroom - four I'd just about started school. I had me 5th birthday there at Christmas, plus I got the measles there too, with a flock of other kids. There was over a hundred of us in that place. And she'd give us a whack with the stick we happened to bring in - you know like we were

03:30 innocent little kids, we didn't know up from down. And this woman, God I think she got her kicks out of it when I look back at it. Because 3 years ago I read they were having a 'back to St Joseph's'. I went over to this place and I got talking to a couple of these nuns, they're pretty active this St Josephites mob. They're mixed up with that lady they're trying to make a saint, what do you call her? Mary McKillop. And

04:00 I said, "Well I can only remember a Sister Aloysius." And their words were, "They changed her every 5 years." So they were shifting them around many years ago before all this sex business came out that goes on in church situations. So you can guess it's not an overnight situation, probably happening when Christ was a child. But anyhow, after I'd been there about 6 months - my mother used to have to pay 10 shillings a

04:30 week to keep me there because I wasn't what you would call a voluntary child. All these other kids their parents had dumped them. I asked the teachers or later on I found out. "Doesn't anyone ever own these children?" She said, "When they're 14 or 15 their parents come out of the woodwork, they haven't seen them in years because they're ready for the slave market then and they'll earn a living." But my mother told me, she pulled me out after 6 months because I broke

- 05:00 out into a lot of sores and she thought that they weren't feeding us any vegetables. Many years later I was able to tell her in the course of conversation about this, that we used to sit around a round table about 6 to 8 kids to one of these little round tables. Chairs about so big. And I liked porridge and we got porridge every morning for breakfast. A lot of the other kids didn't. I'd empty me plate and
- 05:30 my blood was overheated as my mother used to describe me. It wasn't the lack of vegetables, I just ate too much porridge and I burst out in - but she thought that's what it was all about. My Mum, deaf all her life, I think was a rather brilliant woman. She taught herself to read and write. She also taught me by the time I was 3 years old to talk on me fingers, so I could converse with here. She could always speak so I never
- 06:00 had to worry about reading it back. I could talk just as quick as you like with her and I was able to teach my children when their grandmother was still alive, so they could talk to her.

Spelling out words?

Yes I used to spell words. Like what do you call - Andy Warhol says we've all got our 15 minutes of fame. Mine was when I started school up at Princess Hill Primary up at North Carlton, it's near the old North Carlton Railway Station. First morning I'm there the teachers

- 06:30 writing up on the board, A, B, C and I'm sitting there saying, "A, B, C, D" and I could see her looking around and this kid talking. "Do you know what this is?" "Oh yeah" I says, "I can read the alphabet off no trouble." She said, "Anything else?" I said, "Yeah I can spell words and I can talk to me mother." So she marched me around the school. That was my 15 minutes of fame. 6 months later every other kid in the school could do what I could do when we started, so I've had my 15 minutes of Andy Warhol.
- 07:00 Very early and that was about all the fame I've ever had in all my life. So from there on I just went to all the normal school things. I went to St Bridges School down in Nicholson Street, Fitzroy. It's just where the freeway starts, you know they go down Alexander Parade to go to the Eastern Freeway. Of course it was nothing like it is today.
- 07:30 And you could walk across the road in complete safety. Nowadays you need an armed escort to get across, there's that many cars coming down the road. But apart from that...

What about your dad

Me Dad he served in the First War. He was in what they call a remount group. They went to the Middle East. He was lucky, they never sent him onto France because France must've been the real killing field.

- 08:00 So he done all his war service over in the desert over there. And he worked at a place after the war called Moore's Timber Yard. At that time it was reputedly the biggest timber yard in the Southern Hemisphere. And along come about 1929 the timber strike and he took part in the timber strike and that was the end of the housing boom at that
- 08:30 particular time. The Depression hit right on top of the timber strike. He next got a job in 1940 working at the munitions factory out at Maribyrnong because he was a returned soldier from the First War. So from having bullets - from firing bullets in the first one they let him make them in the Second one. He also found out he was allergic to that cordite and he regularly broke out in skin complaints working in the cordite factory out at Maribyrnong.

So

from '29 to...

'29 to '40 my father never had a consistent job. He done 2 and 3 month stints on what they call relief work. He worked up here at - I thought back here in those days - at Narre Warren, you know it's a suburb. I thought Narre Warren was the end - cause he was up there living in a tent for 3 months working up there. He worked at Maryborough for 3 months. He went down to Forster for another 3 months.

- 09:30 And they lived in tents all this time through the Depression times. And it was a bit of an improvement from the sustenance. The sustenance that my mother got I think, one and sixpence a week which allowed her to buy bread, 11 and sixpence allowed her to go to the local grocers and get 11 and sixpence worth of groceries. And I think there was 3 shillings you were allowed to get for
- 10:00 meat. And we - with no money coming in we were regularly looking at the backside of Mr O'Callaghan, he was a local - had a carrying business. Carrying our few sticks of furniture from one home to another. She was lucky that my mother was a very good worker and a bloke named Llewellyn was a local estate agent. And he come and tell my mother, "You'll have to go somewhere else to live because they're putting
- 10:30 out an eviction order." And she was a benefit to him because people'd get into these houses, they'd take the flashing off the roof, they'd take the tile - but she was actually a good tenant even so we couldn't pay rent. And Llewellyn kept us in houses. I suppose we lived in about 6 or 8 houses over the years until eventually she found one in a place called Victoria Place. It runs off Princess Street in Carlton

11:00 and comes out into Canning Street alongside the Down O'Connell Hotel which is - today they have shows - I read about them in the paper. There's a band playing at the Down O'Connell and to me, we lived in this lane at the back there which was behind the Carlton Baths. So I learnt to swim in the Carlton Baths which I became fairly adept at and it only cost a penny to get in there. So I was able to spend me summers

11:30 swimming in the Carlton Baths. But the reason why Victoria Place was a score - the Relief Committee would pay rent up to 8 shillings a rent. That's how much the rent was at 31 Victoria Place so that was the last house, we didn't get thrown out of because the rent was getting paid. Me mother didn't have the money.

So when you were thrown out of the housing what was the process there?

Well all I know was, we loaded up the few sticks of

12:00 furniture me mother had into Mr O'Callaghan's horse and cart turn out and he carted us - we lived in 47 Princess, 120 Princess Street. We went from there up to Victoria Street in Fitzroy which is not where the St. Vincent's Hospital is - Victoria Street is one street back from Johnson Street.

12:30 It runs between Nicholson and probably just down over Brunswick Street. We lived in a house there, I can't tell you the number. It's gone now, there's a big factory area along there. From there we went to Pitt Street, we lived in Pitt Street there for quite a while before we went back to 120 Princess Street. And then from 120 Princess Street we come around and lived in

13:00 Victoria Place. So we lived in Victoria Place for quite some years. In fact my mother lived there up till she died. I suppose in fact when Nellie and I got married, we fluked the house along, 41 Victoria Place. And I done the place up myself like - when I took Nellie to look at it

13:30 I'd thought she'd say no because we were boarding at her mother's place at the time. And I opened the door and the stink, you wouldn't believe it. And I thought, no way. And she said, "Oh no we can probably fix this up." So I burnt 24 sulphur candles in that house for about 36 hours. Locked the house up. Wonder I never set the place on fire I suppose.

14:00 That helped clear the air out and I stripped the wallpaper off each of the rooms. About 7 layers of wallpaper on these houses. They just put another lot on and another lot on. Right back to the walls and they were cracked up and I patched them up and put some stuff called Muraltone on it. Looked a bit better. And lino on the floor. Had the electric light installed to it and

14:30 it had a stove at the back. Actually quite a lot of land. I put a little lawn out the front. I suppose outside the Exhibition Gardens - the Newry Street Gardens was the only bit of grass grown in Carlton. And of course our son Paulie was born there when we lived there. Born up at St. Vincent's Hospital up at Victoria Street. And I suppose we lived there for about

15:00 - oh I suppose - anyhow we got married in '50 and probably moved there in '51. We come out here to this place in about '55. And we've been here ever since. The people who lived in Victoria Place when we was moving out, they said you are very lucky to get out of this dungeon of a place, that's what they all thought of it. So we got out here and I can tell you I didn't think it was an improvement much. Because you've never seen bracken fern - it was this high

15:30 all around the place. As I said to her, "We'll get speared by a black out here." But anyhow over the years we've improved it and it doesn't look bad about the place now.

So when people talk about the good old days...

I would say they've been lulled into a false sense of security of the good old days because the amounts of money I'd describe that my mother was - this was to keep

16:00 my father and mother and me sister and meself. Me sister incidentally had got caught up in one of those early outbreaks of infantile paralysis. Polio they called it later, which left her with a withered leg for the rest of her life. She died about 3 years ago, lived up at Cogram. But my mother used to take her up to the children's hospital regularly every Tuesday for about 8

16:30 years you know, while they were doing what little bit they could do in those days. But there was nothing, you just had to live with that leg the way it was. But that didn't leave - she was always a bit of a fireball. She done everything else that other kids done. Skipped, played basketball, swam, so it didn't handicap her that much. I suppose it was just her own determination that made her that way.

Was she in callipers?

No. Maybe early -

17:00 there may have been a calliper but most of the time I can remember she just ran around like every other kid, shoes and socks on and no worries at all. Naturally she had to wear odd shoes because one foot was much smaller than the other. We went, as I say to St Bridget's School down in Nicholson Street. And as the years went by I clashed with the nuns a bit

17:30 and they told me they didn't want me at the school any longer and I finished up at St. George's opposite

the old Children's Hospital in - I suppose you'd call it Drummond Street. Today it's the latest one of the - what do you call them, where they train the priests. The priests get trained at what used to be our school. Oh they've got a big flash chapel and everything there. Like

- 18:00 what used to be the school room to us - it was - cause there was a girl's school and a boy's school there. The brothers taught the boys and the nuns taught the girls. The brothers came from over West Melbourne, or I suppose you'd call it North Melbourne over there. They'd walk over every day and teach us. I went there the last year I went to school. And I found it pretty good up there but I didn't go to school all that much because
- 18:30 I got a job delivering hand bills at 10 shillings a week. Should've been at school but my mother thought that 10 shillings was a real handy thing. So I suppose my last 2 or 3 years I should've been at school, I think you can say from when I was 12 till I was just before 14, I didn't go to school a terrible lot. I was delivering these hand bills and that 10 shillings a week helped my mother.
- 19:00 Anyhow about - just before I was supposed to finish school eventually, a policeman arrived at our place one Saturday morning. I'd been fined 2 shillings or 4 hours in the local lock up. I said to me mother, "Give him 2 shillings if you can." Because I didn't fancy getting up to the lock up because I didn't think the police would treat me too handsomely up there. They might've been all right. But anyhow that fine was 2 shillings for not going to school.
- 19:30 At Christmas of 1934 this would happen, I go up to call me mate Wally McDonald. Wally was I suppose in my way of thinking the best athlete and the best all round person that I've ever known. He could play musical instruments, he could sing. He fought 10 rounders at the stadium. When we were 15 years old Essendon offered to take him, out
- 20:00 to train at Essendon, he was that good a footballer. But he had a job working in the city at a sheet metal place at that time. And he said, "No I couldn't afford the time travelling back." They offered to send a taxi - back in those days. But he got sunk on the Canberra when he was 21 years old. So I go up to call him about Christmas time and go for a swim at the baths. He said, "We can't go for a swim."
- 20:30 I said, "What are you talking about? It's Christmas holidays." He said, "We don't go back to school any more, not that you went much." He said, "We've got to get a job now, we're 14 years old." There was a thing running in Melbourne at that time called the boys movement. It operated out of a bank in Collins Street. I think it was run by a group of businessmen, they might have been along the side, like Legacy or something like that. And they
- 21:00 would canvas and get jobs. So we had to fill in forms, just like you gave me a form to fill out. And I filled this form in. And you had to get 2 references. So I go down and see the local parish Priest down at St Bridget's, old Father Gleeson, Irishman from the old school he was. Used to walk along with his old shilale. He gave me one. And the other one I got from a man named George Brown who was a young fellow who'd been out of work himself for 2 or 3 years. And I took this form in
- 21:30 with the 2 references and Wally had his. And we go into this building and the very next day I get a letter back. Like they complain about the post, but the post was pretty good there; I put the thing in today and the next morning I've got a letter in the post to tell me to go to a place called 269 Nicholson Street, it's a knitting mill. And it turns out it's a garage, right opposite Palmerston Street and Palmerston Street's in Carlton. And
- 22:00 this garage is right opposite Palmerston on the Fitzroy side. The knitting mills was around in 2 Henry Street, you went up and looked in some stairs - up some stairs and there was about 15 women working on these machines and Wally and me are - I said, "I'm not going in there with all them women." So I go the back - walk into the town to the boy's movement and explain, it's a garage, it's not a knitting mill. Don't let on. They said, "Oh yeah we realise we made a mistake it's No. 2 Henry Street."
- 22:30 But they said, "Anyhow we want you to go over to the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association]." You know over where the State Theatre and all that is in the city. The YMCA at that time was on the triangle corner where City Road and Sturt Street met, it was a pretty big building I don't know how long it had been built cause me father told me that he'd been to silent pictures back there in about 1902. So apparently the YMCA was there for a long long time.
- 23:00 And we saw a man called Mr Way. And he said, "Oh I'm glad they sent 2 boys over, it's a job up in Carlton, do you know Carlton." "Oh yeah we live in Carlton." "It's in Lygon Street, a place called Watton, Kemp Jack." So he said, "You go there in the morning." Cause this is about 4 o'clock in the afternoon by this time. So he come out. I never forget this. We walk up the Princess Bridge and I don't know whether you know old time horse and cart.
- 23:30 This is before horses driving this timber jink - with a great shaft running up, that the man used to carry timber around on it. "Get a lift off you mister." "Yeah" he said, "Where's you going?" I said, "Carlton." He said, "I'm going to Coburg, I'll go along Leygon Street." "Oh thanks very much that'll do." So we sit on the back of his timber jink and we get a ride back up to where we live. We hop off at Princess Street where you go around the cemetery into Lygon Street. Walk down -
- 24:00 me father's standing outside the Wool Pack Hotel. I said, "We've got a job, Wally and I have got to go to Watton, Kemp Jack up in Lygon Street in the morning." He said, "It's just around the corner from

Princess Street.” “Where?” And we’d been walking past this when we went to school, the hording up on top of this 2 storey house. Watton, Kemp Jack. So I go there the next morning in the best clothes we’ve got on and we see my Kemp. And he looks at us and he says, “Now thank you for coming here. Now you go home and get the worst clothes that

- 24:30 you’ve got.” So little did I realise what he meant. Go home, we changed from these clothes we got on and go back with these few rags that me mother had sewn up, put together. Cause she was a very good needle woman, could do anything with a needle me Mum. And Wally struck the good – he went upstairs I went downstairs. Polishing tin billies, I’ll never forget it as long as I live. I got
- 25:00 15 [shillings] and threepence a week from that job. I wasn’t game to leave because me mother would’ve killed me. That 15 and threepence, made the difference at our place. And what it was – these tin billies they were soldered around. You rubbed down to around the soldering bit with a wet rag. And you put this powder on it and as it dried you polished it off with a dry rag. And they made them by the gross, various sizes from 1 quart to 8 quart.
- 25:30 Tin billies, tin kettles all under the same thing. You had to polish them off. You know they talked about things on your lungs, I should have all sorts of things but must’ve been good luck – good looking after me mother, never affected me much. But the job itself. Anyhow after a lot of months going by they gave me a lift up and I was allowed to handle little bits of wire
- 26:00 and little hand pressed and make rims that went onto – they put the billy lids onto. These went on from a spinning machine and then they let me use a groover that you put the billies together again. And eventually after a lot of other kids didn’t want the job of being apprenticed. I was well down – oh what would you call it – the list. They decided that
- 26:30 yeah, they’d take me on as an apprentice. Me mother had to sign and all this. And Mr Wotten and Mr Kemp. Mr Jack, I never met him because he had gone out of the business before I started. And they taught me how to solder. Goodness me what a job that was. I can still see old Mr Wotten, he’s picking them up and throwing them back at me because I’d leave some marks on them.
- 27:00 I felt like throwing them at him and walking out of the place. But I suffered in silence because I wasn’t game to leave. In fact, when they apprenticed me, I’d got to 18 and sixpence a week. I went back to 16 and sixpence, I took a 2 shillings drop because I became a apprentice. Anyway the years went by and by this time I’d got to 19 and the war broke out. And I enlisted with my mate Murph as I was telling you before. And the manpower knocked me back because I was this apprentice sheet metal worker.
- 27:30 And luckily for me he ended up in Malaya as a prisoner of war. He done all that bit through there. He was in the 2/29th Battalion. And a bit later they were advertising they wanted people in the navy. So I thought, well I’ll have a go at this. So I go into a place called the Alder Fleet Building, it’s in Collins Street. And you had to have a merit certificate to get in the navy.
- 28:00 They were a bit ‘upper class’ apparently. But if you didn’t have it, they gave you what I call a giggle test. It was the equivalent of about 5th grade mental arithmetic. They talk about the education system these days is not firing, I can assure you it was no better back in my time. Because there was 45 of us there, this particular morning doing this thing. And the bloke gave us all a sheet of paper with all these metal arithmetics
- 28:30 on. And he left the room. I done my own and 7 other kids. And 4 or 5 other kids did the same with other blokes who had no idea what – he comes back and collects them and looks at them at all – “Oh yeah all very good.” And then he gave us a dictation test. He read a paragraph out of a book, something to do with naval pay rates. I was spelling the words to the kid on this side of me. They still couldn’t put them down on paper. The upshot of it was there was 7 of us
- 29:00 out of 45 that passed this course. So you can see what I’m on about the education system, it’s been a tailor’s job since ‘Christ was a child’. So don’t let anyone – when you read about in the paper all about, what our education – various governments have allowed to accumulate and accumulate. And the only difference today is, as me old Mum used to say, “The difference between kids in my time and the kids of today, is there’s a million more of them today than there was when I was a child.”
- 29:30 And that’s the reason why.

So there were quite a few kids who were illiterate.

Oh absolutely. When I tell you, 7 out of 45 could do a passage – they all failed on this dictation test. Couldn’t spell words. And they couldn’t even do mental arithmetic. It was just unbelievable. Anyhow about 3 weeks later I’ve gone through all this navy test – I get a telegram.

- 30:00 ‘The Naval Board does not approve of my application’. So I thought I must be an unregistered alien. I said, “Stuff the war, what am I worried about, had a go at the army, I’ve had a go at the navy.”

Sorry they assumed you...

I assumed that I must be an unregistered alien you know. I was no value to this country. So anyhow ‘43 comes along and a mate of mine, Jackie O’Keefe, he says

- 30:30 to me – we'd gone to school and played football. He says, "What about we have a go of getting into the army." He said, "Frank Purvis, he was the bloke who walked in the manpower situation, lived in Carlton, he could fix you up." So I said, "Okay." So by this time I'm out of me time, you know. I'm getting full money. And so we go and see Frank Purvis. "Oh no worries I can fix that up." So the upshot of it was
- 31:00 we got to go down to the drill hall in Victoria Street just near the Victoria market, opposite the old brewery which has gone now. On a Monday morning the 18th October 1943. And we went up to Royal Park, they took us up on the tram. And that was the day that I got inducted into the army. And what do you reckon they come along with another giggle test. We got to go through all this paper work
- 31:30 which we done over 5 days. One section of it I'll always remember was about, wheels interlocking one another to make machinery. And I looked at it and it was Chinese as far as I was concerned so I completely ignored that paper. I done six of the others. And apparently as I found out many years later
- 32:00 I done remarkably well. I've got to jump a number of years here. It was when I was – just before I was to get out of the army. Down at a place called – down at Mornington. Mount Martha – down at the army apprentice school there after the war. And this bloke says to me there he said,
- 32:30 "Oh your discharge is about to come up." Because I had the jump a couple of years later – we'll get back to that later on. He said, "How come you done no skills in the army?" I said, "I don't know I just went where they sent me." He said, "But that giggle test you done when you first went in at Royal Park, you got very high – what do you call it. I've got a word for it –
- 33:00 anyhow my percentage points was bloody near genius. I was 163 he told me. He said it just didn't make sense. He said, "On the marks you got there you should have gone to numerous schools. Not to go to one school." I said, "I don't know nothing about it." But anyhow the penny tumbled. This mate of mine when we'd gone in –
- 33:30 we put in to get into the engineers and we went through this major bloke – he was the allocation officer. And you had to go to him one at a time. And he said, "Oh yeah you go to Kapooka up in New South Wales, engineers depot up there." And me mate who I enlisted with he comes back out and he says, "They're sending me up to Bonegilla, the infantry." I said, "Well this is nice.
- 34:00 I only joined up so I'm going to be with you." So when they've all been through I go in and see this major. And I said, "Look you're sending me mate up to Bonegilla. I only joined up to be with him and you're sending me up..." He said, "Yes but he didn't pass to get on to the engineers and you did." So I says, "I want to go into the infantry with him." And he looked at me and he said, "Are you serious?" And I didn't know what he was on about at that time, found out years later. I said, "Yeah I want to stay with him."
- 34:30 And he got the girl to give me my papers and he crossed out engineers and he wrote infantry. He said, "Are you sure about this?" I said, "Yeah no worries." So what do you reckon. They still send me mate to Bonegilla but they sent me to Warwick in Queensland, so I didn't see him for 3 and a half years. So I go up to this place up in Queensland. And I've been in the army for about a week by this time. And it was the 29th infantry training battalion.
- 35:00 Can't tell you much about it except that the sergeant in charge was a Scotsman named Gibson. Very good. Taught us the facts of life about infantry training. And after you'd been there for I think it was 3 months they gave you 12 days leave. That let me come back to Melbourne. The idea of it was that then when you went back they send you away for 12 months, it didn't matter where
- 35:30 you went, you had no more leave coming. So when I go back they transferred us to a place called the 33rd Infantry Training Battalion – it was a couple of miles across the track. So back we went there and anyhow you'd go out and do the business during the day and come back. Hundreds of fellows at these places. And I'm just standing there on this, afternoon this parade
- 36:00 waiting to get dismissed. All of a sudden – I don't listen to the blokes yelling out all the time. And I hear "Bradley!" "Yeah Sir." Like I'm way down the back. He said, "Why don't you answer when you're spoken to?" I never even heard him, I wasn't even listening. So it turns out I'm up for another 12 days leave. I thought, this is lovely. And I said to me mate Snowy Nelson –
- 36:30 so I've got to go through all this leave business. Already to get on the train to come back to – oh my mate Snowy's screaming. He's still training and I'm going to get '12' – and they realise that someone hadn't marked it up on me papers somewhere else. And they come and pull me off the draft. So I'm back doing training. Almost got 12 days leave again but it didn't happen. So anyhow we finish the training there. They sent us to a place
- 37:00 called Canungra. Which is about 40 miles out of Brisbane and it's like being in the middle of Asia. I suppose I could recount the 45 days minute by minute. A little mate of mine that I met there, by the name of Devinie, Bluey Devinie. I couldn't tell you his first name, he come from Albury. He was about 8 stone 6. He says to me one day, he says "How are you going here Brett?" I said,
- 37:30 "Oh all right. Tucker's good but it's pretty light on." He said, "That's what I'm asking you, I'm starving and I'm 8 stone 6 and I was wondering how you were getting by on this." I said, "Well it's all they give us." It was an endurance course as far as I was concerned. As long as you was thick in the head and

strong in the back you could live through Canungra. Which I did. And to give you an idea, we were in a company and there was 8

- 38:00 platoons in the company. 32 men in each platoon. And every 8 days you were the duty platoon. You cleaned up around the camp. You done the cook house. When you went through of a morning the blokes – as I told you before I liked porridge. They had a big scoop and they had an old copper type thing. And you went through and you ate out in the open, there was tables
- 38:30 in the open. It was, you could say it was very primitive. And they'd tip a bit into your 'dixie' and you went around and you got whatever was going. The only place I ever saw, there was nothing left on the table. They used to put out tins of jam and you'd look in the tins – with your knife and you'd scrap out a bit of jam if there was anything – whoever had the pig
- 39:00 contract to pick up the 'overs' in the cook house didn't get much from Canungra because the empty tins, there was very very little thrown out I can tell you. But anyhow I'm having me first day on this duty platoon. I'm on this dealing out the porridge. I stick me scoop in, bang, full one every time. I've emptied out – never been heard of at Canungra before
- 39:30 to empty out this copper thing. "Need more porridge." The cook rushed in, "What?" And they still – they brought another one straight up. The cooks were living the life of Riley, didn't care what we was getting. So I was the first bloke that ever emptied one of them out. And I'm not skiting about this. Cause me mate says to me, "How in the hell did that happen?" Like it's never been done before.
- 40:00 So after we'd done our 45 days there, they tell us that we're then being moved on to different units. And they take us from Canungra on the train – the train line doesn't run there incidentally any more. I went back on a trip down memory lane some years ago. And I had to ask the local tourist where – they took me down and showed me where the station used to be. Still an army training camp there incidentally at Canungra.
- 40:30 Anyhow we go down to a place called Yeerongpilly I think it is, a railway siding. And to give you an idea just how light the tucker was, they've got these trestles set up – I've never forgotten it and there's food all along. And I don't know, in the old days they used to put pounds of butter out you see. You'd go and buy half a pound of butter for your mother or a pound. Blokes were getting these pounds of butter and sticking them in –
- 41:00 off the table, that's how – I thought to meself, why are they keeping them? They'll be melted in a day. But that's how bad the tucker situation was at Canungra. So anyhow the upshot of it on that trip was when we got up to the tablelands and I found meself become a member of the 2/28th Battalion. They were just reforming after coming out of New Guinea. And 175 of us incidentally this Saturday morning it was.
- 41:30 **So you've mentioned...**

Tape 2

- 00:30 **You mentioned how when you were a young lad you went down the stables...**
- Me father – my grandmother was a Glennon, so that's how I was related to the Glennon family. Apparently my grandfather – John Bradley he was born in
- 01:00 Mildura. Like people have that family history thing. All I know is he was born in 1860 in Mildura, so I don't have to worry – I go back a long long time without worrying about – but I got a cousin who I only met a couple of times up in New South Wales. She done one of these things and she got in touch with me on my mother's side. And she went back to 1819 to a fellow named Steins –
- 01:30 he got 14 years and sent out here for pinching a pig. And my mother's side of the family traces back to him you see. On my grandfather's side I don't worry much. I know he came from 1860 and that's good enough for me. But anyhow I'd say that the Glennons, they were a real old Irish family. I don't know much about them
- 02:00 apart from me grandmother and a couple of her brothers – they lived in Deniliquin in New South Wales. And the first time I saw my grandmother and grandfather I was 12 years old. I went up there at Christmas time and stayed with them for about 6 weeks. Had a wonderful time up there, they looked after me good. But I'd say that the Glennons had this
- 02:30 racing stables on the corner of a street called Burrow's Street in Ascotvale it was. And I'm trying to think of the name of the road, it runs down past the showground there. You know the electric tram runs down there. The Ascot Race Course used to be in that road when it was – cause there's big housing commission thing there now.
- 03:00 But I suppose they had about 10 or 12 horses in the stables at that time. Pat Glennon he was a few

years younger than me so possibly he wasn't even born at the time that me father was taking me out there. It was a regular Sunday go for him he'd take me out there. That was where I met these kids.

- 03:30 I thought it was smart. They thought they were being clever - they were 15 or 16 years old. Teaching this kid to swear. But they were quite happy days out as far as I was concerned. You could say that up till me mother had me put in the boys' home
- 04:00 I probably went there 15 or 16 times a year. When I come home from the boys' home we lived, as I said in Banks Street at that time. And I remember she took me to people up in Clifton Hill in Gold Street. Their name was O'Brien. Apparently
- 04:30 the 3 O'Brien boys were older than me and had been in the boy's home as well. And my mother had met Mrs O'Brien out there and she takes me and my little sister out on this particular Sunday to Mrs O'Brien's - first time I'd been out there. And they send me to play in Alexander Parade which I tell you where the freeway goes now. With a big playground on the thing there, I've never forgotten this.
- 05:00 And I'm down there and these local kids they're ignoring this little kid. And I must've got sick and tired of it and I wandered off. Anyhow the O'Brien boys came back home and their mother says, "Where's Pat?" So they go back and Pat's not there. So this is in Clifton, I'm a little kid 5 years old.
- 05:30 Living in South Melbourne. And I've ambled off. And don't ask me I got home to South Melbourne. I get home and me father's there and apparently I'm pretty tired and he puts me to bed. Me mother comes home with me sister. Got the police and everyone looking for me. Very upset. Says to me father, "The boy's disappeared, we can't find him."
- 06:00 And he says, "He's in bed asleep." Of course to this day no one could tell you how a kid 5 years old had got from Clifton Hill to South Melbourne. Like today if a kid - he'd disappeared off the face of the earth. Someone'd pick him up and you'd never see him again. But that was one of my early exploits, how it happened I don't know, but I got home to South Melbourne. And from there you know
- 06:30 I just went to school. And then me mother - I didn't know at the time - but me mother left me father. She walked out and took me sister and I with her. And all I know is she took us to Mrs Toner who was a great friend of me mother's, lived in Elsen Street in Carlton. And we're staying at Mrs Toner's this particular day. Found out later. My mother had got a house up in
- 07:00 Richardson Street. Cause me mother was a pretty independent lady. She washed and cooked and done everything - and she looked after my sister and me for quite some time till she and me father met up again and we moved down and lived at 47 Princess Street. But we were with me mother and that's where I started school and where I done me Andy Warhol bit. Me mother started me down at that school.
- 07:30 So that would be between when I was 5 and 6. And of course when we went to Princess Street that's when she took me out and started me at St. Bridget's in Nicholson Street.

So what was it that drove your mum to walk out?

Me father was a drunk. No other way to describe him. When me mother was flat out putting meals on the table I can remember when I was little

- 08:00 I'd see her crying. Years later I asked her, you know I used to say, "You used to cry a lot." She said, "I was crying with hunger. I was making sure you and your sister had something to eat but I had nothing myself." But the old man could always get a drink. No. And I'll be honest. When we come to live out here, Nellie said to me, "Why don't you join the RSL [Returned and Services League]?" So a few blokes along here I got to know them and they took me down and joined the local RSL.
- 08:30 I was a member down here for 3 years. I found that if I wasn't in a drinking school then I was on the outer. So I haven't been a member of the RSL for that many years it's not funny. I'm pretty active in our unit organisation but - I look at it this way. I got paid once a week and I couldn't see how I could go down there boozing, and support my family. We had bills to pay, we paid rent on this place.
- 09:00 So this is the upshot of what I grew up with. The old man, he could get a drink any time. But tucker on the table was pretty hard to come by. So I wasn't in love with the old man too much over this, when I found out. And anyhow I jumped a bit to tell you, on that one. But that's the main reason - I'll go to our reunion next Friday and I'll have a few
- 09:30 drinks there. But I could walk away and never ever worry about it. Doesn't worry me at all. But I'm afraid that a lot of fellows find it imperative that they've got to have someone that they can converse with all the time and this is what a pub situation is. It enables you to talk to someone else. I don't find that - it doesn't worry me at all.
- 10:00 I'm a life member of the East Brunswick Football Club. I suppose without skiting, if there hadn't have been a war I might have fluked a few games with Carlton. I played a couple of games with Carlton seconds. And I was on leave one time. I'm on the bus and a bloke says to me - I'd recognised who he was, he was Harry Bell, he was the secretary of Carlton. He said, "Why didn't you let
- 10:30 us know that you'd gone into the army? We wondered what happened to you. You would've made it." I

said, "Too late now, it's all water under the bridge." And when I was 29 years old a bloke wanted me to play football down at Sandringham. I said, "Water's gone under the bridge, I can come up here to the park and have a game with me mates any time. I'm not going to worry about going down to Sandringham to play football living up in Carlton." So I was like the average fellow -

- 11:00 fairly good. And when we came to live here, the local priest said to me, "They've got an under 13 competition going on." And the boy would've been 9 at the time so I took him up, they played up at the top of the street here. And I used to be the goal umpire for them, you know wave the flags. And a fellow named Lou Centenary, he ended up being the president of the local RSL down here. Lou used to umpire for them and coach them and everything. And the kids didn't win a game anywhere. And I said to Lou - we were down at East Melbourne. I said, "Look Lou I don't want to interfere but do you mind if I speak to them for a minute." It was three quarter time. And I don't think these kids had ever been spoken to in all their lives. I lay right into them, including me own son. I said, "Mr Centenary he spends a lot of his time trying to teach you kids the fundamentals of the game. When he's talking to you you're yarning to one another." I said, "It's just not on. When grown up people are explaining things to you, you listen, you don't ignore them." With the result we kicked 2 goals, 5 in the last quarter. We hadn't kicked 2 goals 5 for the rest of the season. So the next week we go down here to Edward Street. I go to pick the flags up and Lou says, "No Paddy we want you to talk to the kids."
- 12:30 It cost me the next 30 years of me weekends. "Cause I couldn't shut me mouth after listening to these kids ignoring a man who was doing the right thing for them. And I coached local kids for the next 30 years down here. We never won any premierships but we got into Grand Finals. Just luckily enough - cause one of the blokes in the other suburbs we used to go he said, "You've always got pretty good side, but you never win."
- 13:00 I said, "No because you blokes cheat." He said, "What do you mean we cheat?" I said, "Well you go and get kids from every suburb. I get kids from Clayton and we must be the - what would you - the least physical people in Melbourne. All our kids are small but you've got big kids that you've got from other suburbs. I give the kids from Clayton a chance to play."
- 13:30 In fact I'll tell you, one day I gave 42 kids a game of football in one game. I changed them at quarter time, half time. Their fathers and mothers used to come up to the park, they couldn't get over it. One kid he was on crutches. He said, "Can I have a kick Mr Bradley." I said, "Look son..." He said, "I can put me crutches - I've got callipers." I said, "But what if you get hurt? Your mother or father..." He said, "Oh me Dad's over there, he said I can have a go." Like you know when crippled kids come and ask you, can they play football, you must be getting through to them. I'll show you after, a trophy the kids gave me later on. And a chap named Jerry Healey, I got mixed up with in this thing, he's a painter. He lived down in South Clayton, or South Oakley you'll call it now. They've changed it. We're East Oakley. But anyhow we finished the season and Jerry says,
- 14:00 "Why don't we take the kids on a trip to Healdton for the weekend?" I looked at him and I was horrified. I couldn't get 4 bob together. I thought, how are we going to take kids. I said, "Oh Jerry I don't think we can do it." Jerry said, "Well I've got a cousin who runs a hotel up there, I think I could get it pretty cheap." I said, "Oh I don't know." We didn't have a trip but I've never forgiven meself cause Jerry lit a fire under me after that. I took kids to Sydney, Adelaide,
- 15:00 Canberra, Western Australia. I found out that there was ways of earning money and when you think I took 27 kids one year to Perth. We flew over there, local priest had a bit of an in with the Ansett Airways and we got concession fare and what have you. But I got us billeted over there, I got us billeted in Sydney. We had people back here. I have 5 Aboriginal
- 15:30 boys stay here one time. Come down from Sydney and stayed with us because the chap brought them down, said, "We don't know how they'll get on." I said, "They can stay here, no worries at all." Oh they gave Nellie 2 bars of soap and a block of chocolate. They thought it was wonderful. But Jerry Healey he lit a fire in me, he proved to me that if you put your shoulder to the wheel you can accomplish a lot of things. But anyhow I'm 'blowing me bags' a bit there.

That's all right.

- 16:00 **But talking about footy, tell us about some of your exploits when you were a kid and playing for East Brunswick and all that.**

Well actually I was lucky that I did stick with football. When I walked at this Wotten Kemp and Jack, there was a young boy a couple of years older than me, Alan Golden. He come from South Melbourne. I'm talking to him as a lot of kids do when they start work. And he's telling me about his playing for this football side

- 16:30 the YMCA. And I said, "That's where we got this job through Mr Way, at the YMCA. " And he said, "Yeah I know Mr Way." But he said, "We've got an under 16 side down at the YMCA. " So I make an arrangement, I go down on a Friday night with Alan. And the YMCA, they had a swimming pool and that. And they had various groups. I was in a group called Ajax with Alan. They played basketball.

- 17:00 And gymnastics. And they had swimming races and swimming was right up my alley. I could swim without skiting, for that time I was – I could swim 50 yards in about 29 seconds you know, which was a pretty smart time back then. Today it's a nothing thing but kids swim 23 and 24 but they've got a lot better conditions than what I grew up in. So I decided to have a go at this
- 17:30 football with Alan. I'd go and I'd train down there with them. And a fellow named Clackston. Don't ask me his first name. He worked at the State Savings Bank, he was the coach. And if I'd listened to Clackston I would've stopped trying to play football when I was 14 years old. I can vividly remember him telling me this. I was a permanent '19th' man, I suppose I got about 4 actual games where I took play in the whole game.
- 18:00 And one day I took a mark and kicked the winning goal but it never got me a game the next week. He said, "You're all style like an old woman." I remember him telling me this. What did I know about style and anything, 14 years old, never played football in me life. But if I'd let that man discourage me, I'd have stopped playing. Well the next year the YMCA side folded but a bloke named Pop Maurie he'd had a thing called the
- 18:30 Melbourne Boys Society or something going. But he and a lady who ran the News Boy Society, Edith Union they had this Melbourne – it was a wonderful thing for the youth around Melbourne. And they had a side called Melbourne City. So I told me mate Wally Mack, I said, "I'm going to have a go at a mob called Melbourne City, why don't you come
- 19:00 down." And as I told you Wally was a cracking foot – he was a cracking – he could do anything Wally. He beat a bloke in 10 round at West Melbourne stadium who was middle weight champion of Australia, that's how good he was. But anyhow Wally comes with me. And I had a bike, we used to go all over Melbourne. I'd dink Wally to the games, and he'd dink me back home. That was how we got from Carlton, Prahran, Murrumbeena, you name it.
- 19:30 How we played football on top of pushing the bike backwards and forwards. Anyhow the next year that folded, but the kids I'd gone to school with at St. Brigitte's they were starting an under 18's side. And they said to me, I used to see them at church on a Sunday. "Do you want to come and have a game with us?" "Oh yeah." So I said, "I can get a few kids I played with last year." And I got the Carmody's.
- 20:00 And Jackie and Ambrose and Wally MacDonald. Harry Hanger. I'd gone to school with up at St. George. And the upside of it was we had this side, I think we started playing, I think this would be about 1937. And we lost out on getting into the four on percentage that year. The next year '38 we were runners up. We played the Victoria
- 20:30 Brewery Juniors for premiers. I got a photo in there of the side too. Victoria Brewery Juniors weren't too flash about under 18's. Alan Rufen who later won on a Brownlow medal was captain of that side. And by this time I wished Clacston had've been there, without skiting. I had improved about 250% on what he used to look at when I was 14 years old.
- 21:00 And one of the kids after the game – they're under 18's and the big Victoria Brewery Juniors have got a barrel of beer after the game. And they say to me, "Have a drink." They says, "You're the best player on that side every time we play." I played against them about 5 times and I don't know, the ball 'chased me' every time I played against their side. And I always looked like I could play a bit. So
- 21:30 '38 and '39 the war came and that finished it. And '40 just before I enlisted Tommy Frost – Tommy was a colossal footballer, he's dead now of course. He and I went down and I was training with Fitzroy seconds. You could go down to Brunswick Street and have a run around with them. And they're going to play a practice match against East Brunswick.
- 22:00 I didn't know where East Brunswick was, like the football ground. It was up in Fleming Park in Albert Street. So we go there. A fellow named Stutchberry was secretary of the Fitzroy seconds and he comes to Tommy and me. There's a stack of blokes like us. Eddie Hart who later on played with Fitzroy, well he was there. And Stutchberry says to Tommy and me, "Look I'd like you to go in and introduce you to Harry Hartley." He was everything at East Brunswick. He'd been coach,
- 22:30 secretary, president. Harold was one of the greatest individuals I ever known. Harold takes us in and we played with East Brunswick in the practice match against Fitzroy seconds side. Tommy Frost was the best on the ground. I hurt me leg, didn't last too long. Turned out I tore a hamstring or some damn thing. Anyhow, oh he was highly delighted Harold, got two kids
- 23:00 that looked like they played football. And he said, "Do you know anyone else?" And we said, "Oh yeah we know quite a few." So we fetched about 5 other kids that played in our side and "Oh where the hell are these kids coming from?" You know they all ended up playing with East Brunswick. All from our under 18 side, so you can guess we were a pretty fair group of kids. And we didn't have anything like the kids have today. They get everything hand fed and we brought our own jumpers, we had no bloke to coach us. We just
- 23:30 done everything off our own hook. Hired the ground off the city council up the park. And – but all in all had a wonderful time. Travelled all around Melbourne, got to know lots of people. Fellows who went on and played league football, we played against them. But I suppose I played at East in '40, '41

- 24:00 and '42 and we were premiers in '43, just before I went into the army. And we beat - funny thing we beat Fitzroy South Districts to win the premiership too. And then of course when I came out of the army I went back and I played with them again. And a thing called the Sunday League started. And us group that had this side that I'd had before we went up to East Brunswick
- 24:30 we got together again as a local pub side down. And we joined in this Sunday League. And the sub districts come up with some sort of a rule that you couldn't play Sunday football if you were a registered player - and I said, "This is wrong." Actually I should, you know I'm jumping a bit here. A young fellow named Fashina, he was playing with South Melbourne and when South Melbourne got taken to Sydney
- 25:00 and he didn't want to go to Sydney because he was engaged to a girl, a young Italian bloke, lived there in Carlton. And he didn't want to leave his girlfriend. And he played with Sydney for a year or two. And then he took the Victorian Football League to court and proved that they could not tell him that he had to go to Sydney to play football. He threw the whole league rules up in the air. He proved that you just can't do as you like.
- 25:30 In fact this business with Herd the other day, talking about - I reckon if Herd had let them go to court, they'd have thrown it out. You can't get pinched for saying what you think about - umpires they get abused every day of the week. But anyhow I'm jumping a bit there. But anyhow I had to play one game to become a life member at East Melbourne. And I said, "This is not good enough. I want a straight out clearance and I'll go to play with me mates." I said, "If we come up here and we play
- 26:00 with you." I said, "Now we've got our own side again, if we play on a Sunday, you can't tell me what to do." Harry Hartley says to me, "Look Paddy play the one day then have the clearance." I said, "Harold it's a matter of principle now. If I play one game now I'm admitting that they're right and I'm wrong, it's not on." So I didn't play. Got me clearance. Next month they gave me me life membership. They realised that morally I was right. Anyhow
- 26:30 I ended up I was Captain and coach of that side. We got into grand finals and what have you. But as I say, we played in more grand finals and got beaten. But without skiting, I wasn't bad.

You said you played some games for the Carlton seconds?

Yeah I played one day against South seconds and I played against Essendon seconds and that was when I went into the army and never bothered telling Carlton. And so

- 27:00 that's when this Harry Bell said to me, the secretary, "Why didn't you let us know." Oh I was invited to a couple of do's up at Carlton. But after the war 'I'd missed the tram', it just wasn't on. But anyhow they were good times.

But how's the game changed, I mean what was it like back in the '30's and '40's?

Well I was only looking at something on the television the other night, they showed you a game

- 27:30 Carlton I think they were playing North Melbourne, I wouldn't be sure about it. But John Nicholls. Now John Nicholls is one of the greatest footballers ever to play the game. And I was - I couldn't believe it. He was practically hobbling trying to get after the football. And I thought, these fellows the way they play the game today, he'd be the last bloke you'd pick. He just wouldn't,
- 28:00 he just wouldn't have the toe to keep up. They're that damn fast today, it's unbelievable. Like I think the bloke, the ball's coming at him today and he knows before it even hits his hand that Jimmy Smith's there ready to take it straight off. It's that damn fast. I tell you what. And the more reserves they fetch into the game
- 28:30 the faster it will get because they keep changing the blokes over. And this is probably why Nicholls looks so tired to me that he couldn't - because he just was working the whole 100 minutes of the game and physically exhausted.

Plus they're holding down jobs all week.

Oh yes and he - he was a bit - you had to be a bit careful apparently. John wasn't

- 29:00 flash where he got a quid from, he thieved a bit too apparently. Cause he'd done time over something up at Carlton. But I just couldn't get over how slow they looked. It was Jez Silenco. I'm talking about wonderful footballers, absolutely their skill level was colossal back in those days. But today, by God they're so quick.
- 29:30 I shudder to think. I don't think us fellows would've got near the ball. Gee they're fast today. Well you've only got to look at all the sports. You take this Thorpe, this swimmer bloke. He swims about, what would you say, when I was a kid there was a fellow named Andrew Charlton, he was the great swimmer
- 30:00 'Boy' Charlton they called him. And he was a world's champion and he swum against Johnny Weissmuller and all them fellows. Thorpe swims about a minute faster than what his world record was. That's absolutely ridiculous. To think that a man that was the world champion in 1925 that a fellow in 2004 swims a minute faster than what was the world

- 30:30 record. It's just ridiculous. And goodness knows what's going to happen in 15 years time. Oh I don't - I don't know - I shudder to think where the human race is going to go in the way it's going to progress. How every individual - what we think. You know I've got a little granddaughter that
- 31:00 plays there. She might be 4 years old and I'm fascinated what that child can do at her age. She seems to be a lap ahead of what I'm thinking at 4 years of age. I'm saying to myself, am I losing my marbles or are these kids running past us. I was doing something the other day and she showed Grandpa, I just forget what it was. She gave me a clue.
- 31:30 That's unreal.

Your memory of that period, inner city Melbourne seems like you knew the place back to front.

Oh absolutely. Today I'd be lost in there now with all those new buildings and Southbank - I wandered around there. Because in my time that was a derelict area. You just wouldn't go across there. You'd look from Flinders Street Station

- 32:00 across there and it was a just a nothing thing but...

Were there places where you had to be careful. Was it really rough around town?

Actually I suppose there was, but I wandered around this town and never had a minute's trouble. In fact when I was in the 28th Battalion and the blokes asked me where I come from and I said I come from Carlton. They were horrified. Carlton. That's a horrible... I said, "I've lived there all my life. Never had a minute's trouble."

- 32:30 I knew I suppose I grew up with, you could say, more than 50% of my mates have been inside and done time. But you know, we lived in a desperate area. And it might've been the difference between their family having something on the table and not having something on the table and they got 'pinched' over it. It never worried me where they'd been. I never judged anyone.
- 33:00 I was probably lucky myself, I never got caught doing things. But anyhow as you say, with a couple of other kids, I used to push a little billy truck around some of them back lanes picking up timber to take home on this - that me mother used to use for firewood. And I don't have many - in fact I'd say I have very few photos of my family as I grew up.
- 33:30 Because my mother says, "The beauty of a fire was you could burn things to keep warm." She burnt everything, photo albums you name it. The things in - like the good old days. What a con act. Absolute rubbish. In fact when I started work some of the men at Wotten's were working 3 days a week in those days. They didn't have a full week. A couple of the men, in fact the foreman
- 34:00 Jack Yock he to me was the greatest tradesman I ever knew. He worked a full week but he was an exception. He was an absolute brilliant tradesman - best sheet metal worker I ever knew, absolutely. He could take a flat piece of aluminium with a 7 pound block and hammer. He'd dome it - today they do it in a press, they just press it out. And after he'd
- 34:30 buffed that up on the buffing wheel you wouldn't see a hammer mark. Oh he was really something. Whenever I was in trouble, I see Yock, he could get me out of trouble in jig time. He was not only a great tradesman, he was a great person.

What kind of trouble and what sort of strife are we talking about?

Well I'd be doing a job, something mightn't be going right on it and I'd say to Yock, "I'm in trouble here."

- 35:00 And he could get me out of trouble in 10 minutes. He'd show me something that I'd missed doing and I was lucky that I'd got to know him. And he looked after me. In fact I think, without Yock I might not have got through my time because he was really something else. In fact I think he said he started work for Wotten Kemp and Jack around
- 35:30 about 1914 when he was a kid. And I think when he left I think he'd worked for Wotten, Kemp and Jack for something like about 52 years. You know to have one job and to work right through the Depression he was really something. Because it was pretty hard. You had to be a real top tradesman to get a job in the Depression and keep it.
- 36:00 He was one.

Did you have mates that were members of like the mobs or the little gangs on the streets at the time?

I knew people, who knew other people that I wasn't intimate with you see.

- 36:30 And they'd talk about this one and that one. In fact a fellow who was supposed to be mixed up in the shooting of Squizzy Taylor, a fellow named Buckley. He was supposed to be the bloke they never ever caught over it because Cutmore and Taylor

- 37:00 were supposed to have shot one another but there was supposed to be another bloke in the place at the same time and it was supposed to have been William Buckley. And I went to school with his grandchildren. They went to school at St. Bridget's. The Buckleys. The Buckleys were pretty rough. You didn't mess with the Buckleys that was for sure, they were pretty tough kids. Later on
- 37:30 they lived down Collingwood. And Collingwood was a bit tough. Although Nellie come from Abbotsford, just on the other side of Collingwood. I used to go down and these blokes down there, "G'day Brad how're you going?" Having played football against them I was allowed through the district. But it was only on account of playing football against them I think. But personally I never had any trouble with anyone but as I say,
- 38:00 as regards to mixing with straight out 'crims', although when I think of it - there's a pretty notorious family, these days and they're the sons of the fellows that I knocked around with. Noel and Keith Ford, well their boys, oh they're bad. They've shot people
- 38:30 right left and centre. The four Noel and Keith boys. Noel and Keith they were thieves but not desperates, like their kids were. Noel died a couple of years ago. Keith I believe has had a couple of strokes, he's not travelling too flash. But Keith was a sergeant in the army so all done their bit for this country.
- 39:00 I suppose you could say before Noel and Keith Ford was as close as I got to being close to any bad friends and it was only their sons who I never did get to know. But oh they're bad. Outside of them I...
- 39:30 Most of the kids around Carlton they could either, good bike riders, the Jamisons, they were Georgie ran 4th in the Melbourne to Warrnambool 2 years in a row. Sydney Jamison the older brother, he won 2 or 3 track bike - big track bike races.
- 40:00 Harry Scott he was pretty good with the Carlton Amateurs, bike riding. You could say that there was lots of people fortunate enough to be born in this time would've done much better in life than they done in our time. Because what's available now just wasn't available back in those days, commesured with their skills that they had.
- 40:30 **I guess the war sort of had...**
- To me the big thing about the war was, and I've harped on this for years, it let the scientists loose. And when the war finished they didn't stop the scientists and that's why we've got all these things going on today. They run on unchecked. See during the war years the Germans would produce something, the next
- 41:00 week the allies would produce a counter to it, the Germans would produce... and this went on both sides, and when the war finished no-one said to the scientists, "Eh stop. You've dropped an atomic bomb, you've done all these things, we've gone about as far as man..." And we've put a man up on the moon. In fact I've crook at meself, years and years ago was a paper called Australian Monthly - it never lasted that long.
- 41:30 It was out for a while. I read this article in it. An American general being interviewed about 1951. He was something to do with the American medical thing and they said to him, "What's the chance of a cure for cancer?" And he said - and I'm talking about a cutting that was in this paper in 1955 I read it. "We would get a cure for cancer in 6 months if we had the cheque they've
- 42:00 got for space travel."

Tape 3

- 00:32 The first day I got to this Canungra place, train pulled in there. They marched us up the hill. The first thing they told us we had slouch hats on and chin straps - take the chin strap off because you'll end up with some sort of skin complaint from around here. So that was the first time I had the hats without
- 01:00 the chin straps. We get up to this camp and they line - they put us into platoons. There was 8 platoons, 32 to a platoon and some of the blokes I'd been with down at Warwick and then there was some of the new blokes including this Bluey Devenie I hadn't met before. And Joey Naysen,
- 01:30 him and I got pretty good mates because we went on the same day back in Melbourne - he came from Footscray. A rather rude awakening. They gave us a bag to put on the ground - a palliasse cover it was called. And that's all it was - just lay it on the ground. That's where we were sleeping - straight onto the ground. And the next morning the bugle
- 02:00 went at 6 o'clock. We were up, got to grab our shaving utensils and what have you and we jogged off a double rate for a mile and a quarter down to a mountain stream. By the time we got down there there was hundreds of blokes on both sides of it. So we - it's in - of what would you say -
- 02:30 late March early April. The very first day we got there and I explained that. And the bugle goes the next

morning we were there, as I say. Off we jog about a mile and a quarter down to this mountain stream. Get down there, hundreds of blokes down there. Got there, strip off, jump in - I'll never forget it - floating around there shaving and treading water at the same time.

- 03:00 Luckily I could swim. You got out, dried, back into your gear. And I suppose we were back at the campsite by twenty five past six. And don't forget we'd jogged a mile and a quarter down there and a mile and a quarter back, shaved done all our ablutions and everything. So from there to a quarter to seven ready to go around
- 03:30 to our breakfast. You line up in your platoon and you marched around this track and you come through and like I was explaining to you about the stuff being dealt out to you. And we stood at these bush tables. I suppose they were about chest high they were. 8 standing up out in the open of course. Finished there and you went back, got your rifle cleaned and what have you.
- 04:00 And somehow or other, I don't know they picked me to be our platoon marker. So I had to be up with the other 7 fellows from the other platoons that were markers to stand on the spot where our platoon had to come and line up. And this for on for each day we were in the camp. Most of the time we wasn't in the camp but anyhow - I suppose we were in the camp for this sort of thing about 11 days, the rest of the time we were out in the
- 04:30 bush doing bivouacs and all this sort of thing. From there I suppose by the time they got through reading out routine orders and what have you, on the parade it would be around about quarter past nine and each platoon were marched off to various areas to do various things.
- 05:00 Like one that sticks in mind was - they had us sitting on the side of the hill looking at the bush trying to sort out 12 fellows that were in various positions, in trees, on the ground, whatever. And I tell you what it's pretty hard with blokes in jungle greens. You know you're about a hundred and fifty, two hundred yards away. Some of the blokes were pretty good, I was never very smart at it at all. But some of them
- 05:30 used to amaze me how they could pick bodies out amongst these trees. I wish I'd have been so smart meself but I wasn't. That would go on you could say for about an hour and a half, then they'd take you on a bit of a route march. You might go for about five or six miles cause we were all given a bit of tucker in our bags to take with us.
- 06:00 And we'd be wandering around doing various drills in the bush till about quarter past four in the afternoon and they'd bring us back into camp. Then after we'd been there about five days doing this sort of set up I've just described, they took us out on what they called a three day stunt. We went out and we were out in the bush - firing ranges,
- 06:30 blokes firing live ammo over you. They had a bit of a mortality rate there I suppose they estimated that there would be some casualties in each group that went through. Cause I think there was something like, I think we were M Company because they had the companies out in
- 07:00 alphabetical order. And I think they - I'm not sure that they had the full alphabet but there was quite a lot of companies, I suppose you could say there was at least 20. And all these fellows training. The training was so intense, the first time I'd seen any result from it was when I went to this Warwick place. There's a siding there called Mount Morgan at this - near this training camp
- 07:30 at Warwick. And this train pulled in this day - we were out in the bush and we saw this train pull in. And hundreds of blokes got off the train and were marched up to this Warwick training camp where we were. And I asked the bloke when I come in that afternoon, who were they all. And he said, "Oh they all got returned from Canungra." They'd been bought from Western Australia and taken straight to Canungra and they'd lasted 3 days. The training was that intense they
- 08:00 weren't physically capable of doing the course at Canungra. So they were sent to this place where we were at Warwick and this was the 'builder up', to toughen you up so you could stand up to the rigours of Canungra. So anyhow I'm describing after we've been there about 5 or 6 days, sent us on this 3 day stunt. We were out digging fox holes and putting up fields of fire and being investigated
- 08:30 in the bush - whether we're doing the right thing for jungle warfare. Pretty intense. officers looking over your shoulders, and sergeants and corporals making sure that you knew what you were doing and why you were doing it. In between doing usual stripping Bren guns and Owen guns and making sure you got them back into firing order and all this sort of thing. So at the end of 3 days you come back in
- 09:00 and it's very handy to get back in and jump into that mountain stream and have a decent wash once again because you weren't getting many ablutions out in the bush I can tell you. So after about another 4 days of this around the camp business, they take you out for a 5 day run. All repeats of what we'd been doing but more intense each time you get there. And sometimes we'd get into this rain forest. Goodness me the leeches
- 09:30 that get into you. It's unbelievable. Down the legs of your pants and what have you. I'd hate to live in the rainforest permanently. So we'd finished that 5 days one under the same conditions. We come back, another 3 or 4 days of the same camp routine business again. Back out for a 7 day one which we thought was the finish. When we got back in from the 7 day one

- 10:00 by the time of the end of the 7th day, you are physically exhausted. And you come up this thing called 'the staircase'. And believe me it was a staircase. Run up about that angle to the top. I suppose it was around about, 900 to 1100 feet in, the climb up to it. By the time you got up there you were physically exhausted. Pack on
- 10:30 your back felt like it weighed about 2 tonne. We get back to the camp and they informed us they were then going to take us to a place called Wasp's Creek which is down near Southport, about 20, 25 mile route march from Canungra to do some tank training. And the tank training consisted of being under a field firing range of 25 pounders
- 11:00 and we're down in fox holes, trenches, what have you, and they were driving these tanks across us. To get us used to tank warfare. Not that you run into much tank warfare in jungle believe me, it's only a dream. The Japs had some small ones but I - they operated at Milne Bay. I never saw any of them. Cause that was well before my time. But the tanks'd run over the top of
- 11:30 you and we're cowering down hoping the size of these is not going to crumple in and the tracks of the tanks are going to come in on top of you. So this went on for about 4 or 5 days before we went back up to Canungra for the finish of the course. But the 5 days took, you know the route march to get down there and the route march to come back. That took the best part of a day each way and 3 days of this field, firing range
- 12:00 under 25 pounders. It wasn't very flash believe me. And that was when they told us they were putting us on this train and I told you about these fellows grabbing the pounds of butter and sticking them in - down at Yeerongpilly or Indooroopilly or whatever the name of the siding was.

So Canungra, that sounds really intense. You said that they expected mortality... Were there

- 12:30 **accidents when you were there?**

In my platoon we had none. But later on I found out, when I - one bloke had been caught under one of these field fire - half the back of his leg had been shot away. Like whether he - someone was over zealous firing the machine gun. Or he was too slow getting up to a certain - you'd be running over a bit of a stream and they're letting off

- 13:00 jelly [gelignite] practically underneath your foot. A mate of mine over in Western Australia - Albie Mason at a place called Collie, they had something the same over there, he done a foot over there on this jelly going up underneath him. So field firing ranges are very intense because if you're not up where you should be you can get badly hurt.

Did everyone from your company make it through?

No no none

- 13:30 in my platoon and I wouldn't know of any other platoons reporting any. But they had a - whether they were pulling our leg but at the top of this hill as they marched us up from the station the first day there was this little cemetery section with about 8 or 9 graves in there and they were supposed to have been casualties. At one time they reckoned Blamey was talking about closing the place down. Was it really necessary because
- 14:00 apparently Col Dale, who I later met in 28 - he joined up after me because he was in another - he was in the initial group that opened Canungra - Col - he won a Military Medal with the 2/28th - he was telling me when we were conversing about our times - when they got there they were issued with machetes and they actually cut the bush away to set the camps up. It was just
- 14:30 complete jungle when they got there. So we apparently got there and got the good times because Col was there a couple of years before me. But the talk was that Blamey wanted to shut the place down but they didn't. And then as I say, lobbed up at the 28th...

Sorry can I ask you a few more questions about Canungra because your memory is so terrific. A lot of guys will just say we went there then we went there but because your memory is so vivid I'll just try

- 15:00 **to get some more detail. How specific was the instruction and the exercises to what you were going to face later on with the Japanese?**

Well the thing was, a lieutenant was in charge of the platoon I was in. His name was Hoyle I think. Later on I think he was in the 24th or the 23rd battalion. 2/23rd -

- 15:30 but he - I can't think of the sergeant's name - I think it was - Trigger but I couldn't be absolutely sure. He was a blonde fellow. And there was a corporal - a thick set bloke and I can't remember his name either but I can see his face. And this lieutenant and the sergeant had to nominate 3 fellows out of each one
- 16:00 of the training platoons like ours. And they had to nominate 3 blokes to stay on for the next intake of trainees coming in. Unfortunately I was one of the 3 that he picked to become what we called a Canungra Corporal. And I said to meself, 'this is nice'. Like me mate Snowy's going to go on to wherever they're going.

- 16:30 So I'm thinking, how the hell can I get out of this. So I went and I told this lieut [lieutenant], I said, "Look I can't afford to be in this. There might be fellows coming through..." I'm telling you the truth, this is what I said to him. "I just got out of doing 6 months at Pentridge back in Melbourne before I come into the army and some of them blokes are liable to come through that's been in the boob at the same time as me. And they'd say don't listen to this bloke he's only a 'boob rat'." He said, "Oh I can see
- 17:00 you've got a point there." And that got me out of it. Only by telling lies. So it wasn't particular that I was worried but it meant that I was going to miss out on being with me mate Snowy who I'd made it up with. And I was a good mate to Snowy because when he'd write home, Snowy wasn't very good on words too and I used to spell the words to him and he always used to finish the letter to his mother and say
- 17:30 how's all them words Mum? Spelt them pretty good didn't I? Incidentally Snowy was a cracking soldier. An absolute cracker.

So where did you meet up with Snowy?

The first day at Royal Park. He come from Footscray and so anyhow he - him and I as I say, we get down on that train and off we go and we finish up in the

- 18:00 Tablelands to join the 28th, 175 of us. And we're lined up and Huey Norman, he's the CO [Commanding Officer] of the 28th at that time, he come out and he's starting to give us a bit of a spiel. And like I said I don't listen intently to what - but all of a sudden he come onto my wave length. He says, "Originally we were totally a West Australian battalion but we got ..." They got wiped out in the desert
- 18:30 at a place called Ruin Ridge. And most of the battalion was either killed or captured in this action against the Germans. Pommies tanks apparently failed - it's in the battalion history - to get up to where they were supposed to and the Germans chopped them right off. When the Germans cleared off, what was left alive and
- 19:00 wounded and what have you and got them away from there, the whole battalion - what was the left and the LOBs [Left Out of Battle] they come up - there wasn't a round left. They were completely out of ammunition. A fellow who I got to know in the 28th - he was a WO [Warrant Officer] - his name was McLennan. He was an original member, he was telling me about Ruin Ridge. He said they called
- 19:30 for ammunition to be brought up. And the trucks were coming up and they were coming through an opening in the minefield - I'm describing what this McLennan told me. He said the Germans had set up an anti-tank gun and was just shooting fish in a barrel type of thing. They were just going bang bang shooting these trucks as they come up no trouble. And he says the truck I'm in with the driver - he says
- 20:00 the Germans hit the truck, up it went and he jumped out, him and the driver. And he said to the driver, "This way." And the driver said, "No this way." He said, he ran that way and ended up in Germany, I ran that way and ended up back in Australia. So that was the difference you see. One bloke went the wrong way ended up as a POW [Prisoner of War] with the rest of them. But he said when they went up and checked out the actual battle scene after everything
- 20:30 had cleared up, there wasn't a round left. They'd completely - and the bloke a fellow by the name of McCarter was in charge of the battalion at that time. He was from the 43rd battalion, he could do nothing else but put his hands up and say, "That's it, we've got nothing left." There was a fellow named Bill Rudd - he lives down in South Yarra - got to know Bill pretty well. He's mixed up in the POW organisation.
- 21:00 He's got a list of every POW, Australian POW where he was in a POW camp, where he's likely to be buried. He's a walking encyclopaedia on it. And he was with the 2/28th that day, he was from the 2/7th Field Company. Him and his mob they'd gone through, the three of them and opened up the minefield
- 21:30 to get the 28th up there. And he told me, he said to McCarter, "What's going to happen to us?" And McCarter said, "We're just going to surrender son and that's all that's going to happen." He said, "So that was when I started my POW campaign." So Bill Rudd is one bloke who can tell you all about the 2/28th on Ruin Ridge. And interesting to talk to fellows like Bill who actually saw
- 22:00 all this business. But getting back to my time and Huey Norman this first morning I'm there. And he says, "Originally we were a Western Australian battalion but due to casualties we now have people from the Eastern States." Because that's how they refer to us in the West, we're Eastern Staters. "And some of them have finished up very good members." And I looked at this fellow and I thought, what's he
- 22:30 coming on about? Up till then I thought I was an Australian. I've discovered listening, I'm a Victorian. I said, "Do I blurt this bloke." And I'm out of here before I've even got started. And I thought, 'shut your mouth'. Anyhow he waffled on, then finished and then he said, "Now you can all pick the companies you want to go to. Headquarters company's over there, if you go over there you'll be allocated to various platoons. They've got
- 23:00 8 platoons in Headquarters Company and in the rifle platoons A, B, C and D, they're got 3 platoons you see." So a lot went off over to Headquarters Company, some went to A Company, others went down to B Company, some went to C Company, others went to D Company. And I stood there with Snowy and about

15 other blokes, just didn't move, just stood there. So they come up to us

23:30 and they said, "You got any particular place you..." "No." So that's how I ended up in the C Company of the 2/28th, they took us straight down to C Company because apparently there'd been less go down to C Company. So somehow or other we got a football. And I started kicking up and down with a couple of blokes and before you could say 'Jack Robinson', there's about 8 or 10 other fellows joining in and we're kicking this football up and down, it's a Saturday morning. And I get

24:00 talking to a young bloke that's kicking a football alongside me. His name's Dick Wilson, a great friend of mine. He lives up in Sydney, I go up to his place fairly regular. We have reunions up there, his family and mine are very close. And Dick Wilson is kicking 60 yard drop kicks and I said, "Where do you come from, South Australia, Western Australia." "No I come from Sydney." I said, "New South Wales, no-one can kick a football like this." And he was telling me, he lived in

24:30 Randwick, just near the Randwick Racecourse. And he said he used to go down the local park when he was a kid and 4 or 5 blokes playing Australian Rules Football there, showed him how to kick a football. And believe me he was a very apt pupil. When the war finished Dick played for New South Wales, 11 years in a row in the interstate side for New South Wales and Australian Rules. He was one of the best footballers in our battalion. I couldn't get over it. A bloke from New South Wales kicking

25:00 drop kicks like that - unbelievable. So that was the start of my friendship with Dick Wilson. He joined them in New Guinea just before they come back to Australia. And anyhow...

What was the last action or campaign that they'd been involved in?

Labuan and Borneo was the last campaigns they were in you see.

But before you joined it was?

New Guinea. They went to

25:30 Lae, Finschhafen. The 7th Div [Division] just beat them into Lae. They'd come down from the hills the 7th Div. And they'd come up the coast the 9 Div. And the 7th Div got into Lae just before the 28th. And they tell me a strange thing happened about the first or second night that they occupied

26:00 Lae. They'd set up a DID [?] at Wing Point. The next morning they went there and there was boots thrown everywhere. Some Nips [Japanese] had got in during the night and trying on their boots. They'd thrown out all the big ones cause only had little feet the Japs. So the Nip was a pretty good improviser. So these are stories I heard from these blokes. But

26:30 Dick had told me he was in call up at 18, up in New South Wales. And they'd done their training but they weren't allowed to go overseas before they were 19 so they were just in the training camp around Sydney waiting till they were 19 and then they sent them up to a place called Celine - it was a staging camp in Queensland

27:00 up towards Townsville. And they allocated them on ships to go up to New Guinea from there. So he said they got allocated at Celine and I think they went up to Buna and from Buna they were allocated out to various battalions and that was how he finished in the 2/28th. And they joined them after a place which is one of the 2/28th's big events.

27:30 A place they call crossing of the Busu River. Apparently this Busu was running flood torrent, the Nips are on one bank they came up on the other. And Wootten - he's the General in charge of things, he says, "You've got to cross the Busu." And apparently some bloke was a pretty good swimmer for the 2/28th - they tied a rope around him and he got across

28:00 to the other bank and tied the rope so that blokes could hang onto get across. They lost - I'm not sure, 7 or 9 blokes got washed away out to sea and drowned on that crossing. But eventually the whole battalion got across and drove the Nips back across at the Busu. It's one of their real big shows. Not having been there I can only go by

28:30 word of mouth and what I've read in there. And Dick said - that's when he joined them, just after that took place. When they came back to Australia on leave I think it was in January and they just reformed them and we went up and joined up with them up there.

When you said the tableland - Atherton or Darling Downs.

The first one was at Darling Downs. That

29:00 was down at Warwick but Atherton Tablelands is up where I'm with the 28th then. And we spent I'd say the next April, right through till very early in December when I fluked leave to come home again, training in the tablelands up there. I knew

29:30 most of that area. I didn't need a map I could walk around it like it was Collins Street. But I did get lost there one day. This is a classic. We'd been going out to a certain training area for weeks and weeks. We'd come back in. Anyway this particular Monday morning out we'd go - where we'd always gone left we went right this particular day. And we go out to this new training area. We put the day in doing

various

- 30:00 drills and what have you. Comes about quarter to four in the afternoon when they used to turn around to come back home and Brent Evans who I showed you his photos out there, him and I were coming back in – we both wanted to go to the dyke. He only wants to have a leak, I want to do a job. So I'm digging a hole and I squat down in the bush. Anyhow Bren yells out to me, he's walking up this hill – the mob have gone in front of it. "You'd better hurry up, they're going out of sight and up the top of the hill."
- 30:30 So I finish, clean up around, fill the hole – walk up to the top of the hill and I look around and I can't see anyone. So they've been going in this general direction you see so I keep ambling along in this general direction. And after about an hour, I haven't caught up with anyone and I thought – I always used to read Texas Ranger book, Tim Hatfield. So I'd sit down have a ten minute read, read Tim Hatfield. Put it back in get up,
- 31:00 walking on. By this time it's around about – I haven't got a watch or anything. I'm estimating, oh it must be around about six o'clock. I come to what had been apparently a training camp and I can hear trucks running and I think there must be a road up there. By the time I get up there there's nothing about. But I'm still heading in the same direction because in the distance behind Ravenshoe Township which is in that area, I can
- 31:30 see this one tree called Mount Pandarnis it is, it's a high hill with this one tree. I know if I head there I'm going to finish in Ravenshoe. So anyhow just on dusk I come out in a paddock that's in this area where we've been coming out for months. So I just turn around and I come up and I'm walking through Don Company and the blokes, "What are you bucking for sergeant?"
- 32:00 Nearly dark and here I am just coming in. They were just organising a search party for me in C Company when I arrived in. Anyhow the Western Australian bush blokes they said for a city bloke I was pretty smart. That I'd headed for something that was a definite land sign and I'd saved a lot of heart burn. So I actually got lost in the bush but found me way out. But
- 32:30 that would be about one of me highlights there except playing in the battalion football side. We got in the semi finals of the winter competition and we didn't do so good in the summer competition – that was when I went home on leave. But then I made a fatal mistake – when I come back after leave they had a lightning premiership in the battalion. And I was captain of our
- 33:00 company side in this particular show. We played two, I'm not sure whether it was fifteen or twenty minute halves and C Company we played D Company first, Headquarter Company played A Company and Headquarter Company beat A Company. B Company had the bye. And then we had to play B Company for the right to play A Company you see. And we beat
- 33:30 B Company so we got to play A Company. And a bloke named Ernie Caddie, he's the coach of the battalion side, he's in that photograph there. He's the coach of Headquarter Company as well. They were a better side than us. They had eight by twos to pick from, we only had three. And a lot of our blokes were still on leave. And they kicked one goal six. And we've kicked one goal one. Fellow Bill Cowan, 'Lofty'
- 34:00 we used to call him. He was a great big tall West Australian. He kicked our goal. And it was right on the death. And I'd taken a mark on an impossible angle. Never forgot it. And I looked at the goal and I over shot. And the goal place was the same shade as the big tree right behind the goal post you see, and I thought it had hit the goal post you see. I thought, oh missed. And the bloke on the mark says, "You so and so,
- 34:30 that's won it for you." We'd kicked two one to one six and beat them by a point. But 'muggins' me, like I'm talking to you, big mouth – Ernie Caddie comes down after tea to talk to me. And I'm skiting how we've knocked off A Company. I don't think he ever forgave me. Because Farmer Giles, Farmer was in A Company – oh one of the best athletes I ever knew. He's in that photo out there too the Farmer.
- 35:00 Lived up in Mildura. Could do anything. Swim dive, football, cricket anything, Farmer could do it all. And a giant of a man. He says to me, "What have you ever done to Ernie Caddie?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "Every time we pick the side he always pushing to leave you out of the battalion side." And him and Jock Morrison – Jock was from my company. Jock said, "You've upset that Caddie something – he's flat out..."
- 35:30 Eventually he convinced them to leave me out and you wouldn't believe it it was the day we were getting ready to go down to Townsville before they took us up to Morotai. Actually when he let me out of the side I was on a working party to carry ammunition up to put on this truck that had to go down to the railway station. So Ernie Caddie eventually – and it turned out after the war Laurie Bowen –
- 36:00 he won a Santo [sporting] medal in the West. He was in the side. And he told me he hurt his knee. I saw Laurie when I went on a trip one time over to the West. It's curtailed from playing football. And he says, "Ernie Caddie was on the Umpire's Advisory Board over in the West." And he says, "When I done me knee in and couldn't play football any more I had a go at umpiring and I got two or three league
- 36:30 matches. And I had a few arguments with Ernie Caddie over a game I was doing." And he said, "I got

dropped off..." So Ernie Caddie was a man who carried – if you disputed him you was on his black list. So he did it with me but he also done it with other blokes. So that's my big recollection of Ernie Caddie. Just because I was skiting how we'd beat

37:00 Headquarter Company. If I could've shut me mouth up I'd have been saved forever.

You said when you first got there how the WA guys saw the Eastern States fellows...

Oh well this was only the battalion commander, the way he come through to me. Oh no the West Australian – I can honestly say that they whole of C Company we were welcome as the flowers

37:30 in May. Two or three of us might have been individually not suited for one another. There was a fellow, he got killed, good soldier too. He was in 15th platoon, Ossie Siddens. Him and I didn't see eye to eye, I suppose the day would've come where there'd been a punch up. But Ossie got killed the same day that Col Dale won his Military Medal. but a

38:00 terrific soldier. Another fellow, 'Scotch' Henry, why I don't know – you know your chemistry's not the same with everyone you see. Scotch Henry and I never – he was another West Australian. Ossie Siddens came from Queensland. A place called Clumont, about 250 miles inland from Rockhampton. I can tell you something about that in a few minutes.

38:30 'Scotch' Henry he come from Kalgoorlie, was a very good footballers. And I don't know where I – we used to play inter platoon football. I'll be honest, I wasn't a lilly playing football, the ball was there, you had to get it. I probably ran through Scotch a couple of times and he didn't like it.

39:00 Him and I seemed to be on permanent – two bulls growling at one another all the time. And we get down to that Trinity Beach where I told you where we done that barge training. And after we were finished we were there at Trinity Beach for a couple of days and they run a swimming carnival. And the first one was a hundred yard swim and they put some buoys out there and a buoy there.

39:30 With about twenty five yards out that way and fifty yards from that one to that one, and about twenty five yards back in. Ten shillings, a canteen order for ten shillings for the winner. And oh there's about thirty of us that dash down when they say go and into the water. And we get to the first thing and I'm breathing looking this way and I missed the turn. And by the time I find meself, I'm about 8 yards too far and the rest of the

40:00 field they've come – and I charge up – by the time I get to this fifty yard mark on the other thing I'm absolutely exhausted. I'm blowing like – I finish about 5th by the time I get in. I'm lying on the beach blowing like – trying to get over this swim. Anyhow I've got to have a fifty yard one out and back. I'll have a go at this, this is the five dollar one. Five shilling one.

40:30 So out I go when they say go and a bloke named Still who was in Headquarters Company, he was a mate of Scotch Henry's they come from a mob called the 44th battalion, they've been carved and sent to the 2/28th from the 44th. And this Still's a terrific swimmer. He's first and he comes around

41:00 and I'm right behind him, about a length behind him. And we're coming back in and you wouldn't believe it, I fluke a great big wave. I zoom past him, hit the sand you've got to rush up to the finishing line. And I beat this terrific swimmer and I won five shillings. What do you reckon? They says, "Whoever won that race have got to run another heat and then there'll be a final." And I thought, I've got to do all this over again. Well you wouldn't believe it history

41:30 repeated itself. Stills in front of me, we come around the turn, I fluke a wave again, and past him. Scotch Henry I don't think ever forgave me. "That Still's a better swimmer than me." I said, "Yeah but he didn't win did he?" Scotch would've loved to see Still finish in front of me. And I won five shillings but I tell you what, hardest five shillings I ever earned. I can still see myself

42:00 landing on that beach.

Tape 4

00:29Australian Welterweight championship in Rushcutters Bay.

We'll come to that this afternoon. You were going to tell us another Scotch tale.

Oh this is when they've taken us down to this place called Julago which is just out of Townsville before they put us on the boat to go up to Morotai you see. And we're running company sports

01:00 to keep us occupied and they're playing softball. And this softball 'lark', you know I'm on third base and the bloke throws the ball to you from somewhere, Scotch is running from second to third. And to get him out you've got to tag them you see. Well I tagged Scotch but I nearly knocked him back to second base you see. Tommy Main he's our company sergeant major. He said, "When you tagged Scotch I thought this has got to be a war here. But you must've hit him that hard it took all the steam right out."

- 01:30 So I think I finished one up on Scotch. But I don't think it was ever one of those things he ever forgave me on. But they took us – when we got there – we were at Julago I suppose for about eight or nine days before they put us on the ship at Townsville. And the company commander, fellow by the name of 'Grev' Lushington. Best officer I ever knew, terrific. In fact he done me three or four
- 02:00 favours after the war. And if he wanted a sportsman, even though I was only a private he used to come to me and say, "We need a basketball team for C Company, we want a cricket team." And I'd go around rounding up fellows. "We want a football side." And some blokes, we used to call them 'Spine Bashers'. I used to get them all off their back and say, "Come on have a go." So I was always pretty sweet with Lush. Terrific fellow he
- 02:30 was. And incidentally this Grev Lushington he enlisted in the 6th Div at the start of the war as a private and finished up a captain. The only place that he wasn't in, was the siege of Tobruk. He saw every other major campaign the AIF [Australian Imperial Force] served in, in the infantry and never got a scratch. For a man to serve six years in the infantry, as an infantry
- 03:00 man and never – he was a soldier and a half, absolutely. And when the war finished he let me know it was finished. I think I might have jumped the fence here. But at about nine o'clock at night we were outside a place call Beauford up in Borneo and he comes out of this house that he was in. We were in two man tents, I was with a bloke called Vic Nelson from Queensland.
- 03:30 It was a two man tent shaped from a poncho. That you clipped together. I had one and you had one and it let us have a bit of a cover out of the rain type of thing. And he come over and he's got a bottle of gin and a bottle of beer. And we drank his gin and his beer, the three of us. He says, "The war is over now." It was about nine o'clock at night up there at that time. So what time it finished during the day I don't know. But that was my
- 04:00 knowledge that the war was actually over when he come and told us.

Where was Lush from?

He – actually he was a Pom originally, he come out here about 1928, or '29 and worked down in the Western Districts as a jackeroo. And he worked various places around Victoria. He was living in Prahran when the war broke out and he enlisted from there. But

- 04:30 I think he was born on the Isle of Man. No, he lived there I think. No he was born in Colombo that's right. His father must've worked on the plantations there. And they moved back and they lived on the Isle of Man. He had two brothers. I never met the older one but I went to the younger one's funeral. Saw it in the paper, it was up here at Springvale, so I went up. Thought
- 05:00 he was living down at Bowen Heads and I thought he'd be there but he wasn't. But the bloke who gave the eulogy, never heard anything – he investigated Lush's younger brother's total life history you know. I was amazed. When I come home. I had his home number and I rang him down at Bowen and told him about this. I said, "I thought you'd be there that was the reason I went up to the funeral." He said, "I'm glad you rang me because I was
- 05:30 just sitting down to write a letter, to thank that young fellow – his name was Luxford." They were a big family up in this area, the Luxford's. To thank him for doing the eulogy for me at my brother's funeral. His wife hadn't been well and he wasn't travelling too flash himself. He said, "But after what you told me, I've got to endorse it a lot more." Honestly you'd have sworn blind he knew your family from the day that your brother was born. It was just terrific
- 06:00 hearing the bloke's story read out to you. But as I say, Lush done four or five things for me. When the war was finished he lined us up, the company outside of this Beauford place. And they were sending him up to Singapore to help repatriate the POW's you see. And he said, "I'll be living in Melbourne when it all gets straightened out. If at any time if you
- 06:30 want to get in touch with me then you can find me in Melbourne." Well as I told you when Nellie and I were living over in Carlton at Victoria Place I was chasing this war service loan for this place. And it was getting a bit 'slow out of the holes'. So I said to Nellie, "I'll ring, I'll see if I can get onto Lush." This was as I say, about '54 or '55. And she said, "Oh he wouldn't even remember you now." Years had gone by. And so I go over and
- 07:00 have a look in the phone box and find three phone numbers for A.H.G. Lushington. Algernon Herbert Greville Lushington. That's his name. And I ring the first one and it was his first wife. This unfortunate lady was walking home from shopping one day in South Yarra where they lived. Had a heart attack and dropped dead in the street. And anyhow, I didn't know of course. I was speaking to her on the phone and I told her who I was.
- 07:30 And I was trying to get in touch with her husband who'd been my company commander. She said, "Well if you ring this number." It was down in St. Kilda. So I rang the number and as it turns out he was a 'gun' with Caltex Oil and it was an office he had in St Kilda but he'd just left there to go to the city. So I have to ring this other number and I ring there and a lady says, "Well he's on the other phone, can you hang on?" Which I did and when he come on I says, "I'm after a favour but you might

- 08:00 not remember me but my name's Paddy Bradley. I was in C..." "Paddy Bradley how could I forget you." Blah blah. I can't believe it, here's a fellow who remembers me ten years after the war. So I explained to him and he said, "Oh I don't know much about war service." One of our earlier battalion commanders was a fellow named John Luthery [?]. He took them through - he'd taken them after they'd got knocked out at
- 08:30 Ruin Ridge and took them through El Alamein. And back here to Australia. And when they were training to go to New Guinea, they then transferred him back here to Melbourne and put him in charge of the transit depot out at Royal Park. So I've only ever met him once. He fined me five pound and twenty eight days' pay for being a week ackwilly [Absent Without Leave] after I'd had some leave. He said, "You've met him all right. Well I'm going to dinner with him tonight." I didn't know that John Luthery had
- 09:00 also been the best man at Lush's wedding. So he said, "I'll have a yarn to him about it." And he took the factory's number where I worked over in Carlton. The next morning I get called to the phone, it's Lush. He says, "Can you get all your paperwork and go into..." He still called him Colonel's Luthery's office. It was in Little Bourke Street just near Myers. So I whip home and get the stuff. I said to Nell, "I've got to go and see a
- 09:30 solicitor in the city." I get in there and cause I've been getting messed around by my solicitors doing this work for me, for about three months getting nowhere. And I give him the paperwork and he has a look and he says, "Oh yes my chief clerk can fix that up I think." So he gives it to his chief clerk, gets on the phone and rings this place that's organising all this jazz. And he's talking to me about things in the 2/28th in my time and I'm telling him what I know.
- 10:00 Anyhow the bloke comes back and he says, "He's got it all fixed up, it should be finalised within three weeks." I can't believe it. I've been going on for three months paying a bloke getting nowhere. I talk to a bloke for ten minutes and it's all - I says to him, "How much do I owe you for this?" "What are you talking about. You were in the 2/28th." Never cost me a feather. But to me, unbelievable. So as far as I was concerned the 2/28th were pure gold.
- 10:30 And I come home and told Nellie. We were living here in a month after that. So this is all through Lush, a terrific fellow. Later on when me boy was looking for a job when he left school, got him his first job. So I done pretty good out of my time in the 2/28th.

Paddy can I take you - you've sort of got us to

- 11:00 **just before embarking for Morotai. Let's go back a bit because we've skipped a few things. You told us about you were trying to enlist early on in the peace and been knocked back because of the job you were doing. Then finally in '43 getting in with your mate, can't remember his name.**

Frank Purvis from the Manpower office.

Just wondering what sort of say your mum and dad had in matters then?

Well I enlisted in

- 11:30 early '40. They both had to sign me paper which they did. Me mother wasn't greatly in favour of it, I can assure you. But me father signed it without much trouble. So I had me parent's permission. In fact when I filled the paper out I think I'd just turned 19 I think. You had to be 20.
- 12:00 And the bloke says to me, "You'll have to put your age up a year." This is the bloke the other side of the desk. So I just said, "Righto I was born in 1919." Simple as that. Bloke alongside of me. I looked at him and I said to meself, this is in the Melbourne Town Hall. I thought, "If this fellow's not 64 years old going." He said to the bloke, "I'm 40." And the bloke on the other side said, "Make yourself 39." Like they didn't care. This bloke,
- 12:30 obviously, he was out of work. We went in for our medical thing. You had to bend over to touch your toes. This fellow had to nearly get down on his hands and knees. Got A1 [Health classification] no worries. Oh it was unbelievable. You didn't have to be any 'physical specimen' to get into the army. If you were breathing, you was in.

What that just a matter of things being that desperate?

Well that's how I saw it.

- 13:00 In fact when we come out, I'm with me mate Murph and the lady mayoress and several other ladies are there and they're handing out cigarettes and cups of tea and scones and that. And she handed me this little thing full of cigarettes and Murph hit me with, "Don't tell her you don't smoke. You get a handful of them." Cause Murph smoked. I'll never forget that.
- 13:30 **So when it actually came time for you to leave for training, how were your folks about that?**

Oh well see by that time, I'm just about twenty three years old. No worries you see, no worries about parents. As I say, my mother wasn't over rapt in it. In fact when I lobbed back in Melbourne, when it was all over and I walked into her place. And as I say she was deaf. I opened

- 14:00 the side gate and I walked in. She was in her little kitchenette and I grabbed her around – she turned around and looked at me and I reckon fifteen years fell off her face. Even though the war had been over months and months she was still worrying. So I suppose mothers the war over would be the same way. Because I don't think to get a telegram or someone come and knock on your door and tell them you've just had a son killed or something like that
- 14:30 it wouldn't be 'all beer and skittles'. Well up at Labuan itself, I've been on a trip down there in memory lane, some years ago. There's a war cemetery there – blokes that they gathered up all around. Tarakan, Malaya. Four thousand graves just in one little war cemetery, it's just unbelievable. And these are all over the war.
- 15:00 The 2/28th they've got blokes that were POWs buried up in the Baltic – that escaped from being POW's and had meandered around the country. They've got blokes buried all around the world. So when fellows left this country there was no guarantee – nobody said, "Here's a return ticket mate." Like it was all right going that way there
- 15:30 wasn't much chance coming back this way. But after we left that Julago place I was telling you about and went up to Townsville and got on the boat. It was an American boat called the General McCrae. By the time we got to Morotai there were signs all over that boat in chalk written by blokes that had seen a lot of war.
- 16:00 I don't know if you ever heard of a German prison ship called the Altmark. Well it was captured and it was full of allied POWs. They were in one of the most inhumane conditions you've ever seen. And blokes were inscribing on this General McCrae, 'SS Altmark' – that's what they thought of this Yankee ship that took us up to Morotai. Unbelievable it was. We lived through it all right but the American
- 16:30 crew weren't much chop believe me. Provos [Provosts – Military Police] on the boat. They were lucky they were never had a mutiny on their hands. They pushed their luck pretty pretty close. In fact there was a big bloke – I often think with the Sands Brothers, the fighters named after this bloke cause he trained fighters of the engineers. I was on the deck alongside him one day and this Yank was yakking at him and this
- 17:00 Sands was a big fellow and he said to him, "Can you swim?" And the bloke says, "Why?" He says, "If you don't shut your mouth you'd want to be able to cause I'll throw you right off the bloody ship." The bloke he got the message, the Yank and he took off. So anyhow at Morotai we were there for about three weeks. I think the day we lobbed there, the 26th brigade
- 17:30 landed at Tarakan. They drew the crow – that was a real bad one, Tarakan. 23rd, 24th & 48th – they run into big trouble up there. But ours was a close go. I'm only giving you what is hearsay. They had us lined up to get on a ship and we think to this day that they were going to send our brigade to
- 18:00 Balikpapan. But it was cancelled and we were at Morotai for another week. And that's when they went up to Labuan and then Borneo. But the 7th Div they landed at Balikpapan about five weeks after we landed at Labuan. And that was a Div show. I tell you what if they'd have sent a brigade to Balikpapan the Australian Government would have been hiding their head forever and a day, because the Japs would've tore us to pieces
- 18:30 if the Balikpapan trip was right. But it was cancelled. But we swear blind that they had us lined up and it didn't happen. So I could have been a little bit fortunate.

So with the Liberty ship the Yank provos, tell us a little bit more about that, how bad was it?

Oh well they – every now and again there'd be a sign, 'the smoking lamp is out'.

- 19:00 You weren't allowed then to smoke down below decks, you were up at certain times up onto the deck. We were in the bottom hold. In these holds they had bunks they were four high. There was about enough room for each man to sit up before he hit his head on the wire section of the bottom of the other one. So it was four high. We were in the bottom hold and they used to have
- 19:30 escape drill. If they got hit by a torpedo or something the rule was, we were in the bottom hold, we took off first and up these companionways they called them, to get back up on the deck. By the time you got up the fourth height I tell you what you was blowing like the proverbial pig. I said, "This is the greatest waste of time ever seen. If a torpedo ever hits this boat, there won't be any worry about us
- 20:00 running up cause there won't be any stairs for us to run up, it'll all be gone. This is a waste of time." But we done that about two or three times. The trip took about seven or eight days from Townsville to Morotai because it pulled in at Finschhafen. And then it pulled in at a place called Biak and then it pulled in at Morotai.
- 20:30 The camp at Morotai was just a camp but you're probably thinking when I showed you that little prayer book out there, that I'm a bit of a holy Joe. I go to church on a Sunday but I'm just an average fellow that goes down there. But I saw something there that made me realise that most of us are a little bit panicky whether we're going to go upstairs or downstairs. Paddy
- 21:00 McManus he was the padre looking after our brigade. He'd taken over from a bloke called Tom Guard.

Tom Guard was with the 43rd battalion and he'd been their Padre right through the Middle East, Tobruk and all that. In fact he organised a cease fire at Tobruk to allow Germans and Australians to get their wounded and dead out of a particularly action.

21:30 Tom Guard organised all that. Last I heard he was the Parish Priest up at Proserpine in Queensland. Whether he's still alive I don't know. But Paddy McManus he took over and was with the 32nd Battalion. Now we're up at Morotai and Paddy McManus says - this is the night before they're going to put us on the boat to go up to Labuan. But he's having a mass over the 32nd Battalion and I went over there with me mate.

22:00 And I get over - I've never seen so many blokes that I'd known for two and three years was at that mass. Never knew they were mixed before. There was about seven hundred fellows there from various battalions, you know I used to go down to mass of a Sunday on the Tablelands. If I saw fifteen fellows there lucky. And I looked around and I said to Brent, "Have a look. No return fare guaranteed, they're making sure they're all with the fellow up top."

22:30 It was one of the greatest eye openers for me. That we're all in a little bit of fear. But me old boss straightened me out on that one. He said, "Paddy when you die, don't let it ever worry you. If you go upstairs or downstairs it won't make any difference, you'll be that busy shaking hands with old acquaintance you won't have time for anything else." So I always remember Mr Kemp, he was pretty straight. But Paddy

23:00 McManus' mass I'll never forget it. And then when they put us on the boat at blooming Morotai to go up there, we had two or three practice runs off the barges and onto Morotai, did a couple of practice landings there. Of course I've got to give them credit the Yanks, they had that landing

23:30 business down pretty well for drills. Like when you're thinking that you've got all these barges coming out of these various ships, landing ship tanks they called them I think. They let this thing down and they're about a mile and a half out to sea, so they've got to be careful cause they let a thing down in the Arab one day and it sank. The same damn principle. If they can't operate them in the Arab they're doing a pretty good job a mile and a half out to sea.

24:00 Anyhow ...

Well you'd done training in Trinity Beach hadn't you?

Yeah we'd done it there on that Empire Spearhead. We had a pretty fair idea what it was all about.

What was the drill?

Well you went down into these holds where these barges were. And I was in what they called, in my platoon,

24:30 there was 1 section, 2 section and 3. And I was in - what do they call it? Anyhow I'm with the lieut and the sergeant. I'm carrying a two inch mortar, it's a fairly heavy thing. It's pretty devastating if you land a couple of mortars

25:00 into anything. But - oh platoon headquarters, I suppose you'd call it. And I'm carting this thing with me little mate Tommy Bowden. We landed off this thing at Labuan, Tommy got caught up in some barbed wire, tore him across the shin. Stopped and wrapped it up. We had some powder and I put it on his leg and I wrapped this up

25:30 and on we went. Two or three days later, I done it a couple of days, I had to get them to take Tommy to hospital. I never seen him again. Could have lost his leg. I don't whether gangrene or what set in but you know, just caught his leg on some barbed wire, so whatever happened to Tommy Bowden I wouldn't have a clue. Because when a bloke went and he didn't come back you didn't know what happened to him. But

26:00 for some reason or other, I don't know whether I was too sweet with the lieut. His name was Simons and he was a Jew and I don't know whether he was' crook in the mix'. But he used to do some weird things with me. In fact the day that Tommy Bowden ended up going back to hospital we done a stunt through a swamp. And when we get through this swamp, and we're walking about this deep through this swamp, he says to

26:30 Tommy and me, he says, "I want yous to go up there." So Tommy and I go up there, we got a rifle each. And all we're doing was looking at this bush. I said to Tommy, "This is a nice..." They've gone on this way you see. So after we've been sitting up there for about two and a half hours I said to Tommy - we'd heard some shooting going on back where they were. I said, "We're out of this, we'll go up to where they went." And Tommy says, "You sure?" I said, "Well

27:00 we could get killed here and no-one would even know where we were. We'll go up there and see what's going on up there." Tommy said, "All right." So up we go. We get up to where they are and they're all out the three sections they're all set up. And just as we get there two mortars come over, one hits down here bang, another one hits over there. And Tommy Marr our platoon sergeant says, "Out of this, the next one'll lob right in the guts."

- 27:30 He says, "These Nips are pretty good with a mortar." So down we charge off this hill and we go back to where we'd come out of the swamp. Get back there in dribs and drabs. And just as we get back there, we're 13 platoon. 14 platoon of our company's coming back and I don't know this at the time. But this Lieut Simons has been on the blower and he's said, "You know they're up on this thing." And they said, "Right we'll send 14 platoon out to
- 28:00 relieve you on there, you've done a good job, and they'll take over from you." So 14 platoon's come out and I look around and I realise that Albie Marr who I showed you in that photo out - his platoon or his section are not here. And I see Simons, he's looking a bit sheepish. Cause he's supposed to be going
- 28:30 to put 14 platoon up on this section - and we aren't even up there you see. I wake in a flash. I say, "Albie Marr's not here. Do you want me to take them back?" He looked at me and he said, "Could you?" I said, "Of course I know where it is." So I take them back up and Dudley House he was a pretty old member of the 2/28th - I'm whizzing along and he says, "Be careful." I said, "What are you talking about? This is like Swanson
- 29:00 Street to me, no worries here." I've said, "We've been up here two and a half, three hours." So we get up on this thing. I says, "Albie we've been relieved, you can come down." Albie Marr was the luckiest thing for Simons, that had ever lived because if his section hadn't been up there, they'd have been wanting to know why 14 platoon was getting sent up to somewhere which was supposed to be occupied but isn't. And I think one lieutenant would have got the shoot.
- 29:30 From then on different association with that bloke. He knew I saved his life. Never let on but I'm not a dill. I know A from B. I always remember that. Anyhow Albie and me back we go. And Lush, oh he was all over us when we got back to company headquarters. "Terrific show" ,he says. And I'm chuckling to meself, if only you knew what I knew you wouldn't be saying terrific show.
- 30:00 And then you wouldn't believe it, Simons must've got interviewed by a blooming war correspondent. He gets a letter from his wife, it was passed around. According to that letter we went through the most ungodly heap of fire you've ever seen. His wife wrote him a letter, stop taking chances because his name was in the Sydney paper and everything. I thought, what a lot of garbage. The things you hear about in your life time.
- 30:30 **What about the landing itself?**
- Well the Yanks who drove us in, they were fascinated with us. They couldn't get over the Australians. They said, "We've practically got to push our blokes into these barges to get them into the barges, you blokes just run in." Like the Yankee blokes who drove us in told us that straight away.
- 31:00 Bo Treadway a mate of mine, I went to his funeral down here down the Peninsula. They'd sent two or three blokes to different schools to learn how to fire these fifty calibre Yankee guns which were on one of the sides of these barges you see. Bo we used to call him. He's behind me coming in. And the Yank driving the boat he says to Bo, "You'd better start shooting, you've got to make it look like
- 31:30 a landing." he said. So Bo went 'brrrr brrrr brrrr'. So that was from the Yank. "Make it look like a landing" he said. We just jumped off the thing and run up the beach and into the bush. Hunting around here and there, finished up three or four blokes got killed and a bit down from where we were Don Company ran into a lot of trouble
- 32:00 down there. Fellow I'm trying to think of his name. Anyhow they gave him a DCM [Distinguished Conduct Medal] for what he done. Terrific show he done. He killed more than my Jim Hatfield western blokes, Nips that day. Ended up he got shot in the leg and they took him out. What was his name? Laurie Bridgeman, yeah.
- 32:30 He was in Don Company. Cause this was the difference. You knew practically everyone in your own company but the other companies they were like living in another suburb. I got to know a lot of blokes in the battalion because various companies have fellows in the football side and I knew them from which company they were in. But as regards as knowing a lot of blokes in other companies, I didn't know all that many. Although most of them knew me because I played in the football side.
- 33:00 But yeah Laurie Bridgeman, he put on a terrific show but they got quite a number killed. In fact a fellow named Charlie Chivers, he was a private. They got that many killed, he finished up a sergeant that day because he happened to be in the right place at the right time and some bloke got killed. He become a lance corporal, another bloke got killed and they made him a corporal. A platoon sergeant - made him a sergeant, all in a matter of hours you know
- 33:30 just through other blokes getting killed. Yeah, Charlie Chivers, he got the quickest promotions I ever seen. He was in Don Company when they got into all this trouble.

What about C Company?

We - two fellows in the company. 'Slip' Simpson he was in 14 platoon and Bert Woods he was in 15 platoon. Well we were still in the Tablelands, they'd come back from leave and they come and said to me,

- 34:00 cause I come from Melbourne, they were West Australians. They got engaged to two AWOLs [AWL -

Absent Without Leave] while they were on leave coming through Melbourne. And they said to me, and this is gospel truth. "After we come back from wherever we're going, will you be our best man at our wedding." And I said, "Yeah no worries." So the very first day we were out there Slip Simpson got killed. We were only there four hours and Slip's dead.

- 34:30 The day they dropped the second atomic bomb Bert Woods got killed where Col Dale won his Military Medal. And to this day I often wonder, did those two AWOL ladies ever know that the two fellows that they were engaged to both got killed. One got killed the first day we were there and the other bloke got killed on the last day we were in action. So life's a funny thing. Especially if you happen to be in infantry battalion. I mean
- 35:00 Slip absolutely - why Slip got killed because he was trying to do - a fellow by the name Jack Painter - a Nip was say - he's in a hole about as high as that seat there. We found out later of course. He's done in there, he's got a rifle. And Jack Painter comes along and this
- 35:30 Nip shot him right through the behind. The bullet came through,, hit him on the hip bone and blew everything out you see. And down he goes. Slip Simpson sees this happen and he rushes to help Jack Painter. The Nip sees him. Bang and he kills Slip straight away. Two stretcher bearer we've got with us. Sandy
- 36:00 - Bluey Morley and Sandy - I can't think of his second name. They rushed to help and the Nip goes bang bang. He's killed three and as it turns out Lush, this company commander he's sighted - he runs up - the Nips lying in the air - he's got his rifle with a bayonet. He reaches in
- 36:30 this is Lush, pulls the thing out and goes whoosh with the bloke's bayonet and kills him back in the hole. But it's all too late for these fellows. They're all gone. But this is the sort of fellow Lush was. Cause I'm about fifty yards down the track while all this is happening. So we've discovered that Jack Painter's still alive. So this Government House thing - there's a photo of it in there. We pulled the door off a building that was there.
- 37:00 And we load Jack Painter up onto it, Dudley Tomkins, who's a corporal in our platoon, Dudley. He'd been with them since the Middle East. Champion fellow Dudley - I still ring him occasionally - he's in the West. They give us a thing called a shell dressing you see. It had a great big heap of gauze on it. You'd wrapped it around a wound and put a big safety pin.
- 37:30 So all his guts is hanging out. Mud everything. Dudley goes bang, puts the thing on, straps this thing around it and we put him on the door we pulled off and we carted him back down to where there was a bit of a blown up bridge and there was a jeep there with a whatshisname on it - a stretcher. We put him on here and they took off - as it turns out, down to the beach. And there's a hospital ship out in the bay. But anyhow
- 38:00 that's the last we see of Jack Painter. The next day I see a fellow from Don Company, Len Faucett. In fact I saw his wife - Len died some years ago and I saw his wife's funeral in the newspaper the other day, from down Port Melbourne. I says to Len, "Did you hear anything on Jack Painter yesterday?" He said, "Oh he died on the beach." I said, "Oh well we've lost another one." And I told you I took some kids to Western Australia
- 38:30 on a football trip. I'm with a mate of mine that's on the trip with me, Jack Saunders. And we go into a gift shop, it's opposite the Perth Post Office. And as we're walking in to go and get some cards. A fellow walks out and I says to me mate, "I know this bloke." I said, "G'day Jack how're you going?" He looks at me and says, "I don't know you." I said, "My name's Paddy Bradley. I was in 13 platoon, I helped carry you out the day you got knocked over."
- 39:00 And he looked, "Oh." And he told me when they got him on the hospital ship eventually they got him back to Morotai and they had him in hospital there. And he deteriorated to such a - he weighed four stone three or something, he lost that much - they had him tied up with wire and goodness knows. And the sisters used to lift him up, one at that end, just holding him in their hands while they washed him, put him back down
- 39:30 you know to save him getting those bed sores. It was months and months before they got him back to Australia and he was in hospital here for a long time. But he lived despite all that. And if you'd have seen the mess he was in when that Dudley grabbed that thing and whacked that thing, you can say, "Dudley Tomkin saved his life." You know and after all those years - I suppose it must've been
- 40:00 26 years. He didn't know me but I knew him. One of those things that happen.

That's incredible.

Tape 5

- 00:30 **I suppose we were at Labuan for about twelve days all told. We got a number of our fellows were killed, a lot were wounded there. It was just day after day patrolling. A couple of B**

Company blokes were on the side -

- 01:00 got shot and they were lying in the middle of the tracks and the Nips came out and bayoneted them and by a miracle never killed them. Because they were there all night and the next morning they got up and come galloping back down the road. How the Nips never killed them is beyond me. But they were in a thing they called up there 'the Pocket'. There was a heap of them there and how they lived I don't know because
- 01:30 they fired that much heavy armour into it, from the 2/12th Field Arty [Artillery] - Shropshire fired from the sea into this thing. I suppose this went on for two or three days. And then we went up to clear it all out and some of them were still alive and still shooting. How they lived they must've been right off the rocker
- 02:00 from all the stuff that had been poured in ... But that practically finished the show there, although two days before this actually finished A Company took a terrible hiding down the road. We were across the road from where they were. Mate of mine from A Company Ted Scanlon, South Australian bloke - he came over and yelled at me, "no worries Brad we'll look after this up here for you." I said, "Okay Stan it's all yours."
- 02:30 They went up this track and the Nips were giving them some curry. And we were going up there and we were carting dead and wounded blokes out all day. I suppose A Company must've got six killed, sixteen or seventeen wounded. In fact Farmer Giles, who I mentioned before in the football thing, he was one of them that got wounded. I'm helping carrying and he's completely grey.
- 03:00 And I looked at him and I thought, 'well Farmer you're not going to play football ever again'. Twenty years after the war I see him at a reunion. And I said, "When I helped cart you out I thought you were that..." He said, "Well when I got whacked, I'm lying behind a blade of grass and I'm saying to myself fancy having to die in a hole like this." He said, "That was what I thought to meself at the time." He died some years ago with a heart attack
- 03:30 lived in Mildura. Terrific bloke 'the Farmer'. But I never seen a man so grey as he was when we carried him out.

You mentioned before the pocket, was that?

That was what they named it. It was what was holed in the whole situation up on - the Nips had concentrated their main force in that particular area. And from what the experts told us they had their battle plan worked out.

- 04:00 Luckily with the aid of all these 2/12th army and the Shropshire shooting - we had a couple of tanks come along cause they had some road there that they could drive up and I can remember this Major Jackson, he was 2IC [Second in Command] of our battalion at the time. The lieutenant in charge of the tank says, "Oh there might be mines up there,
- 04:30 I don't know whether..." And Jackson says, "Have a look at these fellows, they've got a shoot on to stop a bullet, you've got metal all around you, what are you worried about? Drive that tank up there and be done with it. Or I'll put someone who can drive the tank." So the tank then moved on up the road. But he was a pretty tough biddy that Jackson. He ended up a general.

Was your platoon working with the armoured division?

Yeah, we were behind this tank coming up this

- 05:00 road you see. And of course when we got up there we spread out over a whole area and I suppose you could say, the whole company then was spread right across. There was us and then there was Don Company over there. You could say that we were probably in line abreast covering about three or four hundred yards of territory you know. And there were - even though some of them were still
- 05:30 capable of doing something they were pretty hopeless. They were run over that day what was left of them. And I think about - you could say by seven o'clock that night the whole thing was over. That was from about ten o'clock in the morning there was no more organised resistance. A bloke from the what do you call it
- 06:00 the 9 Div cav [cavalry] and commandos I met him some time later and he told me that they patrolled the whole island after we left and went over to Borneo. And they come across what must have been a Jap field hospital and there was about sixteen blokes on stretchers and they were all dead. Whether they died from wounds or starvation but they were just lying there. So that's probably what happened to a majority of them. They just
- 06:30 died from - there was no assistance for them. If they got sick there was no medication, there was no food available for them. Incidentally another little story of mine with food. Where A Company went up this track there was a great big - I'd call it a barn and it was full of bags of rice. And we had a look at it and - in this camp thing on the corner of these three
- 07:00 rows that came together. And a little bloke a local islander he come out. I suppose to me he'd be about

eight stone soaking wet and he says to me, "Makan makan." I didn't know their language but I knew 'makan' was food. And I said, "Yeah in there, rice." "Makan." So I take him over and pull the door open of this - and it's chocker block of all these bags of

07:30 rice. They're as big as he is. So I offload him up and get him straight. And he gets up and he's got a wobble. Away - into the bush he goes with his bag of rice. Well the 'bush telegraph', you've never seen it work so quick. All his mates must've been waiting in the bush. He's no sooner got - out they come, about fifteen of them. "Makan makan." I said, "It's there in there." And they're in there and they're helping one another with bags of rice and away they're going. Anyhow

08:00 the upshot is there's blokes coming back and forwards, the place is emptied right out. About half past two that afternoon a jeep pulls up. It's called - sign on it. Two lieut colonels behind the driver. They're from a mob called ANGAU [ANGAU, Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit]. Something about Allied North Borneo Commission or something. They

08:30 gone over and looked and there's nothing in this big barn thing. They said, "There was rice in there." I said, "Yeah you should have been here earlier, it's all gone now." What it was, they were going to use that rice to have the locals working for them, probably going to give them a shovelful of rice a day to keep them going. I've given the whole damn lot away there's none left. I don't tell them I'm the bloke who give it away. But I never forgot it. I felt like saying, "You should have shopped

09:00 earlier and beat the rush." But I can still see them little blokes. None of them would've weighed more than eight or nine stone. Carting these big bags as big as themselves.

This was in Borneo?

This was on Labuan Island itself. Anyhow they then took us down back near the beach - a day or so later and we stayed there overnight. And the

09:30 next day we went down to the beach and we jumped in and we're swimming around and someone found a ball, a basketball. And we're throwing it around like they'd play at water polo. And this Major Jackson I told you about, he comes along and it's on the wharf. And he says, "Well I don't know about you fellows but I reckon this place is pretty shark infested." You never seen so many blokes get out of the water, we practically walked on 'it' getting out. So that took our

10:00 swimming away very quick. They loaded us up on this Yankee landing barge thing. And then took us across to Borneo mainland itself. And we're going up this river I think it's called the Padas. P-A-D-A-S. And we went along all day and at nightfall they pulled in and we got off.

10:30 We're pretty naïve and we're lighting fires up and sitting around here talking and that. And we slept on that bank overnight and the next morning they put us on the barge again and they took us back over to the other side of the river. And we got off there just in time to see a Yankee river gunboat. It's going up the river and about four hundred yards up the river it's got a bend. And there's a

11:00 Nip Woodpecker [machine gun] stationed there and he starts shooting at this Yankee gunboat. Anyhow he badly wounded the captain of it and on the deck of this gun boat thing there's a two or three - I think there was three from memory of these fifty calibre machine guns set up behind a steel plate. And the steel plate

11:30 protected a man here and then down to about his knees. And this young - to me it was like being at the pictures and watching the pictures going on from where we are. The Woodpecker's shooting at them, he's standing behind this gun and he's not firing a shot. Now don't get all excited till I tell the story. On the other bank about two hundred, three hundred yards we can see the 2/32nd Battalion going through the bush.

12:00 Now this bloke on the gunboat starts shooting, he'll knock the Woodpecker out no time at all. But all his overshoot will hit and knock out half the 32nd Battalion which he can't see from where he is. Now that kid, as I found out later, to me it was the bravest act I've ever seen individually. He stood there with these bullets hitting this plate in front of him. They'd only got to deviate a degree up or a degree down and they'd cut his legs off, they'd blow his head off. And

12:30 eventually they decided, well they've got to fetch this captain and two other blokes as well. In fact the captain he'd be a quadriplegic. They reversed the boat and it come back to where we were and we went - I helped this captain bloke off. He's a real mess. His spine, bottom of his leg, if ever he was the same again, it'd be a miracle. And that was the finish of the business as we saw it you see.

13:00 Cause we had to then go along this railway line that's there and we're marching down and we see what the machine gun mob had done the night before. They'd killed about fifteen Nips coming along there. The 32nd Battalion don't know how lucky they are. Anyhow we go down and get into this town Beauford that's been shot up a fair bit and we've occupied it.

13:30 And a sergeant named Quinn, great footballer in South Australia, they thought he'd caused an international incident. A nun had walked backwards and forwards through the 43rd, where they were set up across this railway line. Two or three times in the course of the day. And this Quinn, this sergeant shoots the nun.

- 14:00 Kills the nun stone dead. What have you done? How will they see you killing a nun? They stripped the nun, it was a Nip dressed up as a nun. He'd been walking backwards and forward sighting - this had been going on all day. Quinn had woke up, 'this can't be fair dinkum'. A nun backwards and forwards. And we know the Nips are three hundred yards down the road. She's not going to be allowed to walk up and - so Quinn... He was a bit brighter than a lot of people paid. But
- 14:30 anyhow they then decided to send our company up this railway line in the opposite direction up towards a town called - now what was that next town up there? Fairly big town. I think it was the same name as
- 15:00 this river, the Padas River. I'm trying - I think that was the name of this name. Anyway we didn't get up that far. We got up to a small railway station area and we occupied - Grev Lushington and his company headquarters they occupied this big hut on the side of the railway line. And 15 platoon was put back
- 15:30 behind them and then 14 platoon - and we got shoved up on the side of a hill. And on the other side of the railway from where we were there was a spring where you could get fresh water from. But getting up and down from where - it was permanently raining. It was greasy. But a couple of our smart fellows they rigged up a 'breaches boy' here. There was a hut there, they got the lead flashing off the roof.
- 16:00 And you know those sort of four gallon drums that are about so high, they've got a handle that you can lift them on. They weighted one side of this with this lead. And where they got these pulleys from I don't know. And we rigged up a breaches boy from the trees above us down to the other side of this spring so that we could run the bucket down with the weighted lead on the side.
- 16:30 Course doctors'd tell us we were poisoning ourselves these days. And tipped it down, filled it up and we could pull it back up. And of course by the time it went across the railway line it's only about this high off the ground. And about this high as you went across the line. Well during the night, we don't know, but his local Chinaman or whatever he was, he's coming along and he's got his two wives behind him and they're carrying these barrels
- 17:00 with water with the yoke around their neck. And of course as he's in front as he gets up this wire rope, we've got running across this thing catches him across the throat. He thinks he's been grabbed by a Nip or someone and he comes screaming - we were flat out walking over these sleepers in the day time, he run back there at night screaming. He gets back to company headquarters and says we're attacking him because he's walked into our rope. You know the humorous things that do happen even
- 17:30 in the heat of war. But the next morning was a classic. Our platoon had to go out on a patrol. And there was this little railway station up - I can't think of the name. We get up there and this lieutenant that's in charge of our platoon, Simon - one section out that way, another section out that and another. And he leaves me and another bloke once again just two out.
- 18:00 Can't think of this other bloke's name. As the rear guard on this railway station. A lot of help we're going to be if some Nips come along. We would've lasted a long time I don't think. Anyhow our most active we saw all day on the railway line was a old man and an orang-utan coming out the bush and dancing around down about two hundred yards down from us. He was there most of the day. But this is the biggest eye opener I've ever seen about the haves and the have nots.
- 18:30 A bloke comes out of the bush, the jungle as they call it. You know how you see them on the pictures in the tropics in these beautiful white suits and pith helmets and all this sort of thing. This bloke comes out, like he was out of Saville Row. And he wants to sell this mate of mine, whatever his name, I can't remember myself, freshly cooked chickens. So, we're not interested. But if you come back later in the day some other blokes might be interested.
- 19:00 They used to give us - it's a container about this big in length, like hold about that high. About four inches, two inches wide and you stripped it off and it had three meals in it. A breakfast, dinner and tea. And in it was a biscuit called a carrot biscuit. I never saw an Australian soldier bite
- 19:30 into a carrot biscuit. I've seen it used, mashed up as a sort of a porridge but I never saw an Australian soldier eat a carrot biscuit. I reckon you could've built a house with them, they were that hard. Out of the bush, after this trader bloke goes back comes this bloke - he's as skinny as a rat, he's got a sack tied around - that's all he's got just a sack with a bit of hay band tied around him. And he's saying to me,
- 20:00 "Makan makan." He's starving and here's a bloke that's come out ten minutes before to sell me freshly cooked chickens. Same district, a bloke's starving. So to me, this to me was the greatest education of the haves and the have nots, no matter who's in charge of a country. This bloke in the white suit he was a mate of the Nip's no worry. This other bloke, starving local. Right. I give this bloke six of these
- 20:30 carrot biscuits. You know how you go to these slot machine places and you see these people pouring the money in he went ... and dropped them straight. I said, "You sit here." I kept him there all day with me and when all me mates came back in I was getting their carrot - this bloke thought it was Christmas with these carrot biscuits. But to me that was the greatest have and have nots
- 21:00 I've ever seen in all my life. And later on when the war was finished and we were up at this Papar place a mate of mine in our platoon, Harry Geary, Harry was pretty good with horses. He rounded up about fifteen ponies that were running around there and we had what we called a jungle cart. It had two

rubber tyred wheels, a big lead handle.

- 21:30 A wire basket I suppose about, three foot long, maybe the same width. About three by three set up on these wheels you know and we could cart stuff to save us being on our back all the time, two or three blokes'd pull these along on a road quite easy. So Harry fixed up with some sig wire, some harness for one of these horses. We hooked it onto this and of course
- 22:00 the war was over by this time and we used to gallop with Harry driving his little horse and cart down to the sand and have a swim, down about a mile and a half down from where we were. Along comes along one of the local residents, who to me had been collaborating with the Nips all through the war. He's built like a wrestler. He goes up to the bloke a fellow by the name - Lieutenant Rule, I've never forgotten him. He's dead now, he died. He was a major when he died.
- 22:30 He's been in the 28th for years. But anything the locals said, Rule agreed with. He never ever - this bloke comes up and said to Rule, all these horses. Why weren't they his when the Nips were running around? Rule gave all these horses to him, took Harry's trotting horse and everything. So we didn't have anything to pull our cart. But I've never forgotten Rule over that. To me there should have been a little bit left for us
- 23:00 after what our fellows had put up with. Because at that time 15 Platoon as I say the war was over, had two Japanese interpreters with them and they'd had to go out into the bush. Well they were out for a week rounding up these twenty five Nips up that were out there, that had no idea - but these Nips were starving to death, were sick as anything and they had to take these two interpreters to explain to them that the war was over. 'Stop arguing the point,
- 23:30 come back in and we can give you some treatment you see. By the time the week was up 15 platoon they were starving, they were wanting food and luckily one of them shot a big pig and they cut it up and barbecued it out, so that there was enough food for these twenty five Nips plus the fifteen or so Australian soldiers and these two blokes to come back. And whatshisname Rule
- 24:00 never allowed for these things. Too busy looking after people he shouldn't have been looking after. Because those twenty five out in the bush, 15 platoon should have all got a Medal of Peace and the war was over. How the hell they lived through - cause they all told me when they came back. They said, fellow named Con Cannon, it was him who shot the pig. He was the most popular man in the platoon who actually found food.
- 24:30 But all in all I think we survived by a lot of smart bloke's initiative. We were pretty lucky that a lot of those fellows, especially from West Australia, they'd lived out in the bush. We've got no idea living in Victoria, we're such a small state in actual size you know.
- 25:00 But over in the west they can travel seven hundred miles and not see someone. And a lot of them survived right through the Depression just by living in the bush, some of them went prospecting, might find a bit of gold. Enough to keep them going for four or five weeks. And then they'd have to hunt around for some more but that's how a lot of those West Australian people did exist over there, there's no doubt about it. I'm glad that my
- 25:30 family never settled in Western Australia. I don't mind Perth but I don't want to live in the bush there, I can assure you.
- If you don't mind, I wouldn't mind going back to Labuan. You've told us some pretty amazing stories of that experience but what I'd now like to do if you can try and remember it in this way, is get a sense from the moment you landed, which you said there was very little resistance because there'd been all this softening with the**
- 26:00 **Shropshire but what day by day the progression was?**
- As I say each day A Company was the duty company of the day. So you could say that there was only one day in four that you actually were
- 26:30 going to be in much trouble. The day they discovered just how heavily defended this Pocket place was, was our platoon's show. I'm still sitting back where we've slept the night before when 15 platoon, our lead platoon for that day have gone up this track. And Jack Roger, Jack turned around -
- 27:00 Len who I see up in Sydney, Len said when I'm talking to him about this. He says, "Len there's someone shooting at me and I can't see anyone." And Len says, "Keep going Jack." Jack went five yards further and he was dead. The bloke didn't miss him the next time see, so all we know is, there's a 15 platoon bloke down, that's all the word we've got back down. So 15 platoon they've drawn the crow, they're leading.
- 27:30 So they've spread out off the track and they've encircled in this area. In a platoon theoretically there's thirty two men but most times you're lucky if you've got twenty four or twenty five. Some went this way and some went that way. And a fellow by the name of Alan Woolfington he was with Col Dale, I was talking to Col about this later on. Col Dale.
- 28:00 Bush Win. Another bloke I can't think of his name but I can still see him, tall thin bloke. But they'd got into this bit of a gully. And when they come up near the top of it there's this hut and Alan Woolfington

he's in front. He gets into the hut and screams out and, "Get out of there."

- 28:30 He's walked into a machine gun nest. And of course the machine gun's let go and it's hit Woolf straight away and he's mailed these blokes behind him, "Get out of here." And they've dropped back down into the gully. So the machine guns firing back over their heads but they can't see them from where it is. Anyhow 15 Platoon then decided they're in bad
- 29:00 shape. They pull back from where they are. Alan Woolfington he's up in the hut, no-one knows whether he's alive or dead or what. Two days later Don Company's going through that area and they find Alan Woolfington in a hole, around him eight dead Nips. He hasn't got a round left, he had an Owen gun 'the Woolf'.
- 29:30 What they'd done is they'd shot him through the stomach. He'd bandaged himself up with this blooming thing and he must've got out of the hut where the machine gun had shot him down, got into this hole and the Nips had come after him and he's been killing right, left and centre. They recommended him for a VC [Victoria Cross]. And you know what they said. What he done didn't warrant it. Like the fellow won a VC sixteen times over. He saved three blokes' lives that were right behind him.
- 30:00 If they come another inch they're all dead. Like as far as I'm concerned Alan Woolfington's one of the bravest men I ever knew in all my life. I can almost cry thinking about him. But - so we were held up then - they realised how many was in there and they said, "Right we'll go up this track late in the afternoon." And
- 30:30 we're getting up there and the Nips open up on us and I'm carting this two inch mortar of mine. And there's blokes carrying machine guns. And a heap of blokes start running back past me and Tommy Marr he's our platoon sergeant and he goes charging with them. And I said to meself, if the sergeant says it's time, he gets more wages than I do, it's about time Brad you got out of here too. And I'm running down this track and these blokes in front of me are discarding
- 31:00 ammo and muggins me, my first time in any excitement I'm picking this stuff up and I've got enough on me to put on a donkey. I get back and I said, "Hey you threw this away." And they're all looking at me so horrified. And I'm giving them their stuff back that they've dumped. I don't know whether they thought I was an imbecile or what but anyhow. But I always learnt a lesson then. When the platoon sergeant takes off it's time for you to get out too.
- 31:30 He's been there since their very first action in Tobruk right up to now, he got wounded at El Alamein, in fact he told me when he got wounded at El Alamein he found out how good doctors were. He said he was lying under an operating table while another, a doctor was operating on a bloke above him and this fellow's screaming and this doctor's working away. There's rubbish getting shot around right left and centre.
- 32:00 He says, Tommy Marr said to me, "Doctors were the greatest things who were ever invented." But when he took off I learnt, when Tommy goes I go. But that was - you could say that was the very first day I actually thought we were in big trouble in our platoon.

How early into the ...

This would be about our fifth day on Labuan, that would be about.

- 32:30 And then we occupied the ground in the front, leading up into that place for about another four days while they were getting all the ammunition and that they wanted up, plus the fact that they've got the 2/12th army and the Shropshire shooting in there. In fact that mate of mine that's out there Brett Evans who got badly wounded, that was from the backwash from the Shropshire from where we were. The Shropshire said from where you are
- 33:00 we want a safety range around of eight hundred yards. And our mob says no way known. So that was as far as they'd take us back. The Shropshire wanted the safety distance for us of eight hundred yards. We were two hundred and fifty yards from the shooting. And the stuff that come rushing back from here, we're sitting on the side of these holes, they might've been dug there by the Nips for all I know.
- 33:30 When this rubbish started to fly up we'd drop into the holes. And Brett Evans is there, 'Snowy' Nations is there, and Tommy Halligan's here. And this rubbish comes over, it hit Brett Evans on the head, cannoned, cut through the top of Snowy Nation's felt hat. Tore the knee out of Tommy Halligan's pants.
- 34:00 Brett Evans...

We can't actually see what you're doing there.

No I know but I've got them - they're coming down the hill you see and it's hit Brett right on top of the head, cannoned off him, cut Snowy's hat right across the brim and tore the knee out of - see they were like this across on the side of the hill. So when the shooting finished

- 34:30 I galloped up then cause we didn't have a telephone or anything and I'm running around this track screaming, "We need a stretcher, Brett Evan's has been hit." And as I get to a corner, Pinto Wardy he was our company quarter master sergeant and Roger Price he was a captain of our 2IC, they're in a hole and the shooting starts again. As I'm galloping up the track and they're in the hole. That's the first

time I've dived into a hole to where there's no

35:00 water to land, on these two blokes. And they're horrified, there's this great body hurtling in on top of them. And all I'm interested in is getting from where this rubbish is getting shot all around. So by this time they could hear me down the track and when the shooting finished there was a jeep that pulled up down on the road and we got Brett down and put him on and we went and visited him the next day in the hospital and his head was done up in muslin. It was a hell of a wound.

35:30 And that was the last I saw of Brett for twenty six years until I saw him at his place back over in Western Australia.

So that was the Shropshire that was firing?

It was the backwash from the Shropshire. Only because we were in a non safe area. The Shropshire knew this would happen. But if our mob won't listen cause their theory was, the holes we got out of the Nips would've started landing there. They'd come out of their holes and get

36:00 into our holes on the other side of the road where the Shropshire theoretically landing in on this plateau where they were. So they're going to look for another hidey hole and of course as far as the Shropshire was concerned, anyone in that area - for eight hundred yards was in deep trouble. As it turned out Brett Evans was in deep trouble. And it was a miracle they never got two others at the same time.

36:30 **What's the backwash mean?**

When the rubbish is flying everywhere. There's a little thing I used to hear a bloke singing.

\n[Verse follows]\n 'Where the whiz bangs are flying\n And comforts are few\n Brave men are dying for bastards like you'.\n

That's always stuck in my mind. Where the story come from I don't know. But that's what - to us it was back wash, some blokes it was 'whiz bangs'. I reckon once -

37:00 on the Monday we landed on the Sunday and I think on the Monday was probably my luckiest day. I found a place where there was running water coming out of a heap of pipes. And I was filling up water bottles and I'm going down to this place and I reckon a Nip fired at me fourteen times that day, he must've been the world's worst shot. To this day I can't get over it. Me mates are saying, "You're mad going down there."

37:30 I said, "Well the water's there, I can get it." They said, "We can hear that bang going on." I said, "Well I can't find..." But he had to be shooting at me but as I say, had to be the world's worst shot, how the hell he kept missing me I don't know where the bullets were going, whether he was firing over me head. But as far as I was concerned I'd found running water and I was getting it. But you know you're young and you're silly.

So you kept going back for water?

I kept going back because the water

38:00 was there to be got. In fact some time later when we were over on the mainland of Borneo, a mate of mine, George Ferneo, he fixed up one of these running water things. He found in the hills outside of Beauford a spring and he found a lot of water pipes. And he must've been a pretty accomplished sort of a plumber and he connected up to this and he ran it for

38:30 a mile and a quarter. Down to where we were camped on the railway line and he rigged up a shower. George fixed up a shower that was running out of the hills you know. The Australian soldier all around was a pretty cluey fellow. You know there was always a bloke who could come up and do something as I showed our friend there in the battalion history, how they rigged up the jeeps and made them railway trains. They put

39:00 railway wheels on to the jeeps and they were pulling railway - rolling stock along there because all the trains were blown up. Beaufighters had blown them to pieces. So all in all you've got to give the Australian soldier a lot of credit for being very ingenious. If there was some way of making something work, someone would find a way of making it work. Even that thing I told you about, the 'breaches boy' to get the water.

39:30 Pretty clever all around. So I reckon I knew some pretty smart blokes back in those days.

Tape 6

00:30 **Can you give us any idea of what the strength of the Japanese forces were?**

They estimated there were six hundred of them there and they reckon in one of our quarterly journals that what's his name, Macarthur wouldn't believe that we destroyed six hundred with the

- 01:00 number of casualties that we got. He said that it just wasn't on. He wanted a better report because apparently the Australian performance was much greater in ratio person to person than anything the Yanks had produced at that particular time. And apparently you didn't tell Doug things like that, to keep him happy. So that was in one of our last
- 01:30 journals. I don't know who put it in but it was in cause we have a quarterly journal - it comes out I think, March, June, September and December. And there's always someone that comes up with some little bit of information there. But I think there's something like around about six hundred families still receive the book. You know a lot of fellows are dead but

02:00 their families still get it.

This was your first time in combat?

Oh yes. I reckon that when we went up there we must have been some of the best trained troops in the world. We'd been practising for that long. You know at one stage they didn't think we were ever going to leave Australia.

- 02:30 And there was talks - they called it a mopping up operation but I tell you what, I didn't want it any more severe I can assure you.

So you found that your training worked well for you?

Oh I'm positive. You know Tommy Marr our platoon sergeant kept us on the ball. I watch some of these

- 03:00 pictures they have on the television and I'm afraid that Tommy would have torn strips off them. If he saw two of us closer than about eight yards from one another he'd jump all over us you know. He taught us never travel in packs it's just not on. He says if they've got to swerve from one target to another it's pretty hard to decide who they're going to shoot at. And he was pretty much on the ball. He caught us one day

- 03:30 when we were up there, we had to go across a river and we found a pretty quick way to get across. Only trouble is Tommy found that two days before and he was sitting on the other side shooting each one of us as we come across. To point out you just don't all go to the same place it's just not on. Like these are things that the average person would never ever think of. A story that

- 04:00 stuck in my mind was when he pointed these things out to me, I read a thing on a young bloke - he joined the French Foreign Legion and he was at Gallipoli in the 'first war'. And they were sent down this particular path and there was a sniper just pinging them off, 'bang bang bang' as they went down there. Every bloke was going and doing the same thing going down there. But when it came his turn like he'd seen about eight fellows killed in front of him, he didn't run down

- 04:30 like that, he dived forward like he was going into a swimming pool with the result that they missed him. And from then on blokes varied themselves you know. So you learn - even yesterday I learnt a little bit out the front there. I've got a lot of rocks that they put out next door and they said to me anyone could have them if they wanted them. So I rang me son and said, "Are they any use to you?" "Oh yeah grab them Dad." So I brought them in and there was one was a very big one. So I said to the bloke, "Would you give us a lift with that?"

- 05:00 And he just shook his head. He said, "No." He made me tip the wheel barrow on its side and we just eased it in while the wheel barrow was lying on its side, tipped the wheel barrow up and I wheeled it in. I said, "Every day you learn something." Every day.

A bit of lateral thinking.

Absolutely.

Well I'm just wondering about the sort of patrols that you would've been doing, ambushes and strategies.

Well actually

- 05:30 Stan Row, he was a member of the battalion for many years. He was sergeant cook in our company. He'd seen most of their action. He told me that what we went through was the worst he'd seen a battalion go through. He said for the simple reason this was the first time we had to go and dig them out. He said before there was always someone coming our way.

- 06:00 So it was a case of they shot you, or you shot them. He said but this time they were all bedded in. And as far as Stan Row was concerned and he was an old member of the battalion, that's what he told me. As far as we ran into the worst he'd seen. And I respect that judgement because it's pretty truthful when you think of it. If you can see someone all right but when you can't see them you're in big trouble. Like I explained to you before about the Nip

- 06:30 in the little hole on the side of the track. Until Lush seen him no-one knew where he was.

so how did that change the way that you approached... what made it different?

Well it made us all realise that we had to be a bit sharper in the mind than we had before. Like

- 07:00 especially the older member they'd gone there and they were used to seeing people to shoot at. But all of a sudden people we were looking for were down below ground level, they could see us and we couldn't see them. And to give you an idea that people get very nervous. We had an outpost and this happened not once but several times. A couple of blokes'd be in this post wherever it
- 07:30 might be. Some Nips'd come walking along the track towards where they were. And the blokes in the hole panicked. They could see these fellows but what they didn't realise, those blokes couldn't see them. And they jumped out the holes and ran, that was the first time that the Nips had sighted them. The blokes in the holes their nerves didn't stand up. So these things happen. Some people get very
- 08:00 shaky let's put it that way, very shaky. Not everyone - well when you think I was out at Heidelberg for a long time before I eventually got discharged, had an operation on me arm. They had two wards out there, 15 and 15A. 15A was for very severe psychiatric cases. 15 was for moderates.
- 08:30 Now those blokes were all in there with mental troubles and believe me they could be brought on. And you didn't have to be in action you know. Some people found that even living with a lot of other people just wasn't there cup of tea, it just didn't stand up. So we've got to realise that everyone of us is born a little different to someone else. Because what's good for you, mightn't be good for me. And until I saw all these things happening around me, I didn't
- 09:00 realise that either. I looked at it this way, I never actually felt very uncomfortable but the old soldiers point out to me this was pretty normal first time experience. They said the second time around, you're a little bit more careful and the third time you're ultra careful. They said
- 09:30 new soldiers generally were better than old ones in the first - when they were first time up but it could make the old soldiers a bit nervous too because they tended to draw the fire on you because they were taking too many risks. But as I said before, when Tommy Marr ran so did I. He earned more money than me, so if he didn't want to stay, I wasn't staying either.
- 10:00 **So once you know a few days in and you hit this strong resistance...**
- Oh it was strong.
- How were the men being affected by that in your platoon?**
- Well I'd say there was ...
- 10:30 To give you an indication of what you just asked, one day I suppose it would've been the sixth or seventh, might have been the eighth day, a fellow named Jack Tracey was getting a bit jittery. And a fellow named Nick Todman offered to take him back
- 11:00 down the track a bit and this entailed having to take him down to what they called B Esch. 'Back echelon' or some damn name for it. But by the time they got down there our quarter master, assistant corporal - I can't think of his - all is I can remember him being called 'Wimpy'. Wimpy told us
- 11:30 about Jack Tracey bringing Nick Todman in and yet when they left us, it was Nick Todman was taking Jack Tracey down there. By the time they got down there Nick Todman's nerves had gone completely on him and the bloke he was taking down to help out was in a better condition than he was. So in a matter of three or four hundred yards this happened. We thought that Wimpy was pulling our legs but he wasn't because Nick Todman didn't come back for weeks.
- 12:00 And Jack Tracey was back in a couple of days. And as a matter of fact we were going from where I was telling you about the haves and the have nots - when we were leaving that area and going back towards Beauford, Jack Tracey he was our forward scout, as we come around this track - we're up in the hills outside of Beauford, he sighted a Nip
- 12:30 but unfortunately he didn't - he had his safety catch on his rifle. By the time he got it undone the Nip was into the bush and gone. We threw a few hand grenades in but whether we hit anyone I wouldn't have a clue. Another time I was a bit lucky in the same area. And this was a snake. There's about eight of us and we're on this patrol and we're going along and we come across this big fallen tree across this track we were going along.
- 13:00 And when I say a big fallen tree, you needed the bloke behind you to give you a bump to get your hands on to pull yourself up, to jump down the other side, which I did. A chap named Herbie Smith he come from Coolangatta and he lives in Coolangatta before the Gold Coast and all them things became the great holiday place they are. He was there before the war. Herbie he'd be about twenty one, I was about twenty three at the time. And I
- 13:30 got up onto the top and he was coming up behind me and I jumped down the other side like everyone else had in front, about four or five fellows. And as I hit the ground on the other side, Herbie let go with an Owen gun from up on top of the tree. I'm into the bush in a flash. I'd have beat the Olympic champion, I took off that quick. And Herbie said, "It's all right Brad, you just jumped over the biggest snake I've ever seen in all my life and I missed it." So I never even sighted it on the ground, so I'm glad I got over the

- 14:00 top and didn't land on the top of it. He said the snake went into the bush the other way to me thank goodness. Then to give you an idea of when I was saying about young blokes being all right first up and the older member
- 14:30 - we were only there, we got there on the Sunday and on the Monday morning the 2/12th arty started firing behind us. And this fellow, he was a corporal, I won't say his name, he'd been original 6th Div, been in Greece, Crete, El Alamein, New Guinea, he went berserk.
- 15:00 Threw himself on the ground screaming and writhing around. His nerves went completely on it. Because the 'arty' following - oh they're only firing about a hundred yards behind where we were. They were just going straight over - but it shot his nerves to pieces. After all those years. So it's - and when you see someone in that condition it's pretty sickening. Especially when you know they both
- 15:30 shouldn't have been there. Like you know they just started what they called the 'five by two'. That was people who'd been in the army five years or two years overseas service. He shouldn't have even been there, he should've been back in Australia. Discharged. But they sent him to the war once too often. How many other blokes are in the same boat, I wouldn't know. But he was - an eye witness one that I saw.

Was your platoon made up of

16:00 the new reinforcements?

I would say that - the lieut had been in New Guinea, Tommy Marr had been with the battalion from when they were formed and he'd been through every action that they'd been in. Dutchie Strugnall he was - he

- 16:30 joined them in the Middle East. I don't know whether it was at El Alamein or after El Alamein. But for some strange reason he was left out of what was called LOB - Left Out Of Battle. So he wasn't there because he was more our age group that would've been a good leader for more younger ones. A fellow named
- 17:00 Jack Hanrahan, he joined us from the 44th Battalion when they carved them up and sent them - a lot of them ended up in the 28th. Jack was a good - what I would call a good teaching soldier, he would be good in a training camp.
- 17:30 But I'm glad he wasn't my section leader I'll be honest. And I would tell Jack Hanrahan himself that I seen him burst into tears. Albie Marr like me was a first up one, had been made a colossal soldier. Would've been an officer if the war had lasted any longer, no trouble. Albie Marr was a beauty, absolutely top notch, Albie Marr.

18:00 Why was Albie Marr so outstanding?

He was absolutely fearless and he made good decisions. Like if he took a section out on patrol you could guarantee that Albie took six men, six'd come back. Not much value when you go out there and you fetch back two blokes wounded you know. It means

- 18:30 that you ran into something much superior to yourself and you made a blue. You should've tried to avoid it. Because I mean, if half a dozen of you run into fifteen there's not much value sticking around because they got much more fire power than you have. Some of them Nips were wonderful marksmen because I told you, some bloke firing
- 19:00 on me much have been the world's worst shot. Another bloke he got killed one day and I'm trying to think - the bloke who described this to me he was - Charlie Willy. Charlie - A Company were going across a clearing and the first two blokes went across the clearing
- 19:30 and the third bloke that was running across the clearing, a Nip - where he came from no-one - hit him right there. Now when a man's running at a full gallop and someone shoots you and it could be hundred, a hundred and fifty yards away you'll looking at a man that's pretty deadly with a rifle. Pretty deadly. And a running target's pretty hard to hit. But Charlie said, "Hit him just there." Killed him in mid stride.

- 20:00 And I've only got Charlie's word - Charlie saw the whole thing happen. So what else?

That - what you said about Albie that if he took six men out they'd come back.

Because Albie - see when they went on patrol, we were in a foreign country. No-one's been there before, we were in Borneo you see. And the section leader's

- 20:30 given a map. And he looks at that map and he's told he's got to go a thousand yards, fifteen hundred yards to a point. And when you'd been there, had a look around at what's that, come back in. Albie followed that letter to the T. He didn't go like some of these blokes you see on the television, that seem to run forever. Like if he was told to take half a dozen men a thousand yards they went that thousand yards
- 21:00 and they come home again. They done their job. But some people just thought they were - you could say

'gung-ho' people. Albie was not one of them. He done what he was told and never failed a beat. And as Lush, as I mentioned before the company commander he told me himself, he said, "If the war had've been going on I had him lined up to go on OTC." That's an Officer Training Course.

21:30 And Albie was a private like me when he joined the 28th battalion. So when he impresses a bloke like Lush it's not only me that's telling you about him, but I'm getting it from the horse's mouth, a bloke that went from a private to a captain. So Albie he was a top fellow. I got a photo out there of him with a group of us. Unfortunately he got killed in rather bizarre circumstances. He was a single bloke and his mother

22:00 had a farm. You'll have to excuse me when I explain this to you. Albie'd do his day's work on the farm and he'd head into the local - they lived up in New South Wales - New South Wales blokes told me about it. Have a few beers for the night and he was coming home and he pulled up beside the road and he wanted to do a bit of wee and stood alongside his truck and unfortunately the road collapsed, the ute rolled over on him and killed him. Simple as that. For a bloke

22:30 that done what Albie done, not a very fitting way to die. But I'll never forget him, a good bloke Albie. And if he was rugby league follower he was a very good rugby league footballer too. They were all the section leaders. Tommy Halligan. Tommy was as dry as a driest biscuit was ever made and much out of the same

23:00 mould as Albie was. He was a nice bloke John. But I don't know if he's still alive. He was from New South Wales too. Who else? They were all the ones that were section leaders in my platoon, 13. So I couldn't comment on 14 or

23:30 15 because as I say, they were different platoons. Although 15 Platoon had a classic AIF coach, a bloke named Jimmy Davidson. Jimmy was always made a corporal when they were in action and when he come home on leave he used those two stripes for some extra leave. So when he went back they took his stripes off him because he'd been away too long. But when they went back into action, they whacked them two - cause Jimmy Davidson

24:00 was a top soldier. In fact he come to me when the war was over. They'd made him acting company quarter master and he marked everything off in my AB 83 that I had, of army possessions. The only thing he didn't mark off was that I had a mosquito net for covering you of a night, if you was in a place where you could use one. And

24:30 you believe it when I got discharged in 1947 over at Royal Park they said to me, "Where's that mosquito net?" And I still had it. But you know he'd wiped off me rifle and everything and the rifle I can still now. The boat we were on they brought us back to Sydney, I left it lying against the side of the hold and I said, "I never want to see another gun as long as I live." And that's true - I never fired a shot out of it incidentally because I'd

25:00 been in hospital with hookworm and dysentery which I'd got while I was up there. And they gave me this new rifle, still had the grease and everything. I hadn't even cleaned it once, I wasn't going to interfere with something that I didn't use - the war was over, why was I going to start shooting anything. So that was - he wiped the rifle the whole bit off, I'll never forget Jimmy over that, a classic.

You

25:30 **used what, the two inch mortar?**

Yeah two inch mortar. Well I suppose when you stood it up, it was about that high. It was on a base plate about that long. You just dropped the bomb down into it and press this little lever and away it went. It had a maximum carry of about two hundred yards. Fired very high, projectory and dropped down, very good for firing

26:00 to get behind an embankment or something like that. And when I first got it, we used to get practice bombs that you could shoot, no explosives in them of course. And we're doing a bit of training up in the Tablelands. And Dudley Tomkins was with me this time. A heap of blokes were in this, oh I suppose you'd call it a thicket and Dudley says, "See if you can lob it at that thicket over there."

26:30 You know it was about a hundred and fifty yards down the track. So looked over the top of the thing towards the thicket, pressed the thing and away goes the bomb and you can see it coming down, it's going to - right in. And there's about six blokes right in this thicket. And it's just like you see in the comics. Blokes exploding about everywhere. No-one was going to be in this thing come and hit them on the head. And it would hurt you, might even kill you. We laughed our legs off but it wouldn't be funny if you was one of the blokes down the other end.

27:00 Yeah that was up in the Tablelands.

So was it a heavy gun to carry?

Oh to carry, I suppose it weighed about - oh I suppose - we carried six bombs with us as well so I suppose all told we'd be carrying something like about - oh I suppose the mortar'd weigh about twenty four pounds.

- 27:30 And with the bombs you'd be probably carrying around about forty five, fifty pounds plus your own gear on your back. You might be carting sixty or seventy pounds worth of stuff. And when you've been walking around for three or four hours you feel like a donkey, you can believe me. It would've been handy - I noticed that in accounts I'd read that
- 28:00 when the Nips landed in New Guinea, they brought a terrible lot of horses with them for carrying that sort of stuff around in the mountains. And I suppose the offspring of some of those horses might still be there, unless the blacks have chopped them up and eaten them all, but they brought quite a lot of horses up there with them. Whether our mob took any up I don't know. But I would imagine that going through the Owen Stanleys they would've needed a
- 28:30 lot of assistance. The human body couldn't keep carrying all that sort of stuff.
- That must've made it difficult for you in the bush.**
- Oh it - when you look at it that way it was. But it's amazing where they got all these maps from cause we were quite surprised when we landed there,
- 29:00 how many places we went to the map showed us the track and the track was there. So apparently they must've learnt a lot from what the Nips done in Malaya. You see they landed in Malaya and the Pommie army who ran that show over there, they reckon you couldn't come through here and you couldn't come through there, it was impenetrable. The Nips rode through them on pushbikes.
- 29:30 They'd been coming through that country and mapping it out for years apparently. And they knew every little back track that was there. So it just shows you, that someone on our particular side when we was sent to that particular area must've done a lot of reconnaissance somewhere because I don't think I ever went out where I actually had to use a machete, to cut me way through any bush. You know invariably I found myself on a track somewhere.
- 30:00 And we were going on the maps they were issuing out to us. And there was only one, the section commander always carried it. Bad luck if he'd got shot and we didn't have a map. We'd probably still be wandering around. I think that a lot of people can take a lot of credit for what we were equipped
- 30:30 with. They issued us with when we were going up there with a paper and I say it's the finest foolscap paper I've ever seen. It was all written in Malayan so that we could ask questions of the local inhabitants. The trouble was, there was no way for us to decipher what the local
- 31:00 inhabitants was telling us. We could read this off to them and they'd jabber back to us and we didn't have a clue what they were saying. So to me like when you think they handed it out to hundreds of men we wasted a lot of money on things that weren't very helpful. Cause the first time I said to Dick Wilson, "Well this is a lot of help." These few words have always stuck in my mind. "Ada or wrongipon." What it meant was, "Are there any Japanese here?" You'd ask a local.
- 31:30 And - "Bill blllll bblllll." And, "What the hell's he talking about? I haven't got a clue." Like they could have been behind his shed for all we knew. But I can still see that terrific foolscap sheet of paper, it must've cost a fortune to be printed but only about - they sent a few blokes to language schools. There was a bloke - Petit his name was, I can't think of his first name.
- 32:00 He had an older brother who had been B classed a bit earlier. He'd been with them for a long time, Les Petit. But this one I can't think - he went - he could speak Malayan pretty good. But unfortunately he was in 14 platoon, he wasn't in 13. Yeah I can't think of his first name. But they didn't send enough people to these schools you know. He was one that I knew.
- 32:30 **What word did you use for the Japanese to the local people?**
- Well just what I told you. That was ada or wrongipon. That few words and that's what it meant, "Are there any Japanese around here?" And as I say, the bloke'd yap back to me. And I didn't know what he was talking about or anyone else standing around me. And this was brought about by not having a language
- 33:00 man in every section. You know to send one out of a company was silly. If they'd have sent one from each platoon even, if they didn't want to send one from each section but to only send one from the company wasn't very good arithmetic in my book.
- Did you have a lot to do with the local people, the villagers. You know you said before you could tell the difference between locals that were working for the**
- 33:30 **Japanese and those that weren't.**
- Oh you'd see some of them built like gorillas and a person alongside them as thin as a match. It was obvious that this person's been living on the fat of the land, this one's been starving. So there was only one way. He was in with the boss man. And as far as I was concerned when we went there they changed sides that quick because we become the boss man you see. And oh they were all over us like a rash.
- 34:00 One of these blokes we saw at Beauford, the first one we seen, he was bigger than any of us. He was built like one of them sumo wrestlers. Oh he was a whopper, I can still see him. Gee whiz he was living

very well, that fellow. And when I saw all the rest of these people.

So when they swapped

34:30 sides were they helpful?

And I'll tell you another thing. When the Jap is in the 'box seat' he's a real boss man but put him on the losing side and you've never seen such a crawling individual in all your life. And I'll give you a first hand indication of this. When they were POWs there was this Jap lieutenant, Freddy Mallard was in my section,

35:00 in my platoon. Now Freddy was half Aboriginal, half Samoan Islander. He couldn't read or write, take him into the bush he didn't need a map. He could take you from here to there and back again. He was a natural bushman, he could take you any - but he had about seven kids in Western Australia with the result that he had a lot of 'points' you see. And it was getting near the end of the war and he was coming home on the

35:30 'point' system. And he come to me. His son, the eldest son had become the dux of the Northam High School at fifteen. And Freddy wanted to take him home a fountain pen for a present. And I said, "Oh no worries, get onto this lieut." And I went to this Nip lieutenant and I said, "Want a good fountain pen." Like he's a POW this bloke. "Yes yes." And away he went and he come back and he handed me four pens. I said to Freddy, "Here." Freddy said, "I only want one."

36:00 I said, "Well he's just given me four, you may as well take them all home for your kids." Like all I said was, "I need a fountain pen." He went away and brought back four.

Where did he go and get them from?

Oh probably off other Jap private soldiers that was in the compound. Just went and took them off them and brought them back. And another one that sticks in me mind, I'm on guard duty one night, it's a place - that river I was trying to think the name before.

Padas?

36:30 No the one up near Padas township had a different name. But they set up this big compound where we had these Nips. They brought the mob around from Sandakan or Sandakan whichever way you want to call it, all the civilians from around there. They brought them around and put them in the same big compound. Oh hundreds, there must have been three thousand Japanese in there. And I'm

37:00 on guard duty on the far side from where our camp on this particular night. And I can hear this little Jap bloke inside the fence, he's lying on the ground and he's going, "Oh oh oh." He's dying no worries. And two Jap colonels come along and they got another Jap to dig a hole and they dropped that bloke down the hole and he was still gasping. He was going to die no worries but they buried him alive.

37:30 Because they weren't going to tell anyone there was a man less because they were only on light rations. See that's one mouth less to feed. He probably might have lived another two or three hours. But as sure as God made little apples, that bloke was still alive when they shoved him under the ground, no trouble at all. They didn't have much thought for one another. They were pretty inhumane when

38:00 you look back at them, pretty inhumane. I see these young ones that come here now, to train or to go to various universities. And I look at them and I think, would you be the same as your grandfather or great grandfather if it was all over again. But

38:30 some people got over them but I don't think the majority of Australian servicemen, especially those blokes that were POWs, you couldn't ask them to be kind to them. With what they - like I told you about that mate of mine. Thirteen five when he left Australia, when the war finished he weighed seven stone ten and lucky to be alive. Nobody's meant to lose that much weight.

39:00 But you had to see them in the POW camp there on Borneo?

Now one, photo I got out there, I showed it to our friend there before. Someone had a bright idea to set

39:30 up a big sportsground, they didn't know when they were going to get us all home you see. And we were going to have these Jap POWs clearing this area to make a big sports ground you see. And we went in a truck, in fact two trucks and we picked up - I don't know how many, twenty five to a truck. Four of us for guards on them to come back across Labuan Island to where this place was. And we had them

40:00 doing this work all day. And we loaded the trucks up to take them back in the night time. And I'm last up onto the truck. And there's this big Jap he's sitting on the end of the seat. And I said, "Move up." And he looked up at me. And I said, "Now you know every word I'm telling you. Now if you don't move up I'll hit you in the face with this rifle butt." And he moved up very quickly. But he was going to get arrogant, he wasn't going to let me have a seat. He thought like, if someone was going to get off the truck it was going to be him, he wasn't going to be too good in my book.

40:30 Because at that time I was the boss man not him. But some of them didn't lose it, they thought they were still, as Hitler thought he was, the master race.

Tape 7

00:32 **Go on.**

Well at this particular time they took us from this Padas River place up to what was Jesselton. Nowadays they call it Kota Kinabalu, since it was part of Cibar as they call it but it was Jesselton back in those days. And they put us on

01:00 a Pom landing ship to take us back over to Labuan. And that was the one they brought the civilian Nips from around at Sandakan or Sandakan whichever you want to call it and put them in the POW camp there. And then they loaded us onto this thing and of course, this is a funny sort of an incident.

01:30 There's no twilight in the islands you see, it's dark and it's light. And then it's light and then it's night again. So we're all hanging over the front of this which is up on the beach while the ship is backing off. What we don't realise is they've got sighted up on some trees to back off and our heads are in their light and they can't see. And they're screaming at us men, to get away from there. And oh we're telling them to 'drop dead' type of thing.

02:00 Anyhow some bloke comes down, turns out he was a petty officer, I didn't know him. He seemed to have more (UNCLEAR) than you can poke a stick at. And he's yacking at us and I told him to drop dead. "Who's that man?" I said, "Who do you think, it's me, what do you want to do about it?" Anyhow one word led to another and I told him to drop off. Anyhow he goes away very upset that some private has actually yapped back at him.

02:30 I didn't know this at the time but a little later along come two young Pom sailors. They said, "Who was the bloke who went off at the petty officer?" I said, "Was that the bloke that was down here before?" They said, "Yeah." I said, "That was me, why?" Cause me mate says to me, "You're going to get into trouble over that lot." They said, "Oh we've come to thank you on behalf of the crew." Apparently this bloke had been making their life unbearable for about three and a half years on this ship. And it was the first time they've ever seen anyone

03:00 snarl back at him. They said, "He went into his cabin and he was in tears that some had upset him." So they said, "Anything you want?" I said, "Nothing much." They said, "Would you like some coffee or some cocoa?" I said, "Well we'll have some cocoa." They brought us an 8 quart billy of hot cocoa and me mate says, "How's that? You give cheek and we're all given a hot drink of cocoa for the night." Anyhow the next morning they dropped us back over to Labuan Island and it was where

03:30 we set up camp before you know, they sent us home. This was where we were going to build this sportsground and all this sort of thing. And they had tents set up there that we got into and put stretchers in, so we had something to sleep off the ground which was pretty good at that stage. And the war had been over, what about three weeks by this time maybe a month.

04:00 And the next morning Tommy Marr says - what they'd done they'd push the jungle back enough to set these tents up to put the company in. He said, "We've got to clear this back for about thirty or forty yards so that we make a parade ground behind here." I looked and I said, "Tommy you've got to be joking." I said, "We'll be here for ten years moving that." He said, "Well that's what we've got to do." I said, "Well, all we've got is our hands."

04:30 And I looked down the beach from where we were and there's an engineers camp. And I can see two bulldozers down there. So I said, "Hang on a few minutes." So I ambled off down to this engineer's place and I saw a sergeant there. I says, "They want us to clear up behind our tents there to make a parade ground. We'll be here for ten years trying to clear that away with our hands. What about your bulldozer there, any chance of you using them?" "No trouble," he says. Him and his mate hopped on.

05:00 I come back I got two bulldozers. Twenty-five minutes the jungle's pushed back thirty or forty yards. I said, "There you are Tommy we can go swimming for the rest of the day." He looked at me and he said, "You're hopeless." But if you'd been there with me - I thought to meself, what's he talking about, all we've got's our hands, we never even had a shovel between us. We'd have been there forever. But the bulldozers made pretty quick work of it, pretty quick.

You showed me that

05:30 **photo earlier of the jeep that was transformed onto ...**

Yeah well, I don't know which one of the engineering companies put that one together but that was one of the smartest moves you've ever seen. Because, oh I'd been on that I suppose - they had two jeeps doing the pulling.

But for people who haven't seen the photo, can you describe what they'd done?

Oh

06:00 all I know is that they put the wheels on the track. They'd taken the wheels off the jeeps, lowered the

jeeps down into position onto the axles. Bolted them together and away they went. And we were using it before the war finished. You know it wasn't after the war. In fact they brought

06:30 the first lot of Nip POWs I saw come in, they brought in from a place called Tenom, yeah that was the next town onto Beaufort. And they had one jeep mob in front, they had the Nips in between the two jeep trains. And they'd made the poor mugs jog along between them until they brought them up into Beaufort where they'd put them into this first compound that I'd seen built there.

07:00 I suppose there was around about, by the end of the day they'd brought in about fifteen hundred. But they only came in on spec. They'd sent an advance party. They wanted to be sure they were going to get pretty fair treatment. And they did, Cause a fellow named Selwyn Porter, he was the brigadier of our brigade, he was - after the war he was the police chief here in Melbourne.

07:30 He was a gun at Myers and then he became the police commissioner. And he'd been in the army since the year dot, type of thing. And one of our bloke made a kick at one of these Nips cause they brought them right into Beaufort and had to take them across the river to where the compound was on the other side. And one of our blokes kicked at one of these Nips and this Porter pulled him up. Told him, "Don't you ever touch any of them like that when I'm about."

08:00 And that was from a brigadier talking to a private. "Smarten up your footwork, it's just not on." He says, "Whether you like it or not, it's finished now as far as we're concerned, treat them like people." But I was one of those unfortunate people, I didn't think we should have been so light on them. But I had to put up with it.

At that stage did people know the atrocities that had happened like in Thailand and Sandakan especially?

Well at this

08:30 stage, I had no idea of knowing about that but ... what I saw happening when they were building that compound, the engineers did this - I found out how powerful water was. They had these enormous pump guns and they would cut whole sections of the riverbank

09:00 out just firing this compressed water into them. Oh great chunks, some as big as this room and fall straight into the river where they'd - cause they were making ramps for the ducks [amphibious transport vehicle] to come up so they could ferry them across to the other side of the river you know. You'd see a whole landing bay cleared in about twenty five minutes. The duck'd just come down with a load of Nips and straight across the other side of the river and up the ramp on the other side

09:30 into the compound. Without those engineers there with their compressed water canons I don't know how we would have got them across because the river banks were about fifteen feet high you know. So short of building a bridge there was no other way of getting them across to the other bank. But they smartened that up they were pretty good. And those ducks, they were unbelievable for their utility.

10:00 Even at Labuan when we went back there. When you've got so many men on an island the rubbish accumulation - like you've only got to look at the local council collections, how much goes into the garbage tip each day. And you say you've got - when we were there they were bringing Gurkhas there to take over from us when we went off the island.

10:30 So I'd say that when the war finished there could've been twelve, fifteen thousand troops on Labuan Island on an island where we'd fought six hundred Nips plus the local population. So the amount of rubbish. So they used the ducks for garbage trucks. We had to shovel the stuff into the garbage trucks and they'd drive out about a mile and a half

11:00 two mile out to sea and drop it in. It's probably still there rotting away on the bottom of Labuan Island. As we know now it's polluting the earth but that was how they disposed of it. On those ducks so they were everything. Troop transports, garbage transports. Saw an article on the television the other night about the bloke who even invented them. He was one of those early

11:30 America's Cup sailors, some Yank bloke I forget his name. But it show you there who invented it. So I saw the invention of the duck.

So when you went back to Labuan how long were you there before being moved back?

To come home?

Yeah.

Well as I say we lobbed back on the 2nd February

12:00 took us about ten days. So you could say roughly around about the 20th January, might have been the 22nd January '46 I left Labuan, and the war had finished you could say early September so we were there for a few months. In fact some of the blokes that were there on the ship that I left to come home on, they were also put on the ship but they weren't brought back to Australia -

12:30 they were took across to Rabaul and unloaded them there to let some blokes that had been at Rabaul

come home. And when these blokes found they got to Rabaul there was almost a mutiny, they didn't want to get off the ship. They thought they were coming back to Australia. But they found they were only being transported from one island to another island. So I was a bit lucky, I struck a ship that was coming back to Australia. I don't think I'd have been too pleased either. Yeah I think it got a bit of a write up in the local papers back here

- 13:00 even at that time. In fact Mick Dawson, one of my mates he lives around the street there. He was there. He said, "I didn't know whether to get off. Were we going to get pinched for being part of a mutiny."

Just going back a bit Paddy do you remember - we'll come to the end, like the dropping of the A-bombs in a sec, but even earlier like the end of the war in Europe do you remember hearing

- 13:30 **the news of that?**

Yeah when that came through we were still at Morotai. It was night time once again, we were sitting watching a picture show. And this was the classic thing about Morotai. When the war finished there was thirty thousand Nips on Morotai. We wandered down around on the beach there and Yanks took the beach head and that was it. They just left them to 'rot in the hinterland', as they call it.

- 14:00 And they were self surviving. They'd set up market gardens and what have you but there was enough Nips on Morotai to wipe us and the Yanks out if they've come out of the bush. So that was a bit of a conundrum you would call it. But it was at a picture show when they announced that the war had finished in Europe but then they announced - but Japan had said they weren't surrendering,

- 14:30 they were continuing to fight. It might have been two or three days later they lined us up to get on that LST 637 [Landing Ship Tank]. I'll never forget the numbers of it. They loaded us up and they put trucks on. The amount of stuff that went onto that ship and it was already loaded up down to the bottom hole with all their own landing barges that they had on. And

- 15:00 I'm trying to think who - they call him the catering officer was in charge of our rations when on the boat. But whoever he was, the Yankee captain says, "Now is all the rations you've got for the fellows that you've brought on the boat?" Cause there was

- 15:30 I think there was, our company and I think B Company was on with us too. Plus an engineering group and all these varying size of vehicles that they'd brought on, they chained on the deck. We were sleeping under the vehicles on the deck you know. There was no facilities to sleep, only to

- 16:00 blokes who was on cook house. But anyhow when the captain of this boat he saw the rations they'd brought on for us. He said, "We'll be about ten days on this trip. With what we've got we should keep you alive till you get where we're going." And I'd say he was pretty right. If they Yanks hadn't have had what they had I don't think there would have been quite enough tucker to feed us. In fact Huey Norman, he said that he was quite surprised when we

- 16:30 landed that we were fit enough to do anything. Because as far as he was concerned it was one of the most horrendous trips he'd seen troops sail under. Because it rained pretty near incessantly. I've never seen so many ships in me life, I probably will never see them again. Gee they just went on. Well I'll say the last ones were out of the sight from where we were. We were up behind

- 17:00 some big Yankee battle ship that was leading the thing, I can't remember the name. I don't think it was the USS Missouri which they signed the peace on, but it was that type of ship. And enormous when you look at them from close up. And how you run into people. Going through

- 17:30 one day in the tucker line and one of the Yanks working in the galley. He said, "Where do you come from?" I said, "Carlton." He says, "I lived in Drummond Street." I said, "Whereabouts?" He said, "Down near the trades hall." That's in Victoria Street as you know. And the Yankee lived there before the war and he knew all about Carlton and he was serving tucker on this boat.

- 18:00 So I had two or three yarns with him.

What was the tucker like?

Yankee food's very good. Yeah I thought so. Cause they had ice cream and all that sort of thing, that was a real delicacy. We never saw anything like that. Being a Depression kid and appreciating any sort of food what was available never worried me.

- 18:30 But some of them blokes they must've come from pretty 'toffy' homes. Oh they'd sit there and complain about, no matter where I was in the army. "Oh look at this what we've got to eat." And I used to look at these people and think, where do they come from? Like they can't have missed a meal in their life time. You know as far as I was concerned, as long as you get three meals a day don't turn your nose up, eat it. You don't know when the next one's coming from. And I learnt that pretty early too. First time I ever saw

- 19:00 rhubarb, my mother cooked it up and she put some on me plate in front of me. "What's that?" Me father says, "You eat that or you don't leave the table." I ate it, that was it, finished. And since then I'm a great lover of rhubarb. But I tell you what the first time I looked at it it didn't look too appetising. But a lot of these fellows I saw in the army as I say, they must've come from petty toffy homes.

19:30 **What was the opinion of you and the blokes you were fighting alongside of Blamey?**

Never heard him talked about much, I'll be quite honest. About the only time I actually - he was at Labuan but I never saw him there.

20:00 The only time I would actually see him except seen him around Melbourne, was up at a place called Mount Garnet in North Queensland. They put on a Div parade there. Apparently 9 Div had two division parades. One was at Gaza after El Alamein which Blamey, I'm not sure whether Montgomery supervised in the Middle East. But he supervised

20:30 one up at Mount Garnet. There was him and Wootten, I'm not sure whether Morshead was there. Could've been. But there was three or four generals beside - and they put this Div parade on. Pretty enormous turnout when you're looking at around about twelve to fifteen thousand men lined up everyone standing to attention.

21:00 All got rifles with bayonets shoved on them, it's a pretty enormous sight. It was on this Mount Garnet racecourse. That was some time in '44. We walked across country to get there. I suppose it was around about thirty or forty miles across country from Ravenshoe where we were. So we were able to do a lot of training on

21:30 the way across. So that was a pretty big show. I suppose there's pictures of it somewhere. The only other thing I saw like it was a small - what would you call it? Brigade show down at the Wondecla - I'm not sure whether -

22:00 a racecourse there or a football ground. But anyhow George Fernio who I mentioned before, George backed a winner that day too. The day they put this show on they had a train to take us across country to this Wondecla. Wootten was there and Selwyn Porter he was there running things. And they had us training and they picked so many from each company

22:30 of each battalion to be a - what do they call it - a brigade guard. And I was one of the blokes picked from our company to go and George Fernio too. But on the day that it took place, I think it was a Sunday it was raining and it was pouring 'cats and dogs' and here we were out in the rain. Anyhow we marched over and do this show. And anyhow I'm looking around and I can't see George Fernio.

23:00 Anyhow the day finishes and we're back in the tents. Here's George comes walking up with his poncho on. I said, "I was looking for you and I couldn't find you." He says, "I didn't get onto that. You know that farmhouse alongside of where we started. I spent the afternoon in there listening to the races with the people there." George was a character. He was a classic George.

23:30 I wish I'd been with him. The rain pouring off us.

I don't know if we've talked about your love life. Did you have a girlfriend during your ...

Actually I had a first wife actually. I've got a daughter to her. The daughter lives down at

24:00 Mornington, I'm in touch with her fairly regular. And like a lot of blokes I got a 'Dear John' [letter informing that relationship is over] at some stage during the war and nose was a bit out of joint at the start. And I punched a few heads when I come home and all that sort of thing. And I could see it was a lost cause, so I just down tools on it and called it a day. Luckily I met Nellie later on and I was lucky

24:30 I backed a real winner there, I can assure you. But apart from that not much else.

When did you get the letter?

Oh I'd been home on leave and when get back and that was at Christmas '44. I got this about a week before I was due to say that

25:00 she'd been going out with this bloke, blah blah blah. I said, "Well that's good enough for me. It looks like a (UNCLEAR) here." And a few of me mates said, "Oh no, don't be like that no." But when you're there and you think, well I'm getting me head blown off and she'll become a war widow and she'll do very well financially out of this because you had to fill - make a will. Which they returned to me when I got me discharge and I very

25:30 promptly burnt it because I'd left everything, it was going to be due to her. So she could've ended up pretty well financially, if I'd have got my head blown off. So when I look back, I'm glad that I lived through it and short changed that. But it's water under the bridge. Occasionally I see a death notice in the paper and people related to that family and I've been to the funerals you see.

26:00 Oh they reckon I'm the second coming. The eldest one, who would've been me sister-in-law she said to me the last time I saw her, "Paddy of all the fellows that our family's been mixed up with, you're the only one that's still alive, they're all dead."

So when you were off fighting a war, did you know you had a baby on the way?

Oh yeah, the baby was born

- 26:30 before I even left – like one of me mates says, “What about we join the army?” The baby was born then. She was born on the 9th January – when I look at it ‘43 was a pretty big year. She was born on the 9th January which incidentally was me mother’s birthday as well, 1943. East Brunswick where I played football was premiers. I went into the army.
- 27:00 And so you could say quite a few things happened to me that affected my life in ‘43. So, but it’s like everything else – it’s all water under the bridge now. In fact one of the funerals I went to, I see this eldest sister there, a fellow named Freddy Rigney that was married to one of the other sisters.
- 27:30 I walked up and said, “G’day how’re you going?” “Oh Paddy how long since I seen you?” This is Lill. And her husband Toot, he come over, I’d seen him a couple – Toot’s died since. But I was having a yarn with him. Anyhow they bought a couple of women – “You know who this is?” I didn’t even recognise her I’ll be quite honest. I said, “No idea who it is.” They said, “You
- 28:00 used to be your wife.” I could’ve walked past her in the street and I wouldn’t have even know her. It just shows you that some things you can block out of your mind. And I come home and I was telling Nell. I said, “That funeral I went to today, I saw me old bride.” I said, “I didn’t even know who she was, they had to tell me.” But the daughter lives down at Mornington, Pat, she’s named after me.
- 28:30 She and her husband Doug they pop in here occasionally and we go down there and see them. She’s got a son, he got married some time ago. Duncan his name is. But I’ve never met his wife you know, that he’s married to. They tell me she’s a Colombian girl. So I might be eventually mixed up with some drug
- 29:00 runners for all I know.

I don’t mean to pry but this must’ve had quite an impact. You going off to the islands...

Well I wasn’t very pleased about it, I can tell you. I thought to meself, how’s this? If I get knocked over she’s going to be laughing her ‘leg off’ back there. But it didn’t happen so as I say, water

- 29:30 under the bridge. Oh eventually, funny thing. Now I look back and I went down there one time. Of course the little girl was only so big by even this time. I wanted to pick her up and take her somewhere. And she told me, no way known... I said, “You’ve got to be joking.” And I smacked her right in the mouth. They pulled me into court and I got – the
- 30:00 only charge I’ve got against me and I’ll never forget the bloke he was a – I don’t know whether it’ll come out – but as far as I was concerned a police magistrate, his name was Pyvas. As far as I’m concerned a complete bar twenty. He fined me three pounds five and seven and six costs. I’m still only getting about
- 30:30 four bob [shillings] a day pay in the army because I’m paying an allotment on this little girl you see, even though I wasn’t paying an allotment on the wife at this time. I’d scrubbed her right out. And I said – I read in the paper every day, someone’s pinched five thousand dollars and they walk out the court you know. I says, “Can I have time to pay?” Or seven days in the lockup this fine was going to cost me. I said,
- 31:00 “Can I have time to pay?” Like I had sixteen bob in me pocket. Luckily three mates had gone down with me, down to South Melbourne Court it was. Funny situation. No time to pay. So I’m put in the lock up down at South Melbourne to wait for the Black Maria to come and they’re going to send me out to Pentridge for seven days. But me three mates who have gone with, they walk all the way down Clarendon Street and down into City Road
- 31:30 looking for a – what do you call it, a porn shop. And they all porn their coats off their suits. And they’ve got enough money to make the three pound twelve and six on top of my sixteen bob to pay the fine. That’s the only reason I never done seven days in the lockup. And I borrowed some ribbons, I was in my army clothes. I’d borrowed some ribbons off a bloke to put on here to show I was a returned soldier. But this Pyvas.
- 32:00 And when I read all these blokes, all the amount of money they’re getting pinched now and they just stroll out of the court and they’re laughing. And here’s a bloke wouldn’t give me time to pay it. Only needed a couple of hours, would’ve got the money off someone. But Pyvas, as far as I’m concerned, I hope he rots in hell wherever he is. He was a pretty well known police magistrate. He was no pal of mine as far as I was concerned.
- 32:30 So as I say, there’s never a dull moment when you look at life, something’s always going to come up.

So where were you when you heard about the A-bombs being dropped?

I’d just come out of the hospital and got that new rifle, I was telling you about. And the bloke who told me about it was a fellow named – I’m not sure whether it was Terry or Tom O’Rourke. He played football with St Kilda before the war and I knew him through playing football around the Tablelands you see.

- 33:00 And he was getting on this same barge as me to go from Labuan back to the mainland. And he said, “Oh no worries Brad it’s all over.” I said, “What?” He said, “The war. They dropped some big bomb up in Japan, it’ll be all over in a couple of days.” Cause I heard nothing about it. So he was the first bloke that told me anything about it. And I got back over to where our

- 33:30 mob was back over, outside of Beaufort and they then told me – and this was when Bert Woods who I told you had got killed on the day they dropped the atomic bomb. I helped to put him down, they buried him there when I came back. And I helped put him in the hole. And of course then they dropped the other one at Nagasaki
- 34:00 and that was when I found out I think, the next night, that it was over, when Lush come and told us. But a funny thing happened that afternoon cause when I got back there, Pinto the quarter master sergeant, they put me in a tent with him. And Jock Morrison, he was out of my company, he was in 15 platoon, he played football with Collingwood. Jock
- 34:30 and Pinto said, “We’re having to pick up a lot of stretchers because they’re fetching the company back from up forwards.” And the 43rd was taking over. This was up where Col Dales won his MM [Military Medal] and Bert Woods had got killed. And the 43rd’s taking over from up there. Incidentally the 43rd got a bloke killed the day or two days after the war finished. So the Nips weren’t turning it up too quick. Anyhow and
- 35:00 so Pinto said, “We’re picking up this heap of stretchers, so the blokes will have something to get them off the ground when they come back here. There won’t be any tents. They’ll have to do them two men things with our poncho’s which operated that way.” So away he goes to organise these things. And I’m just sitting here on a stretcher talking to Jock. And a local bung kid comes up and he’s got a duck tied with a bit of string around its neck. And he’s yacking away.
- 35:30 And I don’t know what he’s talking about. I said to Jock, “What’s he on about?” And Jock knew a bit of the language. He said, “He wants a shirt for the duck.” And I look and there’s a shirt and a pair of pants on this stretcher alongside me. I said, “Here you are here’s a shirt.” Give the kid the shirt I take the duck on the string. Jock says, “You’re kidding, that’s Pinto’s.” I said, “Well bad luck, he’s missed out,
- 36:00 his shirt’s disappeared. We’ve got a duck.” So anyhow about a quarter of an hour later the same kid comes back, yacking away at me again. I said to Jock, “What’s he on about this time?” Jock said, “He now wants the pair of pants for some eggs.” And he’s got some eggs in his hand. Bang. And he’s got one of those fez’s on his head and I lift it up and he’s got another two eggs under his fez. Like his old man
- 36:30 as it turns out apparently had sent him to get the pants. So I’ve got a dozen eggs and a duck for a shirt and a pair of pants. Anyhow Pinto comes back. Says, “Righto we got hold of those stretchers, we’ve got to go around and put so and so here and so and so with the three platoons where they’re going to be lined up.” So we’ve got them on this jeep railway thing and we go down
- 37:00 the railway a bit and we put some off here for 15 platoon and some down here for 14 and some over here for 13, including one for meself. And when they come back Jock’s going to issue the 15 platoons, I’m going to – anyhow went along hunky dory. Anyhow the next day Jock says, “ You should’ve heard Pinto, he was going off about
- 37:30 someone’s pinched his shirt and strides.” He said, “He’s really going off about this.” And he don’t know what’s happened to them. And a couple of days goes by and I’ve got to go up with a couple of other blokes to the DID issuing point to pick up a lot of rations. And Bill Anderson, like Pinto he’s an original, he’s there. He’d been originally in C company. In fact he was one of the first
- 38:00 blokes that I spoke to when I joined the battalion. And he’s helping Pinto, they’re rationing the stuff out into different bins to go to different groups. He says, “G’day Pat how’re you going?” And one of those colossal still life pictures that you like to have. And Pinto’s – and all of a sudden the penny tumbles, he’s about half way through and he looks up at me. “You Irish bastard,” he said. “What’s that Frank, what’s going on?”
- 38:30 “That shirt and strides, that duck you’ve got, I know where that came from.” What had happened the night before, him and Bill had been drinking beer together and Bill got all chummy and told him where his shirt and strides had gone. I don’t think Pinto ever got over that shirt and strides going off. Funny things you do during life.
- 39:00 Years and years later, when I went over on a trip over to the west, Nellie drove us over. And we pulled into Colley. He lived in Colley. He had the Ford dealership there, Pinto. And I went to the Ford place and asked and they said, “Oh no he’s gone down to Bunberry, but he’s probably gone back home for lunch before he comes back here.” So they gave me his address and told me where to go and we drive around there and knock on the door. And Pinto comes to the door. “Paddy Bradley
- 39:30 I called in to see you on a trip over here.” “Oh God. No worries.” In his own car he took Nellie and Leigh our daughter and meself all around a big open cut mine and showed us all around the district. He give us a terrific afternoon out. So there was no love lost between Pinto and me after all the years. He only died a few weeks ago too. He’d been very sick over the last couple of years.
- 40:00 But like all of us, he’d come to the end of his tether.

And you didn’t bring him a pair of strides though?

No. No. I’ll never forget that pair of strides. Of course I told Leigh, when she was a little girl about this story. And she said, “My Dad told me about pinching your shirt and strides one time.” And he says, “If

your Dad tells you, it must be right but I can't recall it."

- 40:30 It was all water under the bridge. "But if your Dad told you it must be right." And the 28th reunion things that we got going, our quarterly journal and that. It's a wonderful set up. For some years after the war they ran a
- 41:00 scholarship program and anyhow when my daughter Leigh got her Matric [Matriculation pass] and that she come home and she said, "You was in the army weren't you Dad?" I said, "Yeah." She said, "On the board they've got up scholarships that we can be applied for by the children of ex-servicemen." And one was a Gowrie scholarship after that Lord Gowrie who was Governor of Victoria or something at one time. Might have been Governor General
- 41:30 I don't know. She applied for that. It was up in New South Wales and they okayed it. And the 28th they had one going that you could apply for so I rang Rolly Cantwell. He was a lieut. He'd been a headmaster and everything at schools over in the west. I rang him to see if Leigh could apply. "Oh no worries Pat."
- 42:00 He said, "Yeah send her name in by all..."

Tape 8

- 00:30 And the scholarship was for two hundred dollars, I forget what the Gowrie paid. But it came in handy for paying for books. So providing she passed the examination over the university. She qualified again the next year. I wrote over and thanked her very much and Rolly said to me - I rang him on the
- 01:00 phone to make sure he got the letter. And he said, "She going back to uni again next year?" I said, "Yeah." Well they were only putting it on for two years. But they gave it to my daughter for the third year. And Rolly told me some years later that the reason they did, and I give myself a big pat on the back. He said, "Your daughter was the best junior we ever put through our scholarship situation. So she got it for two hundred dollars for three years off the 2/28th battalion
- 01:30 scholarship thing and she got the Lord Gowrie one for a couple of years. So it was pretty handy for paying for books. But we were lucky, university at that time was free, not like these poor fellows that are jumping up and down right now. So I'm glad that she's beyond that area.

In the notes here - this is going right back, sorry to do this to you but it talks about a

- 02:00 **training exercise at Ravenshoe.**

That should be Ravenshoe shouldn't it?

I called it Ravenshoe. I think it's the same place.

Yeah no worries cause I often used to look at it meself.

Well there was a training exercise that you did there where - the thing about the captain

- 02:30 **not giving you a pass for... do you want to tell us that story.**

That was - you would put that down to a complete balls up. In the night 13 platoon had gone out. You went down through a timber mill and across a bit of a stream and up this track. And we done a bit of an attack on the 43rd battalion in the night time you see. And Dudley

- 03:00 Tomkins once again he was along side of me. And this bloke must've been - 43rd bloke must've been sound asleep. We got blanks you see and they make a hell of a racket, bang bang bang and flashing. Unless it's shoved against a bloke's face nothing ever happens. And this bloke must've been sound asleep and he must've woke up to all this banging and there's Dudley and me looking down at him firing these blanks. "Don't shoot me! Don't shoot me!" And probably thought his last moment.
- 03:30 So we'd been up this track and we knew where we had to go. So anyhow this finished and we go back to where we are. And about quarter to five in the morning we've all got to get up again, the whole battalion. And we go down through this timber mill once again and this lieut, what was his name? It'll come to me in a little while. And this lieut he's there directing the traffic.
- 04:00 And he directs us - I see the company in front of us swing right and go back down that way. And we get down there. And I'm expecting our lieut to say to him, "No no we've got to go down here, up this track here." But no Simon follows where he directs him around there. And anyhow we're ambling along, still pretty dark. It ends up, we're out on the Palmerston Highway.
- 04:30 Like it's only a big gravel road but it's called the Palmerston Highway. We're going along and going along and people up in front of us you can see. And all of a sudden on a tree alongside of going past here's the picture show advertised from the pictures at Ravenshoe. And I dash up to this Simon and I say, "Hey you'd better hang on we're going the wrong way you know." He said, "What are you talking about?" I said, "Well we're now on the Palmerston Highway.

- 05:00 Just back there we passed a tree with a local picture show on it. Now we should've gone half left not turned right back in that timber mills." "Oh." So he very carefully rushes up and gets the company commander Lush and Lush pulls our company right off the road you see. And we're sitting on the road and Lush has dashed on up to get to battalion headquarters. All of a sudden this lieut -
- 05:30 this attack we're supposed to be putting on at half past five in the morning eventually handed around about quarter to twelve after they got us back. I'm glad it wasn't a real war. But the lieut he's in tears. Like it practically got him a bowler hat. Oh what's his name? Oh he was in a hell of a state. To this day I can't understand
- 06:00 how he got his wires so crossed but if we hadn't have been up the track the night before I wouldn't have known meself. But I said to Dudley Tomkins, "How can someone make a blue like that?" "Don't let it worry you Paddy because it's not worrying me."

That was at Ravenshoe?

That was outside of the Ravenshoe township. I think it was a place called Tucker's

- 06:30 Crossing actually the name of this actual spot, that they called it. Because there was a very bad accident to a 43rd bloke. Cause you know on field firing exercises they're shooting live ammo off around every where. And some of it doesn't explode. And one day unfortunately for this young bloke in the 43rd battalion. The 43rd battalion were doing some exercises out and this young bloke
- 07:00 lost a leg. Stood on a grenade that was unexploded until he stood on it and it blew up under - and he lost a leg over it, just in a training exercise. These sort of things happened. To give you how lucky you can be, I'm still working when this particular thing happened. The chap that I worked with named Les Guild he got into the air force, this is long before I got into the army.
- 07:30 I get to work one morning - someone says to me - I knew he was in some air force camp up at Sydney. They said, "Les Guild got wounded." I said, "Oh how he's only in Sydney, how would he get wounded in Sydney?" But sure enough he had. What it was, two Spitfires have landed at this air base he was at. And Les was only a little fellow, luckily for Les he was only a little fellow.
- 08:00 And he says, "I've just gone to work this morning in this hut that I'm working in. And off goes this machine guns out of one of these spit fires." He's a mechanic. I'll have to show this on your camera here. This is a beauty. This is a demonstration. He said, he's a mechanic, and he's working in the cockpit and he turns around, his behind hits the firing button. It's loaded. Off goes the machine gun - brrr brrr brrr.
- 08:30 Straight through the wall of this hut Les is working in. As I say Les is a little bloke. It went - the bullets went straight through his hair. Three months later they were still getting shrapnel out of his head. He says, "If I was a half inch taller I wouldn't be telling you the story." But he got wounded in Sydney. The things that go on. It's just unbelievable - blokes
- 09:00 cleaning rifles in tents. They're not supposed to have bullets in the blooming things - boom through the - like they've only got to hold - they've killed two blokes in the tent with them. You've got no idea. People have got no idea around fire arms, just how dangerous they are. Was I going to work or coming home? No I was out for me morning constitution. When we used to have dogs. And I'm coming back through the park here and I look over and there's a tree I'm going past.
- 09:30 And I saw this rifle on the ground. And I walked over and it was a pretty old rifle. And I've picked it up and I'm walking down the street here. It's about quarter to seven in the morning. I thought I hope none of me neighbours are out, they'll probably ring the police and say, "There's a character walking down the street with a rifle." So when I get home I ring the Averley Police Station and I tell them that I picked this rifle up. And a bit later before I went to work two young police women come up and they said, "Would you like to sign this because if no-one claims it
- 10:00 you can have it." I said, "You've got to be joking." I told them where I'd left me last rifle. I said, "I never want to see another one." And I just picked this up in the park. The things that people dump around. Like some kid could've picked it up. Put something in it and fired. It's out of condition, could blow up in his face. Or their face but luckily I picked it up in the park. I never want to see another rifle. Me boy brought one out one time.
- 10:30 Oh this is years ago. I said, "Get it out of the place, never want to see another one." People who like firearms they can have my share of them.

Did you have a good supply of ammunition?

Funny story about that once again. Where I told you about the rope catching the bloke across the throat. 15 platoon gets a report from Ben Norman who was our company

- 11:00 sergeant major. They've sighted three Nips back from where we are. So 15 platoon go out and they hold the three Nips up in a big hut apparently. And 15 platoon's around there and they're shooting it. They kill one Nip, they capture one and the other bloke gets away. And
- 11:30 each section leader has got to find out off his crew how many more rounds they need to make up their

stock. You know they're supposed to carry a bandolier around us, plus what we've got shoved into the rifle. I think the rifle held five, I'm pretty sure it was five in the magazine. And automatic weapons they carried twenty odd. But the bandolier I think

12:00 you carried about two hundred and fifty. Anyhow the upshot of this 15 platoon want a replacement for four thousand rounds of ammunition. And Ben Norman, a character, "Four thousand." You could have put them around their bloody necks and drowned them with that many - three bloody Nips, you shot one, caught one and one got away, it cost us four thousand rounds." So we had to be the worst shots in the world.

12:30 Funny that you should mention that. Cause Ben Norman he was a real old soldier and a character. Unfortunately he died remarkable young. I think he was only about forty six. Cancer killed him. Forty six pretty young to die. Especially after you know, all the things that the man has been through. You could've drowned them with the weight of it.

13:00 **So why did they put in an order for four thousand?**

Well see, you've got to be 'up to strength' all the time. Cause he's got - the company sergeant major's got to send away and have that stuff brought up to you. Like Pinto I remember, before when we were still on Labuan - one of the Bren guns - something went kapooey with it. I'm not sure - it wasn't our platoon. It might've been 14 or 15. So they had to get a replacement.

13:30 Of course Pinto's got this on the telephone and he's got a bloke in a jeep to drive him out to where we are - cause it was a pretty fair track coming out there. And the Provo's pull him up on the way, they've got a picket on the road, "You can't go up there." Pinto said, "What are you talking about - the only reason you got the bloody job here is because we're out there blueing. And if I don't get this to them they can't blue and then the Nips'll be coming back and you won't be telling them they can't come through here."

14:00 Let him through, let him through. But it just shows you you've got to be kept up to strength at all times no matter what. And as I said before, when the 28th got wiped out in the Middle East that was what stopped them, they just ran out of everything. When they saw them the next day there wasn't a round left up there. So there was only one thing they could do, was put their hands up in the air. You know the battalion

14:30 commander, bloke named McCarter he had the dubious honour of losing a battalion you know, which doesn't look well on a battalion commander's record. It doesn't put him in line to become a full colonel.

What would have been the circumstances that they would have shot off four thousand rounds?

Well if you got three Bren

15:00 guns firing. Now I think a magazine, I'm not sure whether it carried twenty four or twenty eight. So the Bren gunner and his number two between them, they carried about six magazines. Everyone else in the section carries a spare magazine for the Bren gun in their pack. So they hand them over so

15:30 you've got - say you've got seven men in your section, like there's the two there. That means you've got five more, you've already fired eleven by the time they've handed them in. Eleven we'll say of twenty eight, we'll say of thirty. So that one gun has fired three hundred and thirty rounds. Now if you've got two others on the other two sections firing at the same right you've fired nearly a thousand rounds inside of four or five minutes. And with the riflemen

16:00 shooting their five rounds and whipping another five out of their bandolier and whacking them in, the average rifleman he might shoot say, fifteen maybe twenty in the course of fifteen to twenty minutes. Some real 'Wild Bill Hickock's' - one lieut I know he was a crack marksman, he with a rifle he could shoot twenty six rounds out of a rifle

16:30 in one minute which is astronomical. When you think that he's got to keep shoving magazines, five in a magazine back into that thing. Like he didn't keep loading the magazines, they were already loaded, he just kept replacing the magazine. And he fired twenty six in a minute, by firing from the shoulder. I see these things on the television, I see - they're holding guns above their head and they're shooting them out of one hand. I say, "How can that be?" Like I'd put a 303 against my shoulder

17:00 and I'd fire and you could see my shoulder go back seven inches. And I watch these characters and I'm saying to meself, 'surely they haven't got recoilless guns these days'. Like you know, the gun's got to kick back somewhere and I watch these, they're going 'bang bang' with automatic weapons. I say to meself, "There's something wrong there, are they firing blanks?"

Hollywood.

Absolutely. I just, that always fascinates me. I've asked blokes at reunions. I said,

17:30 "Do you see these things on the television?" Because I can still feel the first time one hit me in the shoulder, the first time they took me down to a rifle range and believe me, I was not a good shot by any means. I wouldn't have been a Bisley marksman, the best day I ever seen. But you know you point something, you could generally manage to hit some part of it. But oh goodness me. Yeah rifle shooting I

could say

18:00 was not one of my strong points. And – but that Col Dale I mentioned before, he could shoot anything. They gave us some pistols some time, 38s they were, and we were firing at these four-gallon drums. No-one got within cooee. We had five shots each. Col hits the thing twice. You know to me that was a miracle. Like as far as I was concerned, he's another Wild Bill Hickock, he could shoot anything Col Dale. He's still alive up in New South Wales.

18:30 Not very well at present but he was a character really, got a photo of him out there too. When we were in the army, I suppose Col weighed about nine stone six soaking wet. You see him today he's built like a gorilla.

Did you have to do guard duty at night when you were out in the bush?

Very lucky in the Tablelands. We were about the only battalion that didn't have

19:00 guard duty. We had what they call a 'picket' and all the picket done was to make sure at five o'clock in the morning they went around to every cookhouse and woke the cooks up so that they could cook breakfast. But all the other battalions – oh they put one on just before we went up to – down to Townsville was the first time we had a guard in our battalion. And

19:30 Jock Morrison, they had what they call a stick man. And the stick man he's the best turned out soldier. He gets off the guard. And Jock Morrison he was like he walked out of Saville Row. Every time Jock was up for guard duty, he was stick man. Gee he was a well dressed soldier, I tell you. He must've kept that uniform well hidden, so it was all spot on. But I was only on one particular guard.

20:00 But as I say all the other battalions they always had them but the 28th for some reason, we just had a picket. And I was highly delighted when I found out what guards were all about. You know you're doing this rifle – cause when you're in the training camps, drill – foot drill and rifle drill just goes on for endless hours. You're out in the middle of a boiling hot paddock.

20:30 This is up in Queensland of course. The sun's pouring down on you, the sweat's running down your back. They've got you standing to attention. Your feet are on fire underneath you. You're saying, "How long is this going to last." They've got you standing to attention for about half an hour. To me the greatest waste of time but they reckon it was good discipline. I wasn't greatly rapt in it. I don't think I was your ideal soldier to be quite honest.

What was the story

21:00 **about the captain who wouldn't give the password?**

Oh that's when we were doing that barge training. Me mate Snowy Nason, he and a couple of other blokes – we're going up from Trinity Beach up towards Cook Town along the coast. Anyhow Snowy wakes Dolly Ray, he lives up here in

21:30 - Hellum I think it is. He lives up there now. And I'm trying to think of the other bloke who was with us that night. Can't think. Probably some interstate bloke, I can't remember his name but the three of us were just sitting there. But Snowy told us, this captain had come up to him and the other two blokes he was on with, and went crook at them because they hadn't challenged him when he come onto the beach.

22:00 And he was from this artillery mob. And he's complained to Dick Hindley who was the lieut in charge of us. And Dick had to be woke up for this happening. So Snowy says, "You'd better be watching out if this character comes around again." He said, "Dick wasn't too pleased with us and so he might try the same caper." So anyhow Dolly and I and this other bloke are just sitting there. And this barge it's only semi light

22:30 - about two or three o'clock in the morning. It pulls in on the beach. And they lower the ramp down. So I thought I'd better walk up to them. I walk up to them and the bloke's coming down the ramp onto the beach and he's starting to lug this twenty-five pounder off. I said, "Halt, who goes there?" And this bloke says, "2/12th Art." I said, "What's the password?" It might have been 'charlie over the water' I can't remember that long ago. He didn't know what the password was

23:00 and I didn't know he was a captain at the time either. And I've got me bayonet on me rifle and I said, "Right you're a prisoner." Oh this is lovely. These blokes with the twenty-five pounder that they're struggling with they stop. So I march him up and I wake Dick Hindley up again. "What's wrong?" says Dick Hindley. I said, "This bloke's just bought a barge in here, doesn't know the password, so I've made him a prisoner." And the

23:30 bloke, "I'm the Captain so and so from the 2/12th field arty." And Dick says, "Well why didn't you give the man the password?" He said, "Oh I didn't know what it was." Dick says, "Well you were here a while ago and you put on a performance about someone else. Now you're in the same boat." So anyhow it gets sorted out. The blokes manhandle the twenty-five pounder up and set it up and put a big

24:00 camouflage net over it and point it towards where they're imaginary going to fire it. And of course pushing one of them twenty pounders up through the sand is no joke. And there's six or eight blokes

doing the job. Anyhow Dolly and I and the other bloke, are sitting on the beach just yarning. And down comes a couple of them. And they says, "Who was the character with the rifle with the bayonet on it?" I said, "Me why?" They said, "You're going to be famous at the 2/12th." "What for?" They said, "That captain, he's been giving us buggery for years."

- 24:30 And to think - and we've got this to tell all the mob when we go back. He'll be the laughing stock then." So once again I got a bit of a rap from - what was the - you know he was all officious with Snowy and when he come out - he didn't know what was up from down. But these things happen in training. I suppose
- 25:00 some of the injuries you see blokes - that happen to fellows. I was on cookhouse one time with a bloke named Mannie Lyons. This was in the Tablelands. Anyhow we get our job done for the morning, it's around about half past ten. I said to Mannie - Mannie had been a jockey in West Australia. I said, "I'll get a footy and we'll have a kick down on the footy
- 25:30 ground." He said, "Okay Brad." So I get the football and him and I are down kicking the football back and forwards to one another. You know and he's run over to pick it up and he falls over. And he's in trouble getting up and I go, "What's wrong?" He says, "I've hurt me knee." So I help him across to the RAP - Regimental Aid Post. They have a look at him. And they reckon an ambulance and send him off to hospital. Anyhow about three days later a lieut named Lockwood
- 26:00 comes to see me. He says, "I've got to get a witness statement off you." "What about?" He says, "Private Lyons injured his knee on the football ground playing football." I says, "Yeah that's right, him and I were kicking a football there the other day." I heard a big army investigation about it you know. If I'm not there they charge poor old Mannie with SIW - Self Inflicted Wound. And he's in big trouble. As it turned out he knocked the knee that bad he got sent back to Western Australia.
- 26:30 I never saw him again. Just an innocent kick of a football. So things happen, very strange. And you see even in newspapers back in those days they used to put 'wounded in action', 'accidentally wounded'. They never put down SIWs - Self Inflicted Wounds.
- 27:00 But it just shows you people get caught out. I got to know a few of the 43rd just after the war was over. And I met a bloke one day when we was in the Tablelands that I'd worked with. His name was Maurie White. But in the 43rd he was known as Billy White. Mustn't have thought Maurie was a tough enough name for the army you see. So
- 27:30 I said - when I got to know - I said, "I know a bloke in your mob, Maurie White." I said, "He come from Carlton, back in Melbourne." They said, "Oh no you mean Billy White." I said, "Oh that might be his name but I knew him as Maurie." They said, "Oh he got sent home a long time ago, wound." The very first night we were on Labuan, he shot himself through the foot.
- 28:00 The blokes had to tell a lot of lies you know that things had happened but he shot himself, no worries. Blokes get to know blokes. He was one that I knew. Of course when I came home, I'm up at the local bootmakers one day getting me football boots restopped. And he said, "I was talking to Mrs White the other day." I said, "Who Maurie White's...?" He said, "You know he got wounded at the war." I said, "Yes I heard about that Mr Clag,
- 28:30 I heard about him getting wounded in the war." I didn't tell Mr Clag how he got wounded though.

You got sick yourself towards the end didn't you?

I was the only bloke that fronted up in Labuan and Borneo with hookworm. I must've picked it up in Morotai. It was pretty prolific there, you had to be pretty careful. But it never hit me till we'd been at

- 29:00 Labuan for about eight or nine days, it started to play up with me. And then it went on and on and on. Cause I didn't know. I went and saw the doctor and he give me a lot of tablets to take. By this time I'd developed dysentery with it. And up where we were we'd set a 'thunder box' [toilet] up on the hill and I used to get off that box to let someone come and sit on it that's how bad it was.
- 29:30 Eventually when we were going to go up to this forward position where they were when the atomic bomb got dropped, Lush me company commander, he comes and sees me. He says, "I want you to go down to the RAP, see the doctor, tell him I sent you down. I want them to send you to hospital cause where we're going, the way you've got to be up during the night, someone will shoot you during the night. They'll be that nervous where we're going." "You're
- 30:00 the boss." So down I go and I explain to the doctor. "Captain Lush says you've got to send me back to the hospital." Well he sends me back to Beaufort to this CCS [Casualty Clearing Station] they call it. And told them what I was there for and the doctor had written a bit of a report. They give me a stretcher and I'm on it. A bloke on a stretcher alongside me turns out he's from a field bakery unit. And he's in there bad too with dysentery you see.
- 30:30 So the next morning I'm down on the 'throne' at the back of this CCS and a bloke comes out and says to me, "They want you to go down onto the barge." I said, "What for?" He said, "You've got dysentery, you've got to go to hospital over in Labuan." I said, "No you mean the kid in the next bed from the field bakery." He said, "Your name's Bradley isn't it?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "That's who they're screaming for, Bradley." So up I go and sure enough it's me they want. I've got to go down - there's about four of

our blokes

- 31:00 that's on there being wounded and that and several other fellows got malaria. Back over to Labuan I go on this thing up to this 2/7th AGH [Australian General Hospital] I think it was, a big military hospital. And they give me a bed and I'm alongside a fellow from an artillery unit. He'd won a Military Medal up in New Guinea he told me. But he said, "You blokes in the infantry, they should give you all one. What did they give me a Military Medal for?"
- 31:30 He says, "All you infantry blokes ought to get Military Medals." And so I said, "Won't do me much good with what's wrong with me." And the next morning the doctor comes around. And he says to me, "How many motions a day do you do?" Well I says, "I'll tell you, we got a thunder box there, I get off it to let someone else sit on it." And I said, "That went on all day, every day for the last eight days." "Oh."
- 32:00 So next thing I know I'm out of that ward and into a fly proof ward that's got fly wire all around so that no flies can get in. There's about twenty blokes in there. And they do some tests and they put me on what they call a light diet for the army, I was only been fed on fish. I was being a real toffee not on M&V [Meat and Vegetables] and all that sort of thing.
- 32:30 And the only thing they gave me for it was what they called an atomic cocktail which was a glass of stuff with about six colours in it. Tasted awful, I had to drink the whole damn lot. That's the only thing that they give me and the sister in charge of the ward - and that was her name, Sister Dagan Ward [?], that was her name, she was in charge of the ward. She told me that what I was in there for, that the dysentery they could control
- 33:00 it but it was the hookworm they don't want. And she said, "They want to know just how you have got hookworm here because no-one else has had it." That's all I could put it down to - if I didn't get it here I must've picked it up back in Morotai before we come here. But as far as I know I was the only bloke up there that fluked and I wouldn't wish it on anyone else. Whoever got it it really churned me up inside. I suppose I was in hospital
- 33:30 about twelve days and that's when I was going back and I found out they'd dropped an atomic bomb. And that was when I knew the war - Tom or Terry O'Rooke I can't think of his name properly - he told me that the war was coming to an end. And I don't think anyone was going to protest, whichever side they were on. Because I'm quite sure everyone wants to be a 'returned
- 34:00 soldier'. So I'd say that the time I was in the army I was pretty lucky with the people I was mixed up with and as I mentioned Ossie Siddons a while ago, whose family live out at Claremont. When I was on me trip down memory lane I took some photos, I can't find them now, when I went around the
- 34:30 war cemetery of various blokes from our unit. And his was one - actually I didn't take the photos cause as Nellie'll tell you I'm hopeless. I've never taken a photo in me life, never driven a car. I struck a young bloke from South Australia who was wandering around there. He was just up there to see his wife, she was the woman engineer in charge of a big project that was going on on Labuan Island. How's that, a woman in
- 35:00 charge of an engineering project. And he was up there. He said that eventually he'd probably come back cause he was mixed up in the merchant bank business. He had a camera. I said, "Do you take photos." "Oh no trouble." So my daughter give me a camera. So I said, "Could you take some photos for me." So I went around and pointed out different graves. And one of the graves I took was Ossie Siddons. I took several others. I found a mate of mine who was in the 24th, Tommy Ranulli's grave. He's buried alongside of Diver Derrick who won a VC and was probably
- 35:30 the most famous infantry soldier in the last war from Australia. He was with 48th. And Tommy's buried alongside of him. I took Tommy - cause we went to school together, took a photo and I gave it to his family. They lived over in Heidelberg. Oh they thought it was wonderful after all these years. But I've got this one of Ossie Siddons and I've tried to find out - I'd got Bert Woods and Slip Simpson's. But I couldn't trace any of their families at all.
- 36:00 So I rang the phone directory and asked them - cause I knew he came from this place Clermont. "Was there any phone numbers for a family named Siddons in Clermont up in Queensland." And they gave me a number. So I rang it and it turns out it was a great nephew of Ossie Siddons. He's got an electricians business there.
- 36:30 And I explained what I was on about. He said, "You want to talk to my aunty Joan, can you give me your phone number cause she's down in Rockhampton. When she comes back I'll get her to ring you." Her husband was sick and apparently they were down there, he was having treatment. So the next week, it was on a Sunday morning, she rang here. I told him what I had and I said, "If you like I can post up the pictures." And I sent
- 37:00 one of our quarterly journals and everything. And this, a real good young fellow - he says, "Send it to me collect at this end will you?" I didn't even have to pay the postage. So I thanked him very much. And anyhow she rings me. And she says, "Are you writing a book?" And I said, "No no I just thought the family..." "Family interested?," she says.
- 37:30 "Like pennies from heaven after all these years that we actually have a look at Ossie's grave." And she

was telling me the things he and she used to get up to when they were kids growing up. And yet Ossie and I couldn't see eye to eye all the time I knew him in the army. Yet his family think I'm terrific because I told him - well a chap Phil Thorpe lives in Rockhampton who was in the same platoon as

38:00 Ossie. So I gave them their address so I said, "If you're in Rockhampton look Phil Thorpe up and he can tell you all about Ossie if you like." The next time I hear from Phil he says, "The Siddons family think you're wonderful that after all these years that someone actually got..." And the classic was, Aunt Joan had gone to school with Phil Thorpe's wife. The world is such a small place it's not funny.

38:30 **There seems to be so much of that, like in the decades after the war of people finding each other.**

Oh actually I think we could all find one another if we were really sincere. Now this daughter of mine I was talking about before. The reason I'm in touch with her - I hadn't been in touch with her for many years you see. But this second cousin of mine that was doing a family history

39:00 on my mother's side of the family, she gets in touch with me and sends me some paperwork, could I fill it in. Blah blah blah - my family, who they were, who I got, who I haven't got. And I put all this down. And I thought to myself, how do I tell her about - I don't know where she is. So I thought to myself, now where can I start? So I decided -

39:30 I decided to look in the phone book under various names. And I found one name - Freddy Rigney's who funeral I went to later on. And I said, "You mightn't remember me Freddy but one time you and I were brother-in-law's." "Oh Paddy how're you going?" Blah blah - he was living down South Melbourne. And I told him and he said, "Oh I can't..." He said, "But Leah..." Him and Leah his wife

40:00 they'd split up you see. She was living in Queensland. And he's got her phone number and address up in Queensland. So he said, "Get in touch with Leah, she might be able to fill you in." So I did this and I ring there and I explain to Leah - "How did you get my number Paddy? It's a silent number." I said, "I got it off Freddy." "Oh." I says, "What I'm after, do you know where Pat might be these days?" And she gives me her phone number

40:30 and her address and you wouldn't believe it, ten minutes' drive from here to where she lived in Lower Templestowe. So you know I lived that close to her it wasn't funny.

Your daughter?

Yeah. So anyhow I ring and, sitting there I ring. And I say, "This is your father here." "Stop this bloody nonsense!" ,this girl screams at me back over the phone. I says, "Now hang on a minute I am your father whether you want to believe it or not. My name's

41:00 Paddy Bradley." She says, "Oh Dad I'm so sorry." Like after all these years and I haven't spoken to her that long - she said, "You wouldn't believe it." Her son had just been going out a few minutes before. He was playing basketball. Apparently at that time he'd be about eighteen or nineteen. She says, "And he was only just asking me would I have any idea where his grandfather really lives." And she says, "I told him I wouldn't even know." And she says, "And you've rang just now."

41:30 She said, "When he comes home I can tell him I've been talk..." So as I say I think if we take a punt and we look at a phone number and we ring someone they might be able to put us on. Like I suppose I found out where she was within twenty minutes, when I tried to. And of course since then we've been in fairly regular contact. And of course they've moved from there and they live down at Mornington now, her and her husband and

42:00 they've been here.

INTERVIEW ENDS