Australians at War Film Archive

Roy Wotton (Padre) - Transcript of interview

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Tape 1

00:30 **Good morning Roy.**

Good morning Christopher [interviewer].

I'd like to start today by hearing where and when you were born?

I was born in 1913, ninety years ago at Epping, which in those days was a semi rural town.

01:00 It had been all orchards originally and it was moving out of that status into a dormant city, town rather. I was the second boy in family of six, five boys and one girl. My mother was a New Zealander and I still have a very strong affinity with New Zealand

01:30 except when we were playing footy. So we were brought up and I went to Epping Public School, and from there I went to Fort Street High School at Petersham which was then considered the school of Sydney. We kidded ourselves that we were somebody to get there. From there the depression hit us, and I had a job with the Egg Board for a couple of years.

02:00 It was then up in Mount Street, that's up in Broadway, so I did evening lectures at the University which was only a five minute walk. And so I started a BA [Bachelor of Arts] degree at Sydney and did four subjects and then in 1935, no it wasn't it was '36

02:30 I went into Moore Theological College and I was there in 1939 and 1937 and I was made a Deacon at St. Andrew's Cathedral by Archbishop Mull in 1938 and we were very much Church of England and part of old England. Archbishop Mull had grown up in Dover where his father was the Mayor, and he was educated at Kings College, Cambridge

03:00 and was ordained a priest at Canterbury Cathedral by Archbishop Davidson. Although he went to Canada for a while, and then he became a Bishop of Western China and then to Sydney as Archbishop, but he always remained an Englishman. And the Bishop taking our retreat was Bishop Taylor Smith, who, in his younger days had been Chaplain to Queen Victoria and then he became

03:30 Chaplain General to the British forces in the First World War and then he became Bishop of Sierra Leone. So we were really a part of old England everything was C of E [Church of England], what changes have occurred. Then I went out to Waverly in 1938 as a curate and I spent two years there, and I wasn't particularly happy in the Eastern Suburbs

04:00 it was a very impersonal sort of life, and then I went to Manly and there was a terrific difference. Manly had a soul and they call it the village and I had a very happy time there at Manly. I started a football club for example that lasted for sixty years, and over the years we got six internationals out of that that club. Well I went away from Manly in

04:30 1941, I was married just before. We went into Ingleburn camp and we sailed from Sydney in 1941 December on the Aquitania, the last of the four funnel big Cunnard liners, and we landed in Moresby towards the end of January 1942 and it was chaotic.

05:00 They had put all the tents and things first on the ship, so that they were last to come off, and for almost a fortnight we lived out in the open air. We were subjected to mosquitoes., there was one tap to a whole battalion and ultimately they spread this battalion I was with, it was the 53rd Battalion -

05:30 it became part of the 30th Brigade, the 49th and the 39th Battalions - and all these chappies did was unload ships and make roads and did very little military training. Ultimately and when it was necessary to go across the Kokoda Track they were very poorly trained.

06:00 The battalion, while it was in Moresby had no cohesion because of the jobs that it was given. They had one exercise and they were ill equipped in every way to go into battle, Well they went up and the first battalion to go up and meet the Japanese at Buna and Gona was the 39th who did very well. The 53rd

met the Japanese when they were

06:30 in full blast and they got driven back, so then they were pulled out. The AIF [Australian Imperial Force] had arrived and the AIF took over and the Japanese continued to advance in spite of that. Well the 54th was then joined to the 55th Battalion and in a sense I was out of a job, so they then sent me down to Milne Bay and then on

07:00 to Goodenough Island where I joined the 2/12th Battalion. The 2/12th Battalion was part of the 18th Brigade, a very wonderful Brigade. And they were the 3rd Brigade of the AIF and they were originally the 6th Division and they went to England, and at England they were transferred from the 6th Division to the 7th Division and immediately they put them into Tobruk under the 9th Division.

07:30 So it was a real mix up and they spent a long time in Tobruk and they were on the perimeter of Tobruk and they were the first to stop the Germans in Tobruk. Well they were then pulled out and brought back to Australia and instead of putting them back into the 7th Division they sent them to Milne Bay, and their place in the 7th Division was taken by the 16th Brigade of the 6th Division

08:00 such is the way the army does things. Well at Milne Bay they were the first to stop the Japanese. They were a wonderful crowd, the 2/9th Battalion was all Brisbane and the 2/10th was all Adelaide and the 2/12th was a mixture of North Queenslanders and Tasmanians, so graphically speaking you couldn't imagine a more extraordinary thing

08:30 than the fellows from way up North Queensland and the fellows down south in Tassie [Tasmania]. Any rate they threw the Japanese out of Milne Bay and then they went up to Goodenough Island and it was one of the D'Entrecasteaux group; they are three islands off the south east coast of New Guinea it was the Ferguson, the Goodenough and the Normanby. The Japanese had used Goodenough as a base to attack Milne Bay. So

09:00 2/12th were sent up and they removed the Japanese from Goodenough Island. Well around about December we were told we wouldn't be there much longer, we had Christmas Day on Goodenough Island which was a lovely place; warm streams, friendly natives, plenty of tropical fruit it was

09:30 a real paradise. And about the 20th December, no it was later than that, no we had Christmas there, that's right the 29th December three Corvettes arrived, the Broome, the Colac and the Whyalla. And any Naval man will tell you that they were the most uncomfortable ships in the navy, they were a work horse

10:00 they weren't a destroyer, and they weren't a frigate and they did all sorts of jobs. So three hundred men were shoved onto these little ships and they travelled all day on the 20th December up to Oro Bay and when they got off at Oro Bay, they got there about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, they had a quick meal

10:30 and then all night they marched through the jungle. They arrived at Buna early on the morning of the 1st January 1943 and a quick breakfast and they were thrown into action. And they had to go across open country, in broad daylight and attack strongly fortified Japanese

11:00 defences. The Japanese after being pushed over the Owen Stanley Ranges on the Kokoda Track still hoped they would keep their bases in New Guinea. They had lost the Battle of the Coral Sea so they couldn't take Moresby then they decided that they would take Milne Bay and come over the mountains and get Moresby that way. Well they lost it at Milne Bay and they were pushed ultimately over

11:30 the Owen Stanleys to Kokoda. and they retreated into their bases at three places, at Gona, Buna and Sanananda. Well the boys that had come over the Owen Stanleys dislodged them at Gona and that was around November 1942. The Americans were given the task of removing them from Buna and Sanananda but they didn't succeed, so this

12:00 18th Brigade was sent up to do the job. And so the 2/9th Battalion went in on Christmas Day 1942 and the American General Eichelberger said they were the finest troops in the world, he was really impressed. Well they suffered terrible casualties and they took their objective which was Cape Enderdeer.

12:30 And then the 2/12th Battalion, who had come up on this awful march during the night, they went in on New Years Day 1943 and it took them two days to take Giropa Point, Buna. The Japanese had been there for a long time, they had these strong fortifications, they had dug outs, and they had put tons and tons of sand over

13:00 and then the jungle had grown over them and they had put coconut logs there and our artillery demolish them. So we did have tanks, and the fellows went in on New Years Eve 1943 and had to go across open country and the great General Vasey said, "We have learned nothing, we had gone back to the tactics of World War I

13:30 where the fellows just stormed the enemy positions." Well by about January 2nd they had taken Buna, well this meant that the Japanese had been removed from Gona and now Buna but they were at Sanananda, and this Brigade ultimately by the 22nd of January they had taken Sanananda.

14:00 In those three weeks that began with 2/9th Battalion at Cape Enderdeer, they had lost a thousand men.

The jungle conditions were unbelievable, it was tough on the Owen Stanley tracks, I was one of the few blokes who was in both battles, having gone up, see chaplains were moved from battalion to battalion and I had two trips on the Owen Stanleys. I went up there

14:30 with the 53rd and they were withdrawn and then the AIF 21st Brigade went up and they made a terrific stand at a place called Efogi on the Kokoda Track, they were completely outnumbered, they were surrounded and they could neither retreat or advance

15:00 so they went bush. They went east as far as we know over country that as far as we know, in which human foot had never trodden. Then the next Brigade came up, the 25th and they had the Japanese on the run and they couldn't stop to bury the boys of the 21st Brigade and as I was at a loose end and they sent me up to bury these lads. And there were about seventy of them at a place called Brigade Hill at Efogi.

15:30 They gave me a Papuan who went bush and a young corporal who couldn't take it and he cracked up, and so I was left on my own to bury these blokes with my own hands, about seventy of them. You can imagine after all this

Sorry Ray we might just pause there.

You can imagine physically and spiritually

16:00 I was absolutely drained. And then they wanted me for the 18th Brigade and I was sent to the con depot to recover, but and anyway the old brigadier was yelling for me and so that's how I joined the 12th Battalion. Well, so after we went to Sanananda, we took Sanananda on the 21st January '43.

16:30 So that when we came out of Sanananda the Brigade had taken, had absorbed over a thousand fellas, but my interpretation of that was, it pretty tough on the Kokoda Track and it was tough, there is no doubt about that but it was nowhere near as tough as Sanananda and Buna

17:00 was. The weather, one night we got thirty-six inches of rain and it was rather funny and the colonel was sitting on a log overlooking a creek and there was a clap of thunder and it knocked him right off the log and into the creek and the fellas had a great old laugh about this, he didn't think it was funny of course. So Sanananda.

17:30 the weather was bad, it was jungle, and our artillery had made great holes all over the place, which meant that our fellows were wading through holes up to their waists in mud and against a determined enemy to fight it out to the very end. Sanananda was really tough. When we came out ultimately and we were getting on the plane at a place called Dobodura,

18:00 the colonel said, "Stand out all the men who went to England on the Queen Mary in 1940," and out of the nine hundred there were twenty-nine. So we came back to Australia and we had our leave and the battalion had to be reinforced of course, and what did the army do? But there were a lot of units in Australia

18:30 who had been originally been in Light Horse and they converted from Light Horse into Motor Regiments, the horses went, and so they were sort of a mounted infantry fellas and they were in Australia. And the army decided to use them to reinforce the AIF units who were depleted in the first New Guinea campaign.

19:00 And so into the 18th Brigade came a new brigadier, Brigadier Wootten had been promoted to be a General in charge of the 9th Division, and Brigadier Chilton was put into his place. And into the Brigade came all these fellas from the motor regiments bringing with them army seniority, not regimental seniority, which meant they superseded the

19:30 officers who remained from the old Brigade. You can imagine how the fellows felt; they had fought the Germans in Tobruk, the Japanese at Milne Bay and they had fought them at Buna and Sanananda and suffered terribly, and when they naturally expected promotion it was denied to them because they had regimental seniority and these new men had army seniority.

20:00 And so into the old Brigade came three quarters of new troops, officers and men you see. The great thing that Brigadier Chilton was able to do was to blend them. And so they trained at a place called Ravenshoe in New Guinea, and it was all, they put the troops up there because it was all jungle country.

20:30 The Brigade ultimately was ready again as a fighting force, so back to New Guinea we went and for a while we were stationed in Port Moresby. Now the next thing the army wanted to do was get the Japanese out of Lae and so they flew the 7th Division of which the Brigade was now part,

21:00 they flew them across the mountains to a place called Dumpu. When we got off the plane at Dumpu it was bad country, it was typhus country and typhus, they were fatal little wogs, and on the drome it had [a sign] 'one bite, one night, good night', if you got typhus you were lucky to recover you see? Well the first Brigade to go over was the 25th Brigade

21:30 and the 2/33rd Battalion were in trucks on the drome in Port Moresby waiting to be flown over when a big American bomber, a Liberator, landed in among them and killed about eighty of them. So at any rate what remained went across, and then ultimately the other two Brigades were got into Lae and took Lae.

22:00 Then the thing was to drive the Japanese further out and chase them right out of New Guinea and they had gone up into the Finisterre Ranges, the Germans had called those mountains the Finisterre cause its Latin - the end of the earth - and that's what they called it. There was there this famous place called Shaggy Ridge so the 18th Brigade had to go and take Shaggy Ridge.

22:30 And after they took them from Shaggy Ridge the next stop was a place called Bogadjim and the next place was Madang, and so the poor old 18th Brigade having defeated the enemy and had to chase the remnants of the army into these small villages, were pulled out another unit were given the honour and the glory. So at any rate we came back to Lae and

23:00 ultimately go onto two Dutch ships and came back to Australia and we were now still on the Atherton Tablelands, but not at Ravenshoe this time but at Kairi. The training went on and on and on and the authority, whether they were army or political or who they were, decided that we would go and take Borneo. And so they sent the 9th Division which had just come back from the battle of El Alamein with

23:30 the 8th army against Rommel, were given the job of going to Tarakan which was north Borneo, which they took. And the 7th Division were given the job of taking south Borneo which was Dutch, to a place called Balikpapan and they did that all right with the help of the American Navy and air force. They were there till the end of the war, when was? 5th of August

24:00 1945. And then it was only a matter of then waiting when the war was over to come home and be disbanded and so I came. So by this time I had been made Senior Chaplain of the Division and I decided I'm not going home on one of these dirty old American Liberty ships, I'm going to wait until a decent ship comes in and I'll go home in comfort. And I did that and I came home on the Manoora a lovely ship.

24:30 So I was discharged in Sydney in January 1946. And then I thought I would have a bit of break but the dear old Bishop thought no and he sent me to a place called Mortlake. It was in pretty bad shape and it was a place where they made gas in the old days and so I settled down there with my wife and my young son who hadn't

25:00 seen me until he was nine months old, and we had a very happy time there. Then Judith the second child came along in 1946 and then I finished my university work, I had broken it off to go to the war you see? So I finished my university work and I had five years there and then I went to Gordon, to St John's Church at Gordon, it was the mother church of the rich North Shore.

25:30 But Gordon was a lovely place in those days and there were horse troughs on the Pacific Highway in front of our place and it still had the lovely North Shore atmosphere. St John's was the mother church, it dated back to 1872, and it had a very ancient cemetery attached to it in which all the North Shore was buried. We had rabbits in the backyard

26:00 and I kept WAS DOUBLE QUOTE CHOOK s and I had a garden and it was a lovely place. In the post war development they widened the Pacific Highway and took a bit of the property off the church and big business moved in and it became what they call the urban sprawl and it more or less lost it character, but I was very happy there. I stopped there until 1979

26:30 and the children had grown up and they had done their university work and left home and we came up to Blue Bay in 1979, and we had a very happy time. Blue Bay was a lovely place in those days, it was still a holiday resort and a fishing village and then of course development came in

27:00 and all the big houses came on the beach side and around the lake and by and large it lost it character. We could go down in the early days and in half a day catch enough fish for a week and go down at night and catch enough prawns for the week too, that's all gone. The place has completely changed it character demographically of course and so we were here all these years

27:30 and Maisie had a stroke in 1990 and she died in '93, so I have been here ever since. I do a lot of church work and I do a lot of army work. I'm tied up with the 18th Brigade, my old unit and I'm also tied up with the 7th Division and also with the 6th Division, see chaplains move around a lot.

28:00 And also with the 53rd Battalion and the local sub branch of the local RSL and that keeps me going pretty well. And I'm a keen gardener and I used to fish and play golf, but those days have gone and I no longer drive a car and so I do a fair bit of reading and that's how life is. I go to Sydney a lot

28:30 and that's it.

That's a wonderful little expose.

I suppose I should tell you about the New Zealand connection.

Well I was going to ask you about your background. First of all you mentioned that your mother was a New Zealander but of English back ground herself?

29:00 **Was she, was the UK [United Kingdom] originally?**

My grandfather was an Irish peasant and he landed in Sydney first of all, and worked on the railways as a labourer and then he went to New Zealand and he raised a family of thirteen kids, killed his wife. She

died at fifty-one. His bright boys he made teachers,

29:30 and they all died poor men. His not so bright men he made farmers and they all died millionaires and got the Second World War and fed the Yanks and all this. And he was the founding father of the Tory Party in New Zealand, I think they still call themselves Nationalists. My son

30:00 and my nephews have all done very well for themselves in the professional and commercial life in Sydney and when there is an opportunity I tell them, “D don’t forget your origins mates!” When this row was on about the boat people I told them my ancestors arrived in Australia, steerage, on a tub of an old ship, it was before Federation and there was no Mr Ruddock to vet them

30:30 or to say, “We don’t want you,” and all the rest of it and I begged them to be a bit tolerant because history was very kind to them you see? So old grandfather Wilcox he was a good farmer. One of my uncles had three sons and he got out of dairy and into what they call growers, indeed what we would call a market gardener. He was the biggest

31:00 potato and onion man in New Zealand, and his three sons and they are so big now, they have gone to the South Island and they have a helicopter to go from their North Island farms to their South Island farms you see? They have all done it very well over there. My father used to go on trips and he went over to New Zealand and he met my mother over there so she came to Australia. And these were the days when it took four days

31:30 on an uncomfortable ship to go to New Zealand, so she made a great sacrifice. Rarely did she go back to her own people, but of course these days with transport being what it is, every four years we have reunion in New Zealand and of course we go over. The first one we had, oh it was a long time ago there was a guilty whisper there might be some Maoris in the closet.

32:00 What happened, old grandfather Wilcox had a brother who had a wife in Ireland, and he took a de facto wife who was a Maori in New Zealand and when the Irish wife heard about it she came out post haste but the damage was done, he had married a Maori girl you see. So the first reunion there was just this whisper,

32:30 but the next reunion there were about ten Maoris there and the last time I went there were thirty of them and one of them, John he is a terrific fellow. He graduated from the university with first class honours and he was secretary to three cabinet ministers and now he has given that all up and he runs a jazz band.

33:00 He has the leading jazz band in New Zealand and his brother got a PhD [Doctor of Philosophy] in the forestry and he has been used by the Owayan government, and the Malayan government, the New Zealand Government and the New Guinea Government and even the Australian Government so we are not a bit worse off for a bit of Maori blood in us, the Wilcox mob you see? But they are fine people, lovely people.

33:30 One reunion we had in the Rugby Union Hall at a place called Bombay and all around the hall were these All Blacks who had played football for New Zealand, I wouldn’t have liked to have played for those fellows, they looked fierce, they really did. So that’s New Zealand and we go over there a fair bit and they come over here so they are my cousins you see.

34:00 **Well Roy I wanted to ask about your father and what he was doing?**

My father was brought up in Glebe, the sociology is most interesting; they lived at Forest Lodge and they went to St John’s Church at Glebe. It’s proper title was St John’s Bishop Thorpe. The early Governors gave the Anglican Church a lot of land out at Glebe, Glebe is the Church land you see,

34:30 it was useless in those days and it has appreciated enormously since then and the church let the land in Glebe out to a development company to put houses on it, the church got ground rent which was very low and these people made a lot of money out of the houses. When the lease was getting near its finish this company naturally,

35:00 as the houses were coming back to the church, let them deteriorate. You see ultimately the church sold them to the Federal Government and now Glebe is a housing area the church put its money into St. Andrew Cathedral. Everybody went to church in those days, it was the social centre as well as the religious centre and St John’s Glebe were very, very

35:30 patriotic. Father worked in Goldsbrough Mort, the wool firm. His aunt had been a Governess to Thomas Mort, the great industrialist and that’s how he got the job. Well I went to church with my grandmother and the dear old lady she was a replica of Queen Victoria, physically in every way, she had this little muff around her neck and she had her widow’s

36:00 weeds as all the old ladies did and I went with her to church and I sat with her in the front seat and I was turfed out. I was told that it belonged to Judge Wilkinson, Judge Wilkinson was a silver tail who lived at Glebe Point. The ordinary people they called Copper Heads lived on the flat and were mostly shop keepers but we lived at Forest Lodge

36:30 and were the great middle class. We were the backbone of society and the church hall at Glebe still

today is called the Record Reign Hall after Queen Victoria, and the cricket oval is Jubilee Oval even to this day and the old 55th of World War I was called the West Sydney Regiment, so it was very English you see? But that was the background you see.

37:00 The dear old Church of England it was part of this too, you see and my father was very active, he was the Sunday School Superintendent and so it was inevitable that one of his boys should become a priest. Well he had enough in him to see that Glebe wasn't the place to bring up a family and about 1910 he moved to Epping he bought a block of land,

37:30 a half acre and built his house there and it took him thirty years to pay it off and this little boy from Glebe had his ducks and his WAS DOUBLE QUOTE CHOOK s and we shared a cow with the next door neighbour and it was a lovely place to be brought up as a boy. We were brought up in the bush and so on, that was my father, he was a clerk at Goldsbrough and Mort

38:00 and Goldsbrough and Mort in those days were right at the Quay and one of his jobs was to supervise the loading of wool onto the ships, and his father told him that previously they were sailing ships they put the wool onto and I suppose between his life and my life I have seen a terrific change in Australian life you see in every way.

38:30 When I went to the university one of my uncles told me I was too big for my boots, that wasn't meant for us, and this was how they were conditioned to accept their position in life you see. Its in the old church catechism, one of my duties is to bear myself reverently to all my betters, and to earn my living and then state of life and then please God to call me.

39:00 One uncle worked in Anthony Hordens in the grocery department and it was the shop of Sydney and the other was as a commercial traveller with DW Murray which was a merchandising warehouse in Clarence Street. He used to walk to work because it cost a penny to get in the tram Glebe to Sydney and it saved a penny because wages were shockingly low you see.

39:30 I can remember just remember my boy hood days, born in 1913 and when I was five it was the aftermath of the First World War, it was a shocking business: Sydney was full of limbless soldiers. I read a book not long ago by a fellow called Braga

40:00 about Gallipoli and its round the life of Neville Howse who was a doctor, he became a politician later in the Menzies Government but he won a VC [Victoria Cross] in the Boer War and he was in Gallipoli and when a man came in wounded in the arm or leg they used to chop it off and he said the hospital ships were running with blood.

40:30 They just washed them off with seawater. When it was all over, they went to France of course, Sydney was full of limbless soldiers and gassed soldiers everywhere. You would get in a tram and you would see a notice 'The wearer of this badge is a limbless soldier, please don't let him stand.' Well we hardly got over that and then the depression.

Roy before we get into that, I am sure you have some vivid memories, I think our tape is coming to an end?

41:00 **So we will pause there and change over.**

Why don't you ask me a question?

I will yeah.

Tape 2

00:33 **Roy you had the advantage of seeing Sydney at a time when it was suffering from post First World War and as it led into the depression can you tell me your recollections of the depression time?**

Well as I told you I had this job with the Labour and Industry Department it was only temporary, it didn't last that long

01:00 and people learned to improvise. And you also had family solidarity, if Mum and Dad couldn't get a job, Mum might go out and wash and she'd get five shillings for a morning or afternoon washing clothes for people who could afford it, the little boy might go and sell newspapers,

01:30 we used to go to the nursery and wash pots for which we got sixpence for a hundred, or tie up labels. The result was people learned to appreciate one another as human beings and they did learn to improvise. When my father's suits wore out mother would take them down to a seamstress and she would make trousers for us boys

02:00 for one and six, and I suppose my mother was typical of her generation; she could make a shilling do the work of a pound. Fortunately at Epping most people had a little orchard and so when the oranges were on Mum made marmalade jam until we were heartily sick of it and then when the summer plums came

on and so we had stewed plums, and we had to put up with it you see.

02:30 Every little boy had his job to do: we might go down in the bush and bring home clothes props for example and we all had a little garden plot to do and jobs to do. So the depression made people realise that they had to stick together and that families had to have solidarity and they had to improvise. And I read a history

03:00 of the 2/9th Battalion written by an Adelaide fellow of all people in which the same thing happened in Adelaide and he pointed this very fact out; what made Australian such good soldiers in the Second AIF was that they had learned to live together and this business of solidarity, and they had learned to improvise. And for example our boys in Tobruk they leaned about Molotov cocktails,

03:30 they had no answer to the tanks so they made these Molotov cocktails with petrol in bottles and so on. So it was very formative period in Australian history, very unkind and very cruel, men were on the road walking from place to place like tramps looking for work and it was a soul destroying period there is no doubt

04:00 about that you see. Anybody who wanted to go the university would not be able to, there were few bursaries and few exhibitions. When I ultimately got a job at the Egg Board I wanted to do university work I had to do it at night and as I felt that I had had such a respectable upbringing

04:30 I wanted to see the other side of society I chucked in my clerical job at the Egg Board and worked in the store as a storeman; working with fellas who were taking their girls out to the park and SP booking was rife, always hoping that they would make something. In those days there were race meetings every day of the week.

05:00 The University of New South Wales is where Kensington Race Course was out near the airport where the navy have got their big depot, was the Ascot Racecourse, out near Kogarah at a place called Moorefield there was another one, there was a meeting every day of the week. These fellows I worked with on the Egg Board were rugged sort of fellas, see I had been at Fort Street,

05:30 I was at Fort Street with Kerr, the Governor General, he was in my class. They were very bright fellows Kerr and his mob they got the few exhibitions that were going, those of us who wanted to go to university had to go at night, earn money of a day so it suited me. The university at night had more evening students in the faculty of arts

06:00 than they had in the daytime. School teachers who were primary school teachers who wanted to be high school teachers so they had to get a degree, went to the university free that was an agreement between the State government and the university, the State Government gave the university money on condition, there is always a condition in politics, that they let school teachers attend free. So Sydney University at night time in the faculty of arts and economics

06:30 was full so that's where I went and I spent two years there and then I went into Theological college and I have told you the rest. I was going to say the army was a great education, see I lived at Manly.

07:00 Manly was Sydney, Sydney was New South Wales and New South Wales was Australia. And I went away with a Sydney Battalion only for six months and then I was put into the 18th Brigade and I found myself amongst fellows who had prawned in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and broke in cattle in Long Reach and Camooweal, and branded cattle and cut sugar cane around Cairns and timber on the Atherton Tablelands,

07:30 rugged Australians. And I will never forget when I joined them on Goodenough Island and they said, "There is a study group down in A Company," and I went down there I thought this suits me and the subject matter was Bastards I Have Known, and these fellows told all about the bosses they had in Queensland. They were rugged fellows I can tell you. Well I had four wonderful years with these fellows and they taught me how to be

08:00 an Australian. You know with my insulated Sydney outlook you see, Queenslanders I really think are the best Australians. They really are. So it was a great education with them and I mean they talked about ringers and all these sorts of things, I didn't know what a ringer was and I made the mistake of asking, and I got the right answer you see. So I had four years with these great Queenslanders and Tassies

08:30 and as the war went on we got fellows from Western Australia and South Australia and the army experience was really wonderful and I got to know fellows from all over Australia and that's the one good thing the AIF did for us.

Well on this note of your experience with the army I'm wondering what you father did in the First World War?

My father did not go to the First World War.

09:00 You know we kid ourselves that we didn't have conscription but there's the physical one the outward visible one and then there's the social one that any young man that didn't go to the First World War got a white feather, sent by some young lady in the post it was that social pressure. He didn't go because he had three children at the time and I think if anything if they did have it then he was in the reserved

occupation.

09:30 So he didn't go and so when it was all over he didn't have that social prestige that all the returned men did, neither did his two brothers went and they were bachelors and they copped it and they go white feathers galore. He didn't go and so by 1925 he had his six children you see,

10:00 and that was it. But where ever you went after the war you would see up in a shop, Joe Blow Draper, late AIF, a fellow came around in a little trap selling butter to mother and they put men on the gate on farms and you wouldn't believe it around French's Forest and Belrose, that was back country in those days,

10:30 most unsuitable and the fellows weren't trained for it. They put them on these farms without any capitol and they had to walk off it you know. But the old returned soldier from the First World War he didn't get a very good trot and all the fights they put up with the Department of Veteran Affairs it was a result of their agitation over fifty years you see. What really happened

11:00 when they came home from the First World War they were put up at North Head and they had to be what do you call it, properly demobbed, and it took so long a lot of them walked out. And the result was later on they didn't get repatriation benefits. See when I came out of the army there was a doctor in the Showground where we were demobbed, he said, "Now if there is anything you think is wrong with you lets put it on your papers ?"

11:30 and I did all I could I said, "Oh well I was in a few air raids and my ears are not too good." And it was only five years ago when I went to the doctors and he said my hearing had gone and it was on the papers, and I have a thing called Keratosis and they put that on the papers so the fellows who came out in the Second World War were well looked after but not the First World War,

12:00 and they found it terribly hard to adjust themselves. See they had been in France, it was a wicked war and they lived among dead men and dead animals and all of the rest of it, and they brought VD [venereal disease] back with them and they were treated as criminals and all the rest and that period in the twenties was a terrible period and

12:30 for all of that in the local school we would line and we would say, "I honour my God, I serve my King and I salute my flag." It was bred into us. And a boy was taught if he couldn't put up his props and fight he was yeller and every class and in every primary school and an unofficial roster of fighters

13:00 every afternoon on the way home from school we would have fights. A fella might be the number one fighter in the class and he might get beaten and that was the mentality that that war produced, and they kept military training. And every boy at fourteen had to register and then at sixteen he had to go one night a week and Saturday afternoon

13:30 down to the local drill hall and do drill and once a year he would go into camp at Liverpool and that went on till the Scullin Government came in and they wiped it. So that was the mentality that that war produced, and when Anzac Day came the whole of Sydney stopped. On the Sunday after Anzac Day every town had its

14:00 war memorial and the whole town would turn out in one of the big theatres for a memorial service, and then the churches would have another service at night and all the widows would turn up at the service and the names of the fallen, their husbands, would be read out and I can still hear those women weeping in the church. That's why Anzac Day got such a hold.

14:30 One of our worries today are the great battles of New Guinea which saved Australia, I have talked about Buna and Sanananda, if you went out and spoke to someone and said, "What happened at Sanananda?" they wouldn't tell you. One day I was coming home from Anzac Day on the train and I got in with some Knox College kids, nice boys, and they had been surfing and they said, "How did the march go?" and I said,

15:00 "Good oh except the band was lousy," and I said to one lad, "Do you know about Buna?" "Nope." "Sanananda?" "No." "You have heard of Kokoda?" "Oh I think so. I have heard of Tobruk." "Yes." I gave them a run down on 1942 and how "Prime Minister Chifley said it was the most perilous period in our history, they were sinking ships just a mile out from where you are here now," and so when the kids got out they said,

15:30 "We know all about Trafalgar, we know all about Hastings, all about Waterloo," but they didn't know about the battles that saved Australia. One of our gripes you see, and another thing they don't know about the First World War that in the first Battle of Mons, Earl Haig lived in a chateau which was almost on the site of the old battle Agincourt.

16:00 He lost sixty thousand British soldiers in a week, he still put on a second charge in spite of the weather and lost a lot more. And a general friend of mine who is a real brass hat who had been reading the life of Haig said the Australians in this life get three lines. In 1918 General Monash

16:30 took over the Australian AIF, five divisions it was the first time they fought together under their own command, and he broke through at Pozieres. He was the first to use tanks and that was really the end of the war. The great German General Ludendorf said it was the "Blackest day in the history of the

German Army," now how many Australian kids know that really the Australians helped finish

17:00 the First World War and how many know that Australian was in such peril in 1942? Darwin was bombed fifty times, there were more bombs on Darwin than Pearl Harbour, there were a thousand casualties, a couple of war ships were sunk in Darwin Harbour, the Japanese razed Broome to the ground. And to me it's as a historian it is always a mystery why

17:30 the Japanese didn't attack Australia from Timor. Obviously they were trying to get New Guinea to cut the American supply lines to Australia but why they didn't come down there is a mystery. My own explanation is that Hitler told them to keep going west and he would keep going east, and they would meet somewhere in India but they didn't get past Burma, they got Singapore and all the rest of it. It's a sore point with the old Second World War Digger,

18:00 that the average Australian knows nothing about the great peril of 1942 and as I have already told you that's when the AIF in New Guinea got such a hammering. The Japanese were good soldiers. We took a prisoner at Sanananda. What happened, I was on a burial party and a dead Japanese got to his feet and threw a grenade at us

18:30 and it hit my batman on the foot and it didn't go off, but it busted his ankle, he said, "I have had you, I would be safer in a rifle company." Any rate I tackled this fellow rugby style and its gone down in the history books that I took the only prisoner in New Guinea which is, there is no good denying it they would just add to it you see. He sat in the mud and it had gone around, "We've got a prisoner." Up came the general and the brigadier, and

19:00 General Blamey spoke to him spoke to him and he was rude truculent, and then Brigadier Wootten and the colonel said, "Why didn't you surrender?" and he said, "It is not honourable to surrender," he spoke perfect English. He said but you did surrender and he said, "No I didn't, my pistol jammed" and so when that all finished I thought well I'll have a go now.

19:30 And I said, "What religion are you?" and he no longer sat in the mud and was rude, he jumped to his feet and saluted he said, "Japanese religion, Hirohito." If I needed to be shown the power of religion it really showed me then. You know this fellow had invasion money on him and he taunted us and, "Oh well you've got me, but I'll meet my mates in Sydney," they were quite, you know I talked to Brigadiers and Generals, they didn't really want to take Australia they only wanted to destroy us

20:00 as a base for American operations. That's not what we found in this fellow, he was quite true and he was going to meet his mates in Sydney and they would release him. So that's how close it was you see. But when you come to think of it what a stupid thing it is, one night we had a reunion and Brigadier Chilton turned up, he is still alive wonderful man ninety-five and he said, "You know, twice in my life I have been caught up in this stupid thing you call war."

20:30 He said, "I drove here tonight in a Toyota and some of you fellow who have done better than I have, have come in Mercedes you see you get the message, we are now trading with the Germans and the Japanese and living quite comfortably with them. They have realised what they couldn't get by war they have got by commerce and trade. "And the Japanese at that time were doing very well and so were the Germans.

21:00 It solves nothing and if we hadn't had that war the French would probably still be in Indochina, Vietnam and the Dutch would still be in Indonesia and British would still be in India and we wouldn't have had all the troubles we have had ever since. All war does, it does not solve anything, it creates more problems and look at the waste of life and a

21:30 all the rest of it. So any old soldier will tell you it's a silly business, you think of all those good men we lost, from a breeding point of view.

Well you have been in the interesting position after having seen the after affects of the First World War as you've spoken of this morning, I'm

22:00 **wondering what prompted you to be part of the Second World War when it came around?**

I often wonder about the Australian mentality. A lot of those old blokes that went through hell of France continued on in peacetime and when the Second World War broke out they went in again. Brigadier Wootten commanded the 2nd Battalion in the First World War

22:30 and he took away the 2/2nd Battalion in the Second World War. General Blamey and General Allen and General Morshead they were all in the First World War: they never told us in spite of the obvious fact amongst us, with all these wounded blokes, what a silly cruel think it was. We were never told the truth, now books are coming out about Gallipoli,

23:00 how it was mucked up the incompetence of the British Generals and it was one of Churchill's colossal mistakes. You would be shot if you criticised Churchill, and the war broke out and we all wanted to be in it. We pestered the Archbishop to go as chaplains, and he got so sick of it he called us all to Bishop's court for morning tea and when we got there read the riot act to us, and said that he was fed up

23:30 and when he wanted chaplains he would let us know, and go back to our jobs. All the young curates

wanted to go as chaplains the young fellows rushed off for colours. Because as I said earlier the depression had a bit to do with it you see? In the First World War they just needed to blow a bugle and that was it they didn't need conscription really. But in the Second World War

24:00 it was interesting I would be at the football matches at Manly and the recruiters would come in, and they weren't doing too well. The young blokes were a bit of a wake up to it you see and as I look at the 6th Division and then I look at the 7th Division, they were more mature they were men who had come out of better jobs because the 6th Divvy [Division] boys had gone in to get jobs.

24:30 That's why the 7th Division was so successful. See the 18th Brigade went to England and the 18th Brigade fought under the 9th Division in Tobruk and they took Milne Bay and they won the battle of New Guinea in 1942 and they won the battle in 1943. So the 7th Division were a very solid Division cause they were older blokes and they had jobs most of them

25:00 you see. So why men join the army I don't know because in the Second World War they had the air force. I remember the colonel in the Militia Battalion in Ingleburn in 1940, what happened was, every young man had to register into a thing called the Militia. Now into the Militia came the recruiters from the navy, the army and the air force and the colonel of the 45th Battalion I was with

25:30 he had been a First World War bloke himself, he said, "Listen fellers join the navy or the air force, because they sit down to tables and sometimes they had table cloths," that was the difference between them you see. And they used to call the infantry the PBI, poor bloody infantry you see? Of course in the New Guinea wars it was all infantry ninety-six percent

26:00 you see. But a lot of young fellers considered it their job. And girls, they went in as nurses, AAMWS [Australian Army Medical Women's Service], your country needs you and that was it and today I think that well if England wants to get involved in a war well and good but then if England got into a war we were in you see. And when Mr Curtin decided that the AIF would come home to protect Australia,

26:30 New Zealand didn't, they stopped there fighting for old England the New Zealanders. My old New Zealand aunts would say Ben and Crick and thruppence and that sort of thing and they always got British motor cars, very loyal you see. When Curtin decided that he would bring the AIF home because Australia was in danger, Churchill couldn't believe that an Australian

27:00 Prime Minister would stand up to him. He could twist Menzies around his finger like that and they even told Menzies that he would make a good Prime Minister of England, and he had Lloyd George, Lady Astner, and Beaverbrook put this to him and he sold it. And Churchill always had funny ideas, he used to overrule his Generals

27:30 and he decided to go into Greece and Crete which was doomed before he went and our 6th Division was there and they got a hammering, they acquitted themselves very well. Well then Curtin said, "They are coming home," and Churchill said, "They are on the water and they are going to Burma," and Curtin said, "No they are not, they are coming home to defend Australia." And Churchill couldn't believe that an Australian Prime Minister would stand up to him

28:00 and he asked cabinet, "Who's this Curtin?" They said, "He is a drunk. He's an atheist, he's a pacifist," and Churchill said, "What more can you expect from a race of men who are descendant from convicts and Irishmen?" that's what the old blighter said about Australia. In all his long life he could never come out to this country, Heath came out here for a boat race,

28:30 Maggie came out and she was only about two weeks, he was the only Prime Minister that never came out to Australia. And they used the Australians in the First World War as shock troops, they were good soldiers. And I was in Gordon church the other day which is the garrison church for the 18th Battalion, Joe Maxwell belonged to the 18th Battalion a VC [Victoria Cross], MC [Military Cross] and bar and DCM [Distinguished Conduct Medal] and MM [Military Medal]. And I looked at their battle honours,

29:00 there was Beaux Palm, Mt St Quentin, Menin Gate, Pozieres, Passchendaele and Hamel and Gallipoli and all these battle honours you see. And you see they just threw the Australians in gain and again and again and the old 53rd was reduced to thirty men and they jacked up and they were accused of mutiny

29:30 and no, it's a different mentality. When I went to England in 1981 I went to Aldershot which is all army and I saw fellows walking around with red berets on and I said to a shop keeper, "I get very sad when I see these fellows." He said, "Why?" I said, "Well I love soldiers, I buried four hundred of them and saw a thousand wounded. They are going to Ireland?" He said, "That's right." And I said, "Some will get shot," and he said, "That's right,

30:00 that's their job." That's the British attitude, that's the difference between the mentality between World War I and World War II Wootten was our brigadier and in the first New Guinea show he had covered himself with glory and blood, there is not doubt about it he was a great soldier. Well he was succeeded by Chilton, and Chilton had gone away with him on the 2nd Battalion and Chilton followed him to command the 2nd Battalion and he followed in command the 18th Brigade

30:30 and he followed him to run what is now the Veterans Department, so they were pretty close blokes. Well in Borneo it was late in the afternoon, we were attacking a hill and we took it and the brigadier came up, Chilton and he said to the colonel, "I had nine guns for you and you used one?" and the colonel said,

”I didn’t have time to tee them up I had to take that place now or they would have belted us at night you see. “

31:00 And the brigadier said, “Very well colonel you got away with it but remember this; you can always make bullets, you can't make men.” The different mentality between the young officers who came up in the Second World War. They didn’t care how many men they killed in the First World War, that was the British idea. See you’ve got in Kipling remember that Tommy Atkins, Tommy this and Tommy that and Tommy here’s you hat and

31:30 so it was a great education for me to see the difference between them.

Even so you had an idea of war when you were growing up and although you followed your calling into the clergy I am wondering what was it that drew you to want to be a part of it?

Its an interesting question that, today I am almost a pacifist almost,

32:00 I believe there is such a thing as a just war and I always explain it to fellows that there are times when you have got to use violence. My wife was in a wheelchair out here and along comes my Italian friend with his dog, and he told me he was getting a dog and I said, “Don’t get a big dog around here,” and what did he do but get a red cattle dog, and they used the red cattle dog in Queensland for scrubbies, cattle that have gone bush

32:30 not a blue cattle dog you see? And she was in the chair and this red cattle dog went for her and I picked up a lump of wood and hit the dog and he turned his attention to me and went for my throat and then Tony came along and called it off and I could have said I don’t believe in violence and that little lady would have been hurt So there are times when you have got to go to war, when you are attacked by a nastier bloke you see. But I don’t think the young Australian

33:00 even got that far. Hitler was a nasty bloke, he had to be stopped. Mussolini was a nasty bloke and Tojo was a nasty bloke, we’d had seen their track record and our women and our kids were in trouble. General Blamey tried to motivate the troops by telling them the Japs [Japanese] were ape like creatures

33:30 and they had to be killed and a wonderful Methodist chaplain Frank Hartley went to him and got paraded and said, “Your motivation and psychology is wrong. Tell these blokes love their wives and their kids and their mums and they are fighting for them,” and for his effrontery he was down graded from a third class chaplain which was a major to a fourth chaplain which was a captain and posted and he was the senior chaplain in the 7th Div [Division] and put as a chaplain in a VD hospital.

34:00 Well now that would be my attitude still, if they are nasty blokes that are bent on doing cruel wicked things you have got to stop them. That would have been our motivation but we have matured since then and we have got to live with Germans and these other people, after all Acts of the Apostle St. Paul says, God made of one blood all men

34:30 to dwell upon the face of the earth. Skin is only pigmentation when all said and done. And see when I was at Gordon the rectory was only hundred yards from the railway station and we had a train into Sydney every quarter of an hour and the results were we were asked to put up a lot of people and my kids grew up with Chinese and Japanese and Borneo people

35:00 and Melanesian, Polynesian and Aborigines and they are very well adjusted kids. They learned what other people were like you see, and we think we can produce this democracy on the end of a bayonet. One of my old mates in my battalion became the Deputy Speaker at Port Moresby and his job was to teach the Papuans the intricacies of the Westminster system. And a Member of Parliament

35:30 came to him and said, a planter had come to him and offered him five thousand to vote against the bill and he took the five thousand, he voted for the bill and the planter was very annoyed and threatened him with violence and my friend had to tell him that the Westminster system would call that a bribe and you don’t do it. And he said good and he tried to tell this fellow that our democracy took six hundred years to develop

36:00 way back in Simon De Montfort’s time and in the process we knocked off a King’s head and an Archbishop’s head and we tried to impose it upon a stone aged people overnight. You see it’s the same in Iraq, the Arabs don’t understand democracy and freedom as we talk about it. So I opposed the Vietnam War I suppose I would have difficulties today, which I didn’t have then

36:30 we were young and idealistic and we swallowed all the propaganda, which most of it was true of course. So we were not educated and our country was always right you see? Even the articles for the Church of England say its lawful for Christian men at the command of a (UNCLEAR majess) of state to bear weapons and to fight in the wars

37:00 but in the Latin version of it it talks about the Iustus bellum [latin for ‘just war’], the just wars. But England never took part in an unjust war, every war that we have fought has been just so we eliminated the word just the articles and that’s what we were brought up on you see for God King and Country.

When did you enlist?

In

37:30 1941 and the Archbishop Mull considered that I was too young and he was right, see we were not trained. I went away with this 53rd Battalion, they were the rejects of all towns in New South Wales, they were criminals of all types and one young man committed suicide. He was paraded to Archbishop Mull

38:00 and I often think and worry about it and had I known more about all the homosexual business I might have saved that boy, he had been tampered with. Coming from Chatswood from a nice middle class respectable family went to St Paul's Church, it preyed on his mind. See we were not trained in these things you see. It was all idealism you see and when you think emotionally you cant think clearly

38:30 there is no doubt about that. We had no moral problems at all then which we would have now you see. And when I get up at the RSL [Returned and Services League] and tell them to be compassionate to the boat people, you know I went into the courts at Burwood, a little Greek lad was pinching fruit in the shop and he got nabbed and I went into court and told the magistrate that he had lived in Greece under Hitler

39:00 and they had to steal to live and he couldn't translate. The magistrate agreed with me and let him off, put him on a bond you see but we didn't think that way in those days. We didn't think that way then you see, and we had no worry about the war at all. Years later little Japanese used to stop with me at Gordon and I was very proud when we shot a Japanese aircraft out of the air,

39:30 they were Japs and I took a photo of a dead Japanese at Buna ,and there he was at the races with his little boy. That little boy hasn't got a dad now, he was still a human being but we didn't think that way we agreed with Blamey, they were ape like creatures and they had to be exterminated. Well they did have to be stopped there was not doubt about that. And we saw women

40:00 with their breasts cut off at Milne Bay, and we saw Australian soldiers tied to coconut trees and used for bayonet practice and can you expect Christian morality from non-Christian people? You would be interested in this if you went to Tokyo, there is a great big tower and all the telly and the radio is transmitted from that one and it is dedicated to the 'Goddess of the Air'. See the Christians

40:30 in Japan are only about one percent the whole lot of them. And we expect Christian morality from a race that had been taken over by the militarist. We had this unholy alliance with the industrialist Mitsubishi, and the militarist Tojo and the same thing in Germany with Krupps and Hitler using one another you see.

41:00 And today I think differently of course but all young blokes, in Manly in the First World War the surf club went bung, the rugby union went bung, every man joined up. I was there in the Second World War and we were not going to let rugby union die this time so we concentrated on the juniors.

41:30 That's when I started St Matthew's Football Club which produced ultimately six internationals but that's what happened in the First World War. I went up to Dungog to talk to the RSL the other day and on their Honour Board and it was full and I could just imagine they were all country lads, all joined the light horse, every young man in the town joined up. When the Second World War came along and they said,

42:00 "Oh no you don't."

Tape 3

00:37 **Roy you mention earlier that when you enlisted you didn't receive enough training what training did you receive?**

We got no training whatever, a chaplain

01:00 went into the army for rations and duties and the ordinary bloke went into the army on rations and discipline, a chaplain was not subject to the normal army discipline. All the colonel could do if he wanted to get rid of a chaplain was to recommend it, he couldn't sack him like an ordinary soldier, and a chaplain if he liked could do nothing and I'm sorry to say

01:30 some did just that. And their prestige wasn't very high the fellows would say, "You've got the best job in the army one day a week church parade which is compulsory." I used to say, "It is a good job and you have to be very clever to get it and we are always looking for recruits," but fortunately in my curate days I had a lot to do with the fellowship movement

02:00 where we believed the human being was four square, mental, spiritual, physical and social so I had been tied up with sport, acting and debating and a bit of politics so that I was lucky. And when I got into the army I applied all these things but a lot of chaplains had gone from school into college

02:30 and little knowledge of the world or what people were like and their prestige wasn't that high. I wasn't even taught first aid and when a battalion went into action the chaplain would tie himself to the

regimental aid post, the RAP [Regimental Aid Post] and deal with the dying men but I also went further than that. I

03:00 learned from the doctor all the first aid stuff. So a chaplain could do nothing, he could sit in his tent all day and read, it didn't matter and he got a captain's pay and so well. I was lucky with my background and I will say for myself, this that I really hit it, I've got mates all over Australia because of it.

03:30 But promotion was almost non existent you could go to the Division as a Senior Chaplain and become a major, towards the end of the war they said some of these fellows had given long service and we will give them a promotion and I was one of the lucky ones and I became a major and was allowed to stop at a unit, the last thing I wanted to be at headquarters. Same at a church,

04:00 so a chaplain would take a compulsory church parade on Sunday. The fellas hated it, the chaplains hated it, the colonels loved it and so did the sergeant majors, it was a chance to have a parade. Fellows would get fined for being out of line in church parade and I'd have to go and talk of the Gospel about love to these fellows. And when intimately I said to the colonel, "Look can't we do

04:30 without this, I would rather have seventy fellows in the hall who want to be there than six hundred blokes that don't want to there," and he said, "Well if that's how you feel I will get another chaplain," so I shut up. So that was the set up you see. Towards the end of the war the Government said, "You can have conscientious objectors, any men who object to going to church can be exempt," and the colonel

05:00 said, "Good oh well you can go on a long route march or you can cut wood." So it was better to go to church for half an hour than cop it you see? Oh, and also moral questions would arise, men who were away from home and their women folk stray, I will put it that way, and it came time when we had to rebuke them you know. I will say this that this crowd I was with, their women folk were wonderful.

05:30 I'm burying one of their women tomorrow, they were wonderful the way they looked after their blokes, but see when a man was killed and we would bury him we had to write to their parents and I that's where I made a lot of contacts you see. But apart from units that never saw action the chaplains had a wonderful time if they wanted to.

06:00 Another thing, every battalion had what they called a boob it was a gaol. It was the gaol for petty offences and fellows were put in you see and that was one of my jobs to go to the boob and the joke was among the Australian soldiers, he would be in boob one week and on guard duty the next week, they accepted this discipline you see. But it's like a priest in a parish, he has got to get to know people and when he gets

06:30 to know people he gets their confidence you see and too often chaplains were called colonel's darlings. My predecessor in the Middle East got to Jerusalem now the fellows couldn't get to Jerusalem, now he shouldn't have done it, and when he got to New Guinea he wanted to go and see the big cathedral in Dogura and he got it again you see. Well I inherited that situation and my

07:00 brigadier says to me today we didn't see much of your Brigade and I said "I might have overdone it but I spent my time with the blokes," and I have a great love for the ordinary soldier, that's why I go to repatriation inquiries and tribunals to see if I can help them get their pensions and that sort of stuff. So a chaplain defined his own job and not like the doctor, the doctor had a sick parade every day and

07:30 was dealing with this physically you see and at the end of the day he felt like he had done something. But what I always did I wouldn't spend my time in the officers mess at night on the rare occasion when we were stable I would let them know any fellows that want to be confirmed I'd have classes . Its always difficult for a priest to accost a person and say, "Are you a believer?" and some do it and get a lot of rebuffs

08:00 so I had confirmation classes and they would come into my tent. Also I tied up with the army blokes and helped run the army education but there again you were up against the army establishment for example; we wanted to discuss communism at the time when the Russians were naughty boys and one chaplain went to the General and complained

08:30 that we were teaching communism. He was a renegade there was no doubt about it we were only discussing communism in the system and after all if you are going to oppose something you have go to know all about it. The army education were good they had a little booklet called Pass the Salt and there would be discussions for it.

09:00 So I work in with the army education bloke at Brigade, there were times when we had touchy subjects, what were we going to do with the Japanese when the war was over? And what should be our attitude to the Japanese? Of course my attitude towards the Japanese didn't always, even today, I hear my mates talk about Asian trash just the other day, its hard to hold my tongue you see.

09:30 And as I told you about Frank Hartley who went to Blamey and told Blamey that his motivation was wrong and he was wrong, I mean if I'm fighting the Japanese and of course I hate him, its not nearly as strong as the love for my Mum and the wife you see? So a chaplain could do exactly what he liked, and mainly the Roman Catholic blokes were like this, they didn't have to have church parades, they took their fellows

10:00 off to mess. But there were some naughty boys in my battalion, Roman Catholics so they sent them to the Rec hut to mass and then they would sneak underneath and they would be playing two up, while Father Joe was taking Mass upstairs you see. You can't push Australians around they just Jack up and I learned that very early so I got on all right.

10:30 **Well in a sense what you described you were quite aware of what you were getting into what was your job description?**

Well the crowd I went away with never realised there was a war on, they went to Port Moresby and we were making roads,

11:00 and unloading ships. We never thought that we would be going to battle and that men would be killed. Now I was never taught this as a chaplain that I would have to minister to dying men and also I would have to bury blokes on battle fields, I wasn't told even the technique of it. For example in the jungle we had to careful to bury a soldier near a track or

11:30 a clearing because the jungle would take over in very, very quick time. I had to learn that the hard way, I hadn't been taught this. But I didn't think that I would be seeing men being killed it came as an awful shock to me to do it you see? Then I had to learn that the war graves would come along and remove the fellow to a proper cemetery, I had to put it in a place where the jungle wouldn't take over

12:00 and where they could find it. I think of all the fellows I buried, only two were never found and one of the families really gave me gippo [grief] after the war because he was never found you see. So we weren't trained or told anything we were just put in there and thrown in the deep end as it was, and we weren't taught this is what you are going to cop

12:30 and how to deal with it and you are? And you are going to be among a lot of young blokes who are not nice blokes, rugged and the rest of it that they didn't go to church and you could have a problem with them you see. I mean what was I going to do with fellows that turned up with VD? They would be going to the local village and this sort of thing you see, we weren't trained. Doctors were trained, everybody in the army was trained. For a job

13:00 for example to teach men to stand up to bullets they would dig a pit and put them in it and fire bullets over the top of it and they didn't duck, they were used to this sort of thing. And so sometimes the church parades were part of the discipline, well they were part of the discipline of the unit you see and in good units they never let the fellas

13:30 let up on discipline, that's why they were such good soldiers in the 18th Brigade you see. I used to take fellas in trucks to the church in Atherton. I didn't kid myself they wanted to come to church it was a chance to get out of the lines you see? We had some fellas who were burglars from Melbourne and they went into Atherton and up one side of the town and down the other and burgled every shop.

14:00 They caught them so you go all sorts of fellas you see. When the new boys used to come in and I would go down to the tents and the old fellas would say, "Oh heres the padre, we won't lead them astray." And I said. "Not much you won't, I know you blokes only too well," I could like to them like that you see. But I didn't find that young lads who came in late in the war where the fellows who didn't quite settle down into civvies life.

14:30 See the army is a lovely old mother it tells you went to clean your teeth and when to clean your socks and when to go to the barber and when to go to the dentist, all of these little things in a normal civilian life is done for them and to become a civilian and the young blokes didn't, but it was very touching to see the old blokes. We got boys who were at Buna

15:00 who were on the wharves on Port Phillip and one week later they were killed at Buna and to see the old fellows, "Keep down son, keep down I'll tell you when to get up," it was marvellous how they looked after them you see. I would say to them, "You have sergeant so and so and he's a good bloke and I'll tell you how to take him," you see. And I suppose I was a bit unusual because I had four years and some chaplains got awards, I can think of two got MCs [Military Cross]

15:30 and they never came back they had had enough. So through football, cricket and debating and through all this I got on well with the fellows you see, and when I went up to Brisbane the other day they gave me a hundred and twenty dollars and I said, "What's this for?" and they sold a medal and they said, "Well you've got to pay your fare up here," and I thought it was touching

16:00 you know yeah.

As a padre what did you wear?

Oh yeah, at the beginning of the war we had no rank we had two black strips here (shoulders) to show that we were chaplains. Well then they decided, we were getting the pay, and then they decided they would use the rank. Now a chaplain like a doctor went in as a captain with three pips. For

16:30 chaplains that was about the end of it, well then if, well their was a senior chaplain at Divisional Headquarters he was a major and you went up the stage to a corps and you became a half colonel, lieutenant colonel then in the army became a full colonel at the top the Chaplain General was a Major General. So we wore army rank as distinct from welfare officers,

17:00 like the Salvation army they didn't wear any rank you see. But it was a stupid chaplain who tried to assert his rank, the chaplain was the senior chaplain in the mess. Now a problem arose in every mess the president was the 2IC not the colonel, the colonel was an ordinary member of the mess

17:30 he couldn't run his mess like the unit outside. What happened when a chaplain who was a senior captain now became a major was seen to be senior major in the mess over the president, it caused a bit of trouble. But that was the rank, and I knew one chaplain on Central Railway demanded of some troops their leave pass, and they bashed him.

18:00 Broke his nose, serves him right too. We were not, we didn't have discipline you see, but some tried to do it, to ride the rank because they did in the British Army. In the British Army it was entirely different, and in the navy too. In the navy a chaplain could sit on a court martial, well not in the Army, he wasn't part of the discipline of the show. And he was a very foolish bloke if he tried to assert it and some

18:30 did with pretty cruel results. And if you wanted to be respected as a priest you had to remember that he was a priest first, not an army officer you see and we were there for rations and duties not discipline, well it cuts both ways.

And what clothes did you wear?

Uniform, ordinary uniform same as the boys.

19:00 Oh of course we had a pretty uniform as an officer, we had two, one was one was a heavy and one was a drill used in hot weather and so on. We wore exactly the same uniform and the army supplied it and we wore the same uniform. Of course that was the difficulty in the jungle the Japanese didn't care if you were a chaplain or not. In action we were supposed to wear a Red Cross arm band

19:30 but it was more hindrance than help. We were not suppose to carry weapons and if a chaplain was caught with a weapon he could be shot because he was protected by the Geneva Convention. But to the Japanese it didn't count, I carried a pistol, I never used it. And a doctor was entitled to have a pistol to protect

20:00 his patients but a chaplain was protected by the Geneva Convention. That was silly, and he did get shot and a couple did get shot but he was supposed to be protected by the Geneva Convention. I threw my thing away well the two doctors were shot beside me, you know I'm sure the Japs didn't care, well they didn't know. The Japanese never accepted the Geneva Convention

20:30 that's why they were so cruel to our prisoners of war and they did the same to their own blokes at any rate.

Well you have just mentioned in passing a story that I would like to hear more about the doctor who was killed next to you can you tell me about that?

Well what happened, we were in action at Buna.

21:00 The front line wouldn't have been more than a hundred yards away, and the Japanese did have what we would call today suicide bombers you see? And the Japanese sniper climbed a tree, and it was a dead tree so he could be seen and he was having pot shots at battalion Headquarters. Obviously he was trying to get the colonel.

21:30 Well he got the doctor, it just kissed the doctor on the neck, and knocked him off his feet and he got up, put a bandage on and went on with his work and he got an MC for this later on. A young officer standing by grabbed a rifle, there were a lot of them lying around, and it was like a wild west shoot out.

22:00 The young officer won he got rid of the sniper. Now the other one was when we were in the Owen Stanleys. I was with the doctor and he said, "I could do with a bit of food," and I said, "Well I'll go down to the Q store and get some," so I went down to the Q store [Quartermaster store] and got some and then he said., "Well its my turn now," and on the way down he got shot. And as we were walking up the Kokoda Track and he said to me, "Wouldn't it be terrible to be wounded in the leg in this country?"

22:30 and that is exactly what happened to him. So he was shot with me and later on this other chap got shot in the neck. He was lucky you know, it was only a matter of only one or two inches, well less than an inch and it would have really got him. So those are the two doctors I was with you see.

23:00 **You mentioned that in your training you didn't receive any first aid training?**

That's right we didn't.

When did you pick up?

I learned it on the job I suppose I was more worldly than the average young priest.

23:30 If you look at our church today got an Archbishop who has never been in the world he, lives at Bellevue Hill and went to Scots College, Sydney University, Oxford, studied theology all of his life and he hasn't got a clue what's going on. I always wear my collar when I go on transport where I go, and its amazing the people that come up to me with problems,

24:00 a mother's have a little daughter that's gone on drugs and I might be the last resort. That's the trouble with most chaplains, they went in and they had never been in the army themselves, they slept in a bed and not on a palliasse and they ate in a mess and they were waited on they didn't go on mess parades and line up and all that sort of stuff and they had come from good middle class respectable homes

24:30 that's where the church got its fellas, very few working men become priests. And I suppose I was lucky; I had been in a big family and I had lived through the depression and learned to use my hands and I had learned to improvise, I had come fro ma very warm family and I think psychologically well integrated. I had no inhibitions and I didn't belong to the puritan's Theological brand as most of these fellows did.

25:00 And I wouldn't mind going into a pub and having a drink and I remember dear old Archbishop Lowe saying to me about a chaplain. They were in a staging camp, and he said, "Do you know what he does at night? He goes into the officer's mess and he drinks." And I said, "Gee Jesus did that didn't he?" You see the Anglican ministry was full of nineteen century middle class

25:30 morality and the morality was no drink, no sex, no gambling. Once you could do that you would be a bit crooked in your business on all of the rest of it, but that was part of the establishment you see. And so I had been a football referee and that was one thing about rugby union, it was a wonderful game and you go out there and do a fellow over, and after the show

26:00 you would come and have a beer together. It was a wonderful game, they have spoilt it now with professionalism. I learned all this at Manly, when I was a referee and I played cricket and footy so I was lucky. Luckier than my Mum and Dad see? I tell my kids and my daughter is a fine woman and my son is a fine bloke and I, you had to battle, you own your home and your own car I didn't give it to you.

26:30 Now their kids are going to get it on a plate, I said to Chris the other day, "Do you know what a refrigerator costs?" So, but the thing was we were never taught our craft and I had to learn it on the job and I learned it very quickly and I realised I was still a priest but it was a different situation. As a young man I had seen very few people die

27:00 and suddenly I had to find a man dying of wounds you see, I learned on the job. I think is still the trouble in the dear old church, all this business that is going on at the present time we are not trained for it you see? I suppose they are today.

And I guess in a sense you also needed to know about the army as well what did you know about the army?

27:30 Well I tried to do everything that they did rather than use my privileges. So when there was a route march on I would go on the march, and the place of the chaplain was at the tail end with the 2IC [second in command] and the doctor. The doc was an interesting bloke

28:00 he used to have a running commentary and he would say, "Hey look at old Gate if that was one of the majors he would say, 'Hey company (UNCLEAR high right)," and all this and the 2IC would say, "Shut up you two." So wherever they went, I went; on these horrible route marches. If they went out on an exercise I went out with them. I couldn't do much as a chaplain on an exercise,

28:30 the facilities weren't there but I went everywhere that they went. I tried to show them I would go under every hardship they went into. I could have rules my rank you see, and a lot of them did, but I tried to completely identify myself with everything that they did. When they had a sports show and I coached the footy team and all that

29:00 and I only wished I had been asked to talk to new blokes about what to do. But they just threw us in and there you are. And it was accepted you see, and so no I learned the hard way. I think it's a good way to learn but it is nice to have a bit of theory to start off with, in your job or any job for that matter.

29:30 **And the route march that you have just mentioned where were you doing that?**

Where ever we were. he boys misbehaved in Townsville and if you know Townsville, up the top of Townsville is Castle Hill, and we had to march up Castle Hill with our heavy gear; full packs on.

30:00 Well I could have got out of that but I didn't, I put on my pack and my haversack cursing the colonel all the way. Then sometimes we might be in the jungle, I have a picture of the battalion going up Shaggy Ridge and the strange thing about the foothills of Shaggy Ridge is they were bare, there were no trees on them. And the heat was

30:30 terrific and marching in this open country, and we were marching up there and an army is allowed to have ten minutes an hour smoko [smoking break], we couldn't last that long. So we sat down long beforehand the brigadier came up and did he give us a lashing with his tongue? "Near enough is not good enough," and I remember that to this day, but it all depends on the country that we were in.

31:00 Now in Port Moresby there were dirty dusty streets and to march fifty miles all day down these streets was hard going, but I made it a point to be with them. I could have gone in a truck, anything I wanted. This was what I would say to any young bloke that came to me, "Look identify yourself with the fellas, don't hide in the officers mess. You have a duty to your men and they are the fellows who cop the dirty

work."

31:30 So I learned the hard way you see.

And when you first sailed on the Aquitania what did you take with you?

Well we, well nobody knew what was what, it was a real schmozzle [mess]. If the ship had been torpedoed we would have all been lost. You see, we didn't know where we were going,

32:00 and we had two warships escorting us. I got in with the education of the sports officers, and we organised boxing matches and debates and all this sort of thing to keep them amused. But we did drill of course, life saving drill and that sort of stuff but

32:30 we didn't know where we were going and we didn't know the officers. and so on. And this is the terrible thing the army did, the AIF crowd they had time to settle down in Sydney and know the officers and know the men and know one another. But here was unit and they decided that they would sent the unit to Darwin, and already the Militia had lost all its good blokes

33:00 to the AIF and then they were told they had to supply a certain number of men to go to Darwin and so they had chucked out all of their problems and the 53rd Battalion consisted of all problem boys. It was very hard to get them interested in anything and when the rumour got around that they were going to New Guinea we had a hundred desertions.

33:30 And the Provos [Provosts – Military Police] went around and picked up young blokes who were AWL [Absent Without Leave] and sent them out to barracks and processed them and before they knew where, they were on the ship, and they had come to me as the chaplain and say, "Would you write to Mum?" I could break the censorship laws and tell their mums where their kids were, just imagine a mother who didn't know where her boy was, he had disappeared. This was almost shanghaied,

34:00 that's what the army did. And you are not going to make soldiers out of fellows like that you see. So that was another job I did on the ship, I broke the censorship laws and wrote to mother's and said, "Your son has been picked up," and I get another officer to sign and he wouldn't even read the letter you see. That was one of my earlier jobs and I realised that just as well I wasn't under discipline you see. So just imagine these kids a lot of them were only nineteen.

34:30 The army did terrible things. I was talking to the CO [commanding officer] of the 49th Battalion the Queensland crowd, Castles and he went to barracks in Brisbane and they said, "Goodbye Castles it has been good to know you." Now the army must have known that places like Singapore and Rabaul had fallen and they thought that Port Moresby would fall the same way

35:00 and then the civilians were still there in Port Moresby and there was bad relations between them and the army. They believed that they would never be bombed and when they were bombed they used to go bush at night and the troops would go into the town and plunder the houses. I had to tell the fellows, "You can't do this," and that was another sort of non curricular job. A chaplain had to be ready for anything that might impinge on morality.

35:30 The army wasn't very concerned about morality, except if it affected a man physically. They didn't mind if a fellow went into a brothel, as long as he came out clean that was there only worry. Of course it's like malaria and everybody got malaria, and so a mosquito was as bad as a Japanese bullet.

36:00 So they brought in Atebrin [anti malarial drug] and they had compulsory parades and some of the fellows would put it under their tongues and spit it out afterwards because a rumour got around that if you used too much Atebrin you became sterile. And I used to say, "Come have a talk to the doctor," to these fellows, "Its not true." They wouldn't listen to me but still I would tell the doctor what was going on he couldn't get into

36:30 get into the fellows like I could, so that's another thing I learned to be a liaison between him and the men. So I got letters from mums and the rest of it, and when a fellow was buried I made two crosses out of palm leaves and I would bury one with the fellow and I would send the other one home to his mum or his wife. But we got

37:00 confidences which you know we had to watch. A fellow was dying and he gave me a letter from a girl who he had got pregnant and I had to write to this girl because she wouldn't have got any notification because there was no official connection you see. I had to write to this girl and tell her to look up a priest or nominate

37:30 in Brisbane and he might then take it up with the army. There were no such things as defacto wives in those days, so these are intangible non defined terms for a chaplain, if he was on the job. I mean it would take a lot of confidence in the man to tell him a lot of those things you see, he might tell it in confession but that ended there.

38:00 So it was a non-defined job and you had to be alive to it you see. These are the sort of things that cropped up. I suppose it took me about a year to learn, but I was always worried that I was never asked to go and talk to new boys and I thought well will they be as good learners as I was?

38:30 **You mentioned earlier that when you went with the 18th Brigade to Kokoda the 53rd weren't quite ready and then the 21st Brigade had fled?**

39:00 Yes well what happened, the AIF hadn't arrived so they had to put what they called the Militia in. Well the 39th Battalion was a Victorian Battalion and they went over to meet the Japanese when they landed at Gona and Buna and luckily they had good officers. The great Morshead, following Napoleon said, "There are no such things as bad troops there are bad officers," well they were lucky.

39:30 The 53rd Battalion colonel was misanthropic and he didn't get on with his officers and he never mixed with his blokes and he in a way despised his officers. When they went up to meet the Japanese he did his own patrolling and he got shot, and they sent me up to bury him. The boys with me reckon there were Japanese up the trees looking at us

40:00 and they must have been Christian Japanese because they didn't pop us off you see. So they lost their colonel. Well the 39th Battalion also lost their colonel but they got a good bloke in his place and they were well led and they did very well, and the 53rd who hadn't been trained they didn't have a colonel they lost him, and the major who took over wasn't much good so case in point.

40:30 And there was major up there with a crowd called ANGAU [Australian and New Guinea Administration Unit] the Australian New Guinea Unit and these were civilians with local knowledge who were put into the army to help the army with the terrain and the natives and so on. And there was a Major Watson, won an MC in the First [World] War and he was an All Black [New Zealand] footballer

41:00 and real soldier and when the 53rd were pulled out he took the bolts out of their rifles and threw the bolts into the bush. It was like the old Roman soldiers going under the yoke, and so that was the way he treated his kids who had never been trained. And I had to rebuke him and told him that he had to have more compassion on these kids and it wasn't, their fault.

41:30 It was the unpreparedness of the army, which did this to them you see.

I might just stop you there because our tape is going to run out and it is a very important story.

Tape 4

00:32 **Roy can you just pick up your story again as to why the 53rd were not prepared?**

Well psychologically they were not attuned to it, they were conscripts and they were the lower echelon of the conscripts, you see.

01:00 Their officers were not particularly good, they had been social soldiers, the colonel who was suppose to be a good tactician, he was misanthropic so it wasn't a fighting force. They had never had a church parade together, they had never had a sports meetings together, they had never had a concert together;

01:30 they were a collection of companies spread over the country side. You see they had had only one exercise which was a tragedy, they were so different to the AIF. When a man is confident was confident in his weapons and he was confident in himself and he'll go forward and this was what Blamey said, "Only rabbits get shot in the back," a man with a gun doesn't get shot. The AIF were well trained

02:00 and had been blooded in battle and they were confident in themselves and nothing could stop them. These kids were chucked together, they had done very little training, there was no esprit de corps, they had come from all over the place, they hardly knew one another and so they weren't a good team. I explained in that book there about the 2/12th Battalion they reminded me of a footy team like you saw last night, go on

02:30 the field, fit, confident and lets get stuck into them you know but that was missing. That esprit de corps was missing in the Militia you see and that's why, when we had our first casualty, I will never forget the effect it had on them. They didn't believe that a fellow could get killed in battle, they weren't attuned to it.

03:00 Where as the AIF were you see and when the AIF got together they said, "Y you are not going on a picnic fellers, it's a nasty business and if you are well trained and you obey and when we take you in we have a good chance to bring you back." But they were good officers in the AIF, well these were blokes who had been conscripted they had never been trained. Some had never fired a rifle.

03:30 So that was what that all about you see. When they met the Japanese who were tip top soldiers, they had been in Malaya, they had been Imperial Guard they had been trained and they knew their weapons you see. I went to a, we were shooting

04:00 lizards out at Port Moresby or something and I said to a sergeant," Your shot," and he said, "I have never fired a rifle." He was a cook but he should have been conversant with his rifle. A good soldier is like a good tennis player, that racquet or golf club it's an extension of him you see, well that was the

same with their rifles. See a Bren gun would

04:30 jam sometimes all machine guns would, and a well trained soldier would say to his mate, “Number two blockage,” and he knew what to do and he would clear it in no time. They were conversant with their. The Ack Ack [Anti aircraft artillery] guns that went to Port Moresby could fire at about ten thousand feet, and the aircraft were flying at thirty thousand feet and the machine guns they had were World War I guns

05:00 and the artillery guns were eighteen pounders whereas the AIF had twenty-five pounders, the latest. Naturally ordinance were short of supplies so they gave them to the AIF and the poor old militia kids had never been trained with them you see and a lot of books have come out and pointed all this out.

05:30 **And I understand you went up to where the 21st Brigade was with the 53rd?**

No the 53rd were pulled out. They were pulled out and they were amalgamated with the 55th and the 55th had a chaplain already, so in a sense I was out of a job.

06:00 Well then, after they pulled out and the 21st Brigade and the 2/14th and 2/16th and 2/27th went up, and at this place called Efogi which was half way up the Owen Stanleys called Brigade Hill. The 2/16th and 2/27th met the full force of the Japanese and they were out numbered ten to one, and they fought to the last

06:30 and they got surrounded. They couldn’t retreat and they couldn’t advance so they went east through the jungle, and they didn’t have time to bury their dead. Well the Japanese moved on and it was really a pyrrhic victory, and when they got to within thirty miles from Moresby they were stopped and new brigade, the 25th came up and they were chasing them all the way to Kokoda. And they couldn’t stop to bury

07:00 these blokes from the 21st Brigade and as I was at a loose end and they sent me up, this is when they gave me a Corporal and a Papuan. I had to bury them with my own hands at the end because these fellows went bush and so that was that. So I had two trips on the Owen Stanleys, and I suppose I was one of the few fellows who would have been on the track and also on the beaches.

07:30 **I would like to hear more about that story you went with a Corporal and a Papuan?**

It shows you the unpreparedness of them to send a young bloke up there to bury these blokes and we had a couple of tools I suppose and they picked this young Corporal, he just, when he saw a few dead men he couldn’t take it he cracked up

08:00 and I had to send him back. The Papuan decided to go bush, and so I had to do it physically with my own hands and there were about seventy of them. So then there was this vacant seat at the 18th Brigade and the brigadier yelling because he knew that they would be moved up to the beaches, of course no body else did. Two battalions were at Milne Bay and one was

08:30 on Goodenough Island and so when they ultimately called me back and then they sent me to the con depot to recover but before I had recovered they put me on a plane and sent me to Milne Bay, and put me on a boat and took me up to Goodenough Island. And I walked into the colonel to report and I conked out, the poor man he must have wondered what the heck he had caught

09:00 because they were living like tourists on Goodenough Island for a while you see. I was right you, got over it and so that was that you see. Well then I had to get down and do all the paperwork when they called me out on all the names fellows I had buried. And when I could when I was in the con depot , I would write to their mums and dads, they weren’t my battalion you see. So

09:30 their battalion were more or less in the con depot recovering and this is when Blamey told them they were rabbits.

I can't imagine the difficulties that would have faced you burying seventy men by yourself?

It’s amazing what a human being can do

10:00 when he is forced. I bet even you two, you have deep within you innate abilities which are there and if you find yourself in a pretty difficult situation you can utilise them, and see I was young I was fit and I had my Christian faith and I accepted this you see. I can remember when I came back home the first thing in the parish I had to do was bury a kid who was killed on a motor bike.

10:30 I remember how horrified I was. Well I was in the army, I had lost that ability to be horrified and I often when I see this thing and bombs raining down on Afghanistan, Iraq and women and kids being killed and houses being destroyed you sit there and you drink your beer,

11:00 you’ve lost the ability to be horrified. I think modern society has done that, a man killed on the roads last night and I just listened to it, and you know I think at this stage you accept that sort of thing. There was a job to be done and while you are doing the job you don’t think about it, you don’t have time to and I had to do this job and I knew I had a limited time, so I did it.

11:30 **Well you mentioned that you didn’t receive any training how did you do it, what did you do to**

bury these seventy men?

Well I dug holes and I took a burial service for them, and I took their meat ticket off, I beg your pardon their identification cross, and I put it on a little crude cross I had made out of bush timber and as close to the road and the track as I could because I knew

12:00 they might never be found. Then I just went ahead and did it. You lose all sense of protection, for example; one village in the Owen Stanleys to another would be about half a day's march but the treacherous thing about the mountains were that you never knew when night would fall, it wasn't regular. I had to go from I think it was Nauro to Efogi,

12:30 and I thought I can do and off I go and night came down and I was in between two villages in the dark and I saw some huts which happened to be store houses of the natives, where they had their taro stored, the seeds. I went and spent the night there. It occurred to me after a while that there were marauding Japs around

13:00 and there were unfriendly natives around and here I was all by myself right out in these mountains and that's when you really feel you are in trouble. Well I just said my prayers and it just seemed to come into order you see. Well this you know today I would say, "Now wait a minute Mate you can't make it you had better stop here for the night," you see

13:30 and I was on my way back home at the time. I think we have all got that ability which only comes out when we need it you know and I think Australians have a good dose of it I really do. So I could have been shot, there is no doubt about that and there were Japs all around the place, they were disorganised.

14:00 They found Japs there years afterwards who didn't know the war was over. So I did the job and naturally it took a toll on me physically and spiritually and I kept going until I got called back and they said, "Gee you are in pretty bad shape, you better go to the con depot," where I lived very nicely, not long enough you see.

14:30 **Do you recall how it long to do the seventy burials?**

It took me about three weeks, and so of course the graves unit came up and took them back to Bomana cemetery later on and I think when you get into the middle of things, now today I'm asked to go and talk

15:00 and I'm not up to it. I asked the General to come and speak at a funeral some time ago and he refused, , he said "I'm passed it, I get real stressed beforehand and my wife's getting sick of it." Now that's true, I'm passed it. There is a big do coming up at Concord for VP Day [Victory in the Pacific] on the 5th of August and I was asked to speak

15:30 and I said, "I can't refuse, but they shouldn't have asked me." Now that has changed their plan and I don't have to do it thank goodness so you get to a stage in life where you just can't take it any longer but where you are young you can. But we didn't know what was in front of us that's the point you see. If I was going up there today I would made certain I had

16:00 adequate help you see and walking around without any weapons I was just Australian soldier if I had met a Japanese you see. I think we were idealistic and we were ready for it you see, and there were some of us that couldn't take it and had to give up they were attuned to it you see, its all the result of

16:30 training.

Three weeks is a long time,

It was a long time.

What did you do for food?

All along the track in all the villages there was a village every five miles there would be a Q store and a cookhouse and I would go back to them

17:00 and spend the night with them you see. But I would live in a hut or something like that, there was no problem with food. We always carried our emergency rations if we needed them and emergency bandages. So there was no problem with food and the food wasn't so hot of course so that wasn't a problem.

17:30 No I would always leave normally in time to get back before dark, and in the Owen Stanleys it would rain from about eleven o'clock on, rain and from about six in the morning the sun would come up and it would burn the shirt off your back. So then we would dry out and at ten o'clock down would come the rain and we would get soaked again

18:00 and have to wait till tomorrow, and that was a problem; we didn't have clothes. And when those boys went on that track the 21st Battalion, when they took their socks off their soles of their feet came with it you know. And they had a wonderful chaplain he had a lot of fellows who had come from Subiaco, they were Western Australian miners, there was no God, they didn't need a God

18:30 and old Freddy Burt said to them, "If there isn't a God there ought to be to come between us and the

Japs it is a silly business here, he could become an umpire." So that what's he said to them. Now to show you how some chaplains did, now Freddy was a Durham man with a lovely Durham voice and when they were in the Middle East they took over picket duty from a British unit

19:00 who had been looting and they told the Aussies all the good pickings, and so they looted too and they got caught. The colonel came to the chaplain and he said to Freddy Burt on Sunday on the church parade, and he shouldn't have done it, "Would you give a pep talk about looting?" So Freddy got up in his lovely Durham voice and he said, "My subject this morning is

19:30 is the story of a penitent thief. Now you will remember Our Lord forgave the penitent thief but the bloody army doesn't think that way." The colonel was well pleased, well he got kicked out of the army himself later on; he was asked to talk to the Millions Club in Perth

20:00 about this battle of the Brigade at Efogi and they were very worried about their 2/16th Battalion and Freddy said, "You don't want to worry they put on a marvellous battle but they got overwhelmed ten to one and don't listen to this man Blamey he couldn't run a police force of six hundred men, he is trying to run two armies."

20:30 Well he got dragged before the Adjutant General he was told he had to apologise and he said to the Adjutant General, "I have listened to you for an hour and I'm not going to apologise - he is still an old bastard." And he got kicked out of the army, and the church didn't support him. Well there was a chaplain told by the colonel not to lose. So the army tried to use us if they could you see,

21:00 well Freddy did it that way, he was a wonderful fellow but he got kicked out of the army.

And why do you think from your experience the soldiers that you came in contact had disregard for Blamey?

Well first of all his great ability was to handle the politicians and MacArthur.

21:30 He was about the only bloke who could do it, and he had had a very good record from the First War, he was the Chief of Staff to the great Monash. But in between the wars he got into a lot of trouble. They found his badge as Commissioner of Police in Victoria in a brothel, he claimed someone had borrowed it off him you see. Now the funny thing about the Australian soldier he will do

22:00 all this himself but he will expect those on top not to. Well you know we expect the Royal family to behave themselves even if we don't behave, it's a characteristic you see. But you couldn't respect him because he was what you call in the army playing. His wife came up on the Atherton Tablelands, went to the officer's shop and she had a good time.

22:30 A young officer smacked her on the bottom, he got kicked out of the army. So and furthermore its almost the lore, l o r e in the army for the bloke on top to kick the bloke below him even when he can't, to maintain his own respectability, and so Blamey sacked a lot of officers. Now when the war broke there were a lot of World War I

23:00 officers in the new AIF but they were old and their mentality was tied to trench warfare. Now it was a new war with movement and tanks and that sort of thing, and they couldn't adapt so he sacked them well that's all right. But then when things go wrong the colonel gets kicked and when things didn't go too well in New Guinea

23:30 and MacArthur was getting on Blamey's back, Blamey then went to New Guinea and the General in charge was a brilliant General called Rowell, and the fellows adored him. And Blamey sacked him and then the commander of the 7th Division was General Allen, Tubby and they loved him too. Well communication was so bad

24:00 that Blamey couldn't ring up the General on the front line, he had to relay it from one sig [signal] station to another and the sigs told me that they got a messages from Blamey down at base living well, to General Allen way up there in the mountains that he should advance and it was relayed from sig post to sig post

24:30 you see. And they told me Blamey said to Allen, "You will advance." And he said, "Its six o'clock in the afternoon, its dark we will advance at first light," and Blamey said, "Yu will advance now, go now." and Allen said, "Go to hell," and so he got sacked. Fortunately we got General Vasey a great fellow. .

25:00 So the fellers didn't respect Blamey because he never appeared on the front line and neither did MacArthur, and when I was coming back from this job I was at a place at Uberi which was at the end of the road and there was General Allen and he introduced me to General MacArthur. MacArthur said to me, "You look after their spirits," and

25:30 I said, "I try." And he said, "What's it like up there?" and I said, "Its rugged country," and he said, "Well you have rugged men to match it." And that's what he said to me about the Australian soldiers. And I said, "It wouldn't be a bad idea if you put on a boot and went up there," and Freddy Burt had just been sacked from the army and so had Frank Hartley and I thought boy you will cop it now and I thought I'd get sacked.

26:00 So when he went I said to General Allen, “I shouldn’t have said that,” and he said, “No you shouldn’t have but I’m glad you did.” So I have down in history as the bloke that ticked MacArthur off. I was made a major the next week. But you see the fellas knew these things got around about Blamey living it up and living, and MacArthur even had carpets flown up to New Guinea.

26:30 He was living in Brisbane in a big hotel and he moved up to Moresby and he had his wife and his son with him and had carpets flown up for him, he was living in Government House. Well these things get round you see and Blamey sacking these good Generals and you see the brigadier in charge of the 21st Brigade was Brigadier Potts they adored him and he sacked him. Fortunately they got General Dougherty and he made the grade.

27:00 So that’s why they didn’t like Blamey they knew about his personal life although they were just as bad themselves and, they he was at base all the time you see and most of the time. And most of the time he was in Melbourne and kicking the Generals up in Port Moresby. And he sacked Rowell, Rowell was picked up by the British Army he was such a good general.

27:30 And so the Australian soldier is a funny bloke, they always try to get the chaplain drunk for example or they would show him their perve pictures to see whether he gloated over them and then they would give him jib. They never got me drunk, they would show me their perve pictures and I would say, “Oh grow up fellas. Its not like that at all.” So an officer had to behave himself,

28:00 the fellas might do things but they expected better of their officers you see. Not that that didn’t always happen you know. One of our officers got a nurse pregnant for example, they didn’t respect him. But that was the truth of Blamey you see and when he went into the 21st Brigade lines one day and he said

28:30 to the sergeant, “This place is like a brothel,” and the sergeant said, “You would know all about that sir,” and he got sacked too on the spot. So you see we like the King to behave himself and if he doesn’t we don’t like him and that’s the same sentiment in the army. And yet he did play the politicians well and

29:00 he played MacArthur well and I don’t think anybody else could have done it and he did put the army good officers in place of First War blokes, they all got the sack. So in that regard he did a good job.

Why do you say Blamey played MacArthur well?

MacArthur was an enigma he

29:30 got out of the Philippines and he came to Australian and they called him in the Philippines, Dugout Doug. And when you went to it he was politically he was a Republican. Roosevelt prolifically was a Democrat and Roosevelt knew that MacArthur had political ambitions,

30:00 and he did all he could to denigrate him. And when the battle for Buna was on Washington told MacArthur, “You’re not doing any good, there are too many casualties,” so MacArthur then pushed Blamey and Blamey pushed his own soldiers and so it went right back to the White House. And ultimately when Truman was President and MacArthur was fighting

30:30 the Korean War and he went into China because he reckon the Chinese were supplying them. Truman sacked MacArthur, and MacArthur and Eisenhower were in West Point together and they were like this and Eisenhower got the big command in Europe and MacArthur got the command in the Philippines. So there was all the moment you get up top you have this jealously and interplay

31:00 between the Generals looking for one another’s jobs. The 8th Division in Malaya, General Bennett couldn’t get on with Blamey, they were together in the First World War and General Monash gave Bennett leave to go to England to get married and he gave him a month, and

31:30 Blamey the 2IC cut it down to a week. There was always jealously between Bennett and Blamey. And when they started the AIF Bennett thought he would get the 6th Division. He didn’t get the 6th Division, he didn’t get the 7th Division they gave him the 8th Division, he had one battalion in Rabaul and another one in Ambon and another one in Timor, so in Singapore he had only two he didn’t have three

32:00 divisions. And he couldn’t get supplied and all the rest of it. So there was jealously between Bennett and Blamey so they were all after the top job you see, this is where I think they let the blokes down. So Blamey always had this undercurrent of the Australian Generals against him and he had to play MacArthur who was the Supreme Commander

32:30 and MacArthur’s title was Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific and Blamey’s title was Commander of Land Forces in the South Pacific this was a contradiction, he was still under MacArthur. There were times when things weren’t going too well in New Guinea and MacArthur would say to him, “Your soldiers are no good, they won't fight,” and that’s why I put my bit to MacArthur you see.

33:00 And of course the Americans at Buna were shockers. I don’t know if you have time but the Americans were supposed to be in Buna and the 18th Brigade was supposed to come home, and because the Yanks couldn’t do it the 18th Brigade were put in to do it. Well after the war the Japanese put a memorial in at Buna and then the Americans put one in. Now MacArthur sent General Eichelberger to Buna

33:30 and said, “Don’t come back alive,” and sacked them and he sacked them from Generals way down to

sergeants. This is when he called in the 18th Brigade and he said, “The 2/9th Battalion are the finest troops in the world.” And when he went to Japan during the occupation and he said, “Any 2/9th Battalion fellers?” That’s what he thought you see. Well years later the Americans put up a memorial there and we’ve got this in print

34:00 and on their memorial they tell the story of a fellow called Boettiger he was a German and went to America when he was six, and he fought in the Spanish Civil War. He was a dinkie di [genuine] communist and he was lucky to get back to America and when he got back to Buna he was so disgusted with their performance it says here he formed his own army

34:30 of sixteen fellows and he attacked the enemy with such ferocity, they came at him in waves and he cut them down like wheat in the fields and this is in bronze. And further along the track between Buna and Sanananda there was Huggins road block. Now Huggins took over when his colonel got shot

35:00 and they reckon they formed choke between Gona and Kokoda. Kokoda had fallen two months beforehand, and this Huggins later on wrote an article in an American journal which we’ve got where he said, “We did not fear the Japanese, we feared the jungle teeming as it was with lions and tigers and man eating crocodiles.” This is the hot air.

35:30 And this other memorial says, “This marks the spot where the Red Arrow Division first stopped the Japanese for the first time in the Pacific war.” This was three months after Milne Bay and so you can imagine, you see this Iraq business; the Tommies were complaining that the Americans were shooting them up.

36:00 They are like this you see, this is what, so we’ve got a memorial and I will give you a picture of it at Buna telling the truth so that’s why Blamey could play MacArthur because he was the supreme commander, he wanted all the kudos and after we had had won New Guinea and he had the bases he didn’t want to use the Australians.

36:30 We weren’t used to go back into the Philippines, he wanted all the glory for America and he got it. And then they famous battle where they really did put on a battle, Okinawa was it? Or Iwo Jima? Where you have that wonderful picture of the marines putting up the flag and then they had a base to bomb Tokyo with the atomic bomb. But after he got the bases in New Guinea he wanted all of the glory.

37:00 And our boys went to Borneo, it was unnecessary, Blamey didn’t want to go, he said, “It wasn’t worth the lives they could wither on the line they have been bypassed.” But the politicians wanted to have a say so the Australian troops were sent to Borneo and the 9th Division took North Borneo

37:30 and the 7th Division took South Borneo which was Dutch. And my old friend John Kerr who had more power than people ever realised, he put in a claim with Evatt and these fellows, that as we had taken Borneo it was an Australian possession. And the British knew about all the oil around there and they didn’t want this and they sent a crowd out to talk to Australia

38:00 about this and Kerr put them in mess hut at Ingleburn and nothing happened and they went off home. We shouldn’t have gone to Borneo and it wasn’t worth the life and it would have withered on the vine, they would have starved, they had no supplies. And Queen Wilhelmina wanted to give us who went to Borneo two guilders a day and a medal and the Australian Government said, “No thank you,” They felt it would lessen their bargaining powers at the peace table.

38:30 And when you, these things aren’t written in history you see we pick them up from time to time and Johnny Kerr told me all this, he is a terrible fella. So that’s why Blamey was so good, he at least kept MacArthur in his place and he kept the Australian politicians, and he got what the boys wanted you see.

39:00 But see the fellas didn’t take him as a person, they could do all these things they could get drunk, go to brothels and so on, but not the bloke on top he must be an angel its extraordinary isn’t it? And of course if a chaplain did it, as a senior chaplain I had to send two home for misbehaviour.

39:30 I was always glad (UNCLEAR) a bishop. You have go to do some of these things you see and of course if a chaplain did it you see he was news you know so that was it.

40:00 **Well you have just answered my next question about the American claim. When did you become senior chaplain?**

A chaplain could become a senior chaplain only when he became in charge of the division, you had a division and every division had three brigades and

40:30 every brigade had three chaplains, always an Anglican, always a Roman Catholic and the third could be anything and that was it. All of these chaplains and brigades I had to look after all the fellows in the 18th Brigade but I lived with the 12th Battalion, so I did all of what you might call extra curricular jobs with the battalion but then I had look after

41:00 all of the Anglicans in the other two battalions you see. In practice we did it the third bloke never did, so we remained captains and that was it. And then for example if a doctor went into a field ambulance he was a captain but if he went up he could be in charge of a little group and he could be a major, he had a chance we had no chance. Well at the end of the war

41:30 nine months before the war ended they said, “This isn’t fair, take a fellow like Wotton four years in a front line unit and he is a captain and so we are going to give some of these blokes a majors rank and pay of course.” And when I got it the senior chaplain went out and I asked if could I not have to go and live at Divvy Headquarters, “Could I stop

42:00 at my unit?” And they said, “Good oh.”

Tape 5

00:31 **Roy before we get into your story again, you mentioned that you had four other brothers what service did they see?**

Right, my eldest brother Jack who was eighteen month older than I was he was a bright enough fellow to get into the artillery

01:00 the 2/9th Field Regiment, and the second youngest he also was in the 2/9th Regiment. The bloke next to me would be number three in the family, he got in with another artillery unit up in Darwin and the youngest one got into small ships and he didn’t get past Moreton Bay.

01:30 Although he volunteered to go for overseas service he didn’t get there, and he’s got no entitlements and he can't get a Gold card and all these things you see. So that was the family you see. And my father died in 1938 before the war broke out and I was ordained in ’38 and he died shortly after I was made a Deacon actually.

02:00 My mother lived on her own at Epping in the family home until she died about twelve years ago. She was seventy-eight when she died. so she lived in the family home at Epping. And my sister, she was the baby, she got a job with the Bank of New South Wales it was, and she went to England and she worked in the bank in England.

02:30 And then ultimately she came back to Australia and she married a fellow called Jeffery Parker who was an air force Chaplain, and he went on to Oxford to Wooster College at Oxford where he was very happy, and he came back and he was the Rector of Muswellbrook up here and Vice Ward of the Theological College at Morpeth

03:00 and then he became an Assistant Bishop and he retired about eight years ago and he died two years ago so that’s mainly it.

How then did you mother cope with and react to all your enlistments in the war?

I don’t know she was a wonderful woman, and they all were in those days, their job was in the kitchen, bathroom and the bedroom that was their job. She brought us kids up on father’s salary

03:30 goodness knows how. These were the days when nobody had any security my father didn’t know from year to year if you would get a raise or get the sack. And they really worked, there is no doubt about it. She had been a teacher in New Zealand a very progressive woman really, very much a feminist if she were alive today.

04:00 So but that was mainly the background and after I left school I was lucky and got a job with the Egg Board from there I went into Theological College, the first curate was at Waverley in the Eastern Suburbs, I didn’t like it much. And then I was sent to Manly and it was so different, I swam at Bondi and that was all right, but oh Manly was a marvellous place.

04:30 Then after Manly I went to the war.

I’m wondering how your time at Theological College prepared you for your war service?

It didn’t, it didn’t, all they did was prepare us for exams. They never told us a thing well certainly about the psychology of the place there was no (UNCLEAR ‘Pastor Rileheld’)

05:00 to tell us how to deal with people or how to minister to the dying or sick people and how to run youth groups, none of that we had to go out and learn it ourselves. It was purely academic, we knew Greek verbs and all that sort of stuff, it was most inadequate. So in the main society accepted us and

05:30 it’s different today of course but the College I went through was always what they call low church and its outlook on life was puritanical its whole basis was on sin and Our Lord died and took our sins away from us, and the whole approach to life was puritanical.

06:00 The last Archbishop he feels guilty and it was the morays of nineteenth century middle class England. Have you been looking at Jane Austen on the telly? It’s that stuff you know, no idea that Jane Austin’s father had shares in a mining company where the miners were dying at twenty from the dust in their lungs and all

06:30 of that, never applied the gospel, it hurts. So I learned very little in the Theological College, I did learn

that there are other points of view than my own and I had to keep looking at my own and exposing myself to other sorts of stuff. For example I like reading Manning Clark and I say, “Hey Manning your wrong here.” I knew his brother very well.

07:00 I like reading Rener who is a rasafist [?], this awful American Bishop what's his name Spong and Barbara Thering my friend Archbishop Lowe will pick up a book and see who printed it and that decides if he will read it, I reckon he must be frightened of his own decision. If you can expose yourself to somebody else, you see. The more I say my prayers and the more I read my bible

07:30 I find politically I find I am going further and further left and theologically I’m going further and further right so tell me I am mixed up if you like.

I wonder how you adapted to the new environment in New Guinea when you first arrived?

Well the army was always on the move we lived together and we moved together, and I don’t think geography had much

08:00 effect you see. After all the army does all your thinking for you its got to, and if you could cow-tow to the brass hats your were all right. We had a major with us and the brigadier said to him, “Do you agree with me major?” and he said, “Sir I agree with everything you say and I agree with everything before you say it.” There was a little bit about it but when you get

08:30 into a fighting unit there is no room for preferment like that you have got to be on your mettle. It will come good and they had what they call a bowler hat [dismissal] and off they would go, you see. The CO [Commanding Officer] from the 2/10th Battalion got a bowler hat. The further up you got the tougher it got you see, if you were a General you got into the political era, as you know in the British Army and it was the same with ours if you lost one battle

09:00 you were out. So there was no problem of adapting yourself to the army because it had its rules you see, and I went into the cracking plant at the oil place at Balikpapan, on a hill, on a heap of rubbish I saw a book and I picked it up and

09:30 it was in German and it was all about cracking oil, and in my arrogance I brought it back to read it you see. And as I walked out there was a brigadier and he said, “You're looting.” “Oh I said it’s only rubbish” and he said, “You’re looting, put it back,” and he let me simmer for a fortnight and then he called me in and he said, “I am very upset about the oil refinery the other day padre.”

10:00 He said, “Fortunately the war is over otherwise I would have to ask for your removal but he said if I did I knew there would be a riot over at the battalion.” He had this great gift of kicking you in the pants and patting you on the back at the same time you see. Well that was one time when I broke the army rule and it was a bit of rubbish. No we conformed.

10:30 We didn’t have any option it was a regulated life, the Australian Army wasn’t tied down by little red books like the Germans or I suppose the British, nevertheless there were some things that you could do. And they were very good with the infantry, they kept us away from the towns almost a hundred percent, so we couldn’t go into town and muck up like they did in the First World War.

11:00 The Australians got an awful reputations in Cairo and Paris and places like that so that was it.

What about adapting to the new physical environment?

We were out of town in Moresby you see we could have been out near Lithgow or somewhere like that.

11:30 We were away from it, and we didn’t have transport and that was another problem you see. There was very little transport so I occasionally got into Moresby, but with the battalion was scattered over ten miles, I didn’t have much chance to do anything else. That was with the 53rd Battalion and you see there was nothing on Goodenough Island, nothing at Buna and Sanananda, only

12:00 a mission station, it was deserted while we were there. The same with Balikpapan the people hadn’t come back to Lae and so on, that wasn’t a problem at all. See we never saw women either, and some bloke would go and cavort with the native girls, but in the main the AIF were pretty good clean fellas.

12:30 It was in the other battalion with the scallywags that were more of a problem. But you see I hadn’t been trained for it, I don’t think theological training is much better today, it’s a bit better. The army’s training is better, they have moral leadership course and all that in the army and the chaplain are accepted as an integral part of the army

13:00 and their behaviour and the whole approach to the job is more controlled than ours was.

In your time before the war you were living in reasonably comfortable surroundings how did you take to living in the jungle and the scrub?

I think when you are young you can do it. The moment you became a soldier

13:30 you knew your life was going to be different. Fist thing you went into camp and they gave you a big corn sack I suppose you would call it and they filled it up with straw and they called it a palliasse [sleeping pallet], and the more straw you put in the more comfortable your bed would be you see. So no they, well

it wasn't to me I was pretty adaptable as a curate I had lived in boarding houses

14:00 and I had been away from home for about seven years so.

You mentioned geography before, how did you go when you were ask to bury the soldiers from the 21st Brigade you mentioned that you didn't have any maps how was it that you knew where you were?

On the Kokoda Track,

14:30 is called a trail of course, there is only one track and it is like a fish bone if I could put it that way. There was the middle bone and there was jungle on either side and of course the fellows had been fighting in the jungle and we had to drag them back onto the track as best we could and then the war graves would come and remove them to a more permanent cemetery.

15:00 Of course what the war graves did they didn't take a full body they only took a portion of it, and this caused a whole lot of sadness. There is a fellow in parliament in Sydney called Charley Lynn, you might have seen he got notorious last week by making a sexual claim against a cabinet minister, well he takes people up to Port Moresby and over the track and makes a lot of money at it. And the Papuans are lovely people.

15:30 Now I know that Bishop Amber, well the Bishop said to me, "They are lovely people but you can't believe a word they tell you, they will tell you the most horrible patient lies and look you fair in the eye." Well they told Charley Lynn that these fellows on Brigade Hill weren't buried and there are a lot of bones there and there are. What the war graves do

16:00 is take a portion and take it back to the permanent cemetery, this shouldn't be known be known because it causes unnecessary pain to the relatives, and the stupid man does it. And he listens to the natives. I have had a lot of trouble straightening this out, and also he comes back and says we didn't pay the Fuzzy Wuzzies [New Guinean natives who assisted Australian troops on the Kokoda Track]. I went up on a pilgrimage in '95 and at Poppendatta

16:30 a politician got up and said, "When are you going to pay the Fuzzy Wuzzies? You haven't paid us." And so when I got back and I was talking at the Battle for Australia Commemoration in Martin Place and I trotted this out. I thought the reporters of Sydney would descend on me and they didn't, but I got a long page a three pages letter from Canberra explaining to me what happened

17:00 and the Australian Government put a lot of reparation money into New Guinea for houses and the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and all these people, and the Government up there being corrupt didn't pass it on. In the end Keating said, "Look we are fed up with this, here is six million finished," and it still didn't go and I said to some ANGAU blokes, "Why didn't you pay the Fuzzy Wuzzies?" and they said, "We did." And I said, "Yes with blankets and tobacco."

17:30 They said, "No no we paid them in solid cash. And it was interesting to see them testing their coins on their teeth and banging it on the ground." So you'll hear that there are still a lot of bodies up there that haven't been buried only portion of them were brought down I have seen their head stones in Bomana cemetery, so to me it irks me to think I went to all that trouble doing and being meticulously careful

18:00 and this is what the war graves have done. Well it shouldn't be known because it will only cause pain to parents who thought the whole boy was brought back you see. So that's one of my pet aversions and Mr Lynn is one of them. I gave him a copy of this letter, its great detail and quite complicated, the Foreign Affairs Department, the Repatriation Department

18:30 and External Territories and it was quite tangled up a bit, and that's what happened. The cemeteries at Lae and Bomana are beautiful and the one sad thing at Lae, there is a whole portion, which says the body of an Indian soldier lies here, and that's all they did. The Japanese caught them in Singapore and took

19:00 them to Melanesia and Bougainville and places like that to do work and when they died they just put them anywhere and the Australian Government brought them back and of course they had no identification you see so.

Well having taken such meticulous care as you said you did for the burials of these soldiers, what care did you take for your self I mean how would you make your way from where you were

19:30 **based you said it took three weeks to complete this task?**

I think we were naive we thought oh the wars up there, we're down in the back part of it and we just went ahead and did our job.

As you have said all ready today there was no front line?

No there was no line in the jungle no, I told you about the sniper who was what two hundred yards from Battalion Headquarters? Never at any time.

20:00 One of your officers was on the front line and he thought he could go down to the canteen and a

hundred yards down to the canteen to buy some toothpaste or something and the brigadier came up and found him missing and he got the bullet, he got the bowler hat. You couldn't do that sort of, you had to stop in all of the time you see? No, there was no front line

20:30 and that's why the old soldiers that Blamey sacked found it hard to adapt themselves to this jungle warfare. I don't know whether you agree with this but I asked General Daly to talk at a funeral and he wouldn't do it, he said, "No." And I asked him why did he retire at fifty five and he said, "Your mind crystallises."

21:00 And that's why the services get rid of these very able men at fifty-five. You've got to be able to adapt yourself, when you think they could fire a rocket at Alice Springs and sink a ship in Sydney Harbour there would be no more soldiers needed you see, its frightening isn't it? No I,

21:30 that was the only worry that I had, I told these people that their boys were buried and resting in a cemetery and this is what the war graves did.

More immediately I'm curiously to know what danger you might have been operating in performing that task since as you said any place in the jungle could have been

22:00 **in the line of fire, and here you were for three weeks burying these dozens of soldiers practically on your own, what threat did you feel?**

I don't know. It raises the theological question has God got favourites? As a doctor who knows pesiphilus says he loves you as much as he loves me. And the same with Catherine. I don't know why did the doctors get shot ? Why wasn't I on the Perth when it went down?

22:30 Why wasn't I on the ship that the Japs sunk in the Gulf at Papua? Why were the two doctors shot and I wasn't? I don't think this is the answer but its chance really. How could I have defended myself at any rate? I had a Smith and Wesson .38 I wouldn't have hit the mark at ten yards, I don't think. I don't think there is any answer to that.

23:00 You see there were families I knew that lost all their boys. I nearly went to Malaya with the 8th Divvy, something went wrong there too, I could have been a prisoner of war and probably died in a prisoner of war camp, I mean why do you meet the girl you marry? That's how it goes and it one of the interesting problems of life isn't?

23:30 **Certainly, even putting aside the imponderables what fear did you feel?**

I don't think you have fear, I might have had fear when I went away. But when there was a good battalion in front of me I never had any fear at all, great soldiers with a great record, and I knew they were in front of me.

24:00 Do you remember the old motto on the Shell maps we used to get? May ducae tuvas arrest - with me as your guide you will be safe. I think if you got with a good battalion you were right. See very few doctors and very few chaplains and stretcher bearers, some did, some got shot like they did the First War of course. No with these good blokes in front of me

24:30 I never worried, you just went ahead and did the job. I think a soldier never thinks I'm going to be shot, he sees his mate shot and says, "Oh Jack's copped it you know," you know that old song of the Vickers gunners? You take the tripod and I'll take the gun and I'll be in action before you

25:00 and if you bloody well get shot, I take the bloody lot and eat your iron rations in the morning. That came out in the First War you see. I think soldiers develop a fatalism, if it comes it comes, and if it doesn't you know. They don't live in fear they are going to get shot and they know at the same time they do, it's a mix up of them you see.

25:30 **What prospects did you see for yourself? In?**

What is surviving? I never thought about it. I never thought about it. Because in action it would only last a week of course see you had the jungle to contend with,

26:00 there was typhus and malaria and dengue, hook worm and reading the story of King David and his fight with his son Absolom it says, "The forest that day consumed more men that day than the sword." And the Owen Stanleys and the whole of New Guinea, the tropical diseases were as bad

26:30 as the Japanese bullets. See if a fellow got dysentery for example he'd be out for a couple of weeks, and if he got malaria and by the time he got back it would be a month. So you had to contend with that as well as the enemy so, no I never worried about those things and I had a young wife at home too.

27:00 No the mentality of soldiers is very interesting. We used to have a stork derby when we went on leave and we all put up a fiver and the first bloke who had a pregnant wife collected the dibs. I often thought of the psychology of it, did every man like King Henry the Eighth want an heir? He wanted an heir and he wanted to pass it on.

27:30 And this is a sort of animal instinct and I suppose for that reason the fellows wanted to survive. There is

a lot of study to go into the stuff for you young blokes to go into this sort of psychology stuff, there is a lot to be done you know.

So touching on the mentality of the soldiers you said that you had faith in the battalion that you operated with

28:00 **while they were there you felt some security, how much of that trust operating both ways?**

You mean their trust in us?

In yourself?

No I never thought about it. I was pretty fit, I knew when to duck and that sort of stuff, well that was instinctive wasn't it? No I was in the army and that was that.

28:30 I think that the mentality was that if it happens it happens, fatalism you see. And some of the officers who where heavy drinkers when we went into action, they would break out the liquor and give us all individually and some of the officers who regularly drank, I never used mine wouldn't take it and they would go into action perfectly sober.

29:00 And no I don't think we ever thought about it. Sometimes I would say I will take a church service before an action and the officer would say, "Oh no you don't you are giving them the wrong ideas," there were some that thought about it, so no, one said to me the other day, "One fellow dies another takes his place."

29:30 So that was the mentality of the Australian soldier. Whether it is the same I don't know but we were all products of our environment, these fellows have come through this hard period of history I spoke to you about, it made them what they were. They were part of a group with had solidarity which stuck together and they all went together and if one bloke forgot to fill up his water bottle

30:00 his mate went with half and if his mate got wounded they would carry him and so on. There was a corporate mentality in a platoon. It developed I suppose over the ages, when you think you get a lot of blokes from Cape York and put them in Wilson's Promontory they gelled very well

30:30 because of the army lore, l o r e, that went with it you see.

What counsel might you give to soldiers before and action?

Nothing, if they asked me, I would say, "Well we are going to die sooner or later and our changes are its going to be sooner but if we love the Lord we're right."

31:00 Simple as that, that's the bottom line you see. During the time in camp, well I would have me study groups and all the rest of it, and try and use church parades they had what they call a hollow square, do you know what a hollow square is? Well the companies would come in, well it was like a u shape, in the middle of the square would be first of all the sergeant major and he would be satisfied and would hand over to the Adjutant and he would be satisfied and

31:30 he would hand over to the colonel and he would hand over to the Padre. "Your parade Padre." And from then on I was the boss and I could even tell the colonel what to do. But you know I think if a chaplain had said, "Now fellows some of you are going to get killed in a week or two." The colonel wouldn't have been happy, I'm sure he wouldn't have been. I don't think he ever did it at any rate.

32:00 We tried in any message we gave, to treat the fellas as if they were back home and if we in our prayers we would pay for our wives, sisters and kids. This is where Frank Hartley had the row with old Blamey about hating as a motivation you see so that was how it went.

You mentioned the story about the stork derby when the battalion went on leave,

32:30 **earlier today the battalion when they were at Buna they were denied leave?**

No it wasn't at Buna, it was when we were back in Australia. I was saying that we were never in a town to get leave you see

33:00 so it accumulated and when I came home to Sydney, it was about a month that I had accumulated. Now it would different to people who where at base, if they were say at Port Moresby they would be given time to go off. We had nowhere to go, same in Goodenough Island, where would we go? Same in Borneo, so it accumulated, it was a good thing

33:30 **What effect did it have on the men you were operating with to keep operating without periods of leave?**

Oh well the army kept them going, they knew the fellows would get into trouble if they were idle so the army kept them going, and when they weren't in action they were doing exercises.

34:00 See were on the Atherton Tablelands because it was jungle and there was no idle time, at the worst we would dig graves and improve the campsite, or we would play football, or we would have other recreation like debates, plays and all that sort of stuff. There was a lot of talent in the army, and we

were never short of musicians, actors,

34:30 debaters and footballers we had plenty of footballers. My doctor friend who was a bit of a character and we went to a footy match one day and a bloke came off with a pots fracture, now a pots fracture is instead of your foot being like that its like that, it is very painful. And he said to this poor bloke, “You are paid to be maimed by bullets not football.” He didn’t mean it of course. No we were never idle,

35:00 and if we knew we were going to be there for a long time we would organise things. At Mount Garnet we even had a race meeting and one of the North Queensland boys took me around to the stables, it was the only time in my life I could see there was some sense in horse racing. He said, “See that horse its too big in the hindquarters, that fellows got too much girth, that’s too short in the neck,” and he knew and he added up with was the best horse.

35:30 We had this race meeting at Mt. Garnet and in the middle of the race track there was bush and they used to reckon that there was illegal things going on when they got around the bend near the bush and so the army engineers cleared Mt. Garnet up, that kept them going. Pulled out all of the trees which improved the race course you see; they used the army for anything

36:00 they wouldn’t let them sit down and get into trouble, that’s when you do get into trouble you see. And we had lectures I remember a fellow who lived at Dungog gave a lecture on cattle raising in the Hunter River and the North Queenslanders said he was a coastal farmer you know a different type of farming all together. No a good army let the fellows idle that’ll only get the fellows into trouble.

36:30 A little bit of trouble I think I told you some of them went into Atherton and burgled the whole town, up one street and down the next and they were professional burglars in private life you see. Oh we always kept ourselves occupied.

Well at those times say after the Kokoda campaign and before the battle of the beaches when the battalion had to be kept occupied what role did you play?

37:00 I could do nothing as I said earlier I could just sit in my tent and read there was nothing laid down for me. And I couldn’t be ordered because I would then, I was always going in and out the tent, saying, “What’s doing fellers? Anybody want anything?” and I prided myself and I think I was unusual, I think I knew every bloke in the battalion.

37:30 You know, “Any of you fellas having trouble at home?” Only rarely fellows would come to me and say their wife had run off with a Yank and the Yanks had stacks of money and to be in Sydney was at battle station you see. The same in New Zealand. And so if I had nothing to do I would go into the tents at night and say, “Anybody want anything doing? You're not frightened of me fellas are you?” and this sort of stuff, build up a good relationship with them you see?

38:00 Then I ran the cricket and I ran the football and I coached the 12th Battalion to the finals in the football on the Atherton Tablelands, the crowd who were outed were the Tank attack fellows. And their CO was Jack Argent and Jack Argent was the founder of the Parramatta Rugby Leagues Club, he took a Rugby League team to England

38:30 and they didn’t have a big number of fellows, and they spent all their time training for footy that’s why they were champions you see. Well he had enough nous to use his civilian abilities keep his blokes occupied, you see. He had inner competitions platoon against platoon all this sort of stuff. So we never let a soldier get idle never.

39:00 If he goes on leave that’s his business, but while you’ve got him there make him be active all the time you know the old adage, what is it the devil makes mischief of idle hands, the old army was a wily old lady you know. Our fellow rarely got into trouble, except I told you about when they looted in the Middle East the Tommies taught them to do that.

39:30 **Well that adage that you mentioned before is a religious adage and you say that the army was wise enough to keep its men occupied how was that message passed on to you?**

It all depends what they were doing. If they send they would send them on a route march and that was the last trick up their sleeve, “We will go on a route march,” well I would go with them and

40:00 and where ever they would go I would go with them, I could have stopped at home and some did unfortunately you see. So a chaplain need to show that he identified himself with the men, there was a terrific temptation to say, “I’m an officer and I lived with the officers you see,” and still

40:30 the old 9th Battalion in Brisbane and it was probably the best in the AIF, the officers in that battalion have never joined up with the 9th Battalion Association. Except the fellows who wife I’m going to bury tomorrow, he’s the only one. And see I’ve got the history of the 2/12th Battalion, cost $20,000 we got a young bloke in Hobart to write it, this is peacetime of course.

41:00 And he dug into my experience of the battalion, there is a lot of me in that book you see. So the army was very wise and we had our regular cricket and football and all these other things, and we won the debating competition for the 7th Division. That was the idea

41:30 and I think they probably expected us, anyway I had a terrific relationship with all of them, the colonel and all. Perhaps they were easy blokes to get on with I don't know.

Roy our tapes about to finish.

Good. Lovely to meet you.

Tape 6

00:30 **Roy in your posting to New Guinea you said that you were at one time attached to the 12th Brigade?**

No, the 18th Brigade, the battalion was the 12th, the 2/12th Battalion. ,

01:00 The army from the start mucked things up. When the AIF was formed there were on paper fifteen Brigades in the Australian Army and they took over from the First War and when the 2nd AIF they then started on the 16th Brigade and they were the 1st Brigade of the 2nd AIF

01:30 and they were 6th Division because they already had five Divisions on paper and so the 16th Brigade was all of Sydney, all of New South Wales, the 1st Battalion was Sydney and 2nd was Newcastle, and the 2/3rd was Goulburn and the 2/4th was Parramatta. Then you went to Melbourne and the same thing, 5, 6, 7 and eight and

02:00 then the next one which would have been the 18th Brigade corresponding to the 3rd Brigade in the 1st AIF was 9 from Brisbane, 10 from Adelaide, 11 from Perth and 12 from Hobart. And then they decided to reduce the Brigade to three so they took the 4th out of the 16th the 8th out of the 17th and they should have taken the 12th out of the 18th but they didn't, they took 11th so they now had a new Brigade they called the 19th

02:30 4, 8 and 11. So they mucked things right up from the jump you see? And I don't know if this is interesting to you but in Gallipoli they knew the casualties would be high, the 1st Brigade was all New Souths the 2nd was all Victoria, and the 3rd which had four battalions, 9, 10, 11, and 12 was interstate so they put it in first

03:00 so to spread the casualties and that was the story of Gallipoli and the others came later. So the 18th Brigade consisted of the 2/9th, 2/10th, and 2/12th Battalions and a chaplain went and lived with a battalion he was attached to a Brigade and immediately detached to a battalion. He lived with the battalion and he was on the strength of it,

03:30 they fed him and all the other things but he still had a duty to all his own brand in the Brigade. I had to look after all the Anglicans spiritually only, all of the 18th Brigade. Then there was a second role which purely voluntary as I have pointed out you might call it extra curriculum with all the sporting activities I didn't have to do them. Generally speaking the Roman Catholic Chaplains they had their blokes

04:00 in under control you know, they all went to church in civvy life so they had a much easier job than we did. We Anglicans never had the control over their people like the Catholics did so that's what happened to a battalion in the army yeah.

I know you have talked about it before about being

04:30 **attached to different battalions but you made a few trips or at least a couple of trips to New Guinea and on to Borneo can you just map out for me your movements from one battalion to the next and how that came about?**

Well I was appointed to the 53rd Battalion with later became part of the 30th Brigade, and we went away on the Aquitania a beaut ship,

05:00 lovely, comfortable and all the rest. Right now when it came later on to come back to Australia we came back on a ship called the Taroona, which was a ship that went between Melbourne and Launceston it was just so so. And the next time we went away we went away on the old Katoomba that wasn't bad. The next time we went on

05:30 a Victory ship and Victory ship was a super Liberty ship, these were ships which the Yanks could knock together in a month, all steel not a bit of wood in them you see? And then we came home on a Dutch ship from the second New Guinea trip, and being a senior chaplain I came home ultimately on the Taroon [?]. So I think the quality of the ships went down and down.

06:00 **And which battalions were you attached to on those different occasions?**

The 53rd on the Aquitania and that was the end of them, from then I travelled with the 18th Brigade you see and they had some terrible ships. They went to Brisbane to Port Moresby on a ship called the Anshun, it was so poor that the latrines were hoisted over the side

06:30 you could just imagine, and it got sunk by the Japanese later on at Milne Bay and the fellas reckoned it was the best thing the Japanese ever did, it was a terrible ship. Of course being officers we were looked after. You wouldn't believe it, when the 18th Brigade went to England on the Queen Mary

07:00 an English officer was detailed to teach them table manners, and one thing they remembered was when you are eating oysters you use the little fork and you point the little finger that way, you wonder why the British won the war sometimes.

Can you tell me about the first leave you spent back in Australia?

07:30 Well I came back after the Buna show about Easter in 1943, and I went home to my wife who was living with her mother and I got malaria and when I got discharged from Concord Hospital they sent me to the showground and up to Brisbane and up to the Atherton Tablelands. So I didn't get much joy in leave, you see

08:00 I spent most of it in hospital. But I would have had about three weeks to get around Sydney and enjoy myself but it was a bit of bad luck that I got malaria I didn't get it in New Guinea. The army was so satisfied that Atebrin would stop secondary malaria that they had compulsory parades

08:30 and every lieutenant had to get his Platoon and supervise their taking of Atebrin. But the Australian soldier is not as silly as that he would put it under his tongue and spit it out because another rumour was that Atebrin would make you sterile and they didn't want that. But I knew a colonel who was in charge of a field ambulance, he was a doctor,

09:00 he reckoned was allergic to it and he got a bowler hat over it. So at any rate will I got malaria and if I had gone back and got it again they would have said, "You aren't taking your Atebrin," it was a hundred percent effective so I didn't have much leave.

You have used the expression 'bowler hat' a few times can you tell me what they signifies?

It's a hat that civilians wear, do you know what a bowler hat is?

09:30 They were all the rage when I was a young man, it was a social thing and it meant he was out of the army. It was a polite euphemism if you like, he got a bowler and a lot of the old colonels who were in charge of the Militia units between the wars a lot of them got bowler hats. It simply meant you got

10:00 a premature discharge that's what it meant.

When was your first leave back to Australia?

That was round about Easter 1943, and so when I got out of hospital I might have had a week and then I had to report back to the Sydney Showground and took some trains to Brisbane, and we were there at Strathpine not doing much

10:30 and that's when we did go into Brisbane, and that's were the fellows did get into trouble. As soon as enough fellows came back from leave they put us on a train and sent us up to the Atherton tablelands so oh there were brawls between the Australian soldiers and the Yanks in Brisbane. There were one or two fatalities. See that's was

11:00 because fellows were waiting in a detail depot to sufficiently fill a train to go north and they did get into trouble too.

Is the battle of Brisbane you are talking about?

Yes that was the battle of Brisbane,

Some of your?

I don't think any of our fellows were in it no. There were bad feelings, see the Americans had a lot of money, I remember the few days leave I had I went into a restaurant in Sydney

11:30 and it took a couple of hours to be served the Yanks were getting served, see they had the money and they threw it around and that was an ugly affair that.

What sort of pay were you on at that time?

12:00 Really good pay, I was on a captain's pay. The system was that every soldier had to send money home, he could send more if he wanted to, that was called an allotment. And then they took another bit out they called deferred pay so that when we came out there was a nice little next egg for us. We had no reason to spend our money there was a canteen

12:30 now and then when we were in a settled position, and then we would have to buy our toothpaste and toilet soap and stuff but by and large all the necessities of life were provided for. And following the good old British tradition the officers got a field allowance, three shillings a day and the idea of it was that we ate the same food in the mess as

13:00 the blokes did but we spent this extra men on something more palatable. So officers got three shillings

field allowance which I just accumulated, I hardly spent anything. So I was careful and I came out of the army with enough money to furnish a house, on a curate's pay I wouldn't have had a hope.

13:30 I had all the money I wanted to buy fridges, they were in short supply and dear, and cots for the kids and all the ordinary things in a house hold you know, linen and cutlery and so on, I had no problem at all. No, the men I think they go the basic pay was six shillings a day that's all they got and when I got a major it went up again

14:00 so no the pay was good, far better than I got as a civilian. I think doctors probably suffered and they were about the only ones, so no, the army looked after us. They bought all our clothes all our food, free doctor we didn't have to pay for that, free dentist, so the army was a very benevolent old mamma

14:30 I see the other day I was talking to a taxi bloke and he said he couldn't afford to go to the dentist and I said, "Well you had better join the army mate."

From Brisbane where was your destination then?

We got on one of those awful Brisbane trains you know the small gauge, and they were over worked and they were breaking down

15:00 and every troop train was terribly overcrowded and the train would stop every hundred mile so the fellows could go off into the bush. There were no facilities what ever you see, you know as a Queenslander it is a long way from Brisbane to Cairns, in those awful pre war Brisbane trains. Again, officers were lucky when I was

15:30 to go back to I found myself in one of the carriages with one of our majors who was a scallywag, always drinking, and the colonel his troops was on the train he was a field ambulance. A non combatant officer in the army cannot command a train, they must be under command of the senior combatant officer.

16:00 So this major of ours who was an Irishman and hit the grog hard, he was drinking rum, and the three of us had a nice little carriage all on our own, one of those old box carriages where we could lie down and sleep and we had a toilet and all that. The fellows were like sardines in the other trains, and this colonel was very annoyed that he outranked this major and yet the major was in charge of the train.

16:30 And when we got to Bundaberg the RTO, the Railway Transport Officer put his head in and said, "Where are the OC troops?" and this major had been drinking pretty heavily, "Have a drink Roy?" "No thanks Keith," "You're mad if you don't." and the colonel wouldn't touch it, he was cranky. And so they got forty bodies to put on the train and he said, "Put 'em up the front," and the colonel, "No you don't major they're my boys up there and they are overcrowded already."

17:00 And he said, "I'm RTO and I'm in charge of the train," And he said, "But I'm SMO the Senior Medical Officer and I forbid it," and Keith scrambled to his feet and just as the train was moving he got on and he said, "I've fixed it up colonel you'll be quite happy." And so the next day I said, "Keith what did you do with those troops up there?" and he said, "I put 'em up the front." I said, "You told the colonel you wouldn't," and he said, "No I didn't,

17:30 I told him he'd be happy." He said, "I'll tell you something you never argue with these roosters, you agree with them and go your own sweet way," and I think I learned a lot in the army the stupidity of argument. So these poor kids were crammed out and can you imagine going on that journey, they couldn't lie down and sleep or anything else, that's how the army treated them. We had a signal officer

18:00 who lived at Carnarvon way off in Western Australia, and got off the boat at Cairns so he had to go through the army system and he said, "Se you next war fellas." We didn't see him again, by the time he got to Carnarvon the war would be probably over. That's how we travelled.

Your destination was Ravenshoe was that right?

We got off at either Cairns or Townsville and went on trucks up to the Tablelands

18:30 and the first time we went to Ravenshoe, which was a timber town and the second time we went to Kairi down from and Tolga and that was mostly maize that grew up there. A different area altogether to Ravenshoe. Now we had to pioneer Ravenshoe, there was fellows coming down with malaria, they didn't let them sit down, we dug drains and put up tents and that sort of stuff, pioneered the camp.

19:00 And then we went off on leave you see, but once they had enough fellas there to bring the battalion up to strength it was on.

Well you ended up going back to New Guinea for the campaigns at Shaggy Ridge and Lae as you mentioned. You've already had experience as to what New Guinea was like

19:30 **and part of that experience you described particularly the beaches campaigns as pretty horrific why was it so bad?**

Well simply because the Japanese were still there in strength and as they retreated their forces went more and more into the beaches, and they had these dug outs which I explained how they fortified them, and they where in there and they had to be dug out, the artillery could do nothing. The tanks were a certain amount of help,

20:00 and our blokes had to go in and dig them out of those places you see? And when Gona fell the fellows who escaped went off to Buna and when Buna fell those who escaped went off to Sanananda and the Japanese were trying to reinforce them at night by submarines. They always thought they could make a second go so, and they fought to the end. That's why it was so difficult, you see.

20:30 They didn't surrender a Japanese solder never surrendered, it was dishonourable and that's why they treated our prisoners of war the way they did, they were beneath contempt. They had surrendered, this was the Samurai code, a soldier never surrenders - he dies on the job. We must have killed ten thousand Japanese in those battles just imagine you know

21:00 even in the Owen Stanley's I tried when I was burying those other blokes I tried to bury a few Japanese but that was their job see? Ad they just left them, they didn't worry about pulling wounded out and trying to repair them, that's a soldiers job. It's like the Turks at Gallipoli,

21:30 it's like these suicide bombers, if you give them a religion activation you can't do anything with them, the fellow is prepared to blow themselves up. And the Japanese did this with their pilots you see, the kamikazes or whatever they call them, they would get into a fighter plane and run straight into a warship, they would be killed but that's their job you see. When we got up to the second New Guinea campaign

22:00 they were not properly supplied, and the formations had been destroyed and it was almost every man for himself. It was a much easier job, that's Shaggy Ridge in that photo over there. The terrain was pretty difficult but the enemy were retreating you see. They hoped they would get back to Madang and make a stand there,

22:30 they never surrendered. See they would, the Japanese professional soldier like the German professional soldier would say, "We weren't defeated in the field, the politicians let us down," that was Hitler's big argument. The army wasn't defeated, it was the politicians that let them down you see and the Japanese could say the same thing. When the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima the Emperor called it off and the Japanese soldiers

23:00 say, "We were never defeated in the field." And that's what we are up against.

Well given the terrible nature of that first period in New Guinea what where you expectations heading up there a second time?

Oh we had to exterminate them from the main land of New Guinea. They were still in Rabaul and we let Rabaul wither on the vine.

23:30 If we could get all of the bases in New Guinea, we now had to attack their supply ships going to Rabaul you see? So we once we drove them out of New Guinea the war was really over now MacArthur had his bases to drive north and that's when he didn't need the Australians any more. So that was the idea and the idea was Australia had soldiers doing nothing.

24:00 The great 6th Division, two Brigades the 17th and 16th sat up in Wondecla for two years. Now you imagine the problems of the officers to keep those blokes out of problems, you probably know Wondecla, little North Queensland town, that was our problem then; keeping them occupied.

24:30 **What became your concerns in that second trip to New Guinea personally?**

Well it was much the same we were in Port Moresby when we went there, a place called Pom Pom Park and the training went on and on and on, and then they flew us across the mountains to Lae, a place Dumpu and next to there was an airstrip at Nadzab which I think they still use.

25:00 And then we had the attack on Lae to get rid of them out of Lae and they retreated from Lae up into the Finisterre mountains which is Shaggy Ridge, and then they had to get them right off the mainland. Then Rabaul was no good to them, Rabaul was left to wither on the vine it was never attacked.

25:30 And so that was the idea of the second and I think the Amy wanted, the army always wants to use blokes. That's why the army's always is looking for wars like the present time. Its like putting a car on the training grounds, you don't know what's it like until you put it in real action and the army liked to try out their Armies there is no doubt about that.

26:00 The Yanks want battlefields to try out their blokes. A peacetime army is not much good.

How were you used by the army that second time?

By that time I knew my job well and truly and I would go and see the doc and say, "Any new stuff out?

26:30 Any new things I can do any new drugs? A wounded man, I would find him out there, I remember the doctor coming to me at Sanananda and we had had sixteen inches of rain, and he and I thought we were clever; we had one man tents and I'd half and he'd have half and so we rigged up the one man tent, we put a tarpaulin on the bottom

27:00 and it was 'raining like Billy O' [raining heavily] outside and we were in this little tent and the water

came up from underneath and we were sleeping in water. Any rate a lad was brought in and he had been shot and his whole nervous system had gone and the doc said, “Are you prepared to sleep with this bloke?” I said, “Yeah.” He said, “Strip right off?” and I said, “Yes,” so he got one side and I got the other side completely naked to see if we could

27:30 put warmth back into his body. We lost him but this was the sort of thing that would come up you see. We learned all that stuff, we were seasoned veterans when it came to Borneo we knew out stuff and I knew when to duck and all that sort of stuff. I knew when to learn a little bit more about first aide and that, I knew how to carry my communion vessels . I got a

28:00 binocular case which was slung over my shoulder. And I had my little chalice, its over there now and the bread box and the little bottle of wine when the occasion arose in between scraps I could take a service, might only have ten blokes there, use an ammunition box as an altar and so on. But I picked up these ideas as I went on and by the time I sent up the second time

28:30 I had the game pretty well sewn up and by the time I went to Borneo I certainly had it sewn up. I’ve got a cross in there which I got in Borneo and it was originally in a Dutchman’s house, and it had a figurine on it and the Japs come along and knocked the figurine off and it was lying beside it and then put tags on everything where it was.

29:00 Anyway the boys found it and put a cross on it for me and I will show it to you afterwards. So I accumulated a bit of gear when I could carry it and by the time the war was over, I really I knew all the tricks you see. But I had learned them over four years and as I said earlier one of my gripes was I was never asked and I have never been asked since, it’s a crime to get old you know

29:30 you don’t know anything, and young blokes know everything.

What I want to know doing services for maybe ten blokes, you were improvising but it is something you have been trained in doing I don’t imagine sleeping naked next to a dying soldier was that written into your job description ?

Of course it wasn’t, but the Australians are a wonderfully adaptable people.

30:00 The German soldiers had a little red book and when you get into position A this is the answer you see well life is not like that you see . The Australian was able to adapt himself to the situation. Australians have initiative. The British didn’t all together appreciate the Australian soldier. Now this chappie I’m going to be with tomorrow came from North Queensland,

30:30 grew up in a little town out from Townsville, and he went to school with blokes and he got a commission he went into the local pub with his privates and the English Army said, “You don’t do that,” he said, “To hell with you we grew up together.” It was the Australian soldier, have you heard the war time jingle, we are a ragtime army, rag time show are we,

31:00 we won't salute, we cannot shoot, we won't salute, what bloody good are we? you see. The Australian was adaptable and at Gallipoli they were making bombs out of jam tins, this sort of stuff, and I said my boys made Molotov cocktails, the German had to go back to the Q store to get them you see? So we just had to adapt ourselves to these things.

31:30 I did it too.

I’m wondering what it did to your moral and your enthusiasm for your role there doing all these duties which to me seemed far removed from what you would be expected to do?

Well I think it was part of priest, I was lucky, I have an article there, you can take it away and read about it, Father White, who pioneered

32:00 the dawn service at Albany at Western Australia of all places. He was a chaplain in the First World War. Its part of priesthood, and I was lucky in Sydney there were experienced priests who taught me the craft. You don’t learn it in college and you know you don’t learn everything at university

32:30 you come out and when that’s when you start to learn, our doctor was a Queensland graduate and he was very annoyed when there was no graduation ceremony because of the war. He said, “I am not a doctor.” He didn’t do his internship in a hospital you see he knew a lot but he knew he would have learnt a lot more in a hospital. So I was lucky in that regard I had been under experienced priests who taught me how to look after people and how to deal with people in trouble.

33:00 They would be what we used to call the Anglo-Catholics more protestant clergy is just love the Lord and that’s it you see? And then I had to adapt to the new situation you see. I found generally I had wafer bread for communion and it kept, but when I used ordinary bread it would go blue mouldy over night and the protestant chaplains

33:30 who wouldn’t use wine, they were teetotallers and all that business they used unfermented wine and once they opened a bottle it went sour over night. So what did they do? They were given sultanas and they would soak them over night and that would be the brew they would use for their communion you see? Now wine kept we were all right you see, and wafer breads would keep, but bread wouldn’t.

34:00 So we had learned our craft luckily as priests but then we had to apply it and so no I was just lucky.

What would you do at times when your own spirits were a little low?

34:30 That was a very hard thing, we did have a good senior chaplain and when we were in a fixed position and he would get us together as much as he could. He was a Light Horse bloke in the First War and he became a Bishop later he was a gem and he would get us together and he used to give us the benefits of his experience in two wars and also as a mature priest you see. And if a Bishop came along he would grab him

35:00 and sometimes a Bishop did come along. There was a legendary Bishop in North Queensland called John Oliver Feetham he was a extraordinary man. He came to my rectory at Gordon years later and Marjory opened the door and he pushed her aside and said, “Where’s the lavatory?” not the toilet, and she gave him a nice bed and he slept on the floor. He used to take services in Atherton and I used to take blokes in,

35:30 they were glad to get in there of course and so we got the benefit of an extraordinary man. I remember him talking to the fellows about loving the Japanese he said, “I went to Japan before the war,” and I could see this coming and he said, “They were truculent and arrogant the women were lovely.” he said, “They were like lilies growing on a rubbish heap.”

36:00 He had this gift of thought you see its lovely isn’t, like lilies growing on a rubbish heap and that’s what Japan was like when he saw it. As often as I could the senior chaplain would come out and talk to my blokes from time to time but he kept us going and we had our bibles of course. I belonged to a system called the Bible Reading Fellowship and I had belonged to it since I was a k, we have a daily reading, and as a priest I am supposed to say (UNCLEAR mattens and evensong) every day, which means

36:30 I read four chunks of the bible well as the psalms and the prayer. That was the Anglican system and the Roman bloke would be all right, I don’t know about the others you see. And then luckily with the Brigade next door would have a chaplain too when we got together I would go and see him you see and Archbishop Mole used to send us good books

37:00 I remember him sending me some of CS Lewis books a great Christian professor at Oxford and he had the gift of communication you see. We had to watch it and see some chaplains didn’t and it got them, the grog got them, they misbehaved and all that sort of stuff. We had to be careful cause we were pretty lonely,

37:30 and when you’ve got no one you can belly ache to the bucks stops with you spiritually you see. So, but you would always find a keen man in the battalion, one of my old blokes is now the Roman Catholic Dean of Wollongong, and one is a priest at Ballarat always had keen fellows. And one chap I

38:00 had confirmed in Port Moresby I see him every time I go to Brisbane. Archbishop Strong became Archbishop of Brisbane and he went to him and he said, “You can confirm me in New Guinea as a soldier there.: And you see now in New Guinea Phillip Strong was magnificent. The Anglicans always flew the flag of St. George which is a red cross on a white background

38:30 its not unlike the old white ensign of the Royal Navy, they had a union jack in the corner. And when Strong heard that the Japanese had landed at Gona he got on his small launch and off he went, and the Japanese mistook him for a Naval vessel and machine gunned him, and the Bishop is in his cabin was saying his daily mass and the bullets went through his prayer book. He has still got that book. Now

39:00 as long as he could he would come around to us in New Guinea and he was a real spiritual father to us and he was only a civilian the army wouldn’t accept him. And the shrewd old Yorkshire man, he had been in the First War and General Mackay ordered him home, he was the last of the civilians. And Phillip Strong remembered Lord Gowrie had said to him, “I am Commander in Chief of the Australian forces if ever I can help you let me know.”

39:30 So Strong got a bright idea he wrote Gowrie a letter to counter MacKay’s order and he went to MacKay and said, “I want to get a letter to the Governor General can you help me?” and MacKay the perfect gentleman said, “Yes it can go down in my despatch box,” and there was a letter to the Governor General asking him to countermand the orders and it was stopped.

40:00 He was a real Bishop and he used to come around as often as he could and we were scattered of course, and so our spiritual life wasn’t neglected. Being a Manly boy the Manly people sent me cakes and papers and this doctor we had, Sampson he was still practicing up in Wickham Terrace up until a few years ago, my mail would arrive and there would some Manly Daily’s and Womens Weekly’s and I said, “What would you like to read?”

40:30 He said, “What have you got? Oh,” he said, “You can the Manly Daily and I will have the Womens Weekly.” And so, no, and the church used to send us things and we didn’t do too badly. There was a time there because of the food I couldn’t eat plum cake I had plum cakes to give away and you know my stomach wouldn’t take it. So

41:00 we were on our own, we had to say our own prayers and do our own spiritual life you know. But we weren’t all together alone, so that’s how it went. But see being Anglican we were lucky we had bishops

and the Roman Catholics had Bishops so every now and then even the Yanks produced a Bishop occasionally.

Well this tape is almost coming to an end so we will do a change and pause there.

Tape 7

00:30 **Roy, you were part of many many burial ceremonies I understand that you were not able to carry your robes what did you carry with you?**

I carried a thing called a stole, a stole is like a ribbon and a stole comes from the old Greek word

01:00 stello, 'I send', we get the word apostello, so I just carried one of those that was all I could carry. I have told you about the little box I had with my vessels in it, well it went in there and so that was all I could carry. When we were on a permanent basis I can show you a photo there of it, I put my full gear on but normally I didn't

01:30 have it. So I just carried a stole and if I didn't have a stole I would have used nothing and the church knew that at any rate they knew we couldn't do that.

I was also wondering if you ever buried a Japanese?

02:00 No I didn't. I had no objection to doing it, they generally dragged their fellow away. But I did see some on the Owen Stanleys and I knew for physical and economic reasons I wouldn't have enough energy to do all them, they came and did their own later on. No I wouldn't have had any worry about that.

02:30 Some of the fellows wouldn't have agreed with me and there was a lot of bad feelings, especially when they saw the atrocities at Milne Bay. Now an Australian might be pretty rough but he cannot bear anyone ill treating women and kids and when they saw women with their breasts cut off they really went mad you know it is a terrible thing to do to a women. No they wouldn't regard them

03:00 as an honourable enemy either, because of that you see. One of my friends a priest was a chaplain in the 8th Division in Malaya told the story how he was in hospital and the captain doctor came around with the colonel doctor and the colonel doctor put his cigarettes on a table on a little desk near him,

03:30 and this fellow pinched them and put them under the blanket. When he felt for them they weren't there and he turned around and belted into the captain and that's how they ticked. And he said he was on parade once and when the Adjutant was handing over to the colonel and colonel belted him too, see they had a different mentality to the Australians. It goes back to their Shinto religion you see?

04:00 So no I wouldn't have minded, after all they are God's creatures but you're in a society which doesn't agree with you sometimes you know, and there was no such thing as a good Japanese. When we were in Borneo we came to a house and scratched on the side of the wall was a

04:30 VX number, and the fellows said, "Gee there must have been prisoners of war here," and they went harder to clean up the Japanese to see if they had some prisoners because we knew how they treated them. And it is very hard even today to tell some of the old soldiers that the Japanese are humans.

05:00 I can understand it, it is all very well when you are fit and you are well and you have go no problems, like if a kid is on drugs, if you have got some guts chuck it, but it is not as easy as that but you might think it is. Its very hard to feel as other people feel but you do as you get older but not when you are young.

05:30 **I'd just like to take you back again to Buna and Sanananda you were, you spent some time with the 12th Battalion why was that time with the 12th Battalion so bad?**

06:00 They weren't so bad it was the 53rd that wasn't trained, the 12th were champions see they fought in Tobruk and Milne Bay they had fought the best soldiers in the world and beaten them. They had this confidence in themselves as I said they were like a well trained footy team and they went on the field and they knew they were going to win and at any price you see.

06:30 Oh no and of course Buna, they called it bloody Buna but Sanananda was worse because of the terrain you see but when you have an enemy that's like these suicide bombers they are prepared to die and hope they will take as many as they can with them, it's a problem a real problem you see. And the Japanese were left there to fight to the last man.

07:00 It was estimated on those beaches that there were ten thousand Japanese lost, we lost about nine hundred I suppose. I believe that when the Japanese joined the army he made his will, he wouldn't be coming back and once you can do that with people, the Turks did it at Gallipoli, an Australian bullet was the key to paradise;

07:30 that's what motivates these bombers in Palestine. Brainwash, and I don't think you could brain wash

Australians like that.

Well when you were at Buna and Sanananda I understand you weren't quite at the front line, where were you in relation to the front line?

About twenty yards

08:00 back that's all. It was almost like bobbies and bushies, it was like finding the Japanese and dig them out and the front line troops wouldn't have been more than a hundred yards at least in front of us. See that's why this bloke at Buna was able to shoot at the colonel see? And no there was no really no straight line

08:30 they had pockets here and there, vantage spots, on the track you see, and they would sight their positions that way.

And how were you living at that time?

Living like anybody else, same food

09:00 the same conditions entirely the same. The General and the brigadier would have a bit of a tent and probably a stretcher to sleep on but we couldn't carry them in that country, we had to be very, very light and on one occasions we left our razor blades at home and did we get ticked off. They reckon it was bad for your morale to look at your mate and see him scrubby.

09:30 So they, I remember the colonel saying to these Victorian blokes, "You are in the AIF now," and that was part of the moral you see, we shaved in cold water of course and probably blunt blades. So we lived the same as anybody, we had to. It was all the cooks could do to give us warm meals

10:00 because all the fuel was soaked you know it was wet, well you can imagine sixteen inches a night. Oh no but we were young and fit and you can take it, but the army saw to that so.

From your stories

10:30 **today it sounds like you spent a bit of time with doctors in each of the your postings and you saw a high number of casualties do you feel as if there is a time that was the saddest for you?**

I can't thin, it was so intense you didn't have time to philosophise. A fellow would come in with a stretcher bearer,

11:00 he was wounded and say the doctor had two or three in the queue I would go up to him and with a stretcher bearer we would dress his wounds and be with him and talk with him you see, have a prayer with him and all of the rest of it and then he would move up on the queue. There wasn't time, you would look after that later you know. I think you do that sort of thing in your own private life;

11:30 I look at this place and there are things to be done and I put them in order and don't let them get me down you. Even when you found out a great mate had been killed, you kept going and you had to keep going and that was the training you see. That was the great thing about the AIF, it was well trained, and even when these untrained blokes came to us at Buna, some were only with us for a day and they were put among the seasoned soldiers

12:00 one fellow the sergeant said, "Now you keep down son I will tell you when to get up," and he knew when to get up and when not to get up and pass it onto the boys. But they were trained and it gave them that confidence you see.

Well you have spoken about the 53rd not being prepared and the Militia certainly didn't get a very good reputation?

12:30 Well neither was Australia, you see some of these fellows when they went into camp were called up were called day boys they sent them home at night. They didn't have rifles to train with this is at Ingleburn and places like that, they had broomsticks. And it was a long point before they fired live ammunition

13:00 and we were caught unprepared there was no doubt about that. We hoped and hoped rightly so that we would come to terms with Hitler and all these blokes and they weren't built that way so. Any ammunition and goods we had went to the AIF overseas so the 53rd Militia Battalion some of them had never seen this ammunition. They had never seen

13:30 a Tommy gun, I doubt if they had seen a Bren gun. Suddenly they were put into their hands and they've got to use them you see and, oh training makes a great difference there is not doubt about that. Plus the desire, the fellows wanted to do it; you can't make a bloke a soldier if he doesn't want to. There is a lot of talk about putting these problem kids into the army

14:00 as one sergeant major said to me, "We're not a remedial institution, if society want to fix up misfits its their job not ours." Some fellows have got the bug they like being soldiers, father was a soldier before them probably so that's how they go.

Well given all of that, well how do feel about

14:30 **how fair it was or unfair it was the Militia got the name the Chocolate Soldiers?**

Yes that was unfair. That was I think the unpleasant side of the Australian mentality, I really do, and the press played it up of course. They have got a lot to answer for. There are some fellas who are not cut out to be soldiers.

15:00 I mean the old Catechism says, one of my duties is to earn my living in that state of life as pleased God to call me, I could not be a surgeon, I couldn't put a knife into a human body. I couldn't work in the sewer, but society ticks because some fellas can do these jobs, and there were some fellas not cut out to be soldiers. Now Hitler

15:30 psyched them and now this fellow would make a good engineer, this fellow would make a good ASC [Australian Service Corps], the service corps, but we didn't we put them all into the infantry, and then from there we did pick a few engineers and gunners and all the rest of it. A lot of fellows signed up went into the infantry and a fella said to me, "I couldn't put a bayonet into another person," you see, and some fellas could.

16:00 And of course the only jobs in our war really were infantry, but for every man on the front line what did they need twenty behind him? Doctors and people to feed him, and provide him with the food, and the ammo and all this sort of stuff, keep his records back at the office and so on. So see these 53rd boys were the last, the left

16:30 overs, after all the other people had taken their pick. So that's how it ticked. And there was a certain social resentment of authority, you know blokes who had been thieves and robbers and all that, and they hated policemen well they didn't like officers very much either. One fellow said to me, I used to see him in

17:00 boob and he said, "You didn't like me," and I said, "Well Porky you were always in boob," that's the prison, "you took up too much of my time, I still loved you but it was pretty hard you see?" Now he wasn't a good soldier he was always in trouble. So that's how it went.

17:30 **You heard stories about Japanese committing acts of cannibalism I'm wondering if you ever witnessed it yourself?**

I never did, and I have only heard of it in recent years, whether it is true or not I suppose it was because there are plenty of fellas who have said it you see but I never saw it. My knowledge of Japanese is post war of course

18:00 and they are entirely different of the fellows I saw. One Japanese officer I saw spat in my eye and we were going along a track, and he was a prisoner being brought towards us and I had to go down a hole and come up the other side and as I came up, I went eye ball to eye ball with this fella and he spat in my face. And that was his contempt for me as an Australian you see.

18:30 But that was about as close as I got to them you see, but we did see atrocities there is not doubt about that, but I didn't see cannibalism but I believe there was some.

I asked because I was wondering when you told me the story of

19:00 **the breasts cut off, which women were you referring to?**

Papuan women. Well they would regard them as even lower they would be right down the bottom of the scale you see, cause the Japanese brought their comfort women with them you know. It has flared up recently in Korea and places like that and I did see on the Japanese what the boys called perve pictures.

19:30 I suppose they would not have the Christian view of a women that we would have you see, even the toughest bloke has some respect for a woman but they would be just a biological necessity you see.

20:00 **You've spoken quite a bit about the Americans today what do you think were the American impressions of the 18th Brigade?**

Its rather funny we were getting on the drome, on the plane at Dobodura drome

20:30 a plane had come over with bread and niceties for the Yanks [American] who looked after themselves, and the fella on the plane said to the fellas on the ground, "Who are these Australians?" "Oh," he said, "Why?" "Oh they are a skinny looking mob are they good soldiers?" He said, "This is the 18th Brigade, the two by nine and the two by ten and the two by twelve and they shot every little yellow bastard

21:00 they set their eyes on," and that was their opinion but General Eichelberger said our 9th Battalion were the finest troops in the world and he saw them in action. The Americans were a mixed bag, and they were very young some of them and very callow, you mustn't think they are a homogeneous people they are not. A fellow coming from Boston is a far different person from the fellow that comes from California

21:30 or the fellow from Chicago they are different you see. Probably the ethnic basis is different. Roosevelt was Dutch and Truman was German and Reagan was Irish and so you can go on you see. They have been there a long time to sort of weld and all that sort of thing but they are, I find them very immature.

22:00 They had to admire the Australian soldier because the Australian soldier taught them a lot you see. And I went to a shoot one day, there was a mound and our boys went over to show them how to shoot their rifles the Garand Rifle and the lieutenant says to the sergeant,

22:30 “Are you ready sergeant?” And he said, “Ready as ever we are going to be lieutenant,” and he said, “Carry on sergeant,” so he said. “Cark [“Cock” – said with an American accent] your pieces and fire one shot.” And that was typical American. An American chaplain said to me, a GI [General Issue – American soldier] came to him and said, “What's wrong with these Australians? They call their canteen a water bottle, they call their PX [Postal Exchange - American canteen unit] a canteen, they drive on the left and they can't even speak English?”

23:00 See we called it a water bottle and they called it a canteen, and they called it, so they were and to show the difficulty of language I met an American lad in New Guinea and he was a nice boy and I could see he had a problem and said, “What's up, come on?” and he had been to a dance in Brisbane and he had met a lovely girl, she was everything you expect in a woman, nice decent chaste women you see. And he asked her a third dance and it was a hot night and she said she was sorry she was puffed out.

23:30 He said you could have hit me with an axe, she was a nice girl pregnant and so crude about it. I had to explain to him that when we were puffed out it simply meant we were breathless, see how the Yanks used it you see. So you had these difficulties of language and outlook too but there were some very nice blokes among them there is not doubt about that. Eichelberger was a gentleman

24:00 and he was prepared to admit that these were good soldiers you see. They are different, I don’t think we differ much between say Perth and Brisbane I don’t think so but they do differ, there is not doubt about that.

Well you have just mentioned Dobodura, what was corduroy road?

24:30 Corduroy Road was like a jetty, the roads were so bad they were two or three inches under water, and so corduroy has something to do with the serge of your clothes, that’s a corduroy business, and they would make a road like a jetty out of bush timber so that the trucks could go over it with out going into a hole you see.

25:00 Unfortunately our shells sometimes landed on the corduroy road so that when you were going along the road you would have to go off and come up the other side so it was a road made with timber that’s that a corduroy road was.

25:30 **Also I understand at Dobodura you got a swim?**

I was telling Chris about this. No it was at Sanananda they had a thing called a sea creek, a sea creek was a river that coves in off the ocean and to cross this, there were felled four coconut trees and they were like that

26:00 and when you got in the middle you got your feet wet. Well a Yank came along, and they were well looked after, with two bags of brown sugar on his shoulder, he was going to make jungle juice out of them. And when he got into the middle he lost his footing and down he went, and up he come with all this brown treacle down and hanging on to these things for dear life you see. He said, “That God damn son of a bitch.”

26:30 And the doctors said, “Gee can't you do better than that?” we had to teach him how to swear you see and but to me they looked after themselves, see this plane I was talking to you about they were delivering bread. They did look after themselves and they had ice cream and all that and the Australian people gave it to them, of course they paid for it and paid well for it.

27:00 That was at Sanananda.

What other moments of respite were there at Sanananda?

None, the war was over and we could now have a decent wash and spruce up our clothes as best we could

27:30 wash them in the morning and they would be dry at ten o’clock, and we could get the mud off our boots which wasn’t easy because they were saturated, we could spruce ourselves up a bit and get in order what gear we still had. I could wash out my communion linen, I couldn’t iron it of course and we knew we were going back, we were getting on a plane and flying back to Moresby you see.

28:00 And then in the army you had to have a proper parade you know the colonel lined them up, ”Fall in,” and put in the markers and all that sort of stuff and they never relaxed on the discipline. One time when we didn’t shave did the Brig tick us off, and when the colonel told these Victorian boys you are in the AIF now it made all the difference there is not doubt about it.

28:30 **You mentioned earlier today that your son was born while you were away when were you married?**

I was married in ’41 and he was born in ’45 so

29:00 he was nine months old when I first saw him. But she did a good job with him and he got called up in the Vietnam thing you know. I always taught him to be himself not a pale copy of me and never to accept opinions second hand.

29:30 So he got his nose into Marx, Engels and Lenin, he knew communism from their Trinity and when he was called up he went into an officer's school at Scheyville and a young officer gave him a lecture on communism and Peter said, "You're wrong, Marx never said it." He said, "What?" He said, "That's what Engels said." Well he got very unpopular. And then they got on about killing

30:00 and Peter was a Christian and said, "I believe in the commandments and you shall not kill," and the officer said, "But when a soldier kills he is the instrument of the Government he is not really doing it himself." Peter said, "But Nuremberg didn't say that when Goring tried to get out of it when he said he was carrying out Hitler's orders and he was told he was responsible for his own actions." Well the Commandant got him and said he was

30:30 nuisance and he wouldn't graduate, he didn't care, and I got a letter from the commandant not to make any arrangements about Peter's graduation it was most unlikely that he would graduate as an officer and I wrote this fellow back a letter and thanked him that he had more interest in the boys education than most of his teachers but I taught him to be himself and not be a pale copy of me and I taught him to think, so

31:00 on his final interview the colonel said, "Y you are going to be a fine officer," and Peter said, "Well that's a change of tune you gave me a rough time last time." And he said, "That's part of the training." And so that was that you see and so he graduated all right. You know when they try to brainwash kids.

31:30 **After Sanananda you returned to Australian and then went back to New Guinea and Borneo, which Division was that with?**

7th Division.

32:00 **And I understand that the 7th Division took a hill at Borneo?**

Oh yes I think, didn't I tell you that? Well we were attacking a hill and it had to be taken before dark and we took it and the brigadier came up and ticked off the colonel because he hadn't used all the artillery that was available.

32:30 He said, "I had nine guns for you and you only used one," and the colonel said, I had to take a risk, if they had had that at night they would have pelted hell out of us." And the Brig [brigadier], "Good oh colonel you got away with it but remember this you can always make bullets," there was a different mentality between him and the First War blokes. You read about the British Army and all that and men were only ordinance it didn't matter how many they

33:00 lost you see. Yeah and the young officer he didn't know whether he was going to get a bowler hat or an MC but he got the MC. It came home to me I suppose being what I was, humanity of the Second World War Officer compared with the objective view they took in the First War, how many Australians was it? Six hundred thousand in the First War

33:30 which was a lot for the population we had.

Roy you have three grandchildren of your own now what advice would you give them?

I was asked to go to Brisbane for the great anniversary

34:00 of the Victory in the Pacific and I was asked to talk to some kids that came from all over Australia and my co-speakers were Paul Keating and Mr Sciacca and they were both very tired blokes, and they were not very interesting. When I got up and finished the kids cheered me and I felt terribly embarrassed. I told the kid that you have got to try and live with other people

34:30 and if you can, travel and meet people of other nations. Some Papuan kids had come down on a concert party to Brisbane and they had performed at a school in Mackay and because they were bare breasted the headmaster told to get off the stage and cover up and the Papuans were very upset. This was part of their culture, they couldn't understand

35:00 this Puritanism of the Australians and so it was quite appropriate when I told the kids this, go to Papua if you can, live with them for a while, invite them to your place; its far better to be mates with them than fighting and killing. And I will never forget in '81 I was in Venice there were kids from all over the world, I couldn't get into the toilets. And there were kids from Wales, Argentine and

35:30 Brazil and Australia and America sleeping under the trees together and hitchhiking together I thought these kids are not going to shoot one another, they are starting to understand one another. And I think this is happening in the western world, its not happening otherwise. But that's why I say to my kids, Peter got into the army and he could say he didn't believe in wars in a general way but he couldn't object

36:00 to this particular one you see. But he had a good army career and they put him out at South Head. He

lived like a Lord in a lovely big old mansion, motor car and he went into Sydney to the theatres and the coffee shops, every night. He was in the ASC and it was a waste of time really. No I cannot understand anybody wanting to be in the army in peacetime sand I would say to the kids

36:30 travel as much as you can and understand other people of other cultures. Like I told you about the fellow in New Guinea trying to shove our democracy down their necks you know and they don't understand what a bribe is. We cant believe it you see. And this woman I'm burying tomorrow had a son who was a doctor, a doctor in Saudi Arabia

37:00 and he, he was asked about the present row and he said, "There is an Arab mentality," and he is a Shore boy himself, "its different altogether." And when Christmas came they wouldn't let him keep up Christmas so he got a fleet of four wheel drives and went out into the dessert and kept up Christmas, they can't understand why we're not Mohammed's. See it's a different mentality and our kids have got to mix with them.

37:30 I met an Indonesian girl at a wedding, lovely woman. She was doing her MA [Master of Arts] she had done her BA and she was under the Colombo Plan, they come here and take the light back home and I said, "Wow are you going to get on back home? and she said, "What do you mean?" and I said, "You know what I mean you don't mean anything as a woman, Muslim country you are nothing more than an incubator." She said, "Ours is a progressive religion."

38:00 and I said, "Are going to the fourth wife of a village booktar [?] and live in a bamboo hut?" and she got so angry with me and she stamped her foot and walked out. She wouldn't face up to it she had tasted western freedom you see. Well I like to talk to people like that you know. But I get worried when I go to the RSL and all this bombastic nationalism is still there,

38:30 I think the Australians are still that way for all the education they get you know. They don't do Arts, that's the trouble Christopher, they go and do these mechanical sciences and they can built big aircraft and good roads and big ships and not learn how to be human beings. So no, that's what I tell kids, both of my kids have been overseas. Christopher has a Spanish girl friend at the moment

39:00 and I don't know how you can mix cultures but still Australians are very pretty good travellers you know. But you see the New Zealanders, it took them about three generations to accept the Maori blood that had come into the gang you see. And by gee these Maoris will leave them for dead too in ability. Lovely people and physically lovely too. No that's what I say to kids.

39:30 War is a stupid thing. I mean if we hadn't had our war and the French were still in Indochina we wouldn't have had Vietnam. And if the Dutch were still in Indonesia and the British were still in India they might have got out more graciously, but you know it solves nothing and it creates more problems and so we go on making bigger and better and more expensive items and weapons and our hospitals are downgraded,

40:00 our schools are downgraded, kids that go to university have to pay exorbitant fees and so on. And I was talking to man the other day whose nephew went onto the Gulf thing, a naval rating, and he is coming back with a hundred and eighty one thousand dollars. That's the pay they got, and our fellows got six bob a day and we are still fighting for pensions for some of them

40:30 and these fellows are getting a ticker tape welcome and a special medal. I just wonder what is happing to our youth so there we are ok.

We will just change our tape.

Tape 8

00:30 **Roy can I just start off again by asking you about the 53rd and when they got a chance to redeem themselves?**

Well I think I told you how they were recruited, they were the last choice of all the Militia Battalions. The young men were called up they went into their battalion according to the locality.

01:00 If you lived in Sydney it was the 1st Battalion, if you lived at St. George it was the 45th Battalion, if you lived on the North Shore it was the 18th Battalion, so they went into camp and then they learnt their drill, their rifle stuff. Into those battalions came the recruiters for the AIF and the air force, mainly those two and the good blokes went in they had learnt their basics you see. There were certain fellas left and they were the fellow who didn't

01:30 want to go or weren't keen on it, then when the army decided to send a battalion to Darwin they asked for a certain number of men from every Militia Battalion and they used their chuck outs, so the 53rd consisted of fellows from every battalion who were not wanted. So it wasn't good material to make soldiers out of you see?

02:00 **Well you just told us earlier that the 53rd were used at Sanananda, can you describe what happened there?**

Well we were attacking the Japanese and trying to dislodge them from their positions and they had to put on attacks you see. The poor old 49th put on several attacks and got nowhere and lost of men, and the 53rd just held the line, they didn't lose many men

02:30 but they did incredibly at Sanananda they weren't there for long and then as soon as the 18th Brigade came up they went out. I don't think I saw them at Sanananda.

After your experience in Borneo you returned to Australia and were discharged when were you discharged?

03:00 Early January of '46 and I thought I would have time off but the Archbishop had other ideas and sent me straight into a parish. The fellows used to tease me on how would I get on going back to what they called the DOLS, the dear old ladies. I had no problem, I had a wife and a young family and I was pretty mature and I was after all doing the same job in the army as I would in peacetime,

03:30 so I had no trouble. A lot of fellows had a lot of trouble adapting themselves but I didn't. I was at Mortlake for five years where they used to make gas and then I was sent to Gordon on the North Shore and I was there for thirty years and I retired from there and came up here, and people are people no matter where you meet them. It is stupid Kerr saying its good to be among the elite there is no such thing.

04:00 People are people and they have got their emotions and desires no matter where they are and they don't vary much. Any rate it doesn't matter to the church well it shouldn't, but some people like it you know. See the church flourishes on the North Shore in the Bible belt and down the North Shore line from say Hornsby to say Burwood perhaps but then when you get down into the industrial areas

04:30 well we are not so interested you know. And we don't put our good blokes there we put them on the North Shore and the Eastern Suburbs. So I had no problems settling down, and I still had my football and cricket to go to and I had to finish my university work, I had broke it off so I had a year to finish that up with and a young family and so

05:00 I had enough on my plate to protect myself. But a lot of fellows found it hard to get jobs and they went from on thing to another some did all right the Government was very good on them, and I have a mate in town who was a Barnardo boy and never had a job and they he took a course in hairdressing and he ended up with five salons made a lot of money. See the Government was marvellous. They said, "All right what do you want to do?

05:30 We'll train you and we'll pay you and we'll give you a living allowance to keep your wife and kids. "This is what dear old Chifley and Curtin [Australian war time prime ministers] did for us you see, and a lot of them went to university, the theological colleges were full, fellows decided they wanted to be clergy and the Government payed the bill so rehabilitation in Australia wasn't too tough.

06:00 One thing we always griped at Chifley gave us a gratuity it was just that something we weren't entitled to, it was an extra and then he got turfed out. Mr Fadden became the treasurer and he made us wait five years, no adjustment for inflation which was going mad and interest, we just got about six hundred dollars which was nice,

06:30 but it wasn't worth the six hundred dollars when I came out of the army at any rate they gave us that. I've got this Gold Card and I get all my medical treatments for nothing and travelling card, so fellas shouldn't have found it hard and not too many of my old blokes found it hard. Some became cooks and some became brick layers

07:00 and I kept in touch with as many as I could you know. One bloke I taught to debate and he joined the Wharfies Union, he was a Communist a dinki di Communist and he used to tell them that a Padre in the army taught him how to debate, he was one of the leaders in the Wharfies in the days when they were really militant. Yes he would go around telling them I taught him how to debate, well that's what he became.

07:30 Oh they became all sorts of things and they settled down pretty well really. Well there was a warm welcome to them you see, people took them on. See Australia was wonderful and see we called in at Gloucester in a troop train, stopped for breakfast and all the mums came out they had made mashed potatoes and sausages and you know we were war weary and home sick and here were

08:00 these women and this stuff after army stuff they looked after us well. Years later the CWA [Country Women's Association] came on the telly and I wrote them a letter and said, "I hope you were the dear ladies who looked after us." That was the spirit of Australia so the boys came out of the army well and were looked after pretty well. They went and did university courses, doctors, lawyers and things like that.

08:30 See this Peter Connolly he went and did a law course and he became a judge at the Supreme Court in Brisbane. Johnny Douglas became a judge in Brisbane he upset Bjelke [Sir Joh Bjelke Peterson – former Queensland Premier], he should have been Chief Justice in Queensland but he presided over a Royal Commission and he gave the wrong finding which didn't please Bjelke and so he missed out on Chief Justice of Queensland.

09:00 Another bloke got a job in the Harbour Trust in Townsville they got all sorts of jobs. This Garth Suthers whose wife, well he went back to Dalgety's and did an accountancy course so it went on. They took their place back in society so I just took up my priesthood and carried on in a different way of course and I had no problems.

09:30 **Well going back to when you were away how did you stay in touch with your wife?**

I used to write her a letter pretty well every day and she did too and I've got packets of them. The fellows used to write and if they didn't write their wives would write to me. And the interesting thing was in the 53rd Battalion there was a lot of this, but in the AIF they had very, very few.

10:00 They were good wives and they looked after their fellows and they were under more stress than the soldier. The soldier knew what was in front of him and they didn't, they had an imagination of all sorts of things, and in the main they were pretty good. I baptised their kids later on and married them and no, they stuck together over the years you know after sixty years. I am taking a funeral tomorrow for one of their wives and I have done a lot of that.

10:30 So no the spirit came out of them it was Australia at its best, there is no doubt about that but then we didn't have the population and we didn't have the change in society that we have today you know. School teaching is tough, anyone who wants to be a school teacher is mad or a policeman, or anybody dealing with people, even the doctors today are stressed.

11:00 Some fellows even stopped in the army you would have thought they would have had enough, but some of them stopped in the army and did all right too. They apparently liked the life and I think it would be pretty tough on their wives they would be posted to Sydney and then to Rockhampton and I met a fellow in Tasmania who came from Wilcannia

11:30 you know they didn't know where they would go. They stopped in the army. So that was it.

Most blokes writing to their wives would have to go through the censor I was wondering if that applied to you?

We were gentlemen, gentlemen never broke the laws. I

12:00 mean we were on Goodenough Island and the fellows said, "We're having a good old time and its good enough for me," and I let it go I thought good on you mate if I get a kick well and good you see. They liked me to censor to their letters and there was always a little bit of antagonism between them and their officers, there had to be you see so if they had something personal they would bring it to me.

12:30 I think I was a bit soft on it you know it was a silly business censoring letters. I got into trouble at Ingleburn because I told them I was going to New Guinea and I got ticked off. And I thought the Japanese would be very interested in a chaplain going to serve in the army in New Guinea, and then I went up on that job to bury the 21st Brigade.

13:00 I told someone I was going up and I got ticked off by the AQ the Adjutant Quartermaster and I thought how jolly silly. Some fellows took it too seriously, there is not doubt about that. I'm sure the Japanese wouldn't be upset to know that a chaplain was going to New Guinea. Oh some fellows took their rank very seriously; I was going along in a jeep one day with,

13:30 in Moresby this was, with the Staff Captain Geelong Grammar boy and he said to me, "I like that word forthwith," and sure enough the next weeks routine orders came out and he put in 'The practice of drying ground sheets on tent flies is wrong and cease forthwith'.

14:00 And he got the jolly word in and it used to tickle me about fellows who liked to ride their rank. Of course we give people power and they like to use it, they do and it always tickled me and Bishops are the same. The Bishop gives us a kick in the pants for no reason just to let us not to get to pally with him you see,

14:30 and I often think Bishops get like army colonels; they give someone a kick in the pants to let them know, don't you get too pally with me. And people are like that and headmasters are like that too, they feel they have got to maintain their prestige they have got to do this sort of thing you see.

15:00 **And how difficult was it for you having your first born while you were away?**

Well it's a funny thing at one stage the army regarded that as grounds for compassionate leave, and then they said, "No". I don't know I think the army sort of dulled your senses you know you had a job to do and that was it and that clouded your whole thinking.

15:30 I thought well now the Oedipus complex will Peter accept me when I get back? Living among women and all the rest of it and but we got all right. It was part of life and we realised that we were getting old and we had better start you see so you got the baby boomers you see.

16:00 Peter and I are pretty good mates and when he said to me one day, "Father you are wrong." I knew I had brought him up properly he was no longer a pale copy of his old man echoing but I have seen so many tragedies, fathers pushing boys. It is like young Packer at the moment, fathers pushing them into a job and they don't want to do it, you have got to let them be themselves, but parents are like that.

16:30 So Peter is definitely he often corrects me about things. And I write letters to the Herald and I have only had three in there and he has had twelve, he gets a letter in there about every second month he has outdone me. But he goes to church regularly and so does Judy, and my sister was married to a Bishop has got two kids that never go near the place

17:00 and she gets pretty upset sometimes about it. But you have got to let kids be themselves but all parents think I have got to tell him what to do and I know what's best for him. I was talking to a professor of mathematics and he said his kid was a drongo, and the kid got first class honours in French and German and he couldn't see that that was the way God had made the boy. He thought he would be like him and of course when they get

17:30 that level you can't talk to them you see so oh no. Well now Peter doesn't play golf and his kids don't play golf they play basketball not football, a Yankee game, this gets me but that's what they have chosen they didn't play cricket they are different that's all there is about it. When Mark goes walking around Erskineville at midnight and gets mugged I feel

18:00 its time to talk.

I wanted to ask you how you dealt with age while you were away I guess I'm thinking when most people turn to somebody for help they seek somebody who is mature and

18:30 **in a position of authority you were very young as a chaplain, well how did age?**

Well it didn't exist we never had AIDS [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome] in those days.

Not AIDS age? You were young so I am thinking?

I should have been older the Archbishop was right he was quite right

19:00 and said we were too young and we bullied him and got away with it but he was right. See we had no experience of life we'd come from nice middle class families and gone to nice schools and we had no, well I had because of my Egg Board experience, contact with the so called working class who after all who where they? They voted for the Labor Party we knew that. I had a sister in law who was married to a banker

19:30 and she said, "I know something about you," and I said, "What is it?" and she said, "I know you vote for the Labor Party once," so we had no experience of life you see. The Jesuits have got the right idea, they take the fellows out of colleges and put them into houses living among people you see and see my dear Archbishop criticized another Bishop because while he was in a staging camp waiting for a posting he was in the officers mess at night drinking,

20:00 terrible you know. If he had been manipulating the share market or doing some gentleman's trick it was all right you see? No I was too young and not only that most of the colonels and the brigadiers were older and I couldn't talk to them at first, I could later on, and so no age was a barrier there is no doubt about that.

20:30 **And were there any occasions where your faith completely failed you?**

Oh no even now I sometimes feel what's its all about. What is going to happen to me when I die? You have got to be honest in these things and see

21:00 as Anglo-Catholics we have the traditions of the church behind us. It worked with thousands in the past, and you are not going to get miracles and all the rest of it you know. No, I just find having practiced my faith all my life, I have a certain personality which comes out of it.

21:30 And when I find myself clashing with people outside the church I know I am not far from the truth. But the old blokes that taught me said this, "Always remember this, you haven't got a monopoly on the truth its somewhere between you and the other bloke and listen to him." And unfortunately my people in Sydney don't listen any more, they are puritans, they have got the truth nobody else has got it.

22:00 They are not nice people, and they are very hard on homosexuals for example you know on hard on people who have got AIDS and this sort of stuff they have no compassion at all, and so I was too young. But what about the other blokes? See they didn't have the experience of life that I had you see so that's how it went.

22:30 **Roy you have just mentioned that your tolerance has changed perhaps gown over the years how do you think your war service changed you?**

It gave me a great respect for the ordinary man which I wouldn't have got. You see ordinary man doesn't get much pay in his ordinary job and when war comes he is put in the front line,

23:00 he's the bloke who cops the bullets and gets the poor play, and to me he is the salt of the earth and that's why Jesus loved them. Its given me a terrific regard for them and when I go up to the RSL there is not an officer among them, and they make awful mistakes, and they are pig headed, but I still have a great regard for them because these are the fellows who went out and saved Australia.

23:30 That's one thing that it did do and it made an Australian of me, the blokes from up in North Queensland for example, the type of fellows I would never have met. Their homespun philosophy of life and so on and they are not far from the mark, and they taught me a lot as a person so I can thank the army for that.

24:00 And physically I came out better than when I went in. Certainly financially I came out better than when I went in see, they taught me to be careful of my money and that sort of stuff. It also brought me into, if I can use the word, important people I sit down with brigadiers and Generals as well as the ordinary blokes and so it did broaden my whole capacity.

24:30 It did you see and it also taught me what a stupid thing war is. I mean I wasted four years really, it was terribly had to get back I only had two little subjects to do at university. I had to do a post, and they were first year subjects, it took me a long time to read heavy stuff, four years of doing nothing and all my thinking done for me. So that was on the down side of course

25:00 but it certainly broadened my, I was talking to a fellow the other day who's father was a General, and he was a regular and he got the sword at Duntroon so he came into the 12th Battalion cocky as they make them. And the sergeant said, "Who are you? and he said, "I'm your new Platoon Commander." Well he said, "We'll make a soldier of you."

25:30 and he took his Sam Browne and threw it into the bush and took his pistols off him and threw that into the bush and gave him a rifle and he said, "Now this is the beginning". Now this fellow he left the army and became an engineer and he is now in his seventies and he said, "It was the best thing that happened to me, they taught me to be human." General Daly said the thing, the boss of the whole army and he was trained by the Jesuits.

26:00 So his whole life was authorities then into Duntroon, and he always had someone to wait on him and look after him, and then he went into the AIF and he said they put humanity into him, and I think that was the truth of the army, so that's what I'd say.

You mentioned earlier in the day that your

26:30 **training didn't prepare you to deal with homosexuality and cases of homosexuality?**

Or anything, well if a fellow walked out on his wife I would call him a blaguard, she could have been an old bitch you know. It had to teach me that there are two sides to every question. We weren't trained to deal with these things. People came to me who were divorced

27:00 and we wouldn't marry them shut the door, and we start to learn about people now the church should have taught us these things. I remember the old psychology lecturer the last one he said, "Well you have been a good class you all pass," and he said, "I shouldn't say it you will be going around Sydney with a degree under your arm and you will be as proud as punch and you will come up against some old bloke who left school at fourteen and you will despise him,

27:30 and he will wipe the floor with you." He said, "We can't make you better than him we can only make you better than yourself." That's very true you know but it's a hard lesson to learn you know and see in that 12th Battalion we had a couple of Oxford graduates and we had fellows who worked in timber mills and all this sort of stuff you see and so

28:00 it got in touch with life you know. In a way I wouldn't have missed it for anything. So that's why, when I see little Johnny Howard praying over these soldiers I thought goodness you don't know a thing about it, the medals and the extra pay and all of that. How we had to fight for decent pay for the blokes you know.

28:30 Yeah and I hope we keep out of these silly wars. If you punch a fellow in the eye or spit in his face he is going to fight back, but if you say you are here to help you have a chance of winning him haven't you? But I don't know all this money on terrorists and all the rest of it.

29:00 None of them understand the Mohammed religion. See you women don't count with Mohammad you are only meant to work and rear kids there are a few pretty girls in paradise but not many, its all male you see and if you misbehave you will get a stoning not the bloke who caused the trouble. You cannot come to terms with Mohammad there is no doubt about it.

29:30 But if the Christians in the 6th Century had done their job there wouldn't have been a Mohammed, he was an illiterate camel boy that's what he was, and he's suppose to have got the Koran from the Angel Gabriel and the scholars say its in classical Arabic, now either its true they got a divine messenger to dictate it to him or somebody else wrote it

30:00 But there you are in trouble you see and no its that's how it goes. Well I had better let you people go is there any more?

Just a couple. I'd like to ask you if you feel like there is a memory that is perhaps the most proudest moment of you time?

30:30 I suppose as a churchman I have convinced some fellow to become priests and all the fellas that I have confirmed who are useful citizens today I think that is an important thing. Several times I was put up for

an award which I didn't get, the Brig didn't think it was fair

31:00 to the Roman Catholic priest and I didn't get it and I was angry, and now I'm glad he didn't. Because if I'd got one I would have done what the Beatles did when the Vietnam War was on, I might have sent it back and that might have hurt a lot of people. And now I would say that the number of fellows I have influenced to be decent blokes. You cannot, you cannot put a figure on that and you cant measure

31:30 it. I think that is what I would say and to show blokes that God loved them and they are precious in his sight and their widows still write to me and I write to them and so on. But I can't say there was a time I won a battle or anything like that.

32:00 I suppose from a worldly point of view when I was made a Senior Chaplain I was able to push people around which is not good for you you know but it gave me an insight into what you do when you have got a bit of power and to be careful how you use it you know, so that would be about it I think.

32:30 **Well you had a very, very difficult job writing lots of letters to relatives about their sons, their brother, or their fathers, who had passed away how did you react to that job?**

Well if I got a cranky letter back I was hurt. My general theme would be, 'Your son died in battle, he died a soldier's death,

33:00 and he has got a soldiers burial and he got a Christian burial and ultimately he will be removed to the war cemetery and you will have the power to go and see him.' But between my Tasmanian mates we have taken a photo of every grave in Port Moresby and sent it to them you see. You will always get some people who are unkind

33:30 and unreasonable and if you can accept that fact they don't get you down. If you don't you will get very and my old psychologist professor had a lot of things he called 'idiosities' I remember only two, the world is a funny place its the funniest place on the world, and the trouble with people is people. And when my little wife used to get upset about the unkind of rumours that would come back about me and I would say, "Marg

34:00 the trouble with people is people and the world is a funny place, it is the funniest place in the world." People will never think the way you would like them to and they will misconstrue what you say and what you do. That's how they tick you see? So yeah it's a very disturbed society we are in and people are leaving

34:30 their wives and are throwing aside standard rules and all of the rest. But I would never marry people outside the church building and a Roman Catholic priest at Toukley asked me to help me take one in the garden, now nothing was required of these people in what we used to call a mixed marriage, an old bloke marrying his partner, and it was an airy fairy thing.

35:00 I said, "But what's the Bishop say?" and he said, "Who cares about the Bishop?" and I find it hard to adapt myself to this sort of stuff. I suppose the army idea of discipline and the need for discipline I found this sort of thing you know. Christopher's mate was doing a civil engineering course specialising in buildings,

35:30 and he's got an apprenticeship with them and he doesn't like the boss so he just chucked up his job. Now we would chuck our job for dear life, but he can go home to mum and dad so this is the new world we are in you see? So there it goes. Anything else Katherine [interviewer]?

Well we are coming to the end of the session I am wondering if you would like to say anything in closing?

36:00 Well I do hope that you people who make films will give a lot of attention to this 1942 which Chifley said was the most perilous year in our history; they were sinking ships out there and I can't get this across to the school kids. Darwin bombed fifty times a thousand casualties, and Broome raised to the ground, Sydney

36:30 Harbour invaded and so on and we nearly went down the drain. And these great fellows who are dying off and some who I buried saved Australia and the media are not interested. And the girl that puts out our battalion paper, a little country girl wrote to the Courier Mail about Milne Bay, it was the first time the Japanese were defeated. And they said, "We are not interested in Asian battles." And this is it seems to be Australia,

37:00 if you've got any chance to try and show them that this saved Australia, and they don't know. And I spoke to the history teachers in Melbourne and they were back with Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson and didn't even realise the industrial movement and the trade union movement and so on, and I was horrified. Most of them had gone to Monash and Melbourne University.

37:30 So that's all I would say is that you give adequate attention to these blokes. Well we'll see how they go okay?

Thank you for being with us today it has been very interesting.