

Jungle To Joy

"From jungle to joy in one stride. Yesterday in a jungle camp in Siam and last night in a British hospital in Rangoon—real food and English cigarettes. The transformation is almost too grand."

So wrote Corporal J. Law, of the 2/3rd Machinegun Battalion, in a letter to his mother, who lives in Marine Parade,

North Cottesloe.

He said that, except for a spot of fever, he was fit and well.

He asked his mother to pass on the following messages: Advise Wagin that Henry Denton is well and expected here today: Frank Denton transferred to Japan in July, 1944, advise Mrs Rushton, of Wagin, that Horace is O.K.; Laurie Griffiths and Ken Meare, of Wagin, are in Japan; advise Mrs McCormack, of Armadale, that Jim is well and expected here tomorrow.

Mrs W. G. Oliver, of Hampshire Street, Victoria Park, has also received an air mail letter from her husband.

This was the first news she had had that Sapper Oliver, of the 2/6th Field Park Regiment was safe.

"It is over at last. We have had a pretty hard time but life is much better already," he says.

"We are still in Siam but planes have been operating all day taking out the sick. They have brought in

out the sick. They have brought in plenty of food and medicine for us."

Mrs Oliver received the first notification that her husband was a prisoner in May, 1944, although he was captured when Singapore fell.

Then, too, she received word from her husband before official notification arrived.

A letter was also the first news Mrs S. G. Nelson, wife of Driver Nelson, received of her husband's safety.

Hell Ships

"I was one of the first to leave Singapore for Burma in May 1942 and had three trips in Jap HELL ships," he wrote.

"We finally arrived in Moulmein and then went to Victoria Point where we were working on aerodromes for about three months.

"We then went back to Molmein and started to build a railway back through the jungle to Siam, a distance of about 250 miles. The going was very hard and cost thousands of lives. We were half starved and very badly treated.

"I weathered the storm pretty well. I had some sickness but nothing compared with some of the poor chaps."

"At last freedom has come and there is peace once more. It is indeed a happy moment to be writing home after these hard years of illness and terrible sufferings."

So said Perth survivor Leading Stoker Cecil Doggett in a letter to his

ker Cecil Doggett in a letter to his family, who live in Gladstone Street, East Perth.

Real Food

Speaking of his arrival in Rangoon he said: "We stepped off the plane into a truck and were taken to a building where we were met by real white women—they were English nurses and women of the different volunteer services.

"It was the greatest of all pleasures to see these women and to be sitting at a table and have real European food served to us.

"From there we were transported to large barracks which have been converted into a hospital for us.

"We are classed as 'sick' although at present we are not very sick—in fact our last camp was the best we had been in. It was great to be given a bed with sheets.

"We actually had tea with milk and sugar, eggs and bacon, bread and porridge for breakfast—believe me it was good.

"We had been living on rice, melons and cucumbers for most of the time as prisoners. We have eaten a few hundredweight of rice during the last three and a half years."

Fever

Perth survivor, Stoker A. J. Hansen, in a letter to his mother, Mrs F. Hansen, of 66 Oakover Street, East Fremantle, says that fever has been

Fremantle, says that fever has been the main trouble in his camp.

He has been flown to Siam.

He says that if any of the "animal" guards even venture to Australia they will go "six feet under." ●

While on leave in Pinjarra, WAAF Mrs J. Smith received a letter from her ex-prisoner husband saying that he was safe in Bombay.

Private Roy Smith, of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, spent most of

his time as a prisoner in No. 4 camp, Siam.

Couple were married only a week before Private Smith left Australia.

After his capture his wife received six cards and one radio message from him.

News that her son is safe and in good health has brought happiness to his sick mother, Mrs H. Foster of 34 Woodville Street, North Perth.

News was contained in a letter from Private Robert Foster, of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, who was only 18 when he enlisted, 19 when he left Australia.

His letter was written in the Bangkok Harbour Camp on August 31.

Last news his parents received of him was from a survivor of a Jap hell ship. The survivor said he saw Private Foster in hospital, suffering from tropical ulcers, in March last year.

Since his capture his parents have received three messages from him.

All Done

Albany Resident

First Albany resident to receive direct advice that her husband had been liberated from Saigon camp was Mrs Harold Hockey.

Pte Hockey forwarded a card from Saigon camp on August 27, with the following message:

"Safe and well, thank God. Trust all at home same. Cabled Mum and Dad in England. Grand to feel free once again."

Pte Hockey was with the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion.

Mr N. A. Sanders of 63 Stirling Highway, has received a letter from his son, Corporal M. B. Sanders, of the A.A.S.C., saying that he is safe in Siam.

Corporal Sanders was captured at Java.

In his letter he mentions Lieut.-Col. Andrew, of Angelo Street, South Perth.

Mrs E. Sorley, of 534 Hay Street, Perth, today received a letter from her son, Private Hugh Sorley, of the 2/2nd Pioneers, saying that he was safe in Bangkok. Mrs Sorley had not previously heard of her son for 18 months.

First news that his brother, a survivor of H.M.A.S. Perth, is safe was received today by Mr Stanley Firmin, of Firmin and Evans, Pier Street, Perth.

News was contained in a letter written by A.B. Edward Firmin, for many years a steward at the W A

many years a steward at the W.A. Club.

A.B. Firmin says he has arrived in Bombay from Siam and is "thankful to be free once again."

Mentions Others

Miss L. Ellis, of Victoria Park, has received a letter from her fiance, Private Jim Gilmaur of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, saying that he is safe in Bombay. In his letter he says that Private Jim Elliott, of Perth, was sent to Japan about 12 months ago. He also says he saw Private Clarrie MacDonald about two months ago.

Nothing has yet been heard of his brother, John Gilmaur, also of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion.

Mrs W. Brodie and Mrs A. Reynolds today received word that their brother, Private Fred Barker of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, is safe in Rangoon.

Mr W. Fryer, of the Norwich Union Insurance Society, has received word that his son-in-law, Lieutenant W. E. Peck, of the 4th Anti-Tank Regiment, is safe in Kuching.

Mrs Kemp, of Attfield Street, Guildford, has received word that her husband, Corporal Les Kemp, of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, is safe in Bombay.

Mrs Walter Wearne, of Leon Road, Claremont, has received advice from the wife of a released Army officer that her husband, director of Wearne Brothers, Singapore, is safe in Bang-

Brothers, Singapore, is safe in Bangkok.

Mr Wearne was captured when serving with the Singapore volunteers.

Wearne Brothers, for many years one of the leading Singapore motor firms, was well known in Western Australia.

Mr J. McAloon of 4 Nicholson Street, West Leederville, picked up the following messages from Saigon radio:

To Miss L M Perkins, Princep Street, Norseman, from J. Gurtin; to Mrs M S Bell, Albany Road, Cannington from W Bell; to Raven, Main Street, Wickepin, from J. Raven.

Mrs E. Randall, of Wickepin, received a card from her husband, Corporal John Randall, of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, saying that he was well but had received no mail since his capture in Java. Card was written on August 22 in Saigon.

Miss Joyce Fletcher, of Maylands, received a letter from her fiance Sergeant John Swift, of the 2/4th Machinegun Battalion, saying that he is safe in Siam. Later his mother received a telegram from the Army saying he was in Rangoon.
