

CANBERRA BOYS IN FORWARD UNITS IN RAMU VALLEY

Gent and Ball are in rifle sections
serving as infantrymen.

Serving with one of the forward units in the Ramu Valley and within sight of the Japanese positions are six ex-Canberra citizens.

Foremost in the unit's esteem for his achievements in action is Cpl. Patrick Egan, husband of Mrs. I. D. Egan, Wakefield Gardens, Ainslie. Egan now proudly wears the red, white and blue-barred ribbon of the Military Medal.

When his company moved in on Heath's Plantation, in the Lae action, Egan climbed a tree to act as sniper and scout. With three shots he got three Japs who had sighted his section.

He was able to direct the advance of his patrol, which was instrumental in taking the feature. In this his commander gave him recommendation for a decoration.

Egan attended Canberra High School and was a carpenter before joining the army.

Cpl. Gordon Sheen, although aged only 21, has one of the most important jobs in the Battalion. He serves with the unit intelligence section and to him sometimes falls the lot of going forward to map new trails. A mapping course he took with his Leaving Certificate at Canberra High fits him for this work.

Sheen, who is the son of Mrs. W. E. Sheen, of the Causeway, formerly worked in the War Records Branch of the Prime Minister's Department.

His brother is Wing-Commander D. F. B. Sheen, D.F.C. and Bar, the famous Australian leading a Spitfire squadron in England.

Another member of the intelligence section has a brother flying overseas. Pte. Raymond Burroughs, son of Mr. and Mrs. Burroughs, of Young, is the brother of Sgt.-Pilot Phillip Burroughs, who was shot down in Tunisia.

Raymond Burroughs, who formerly worked in the Department of the Interior, is engaged on similar work as Cpl. Sheen.

Best-known Canberra identity, though, is Sgt. George Mahoney, who acts as Coy. Sgt.-Major.

Pte. Stan Gent, of the Department of the Interior, an ex-Australian Rules footballer, is another Public Servant who is forward with the unit. There is also Pte. Frank Ball, of the Commonwealth Government Printer's Department, who has a brother Arnold serving with the A.I.F. Both Gent and Ball are in rifle sections