

SX433 WO1. Harold Ian 'Ian' Sabey of 2/3 Field Regiment 2 AIF

Advertiser, Adelaide Friday 6 June 1941, page 20

Warrant-Officer Missing Warrant Officer Ian Sabey, of Stanley Street, North Adelaide, has been reported missing after the fighting in Greece. He is 35. He was born in England, and educated at Brighton College, and came to South Australia in 1928. He was a member of the literary staff of "The Advertiser" until he joined the A.I.F. in September 1939 and went abroad in August last year. He served in India and went through the campaign against the Italians in Libya taking part in actions at Tobruk and elsewhere. Later he went to Greece, where he was last seen, safe and well on a wharf, by a friend on a British destroyer which was evacuating troops. Warrant Officer Sabey is married, and has one daughter

Advertiser Adelaide. Tuesday 29 September 1942, page 6

Out Among the People by VOX

From his prison lair In Austria, Ian Sabey tells an Adelaide friend that they are now all equipped with decent boots and warm clothes, and as the Red Cross weekly parcels have arrived regularly they are in pretty good fettle. -No POW will ever forget that institution hi the days to come." he says. '-If you see Dudley Turner at any time you can tell him that the 900 chaps from this stalag who hail from Australia, would ask me to thank his organisation for their assistance." Yesterday Arthur H. Whyte thoughtfully came in at the right moment to send the compliments of the old regiment to Ian. "When you write to Sabey tell him that Glanville, Binning, and I wish to be remembered to him, he said. "He got us out of more trouble than any man ever got into. We last saw him in Greece before he was taken prisoner.

Chronicle Adelaide, SA Thursday 22 July 1943, page 27

Out Among the People - By 'Vox'

Ian Sabey again Parents and relatives of the men referred to will be interested in this bright letter from WO Ian Sabey, prisoner of war in Germany: — As a result of incident, and not mere accident, this stalag has now within its old Yatalan portals a dignified, if talkative, collection of South Australian flora and fauna for such a seeker after said specimens as myself,' he writes. 'We can now drool and linger lovingly over pubs and clubs, names and 'names,' and compare the two great countries of prohibitions and inhibitions to our hearts' content.

S.A. WAR PRISONERS DAILY,

Ian Sabey writes, 'I see a dozen or so be? No, airmen who flourish across the road to me:— Dave Richards, Glenunga; Eric Burford, Naracoorte; Yot Aldridge, of Alero, Port Augusta; Charlie Nien, of Swan Hill, known to Adelaide's erstwhile trotting public; Arthur Rees (Bagot's Trustee Company), who now he can't help run' Bagot's, assists with Australian rules of football, and finds it faster than telling widows their mite is a minus quantity; H. A. Norman, Mitcham; Bill Harrison, a wool buyer of well-known status (at both the SA bar and at Seaton), who hails from Victoria actually, but will be able to 'heir in any State after the one he's in now; Mac Currie, Sid R. Mills, erstwhile manager near Broken Hill, comes over for a fierce bridge match. He caught a snake last week, fried it, and actually ate it for tea, since when he has become a curiosity, among the English visitors at this reformatory. Turning to the khaki clad brigade, there is L. Zander, Tanunda; Ben Grover. Snowtown; Jack Adams, formerly of John Martin's; Pat O'Connor, known in Whyalla;

Ray Kent, of Hindley Street, and de Laine, of Wayville; Joe Hodgson, Adelaide; Ossie Peate. Rose Park; and Noel Brown, who comes up from just beyond Murray Bridge, at one of those places whose very name makes one pop one's head back in the carriage and reach for beer. Of the 2 /3rd Regiment are Don Phelps. Noel Pritchard — Noel and I joined up on the same day. Others OK are Phil Searcy, St. Peters; A Holland. Croydon; A. J. London, H. E. Crump. J. A. L. Milne, and L. R. Tonkin. All heads and chins high up here.

Gilgandra Weekly, Thursday 5 August 1943, page 1

PRISONERS OF WAR IN GERMAN CAMP INTERESTING LETTER

The following is an extract from, a letter published in a South Australian paper and will be read with interest locally, as one of the boys mentioned is Mac Currie, of the R.A.A.F., whose wife is at present staying with her father and sister, Mr. J I Hofe and Mrs. John ^Campbell, of "Arthursleigh." Mac is a prisoner of war at Stalag V111B, Germany.

"Daily," Ian Sabey writes, "I see a dozen or so bee? No, airmen who flourish across the road to me:—Dave Richards, Glenunga; Eric Burford, Naricoorte; Yot Aldridge, of Illeroo, Port Augusta; Charlie. Nien, of Swan Hill; Arthur Rees (Bagot's Trustee Company); who now he can't help run Bagot's, assists with Australian rules of football and finds, it faster than telling widows their mite is a minus, quantity; H A Norman. Mitcham; Bill Harrison, a wool buyer of well-known status (at both the SA bar and at Seaton), who hails from, Victoria actually, but will be able to "heil" in any Stale after the one he's in now; Mac Currie, erstwhile manager near Broken Hill, comes over for a fierce bridge match. He caught, a snake last week fried it, and actually ate it for tea, since when he has become a curiosity among the English visitors at this reformatory.

In a subsequent issue the following appears:

"More enquiries have reached me about S. A. prisoners of war in Germany. R. A. Jo'ley (Shell House, Adelaide) reminds me that; Mac Currie, referred to in Ian Sabey's letter, was for several years manager of the late Sidney Rymill's station, Wirryilka, with its substantial homestead on the Menindee-Wilcannia road. He was well known in the West Darling district was an excellent gun and rifle shot and is said to have turned out record gunnery results during his pre-embarkation training. The news of his indulgence in rather an unusual, gastronomic item, (snake) would not be altogether surprising to those who know him, for the mere suggestion of essaying anything out of the ordinary provided him with an irresistible challenge,' Mr. Jolley says.

News Adelaide, SA. Monday 13 December 1943, page 3
PRISONERS LIVED ON 2-lb. WEEKLY RATION

Most of the repatriated Australian prisoners of war who returned with him were suffering from illness due to hardships during three months' imprisonment by the Germans in Greece and Crete. Warrant-Officer Ian Sabey of North Adelaide, said on his return here.

Warrant Officer Sabey has been repatriated after 32 months spent in prison camps. When he reached Adelaide he met his daughter for the first time. She is more than three years old.

He said that in Greece and Crete food was so short that prisoners were too weak to escape while, being taken to camp.

They were allowed 1 lb. of rice and 1 lb. of biscuit each for a week's rations. Some men lost four to five stone in three months.

However, the health of the men who had now returned had improved remarkably. There were still a few who could not walk. but the majority were in good health.

The improvement was partly due to the passing of time, and partly to Red Cross comforts parcels.

In Stalag 8b on the Polish border where Warrant-Officer Sabey spent the past 15 months, there were many thousands of prisoners when he left. These included prisoners transferred from Italy.

At that camp Warrant-Officer Sabey, who was formerly an Adelaide Journalist conducted a school of Journalism attended b. 2.000 men.

He edited a camp paper called "Stinnit". which means "official and accurate. It enabled men to voice many complaints. Copies were posted on the noticeboard in each compound.

If a "racket" were discovered, the paper published a full account, giving the names of those who benefited.

The paper is now edited by a Victorian schoolmaster. Flight Lieutenant Featherston of Geelong.

Warrant-Officer Sabey published a paper called "Pow-wow" in an Austrian camp. where he was kept for 14 months. He said that in the German camp the weather was so cold that men had to wear clogs instead of boots. They were now fairly well off for clothing, except, the newcomers.

Red Cross parcels were fairly regular, but Australian mail was very irregular. Many men had only one or two letters in the past year.

Warrant-Officer Sabey enlisted in 1939. and was abroad for four years. For, sometime he was Ill, but he has now recovered.

SX433 WO1. Harold Ian Sabey of 2/3 Field Regiment 2 AIF

This article to appear in three instalments was given in an interview by a prisoner of war who recently returned from Germany. Before enlisting was a member of the literary of the 'Advertiser' Adelaide. He said he is aware that every member of the British Forces who endured those terrible months in 1941 which followed the surrender of British arms, will accuse him of understatement. He believes, however, that little good can be obtained by too close examination of the conditions which existed in German transit camps in Greece at that time.

Mercury Hobart, Tas., Wednesday 26 January 1944, page 7

SUFFERING AFTER SURRENDER

Bitter Months for British Prisoners Captured in Greece.

An Interview with Warrant Officer I. H. Sabey-1.

The events which preceded the surrender of the British forces in Greece had combined- in resolving the 11,000 remnants into a dazed, bewildered throng who were quickly concentrated in a camp situated immediately above the ancient city of Corinth. Here were 10,000 Italians, captured by the Greeks, lodged in the wretched quarters the British troops were now forced into. The Germans refused to free these gallant "allies," and treated them very little better than their newly won prisoners.

The Corinth Transit Camp was originally a Greek army winter headquarters, which at first could adequately cater for 3,000 soldiers. It was already a dysentery ridden, bug-infested, waterless encampment before our arrival, for neither the Italians nor the Greeks placed a very high value on hygiene, and the position got entirely out of hand for several days. Half the newcomers were housed in broken down dwellings, and the remainder slept and lived outside in the streets and on the square, gradually burrowing their way into the sand to afford a protection from the icy spring nights and the heat of the Greek midday sun. We settled down to a bitter month or two, under most difficult conditions. The men themselves were in that frame of mind which goes hand in hand with being inexplicably "let down," lending itself to loss of confidence and morale. For the first time in our lives, but not the last, we were up against something which was outside our focus. Hunger swept over us in great waves. We had become inured to lack of water in Libya. Now it was an endurance test to obtain enough to fill one's steel helmet until such time as more could be brought into the camp. Lack of over-coats or blankets made nights hideous. The hospitals, contrived out of out-buildings, were filled in the passages, and there was little or no drugs or equipment. Flies and fleas crawled overall and sundry. Another factor to cope with was, of course, our captors, who, when the Battle for Crete continued to their discomfiture, introduced a company of SS men to institute reprisals. The food supplied to the British at this time amounted, man per week, to 1lb. or 1 and a half pound of bread or biscuit, 2oz. of sugar made from grape, and two tablespoonsful of olive oil. At my kitchen I fed 250 Australians, and the difficulties were enormous, as we had to forage chiefly in the Italian quarters, it must be admitted for wood, and endeavour to supplement the slender rations with purchases from the Greeks, with what money could be raised from a tarpaulin muster. While these funds held out, we were able to buy broad beans in the market, and we cooked and ate them, pods, and all, to give somebody to the miserable soup which we served the men once a day. The other meal consisted of German chamomile tea, and a few ounces of biscuit or bread. Then reprisals shook the camp. The Germans alleged that Australians were cutting off fingers-and otherwise mutilating living paratroops to obtain rings and booty. We were given our first taste of the Nazi method of sadistic indulgence. Sturdy troopers with tommy-guns stood outside the huts at night and beat up the dysentery cases. They wielded truncheons, rifle butts, and

leather-covered sticks. When the weaker cases, perforce, preferred to remain in the buildings, the whole barrack would be turned out first thing next morning, and as an example to the camp for future hygiene, made to do physical training with iron bars for a long period. Each section of the camp experienced in turn this childish brutality. We were intensely interested in the matter. The British reacted quite unexpectedly to the treatment, regarding their misfortune as a huge joke. This seemed to bewilder the Germans. After a week of these tactics the commandant called the prisoners together and apologised. He assured us that the SS men would be removed and the market reopened. We were glad about the first concession, but the second, to most of us, was superfluous, as we had run out of money. Shortly after Crete fell, the move up to Salonika began. About the first week in June the first batch tramped out of the camp. It was a very dreadful trip. The British had blown the bridge and tunnel over the Brailos Pass, so the weary, and by now weak, prisoners were forced to march the 30 miles in one long staggering struggle up the very mountain that stopped Alexander the Great, and down across the plain to Lamia. They were driven like cattle at the point of the bayonet, in an epic march which no one who endured it will ever forget. Five died in my party. The heat and dust on that June day was tremendous, but we finally struggled down the road to the railway station fresher than our guards, who, carrying no equipment or goods and chattels, collapsed, and were relieved of all duties as soon as they arrived. One German guard died in our midst. One picture stands out very clearly in my mind. It was on top of the Brailos Pass. The survivors of HMS Gloucester, about 30 sailors, trudged barefooted, along the road in the garments they had been rescued in. A German officer stopped his vehicle at the sight of a bearded sailor whose feet were bloodstained and blistered. "Get in," he said, in English. "No fear," replied the sailor, "I don't ride with any bloody Jerry," and he plodded on. That was the spirit that day. We expected nothing and asked nothing. If we had anticipated things being better than at Corinth when we reached Salonika we were to be rudely dis-appointed. Corinth now seemed a remote heaven to this new phase we entered into. I do not propose to set forth the harrowing details. Briefly, food- was shorter, parades were longer, the sun was hotter, the flies fiercer, and now malaria reared its head to aid and abet the misery of dysentery. There were no markets. Men became desperate and made pitiful but hopeless dashes for freedom. Parades were a nightmare, for we were realising the ridiculous truth that no one in the German Army could count above 30, and as a result the counting of such a huge number of men as there, were in the two camps took sometimes three hours. By now the prisoners from Crete were arriving by boat from that island, and their story was almost parallel to ours, only they had endured a longer march, but when they were stronger in condition. We were a curious brew of humanity Indians, Palestinians, and Cypriots sat in groups among the Tommies and Anzacs. Arabs, Yugoslavs, and Greeks mingled in the crowds. There were no razors or towels to be obtained and very little soap. One lone ray of light shone in this chamber of horrors. It was the fact that the Greeks summoned up those amazing reserves of generosity and courage in their character and succoured the prisoners whenever possible with small parcels of food and fruit. They did this in defiance of the Germans and paid the penalty. Many an Australian family has a deep debt of gratitude to these gallant peasant patriarchs, who lined the streets' and threw us bread or olives and were dragged forthwith to prison themselves or beaten up in the street. Tomorrow: 1,500 Anzacs on A Hell Train.

This is the second of three articles relating the experiences of an Australian prisoner of war who recently was repatriated. It tells of a nightmare journey from Greece to Germany, and of conditions in Nazi prison camps

Mercury Hobart, Tas., Thursday 27 January 1944, page 6

1,500 ANZACS ON HELL TRAIN

Australian's Experiences in Notorious German Prison Camp

An Interview with Warrant Officer I. H. Sabey - 2.

The toll taken of the British troops captured in Greece and Crete by such diseases as nephritis, heart, tuberculosis, and ulceration of the stomach is attributed by British doctors in charge of hospitals in Germany to be the direct result of the suffering: experienced during those 10 weeks, first in Corinth, and then in Salonika, and again on the journey up to Austria on the dreaded Hell Trains. Fifteen hundred Australians and New Zealanders began their journey from Salonika to Germany on June 24, 1941. They thought, as they staggered weakly through the streets of Salonika, that the worst of their experiences was over. The Germans had told us that the journey would take three days, and, our destination was Austria. Each man was given a half loaf of Greek bread, 4oz of tinned meat, and two Greek biscuits for the trip. Before the party left, many had eaten all their meat and most of the bread to give them strength for the march of one and a half miles to the station. Some kink in the German character decided that a brass band was necessary to play to us on the station. As we were herded into the cattle trucks, the prisoners were delighted to hear "Roll Out the Barrel," and joined in the chorus. Everyone beamed. It was the last smile and the last song for many a day. Fifty-five to a reeking cattle truck was the schedule that hot afternoon. The doors were slammed and locked, and in a few minutes the heat became appalling, for the only ventilation was a narrow slit at one end of each enclosed wagon. When we tried to lie down that night, we found it just could not be done, as the floor space was too small for the number of bodies. On the second day, quite a number of men had escaped from some wagons which had weaknesses in the woodwork around the ventilation slits, and from, then on the slits were boarded up entirely, and the reprisal of denying the men time out of the carriage for 10 minutes each day was instituted. As the majority had dysentery, as well as many other ailments of a serious nature, the conditions inside the "carriages" became indescribable. Water and food ran out on the second day on the whole train, because they had been consumed in the belief that we would soon reach our destination; but when the third day came, the heat being terrific, we discovered we were still in southern Yugoslavia. We became a little desperate. There was no food or water on the fourth day. When we handed our water bottles out at a large station to friendly Yugoslavs the Germans made them place the treasured vessels on the platform, and the train steamed on without them. The fifth day at Belgrade the Yugoslav Red Cross gave some lemon tea to us one small cupful, but the most blessed drink we had ever known. I saw a Melbourne broker weeping quietly over his tea: a New Zealander, who had never said a word all the way, started cursing happily, and up at the end of the wagon a soldier whose mind had slipped a cog. was cackling with laughter as his mates fed him like a baby would be helped. Next day, we arrived at Wolfsberg, in Austria, and detrained for Stalag XV., a French stalag. When the Germans, saw the plight we were in, they got an order sent to Salonika that no more trains of prisoners were to, be treated so drastically. We literally crawled into the stalag, which was full of Frenchmen. When they saw how hungry we were they fetched their daily German rations and offered them to us. The Austrians treated the British as humanely as possible. Every bed in the hospital was filled, and a hundred sick men flooded over into a hospital annexe constructed in a stable. The life in a stalag, or on a work party, largely depends on two factors, one's guards, and oneself. The first named vary. The prisoner quickly learns a philosophy from his fellows. It is pleasant to be able to relate that, with the exception of Stalag V111 in Germany itself, the treatment of British prisoners, both

in Austria and Germany, generally has been far better than we expected. Stalag V111., which contains nearly 40,000 British prisoners, has had a shocking history since the men from Dunkirk marched into its grim gates. But even this notorious place, which is dreaded by every Briton in Germany, is softening its attitude. True it is that when I left 3,000 men were still handcuffed each day, but the Germans themselves were more tired of the whole affair than we were. The first few months, when the men were tightly bound in Red Cross string, with the cold weather causing ulceration of the wrists, was undoubtedly a difficult period, for we were cut off from Red Cross parcels for the whole of November and December as reprisals, both the wounded and the well. But now the steel handcuffs are a joke. They can be removed at the wearer's will, with a nail. No prisoner will ever forget this indignity, however. Most persons at V11 have fashioned metal miniature handcuffs as cuff links, and we will wear these to recall this treatment after the war. Stalag V111 is the direct instrument of the Nazi Party's attitude to Britain and her Allies. With 70 repatriated men from Austria I called in there for a night, about the end of August, 1942. and stayed there for 14 months. There can be found the Narvik men, the Dunkirk survivors, Grecian campaign prisoners, "rats" from Libya, all the Dieppe survivors, Sicilian adventurers, paratroops from Italy, a thousand airmen captured in as many raids, seamen off Royal naval ships, as well as merchant service survivors, and, latest of all, the prisoners freed by the Italians and recaptured by the Germans. Until the arrivals from Italy flooded into Germany we carried on with an excellent university, at which any prisoner could obtain anything from his BA up to an engineering degree or law pass. Americans, Canadians, Maoris, full-blooded, negroes- and tall, lean Indian mountain men solemnly attended classes conducted by men who in many cases were masters at colleges and schools in England and the Empire. The strong feature of stalag life right from the start throughout Germany has undoubtedly been the desire of a large percentage to take part in all sorts of theatrical entertainments, and it is pleasant to relate that this has not been discouraged by the Germans. Since the changeover to a slightly more tender feeling for the British in Germany, sport has gone ahead. Athletics, boxing, soccer. Rugby, and, strange to say, softball (which is a baseball code played with a padded ball), are the most popular codes. Tomorrow: How Nazis Treated Russian Prisoners

Mercury Hobart, Tas., Friday 28 January 1944, page 6

HOW NAZIS TREATED RUSSIANS

Appalling Death Roll Among Prisoners Brought to Germany

An Interview with Warrant-Officer I. H. Sabey-3.

British prisoners of war in Germany have been eyewitnesses of the grossest cruelties and sadistic treatment accorded to Russians by Nazis. The time will come for the starved remnants of this army of men and women, who were brought back from Russia in hell trains, to tell their story. Most sweeping assertions need qualification. This, however, is one of the few exceptions when one comes to assess the position of prisoners of war under Nazi treatment. Then the time comes for the British to make their charges, their factual evidence of wrongs will pale into insignificance beside that provided by tortured, starved bodies of Russians, lying in great pits around the Russian stalags. Let me tell of what I saw myself in Austria on an October morning in 1941. The snow had begun to fall on the town of Wolfsberg, and the temperature was a little above freezing point. Our camp, Stalag XV111, lay just outside the township, about half a mile from the railway line. We had been told that the first consignment of Russian prisoners had arrived at dawn and would reach the camp after 9 am. Shortly before 10 o'clock, the gates of the stalag were swung open. All the 16,000 men in camp had gathered at the wires to watch the event with a whirl of snow, the head of the procession turned into the stalag roadway. The first thing all of us noticed was the slowness of the marching men. It took them a long time to walk even a few yards. The next was a long, low cry of rage that swept up from the usually indifferent but bitter French quarters. At first we thought it was a demonstration against the newcomers; but when German soldiers rushed over, to stop the noise we knew

that it was against the Germans. Bit by bit the head, of the procession emerged into view. Half a dozen men in front were supporting each other. We had no need to be told that they were suffering from dysentery. They were so emaciated that their features were more animal than human. The procession stumbled into the square. As the marchers swung into column of line, it was now the British prisoners' turn to shout with anger. No man in that long, wavering, bent back line was standing by himself. The strong man supported several others. Carts conveyed dead who had succumbed on the short trip from the railway line. They were thrown up on these like a bundle of straw. Gradually the square filled up. and regularly a man dropped out of the ranks to slump to the ground, too exhausted to finish his tragic journey. The British prisoners were chased into their huts by the guards, so ominous was their attitude, and many were glad to get away from the sickening scene. The first arrivals were made to strip naked and go under hot showers. Others stood for half an hour in the snow, waiting naked, their bones sticking almost through their infested skins, ordered about by guards with whips, kicked and manhandled. The hot shower room in the delousing shed finished off scores that morning. By evening these sheds were, blocked up with the dead, and the British, who had been refused all offers, both medical and otherwise, now pushed the guards aside and stepped in. They started to remove both living and dead, on stretchers. With a British sergeant major, I carried many stretchers in on that dreadful occasion. We could place three of the naked, starving men on a stretcher, and carry them over to their compound, so light were they just a skinful of bone. Too weak to stand, they had to be lifted on to their straw beds in the huts set aside for the dying cases. We found no medical attention being given the men, either by the Germans or the Russians. The Germans were relentless in their cruelty to those either lying or standing. Whips cracked in crowds as they were being given a thin soup. I found a Russian who spoke French. He told me the party had been six weeks on tour through Germany without being allowed out of their cattle trucks for sanitary purposes starved, beaten and given a minimum of water to keep them alive. Of 1,200 on the hell train, a quarter had died on the journey. On the trucks had been labelled remarks such as "This is what Bolshevism will do to Germany," "These are the Bolsheviks. A Member of the German Intelligence, an Austrian who did a great deal for the British prisoners, told me a few weeks later that Stalag Villa's Russian death toll was by no means the highest in Germany; in fact, he stated that he had just returned from eight other stalags, where Russians had been received, and their position was far more, ghastly, and their figures and percentages higher. I have spoken to many Russians since, both officers and NCOs. The stories they have to relate are not fit for newspapers. The Russians do not come under any control of the Red Cross or a protecting Power, and this has given the Nazis full power to introduce their ghastly super-concentration camp methods, such as are carried out in the political, prisoners camp in Munich. In the Winter of 1941, for instance, I was told that the Russians at Lamsdorf, in a temperature of 40 deg. below zero, were given for rations a day, one raw swede, and a half-pint of hot ersatz coffee without ersatz sweetening. All that Winter, and far into the Spring, the carts of dead were packed each day with their grim cargoes of undernourished, little naked corpses. To turn to a more cheerful aspect: of the Russian prisoners' position in Germany today, the death rate has dropped to a low figure. British volunteer doctors in many cases are looking after these great-hearted soldiers, and whenever possible the British help them with cigarettes and comforts. Of course, what the latter can do is only a drop in the ocean, but the reaction of the Russians to any kindness from the British is amazing. One Englishman in particular is beloved by these Allies of ours in one of the great Russian camps. He is Captain I.A. Webster, who was first sent out to attend the Russians as the worst penalty a German commandant could inflict on a medical officer. When his time was up he stayed on at this camp with his Russian friends in a voluntary capacity and refuses now to move back to easier conditions where the International Red Cross shadow falls. With him are a team of Australian. New Zealand, and English medical orderlies, who, refusing to take their chance of repatriation, are so inspired by Captain Webster's service to the Russian community that they have decided to stay on and see the war

through. Russian women, I was told, are spread throughout Germany on land and factory work, separated from their husbands and children, and one of the most pathetic sights to be seen is little parties of boys about 11 and 12, and girls a little older, who do not know where their families are in Germany, or if they are alive, but are little slaves on farms and in factories, under guardianship of soldiers. (Concluded).

Advertiser Adelaide, SA., Friday 16 June 1944, page 7

**PLEA FOR PRISONERS OF WAR
Mr. Ian Sabey Asks for Tolerance**

After a luncheon address to members of the Legacy Club yesterday in which he described life in German prison camps. Mr Ian Sabey said. "I would ask you all to keep a place in your hearts for our prisoners of war when they return they will need all the help the authorities can give them—and they will need all your help, too."

As an illustration of one of the more readily overlooked hardships which prisoners had to endure, he said: The hell of living in a small room with 170 other men for months on end is something known only to prisoners. After two or three years of this, men turn against their own friends. Few nerves remain unaffected by such long, constant, enforced association at close quarters. There will be many anxiety and neurosis cases coming back to us when it is all over." Mr. Sabey emphasised that one of the prisoners' greatest difficulties would be to "get balanced" in civilian life again. It had to be remembered also that many of them would need convincing that their leaders both here and abroad had not let them down. "If we have a good case against Germany after the war." Mr Sabey continued "God knows what the Russians' case will be. And I can tell you now that Russia is going to call on Germany to answer it". The speaker said that no prisoner returning home would ever have a word except of ardent praise for the Red Cross. Prisoners of war owed their lives and their future happiness to that magnificent organisation.

Concluding.

He declared: "I think of the scene at Barcelona during the repatriation—the members of the parties of prisoners of both sides going up and down the gang planks, first the blind: then the men whose reason did not withstand the shocks of their incarceration: those with TB; and I then those with other disabilities. And I think that if the world could only have a spotlight on this pitiful scene both sides would reconsider the whole mad business of making war. Air Observers Aid Planes, Three single engine training aircraft on a flight from South Australia to Melbourne were assisted by the Warrnambool branch of the Volunteer Air Observers' Corps recently when their pilots could not find the aerodrome where they had to refuel. Every light was fired to guide them in.

Advocate Burnie, Tas. Monday 26 April 1948, page 4

"LEFT MEN, LIKE RATS IN TRAP" SYDNEY, Sunday –

In his "Stalag Scrapbook," a recently published book, author Ian Sabey alleges officers left their men "like rats in a trap" during the evacuation of Greece. Sabey was decorated for gallantry in a rearguard action in Greece. He was also a P.O.W. for three and a half years. He says it was the officer system that broke down during the evacuation, and not the rank and file. He adds that there were several exceptions - officers whose names will live on in the hearts of the men to whom they stuck. Sabey says he put in a charge of desertion against an officer but did not hear any more about it. He pleads for abolition of the Duntroon

College "caste system," and advocates that every potential Australian officer begin as a private and gain promotion through ability rather than his "old school tie." In Sydney, yesterday Col. A. W. Sheppard, commenting on the allegations, said they were ridiculous. Colonel Sheppard was one of the last six British officers to leave Greece. He said he had heard and had investigated many reports that officers deserted in Greece, but not one of them was true.

Morning Bulletin Rockhampton, Qld. Thursday 29 April 1948, page 1
Author's Reply to Generals' Criticism

MACKAY, April 28.

While in Mackay today, Ian Sabey, author of "Stalag Scrapbook," replied to criticism by Lieut.-Generals Sturdee and Savige in Melbourne on Monday. Sabey said that criticism of the AIP officer system in "Stalag Scrapbook" was based on experience with the AIF to 1941. Although it was seven years since the Australians were captured in Greece, he believed that few re-turned prisoners of war, especially those attached to Corps Headquarters, would not subscribe to the view that these officers were unworthy of being considered leaders of men. In spite of the fact that World War II had then been in progress for 20 months, he had instanced in early chapters of the book the failure of officers to fight the Germans at Kalamata Bay or Tolos Beach, where not only had the officers failed to participate in the vital rearguard, but one senior Corps Headquarters man had evacuated himself at the critical moment. Did General Sturdee, asked Sabey, still believe the well publicised fairy stores that Dunkirk, Greece, Crete and Singapore, where the British armies had met tragic reversals, were really shining examples of British bravery? Sabey spent a few years with the men who had not got off the beaches. Their accounts of desertion, or worse, by officers closely paralleled the pattern he had witnessed in Greece. He was certain that the gap between the officers and the men could be closed at a point which would give both officers and men a proportionate place in the army. He believed there was a dislike in most World War ex-service-men's hearts for any regimentation, such as Anzac Day marches and reunions. It was a backwash of the service officer system and all it stood for, so often a lack of real human interest

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IT'S THEIR NATIONAL DAY TODAY
Greeks stood by us in retreat
By IAN SABEY

Today, we celebrate the National Day of Greece. Joining with Greeks, exiled from their country, will be the good wishes of thousands of Australian and New Zealander ex-soldiers.

They are the men who formed part of the ANZAC Brigade which took part in the forlorn but gallant attempt 13 years ago to stop Hitler's domination of Europe.

In 1941 the Greeks, mingling 'their blood and their suffering with the retreating, but unbeaten "Anjais," earned forever a special place in our hearts.

Australians, straight from their desert victories against the Italians, had tended to classify Greeks also as fish and chip merchants — or fruiterers! We were to change our minds — and quickly!

Today, if we meet an old cobbler we will find ourselves going over those days together. The time when we rode triumphantly northward through Greece (just about this time of the year it was) to the "Zeeto Australeer" of the cheering townsfolk and villagers, the thunderous "Kalaneere" and "Kala Speera" of our greetings: and the flowers tossed into our trucks by the young girls!

Today we will recall, rather humbly, that journey back again within a few weeks: no "thumbs up" this time, only the dazed look of these same patriots' faces as they saw the tide turning, the ruins around them, the despair that the malignant Luftwaffe was spreading.

But it was during these early days of the retreat, a retreat that not one Anzac accepted without forceful expletives and bitter dismay, that we gained a vivid glimpse of the spirit of this battle-ravaged nation.

Without seaports, or airports, the Anzacs fought their retreat out, foot by foot, from Katerine and Veve, through the Servia pass to Ellason, back, back to Larissa, Levadia, the Brailos Pass and then — the beaches!

Then did the true spirit of Greece shine through the ashes of our defeat.

These people who, themselves, had known suffering and hardship for 1000 years, burst the borders of wise restraint to give succor and sympathy.

Their whole attitude breathed defiance to the Nazi.

From the moment the black shadow of the Luftwaffe armada had darkened bright snowcapped Mt. Olympus: from the moment the Greek Albanian Army (our left flank) had been given indefinite leave; from the time our 2/8th Battalion, both our antitank battery and the 2/4th Battalion, had been cut to pieces by the Nazis' flanking movements following the Greek collapse on our left wing, our great adventure had turned into a nightmare, a bad dream, which, as we awakened, became a likely major calamity for those involved.

Moments of splendor were still to be with us — the cheerfulness of the tired troops as organization held chaos at bay; the Maoris' war cry which led to their hurling Hitler's guardsmen back on the Servia Pass — the blowing up of bridges in the very teeth of the enemy — **the heroic delaying actions by our Australian artillery, the 2/3rd and 2/2nd Field Regiments.**

And so back to the beaches, where we crouched under olive trees and waited for the Royal Navy to carve one more splendid achievement in their great record of the Second World War — the second great British evacuation.

In spite of their agony, at this period, the Greeks never failed, individually, to help wherever possible.

They threw us precious food.

Little supplies or carefully hoarded food were proffered, bottles of "ouzo" or their sour resinated wine, were forthcoming at villages and along the long winding road that led to the southern beaches and the Corinth Peninsula.

But it was to help the allied prisoners of war, whom the Germans were starving to crippling enfeeblement, that the Greeks rose to their greatest heights in compassion, and in helping any allied soldier able to escape the Germans, clutches.

I remember one small incident that illustrates this point.

After two months' starvation, we were driven staggering through the streets of Salonika to board the "hell trains" which were to wind their way through the Balkans and Jugoslavia to Germany.

Men were "blacking out" through sheer weakness. In spite of the bayonets and the brutal butts of rifles freely used, in spite of shots and arrests, the men and women, and even children, of Salonika threw loaves of bread and biscuits to us as we staggered to the station.

I recall vividly that I successfully caught a loaf of bread which undoubtedly saved the lives of several in my party.

Today is the National Day of Greece. The great poet, Byron, wrote this of the Greece of his day:

*"Fair Greece, sad relic of departed worth,
Immortal, though no more; though, fallen, great."*

These lines, written more than 130 years ago. might be a toast that we could offer to the Greek nation. Perhaps in the more simple Australian style we would prefer to say: "We dips our lids.

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