

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Alan (Mick) Thompson received a Comfort Package or a Money Order from the King Island (Tasmania) War Service Fund, and then corresponded with the Fund.

In August 1940, the Island Fund was formally approved to operate independently from the State of Tasmania. It was run by a group of volunteers, led by Mr John (Jack) Marshall. John was an ex WW1 soldier, also the President of the local Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA), founded on King Island in 1919. This is now known as the Returned and Services League (RSL) and the King Island RSL Sub branch is still in operation.

The fund distributed packages to locals who had enlisted and other people who had no connection with King Island. As a mark of respect 139 service personnel wrote letters of thanks, totaling approximately 530 letters – they form the basis of the collection. Further information on the Fund and its operation can be found on the Community Page.

The challenges for a service person during World War 2 to write a letter was to firstly find the inclination (often directly related to their mental condition due to combat), time, paper, a writing implement and a place under cover. Occasionally a letter was typed and the paper ranged from high quality to loose scraps, and as the war progressed supplies dwindled. With letterhead paper, naming a unit or organisation, do not assume that was where the person was when writing. Paper was borrowed and passed on to mates. Occasionally, a Telegram was sent where the emphasis was on brevity as each word added more to the cost.

The standard of writing is directly related to the standard of education and sometimes a friend or a Chaplain would write a letter on a person's behalf. Many of the letters were addressed to Mr Marshall (or just Jack), his wife, a member of the voluntary committee, or the RSSAILA. Some letters are very brief while others are detailed and mention other people, or events they have witnessed. The Marshall's also lost their son John while on Active Service, and some writers asked about John or acknowledged his death to the family.

For most of the war, letters were subject to censorship and this is often observed in a cutout section on a page – if the other side was written on it was also deleted. Many letters have the initials or the signature of the person who checked them prior to posting.

What follows is a scan of the original letter and a typed transcript, based on the original. Grammar or spelling has not been changed or corrected, and if more than one letter was written they follow in date order. Some of the original letters, although stored correctly, are very faint and fragile, but all have been included along with undated letters. They are perhaps the only surviving documents written by this person.

Mick was a prolific writer and sent 15 letters to the Fund; two in 1940, five in 1941, three in 1942, two in 1943 and three in 1944. They record his travel from Australia to the Middle East, back to Australia, then to New Guinea. He writes a range of letters from the very brief to the newsy, full of information. Mick records the feelings towards the civilians and other Allied troops and clearly enjoyed meeting people. He was finally discharged in November 1945.



Victorian Y.M.C.A. Military Service Department
PATRON: HIS MAJESTY THE KING

Write Home First

"It is not sufficient to live,
But to live well."

Tx. 3064

Sgt. A. J. Thompson.

N^o. 1 Section

2nd/9th Field Coy. R.A.E.

Brighton Camp. Tas.

194

To The Secretary,
War Service Fund.

Dear Sir.

I would like you to convey my thanks to the members of the "Fund" for the parcel I received last week. It was very acceptable indeed. Our Company have just arrived back in Brighton today, after having spent (8) eight weeks or more down at Ralph's Bay working on pill boxes & machine-gun nests. While camped away from town, in tents, one does not get much time to write letters so I have taken the first opportunity to write this. There are not many A. I. F. in camp here now, and we won't be here much longer, we hope. It is a great camp down here and one sees plenty of Hobart. While at Ralph's Bay we had plenty of leave and as it is only eight miles from Bellevue & a free trip on the car ferry it was quite simple to come to town pretty often. Well! again I thank you for the parcel & I'm sure the other boys have derived as much pleasure from theirs as I did mine.

Yours Gratefully

Thompson A.J.

TX 3064
Spr. A.J. Thompson
No1 Section
2nd/9th Field Coy. R.A.E
Brighton Camp. Tas

To The Secretary
War Service Fund.
Dear Sir.

I would like you to convey my thanks to the members of the "Fund" for the parcel I received last week. It was very acceptable indeed. Our Company have just arrived back in Brighton today, after having spent (8) eight weeks or more down at Ralph's Bay working on pill boxes & machine-gun nests.

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Yours Gratefully
Thompson A.J.

T+ 3064

Sakhs. A. J. Thomson

N^o. Section

2nd/9th Field Coy. R.A.C.

Brighton. Tas.

11th Sept. 1940

To.

Sec. King Island W. S. F.S.

Dear Sir.

Just a line to thank the "Fund" most sincerely for the parcel I received on the 9th. It was most acceptable & made me feel proud of what the people of King Island have and are doing for the comfort of the soldiers in camp & abroad. I noticed a couple of parcels in the Section office of Lance Corporal Burtin & Private Farrell etc., so they most likely have been forwarded on to them in the Salvage Corps to which they transferred some time ago. I hope to be able to thank the Fund personally shortly so I'll close wishing you every success.

Yours Sincerely
"Mick"

TX 3064
Spr. A.J. Thompson
No1 Section
2nd/9th Field Coy. R.A.E
Brighton. Tas

11th September, 1940

To
Sec. King Island W.S.F.s.
Dear Sir.

Just a line to thank the "Fund" ~~was~~ most sincerely for the parcel I received on the 9th. It was most acceptable & made me feel proud of what the people of King Island have and are doing for the comfort of the soldiers in camp & abroad. I noticed a couple of parcels in the Section office for Lance Corporal Burkett & Private Farrell etc, so they most likely have been forwarded on to them in the Salvage Corps to which they transferred some time ago. I hope to be able to thank the Fund personally shortly so I'll close wishing you every success.

Yours Sincerely
"Mick"

With Compliments of
CAULFIELD CITIZENS
as a Token of Appreciation

Tx 3064

Caulfield Thursday 30th 1941

Spr. C. J. Thompson

N^o. 1 Section

2/9th Field Coy. R.A.E. (Abroad).

To President. R. I. War Service Funds.

Dear Mr Marshall.

Would you please pass on my thanks to the "Fund" for the Canteen Order of 5/- I received this morning. It was very much appreciated & enabled me to stock up in the necessities I needed. As you see by the inscription above we are in the Caulfield Camp until we sail. The weather up until the last 2 days has been rather wet & miserable but yesterday and today was & is lovely & sunny. It has given us all a chance to dry our washing which is hanging on every peg & nail all over the camp. We have plenty of duty work but also plenty of night leave. Some of the Tasmanian boys had never been in Melb. so they are making the most of their opportunity & Luna Park & other various entertainments are widely patronized by the 2/9th. I will close this short note thanking the Fund again for the gift & wishing them every success.

Yours Sincerely
Mick

TX3064

Thursday 30th 1941

Spr. A.J. Thompson

No. 1 Section

2/9th Field Coy R.A.E. (Abroad).

To President K.I. War Service Funds

Dear Mr Marshall.

Would you please pass on my thanks to the "Fund" for the Canteen Order of 5/- I received this morning. It was very much appreciated & enabled me to stock up in the necessities I needed. As you see by the Inscription above we are in the Caulfield Camp until we sail. The weather up until the last 2 days has been rather wet & miserable but yesterday and today was & is lovely & sunny. It has given us all a chance to dry our washing which is hanging on every peg & nail all over the camp. We have plenty of duty work but also plenty of night leave. Some of the Tasmanian boys had never been in Melb. so they are making the most of their opportunity & Luna Park & other various entertainments are widely patronized by 2/9th. I will close this short note thanking the Fund again for the gift & wishing them every success

Yours Sincerely

Mick

2nd July 1941 TX 3064



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

Sgt. A. J. Thomson

No. 1 Section

2/9th Aust. Field Coy.

R.A.E. A.P.F.

(abroad)

Dear Mr Marshall

Just a short note to ask you to convey my sincere thanks to the "Service Fund" for the parcel I received about three weeks ago. Since it arrived we have been travelling all over parts of Syria doing odd jobs. At times we have been close to the front but apart from a few bombs which landed close in the early stages of our arrival there has been nothing much happened to us. It is very nice seeing plenty of our own planes going over instead of Froggies or Germans. We have been spelling today after working on another front for a few days. At the last place where we worked, there are three colonies of Jewish people nearby. They were very hospitable & gave us a good time. Of a night the boys of the section would stroll to one of the communities & listen to the news broadcast from Jerusalem in English. The people would insist on us having tea with them even though we had just had our own. Their farms are very interesting. All money is pooled into a Community Fund which builds their houses & buys off



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

The farming implements bought on time payment. They have two caterpillar tractors & various implements in one of the Colonies we inspected. On the last night they gave us a send off. A case of Aust. beer came to light from the Coy. & we toasted each other respects. One of the Jewish girls spoke good English so she explained everything to us & made a speech on behalf of her people. Our Captain responded & his speech was interpreted by her to the Jews. After a sing song of English & Jewish songs, a solo by one of our Sergeants & a violin solo by a Jew. They decided to have a dance, so tables were cleared & with a waltz organ & one of our Sappers on the accordion we got to work & so learn their dances & games. Have you ever danced with a deaf & dumb girl. Well I struck a couple like that who couldn't speak English. It was a jolly hot night & as usual so you can just imagine the perspiration simply pouring down our backs & our great heavy boots stamping on the floor in one of their fast dances.



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

19

No One, to see the care free spirit of these hard working people, would credit the fact that a war was waging just over a hill or two from them. It was after 1 am when we bid goodnight & walked back to camp. Yesterday ~~another~~ (along turned) Jews from another Colony turned up with milk & cakes etc for us before we left. There was to have been another party last night at this other place but we had orders to move out before hand so they brought the stuff to camp. The milk, although not in the same street as ours at home, served to remind me of the times I drank pints of it on old K. I. I reckon I'll put away a reservoir of it when I get back. One thing about Syria there is plenty of good icy cold water here so we fare pretty well in the country. Well, I must close this note hoping it hasn't bored you too much & also than king the War Service Fund for the parcel of which I am gratefully yours
N. J. Stanton.

P.S. I have met Reg French
from K.I. since we came here
He is still in the same Unit. Just a
list of the K.I. boys I've met. Dick Thompson
the Morrison boys. Eddie Cummins, Jack
Cornelius, Jack Hodges, Jack Stubbs, Missed
seeing Bruce Bowling & Billy Fisher although
still corresponding with Bill. Also met Frank
Bishop. Another chap was inquiring after me
when on a job in Palestine I forget his name.
He looks after the officer's horses in a remount
depot. I think that's all - who I've met.
The address of the two Barnes boys has
been posted home.

W. H. H. H.

Wick

2nd July 1941

TX3064

Spr. A.J. Thompson

No 1 Section

2/9th Aust. Field Coy.

R.A.E. A.I.F.

(abroad)

Dear Mr Marshall,

Just a short note to ask you to convey my sincere thanks to the "Service Fund" for the parcel I received about three weeks earlier. Since it arrived we have been travelling all over parts of Syria doing odd jobs. At times we have been close to the front but apart from a few bombs which landed close in the early stages of our arrival there has been nothing much happened to us. It is very nice seeing plenty of our own planes going over instead of Froggies or Germans. We have been spelling today after working on another front for a few days. At the last place where we worked, there are three colonies of Jewish people nearby. They were very hospitable & gave us a good time. Of a night the boys of the Section would stroll to one of the Communities & listen to the news broadcast from Jerusalem in English. The people would insist on us having tea with them even though we had just had our own. Their farms are very interesting, all money is pooled into a Community Fund which builds their houses & buys off the farming implements bought on time payment. They have two caterpillar tractors & various implements in one of the Colonies we inspected. On the last night they gave us a send off. A case of Aust beer came to light from the Coy. & we toasted each others respects. One of the Jewish girls spoke good English so she explained everything to us & made a speech on behalf of her people. Our Captain responded & his speech was interpreted by her to the Jews. After a sing song of English & Jewish songs, a solo by one of our Sargeants & a violin solo by a Jew, they decided to have a dance, so tables were cleared & with a mouth organ & one of our Sappers on the accordion we got to work to learn their dances & games. Have you ever danced with a deaf & dumb girl. Well I struck a couple like that who couldn't speak English. It was a jolly hot night Per usual so you can just imagine the perspiration simply pouring down our backs & our great heavy boots stamping on the floor in one of their fast dances.

No one, to see the carefree spirit of these hard working people, would credit the fact that a war was waging just over a hill or two from them. It was after 1am when we bid goodnight & walked back to camp. Yesterday Jews from another Colony turned up with milk & cakes etc for us before we left. There was to have been another party last night at this other place but we had orders to move out beforehand so they brought the stuff to camp. The milk, although not in the same street as ours at home, served to remind me of the times I drank pints of it on old K.I. I reckon I'll put away a reservoir of it when I get back. One thing about Syria there is plenty of good icy cold water here so we fair pretty well. In fact we've faired extra well & seen a good bit of the country. Well. I must close this note hoping it hasn't bored you too much & also thanking the "War Service Fund" for the parcel for which I am gratefully yours

A.J. Thompson.

P.S. I have met Reg French from K.I. since we came here He is still in the same Unit. (Just a list of the K.I. boys I've met. Dick Thompson, the Morrison boys, Eddie Cummins, Jack Cornelius, Jack Hodges, Jack Stubbs, Missed seeing Bruce Bowling and Billy Fisher although still corresponding with Bill. Also met Frank Bishop. Another chap was enquiring after me when on a job in Palestine I forget his name. He looks after officers' horses in a remount

depot. I think that's all who I've met. The address of the two Barnes boys has been posted to me.

Mick

August 13th 1964

T 2064

Sgt. N.E. Thompson
No. 1 Section. Special Forces
RAC A.F. ad-on

Dear Mr Marshall

Just a few lines hoping you will convey my thanks to the K.F. War Service Funds for the parcel I received yesterday. The coffee etc. is very welcome. I have been in Hospital for back in Palestine for the last fortnight with a touch of Malaria but am nearly to the last stages of treatment now. I did not have the luck to meet John but am corresponding with Len Barnes (Large) & Bill Fisher. All is quiet around here. We finished up (our unit) as front line Engineers but we were lucky. No casualties. After the scrap we won the "M"

missed the seafront a few miles inland. Bert Wilson now M.B. were working on the centre sector so I haven't seen his lot for a month or two. It may be some time before I am able to rejoin the section as at Base and we will have to wait for a draft going north. But Lieutenant has joined the 2/8th Eng. as Capt. so I might have a go to join that. Anyway Diego some of my mates here too so I'm not lonely. Miss Peggy Wilson is a sister in another part of the H.Q. camp. She has been to see me a couple of times bringing cigarettes etc. Len Moody also belongs to this A.F.H. but I have not met him yet. We get a pretty good mail service here so things aren't too bad. In fact pretty good. Give my regards to Mr Marshall & family & the Fund which I wish every success
Yours Sincerely
Nick
P.M.

August 13th '41

TX3064
Spr A.J. Thompson
No 1 Section. 2/9 Aust Field Coy.
RAE AIF
abroad

Dear Mr Marshall

Just a few lines hoping you will convey my thanks to the K.I. War Service Funds for the parcel I received yesterday.

The coffee etc. is very welcome. I have been in Hospital back in Palestine for the last fortnight with a touch of Malaria but I'm nearly to the last stages of treatment now. I did not have the luck to meet John but am corresponding with Len Barnes (Sarge) & Bill Fisher. All is quiet around here. We finished up (our Unit) as front line Engineers in Syria but we were lucky. No Casualties. After the scrap
...in the....

CENSORED

...prised.....the seafront & a few miles inland. Bert Missons CENSORED No 3. were working on the centre Sector so I haven't seen his lot for a month or two. It may be some time before I am able to rejoin the Section as at Base we will have to wait for a draft going north. Our Lieutenant has joined the 2/8th Eng. as Capt. so I might have a go to join that. Anyway I've got some of my mates here too so I'm not lonely.

Miss Ruby Milsom is a sister in another part of the Hos. Camp. She has been to see me a couple of times bringing cigarettes etc. Len Moody also belongs to this A.G.H. but I have not met him yet. We get a pretty good mail service here so things aren't too bad. In fact pretty good.

Give my regards to Mrs Marshall & family & the Fund which I wish every success

Yours sincerely

Mick

BY AIR MAIL
LETTER CARD

TO: Mr. Marshall
FROM: Sp. A. J. Thompson
3rd Oct. 41.

Just a few lines thanking the Funds for the 5/- Canteen Order I received the other day. As the Canteen Service is kept up to us in Syria it should not be hard to get the necessary goods with them. At present one of our chaps & myself are camped out watching some Wogs doing a contract for the Gov. I think I'll just as soon do the job myself because, by gosh, they're slow. Their tongues can move 70 to the dozen though. Camped next to us are some Greek gerants who are very decent chaps. Some of them talk English so we have some good old yarns on the virtue of our countries. They reckon we (Aussies) are a 100 to one the Tommies & they also reckon we must love fighting to come all the way over here of our own free will to fight (as they think) other people's battles. They considered it a great honour when the Aussies & others came to grips with the Pommy MP's up here. They say they were proud to have fought beside the Australians even if it was only a street brawl. I'd would not do to print their ideas on titles & Co. Especially since he shot some of their generals etc. recently. The only trouble with them camped beside us is the fact that when they change their gerant at 6 am we think it is the Wogs coming to work & so destroy our couple more hours sleep. Their lingo & the Wogs sound the only new magazines are printed in Eng. & as they can't get any Greek ones they have to read English ones. Well, thank the Committee for me with you, Mr Marshall. Hoping you can make head & tail of this note
Yours sincerely
A. J. Thompson

3rd Oct. 41.

TX3064 Spr. A.J. Thompson

No 1 Section

2/9th Field Coy. (Aust)

R.A.E.A.I.F. abroad.

Dear Mr Marshall.

Just a few lines thanking the "Funds" for the 5/- Canteen Order I received the other day. As the Canteen Service is kept up to us in Syria it should not be hard to get the necessary goods with them. At present one of our chaps & myself are camped out watching some Wogs doing a contract for the Gov. I think I'd just as soon do the job myself because, by jove, they're slow. Their tongues can move 90 to the dozen though. Camped next to us are some Czeck guards who are very decent chaps. Some of them talk English so we have some good old yarns on the virtue of our countries. They reckon we (Aussies) are a 100 percent on the Tommies & they also reckon we must love fighting to come all the way over here of our own free will to fight (as they think) other people's battles. They considered it a great honour when the Aussies & them came to grips with the Pommy M.P.s up here. They say they were proud to have fought beside the Australians even if it was only a street brawl. It would not do to print their ideas on Hitler & Co. Especially since he shot some of their generals etc. recently. The only trouble with them camped beside us is the fact that when they change their guard at 6am we think it is the Wogs coming to work & so destroys a couple more hours sleep. Their lingo & the Wog's sound the same to us. They are learning Eng. fast as the only new magazines are printed in Eng. & as they can't get any Czeck ones they have to read ~~English~~ ours.

Well! Thank the Committee for me will you, Mr Marshall? Hoping you can make Head & tail of this note

Your Sincerely

Mick

TX 3064 Lt. A. J. Thompson. No. 1 Section.

219th Aust. Field Coy. R.A.E. R.F.F. abroad.

Dear Mr Marshall.

28th Nov. 1941

Once again I ask you to convey my thanks to the "Funds" for the parcel I received the other day. I don't think I acknowledged the last one sent some time ago. I can see that there are some old soldiers behind the business as every thing enclosed is jolly useful to us chaps over here. Things certainly seem to be humming on both sides of us. What with the fighting in the desert & the Russian show up north. All we know about it at present is what we hear on the wireless so I think our lot will have a nice quiet Xmas in comfortable quarters. We have been jolly lucky to have missed the desert & the Greek show. Only missed the latter by a matter of two days. However we are getting good experience which should benefit us later. In our camp as Y.M.C.A. hut is has just last recently opened & it's a great boon to the chaps that don't go on leave at a night. They can go there & write, read, play games or listen to the gramophone or wireless. At 9 pm. each person present gets a cup of tea & biscuits which are provided by the "hut". In town there is a Salvation Army Centre for the boys on leave & believe me - it's great. We see plenty of English pictures (American) so I think we are very suitably established. For how long I don't know. Well I must say
Thank you again
Yours sincerely
Mick.

Mick

TX3064 Spr. A.J. Thompson. No 1 Section
2/9th Aust. Field Coy. R.A.E.A.I.F. abroad.

Dear Mr Marshall.

28th Nov.

1941

Once again I ask you to convey my thanks to the "Funds" for the parcel I received the other day. I don't think I acknowledged the Canteen Order sent some time ago. I can see that there are some old soldiers behind the business as everything enclosed is jolly useful to us chaps over here. Things certainly seem to be humming on both sides of us. What with the fighting in the desert & the Russian show up north. All we know about it at present is what we hear on the wireless so I think our lot will have a nice quiet Xmas in comfortable quarters. We have been jolly lucky to have missed the desert & the Greek show. Only missed the latter by a matter of two days. However we are getting good experience which should benefit us later. In our camp a Y.M.C.A hut has just recently opened & it's a great boon to the chaps that don't go on leave of a night. They can go there & write, read, play games or listen to the gramophone or wireless. At 9pm. each person present gets a cup of tea & biscuits which are provided by the "Hut". In town there is a Salvation Army centre for the boys on leave & believe me – it's great. We see plenty of English pictures (American) so I think we are very suitably established. For How long I don't know.

Well I must say Thank you again

Yours Sincerely

Mick



From No. TX 3064 Name Sgt. M. J. Thompson Unit 2/4th B. Field Coy. R.E.
Date 11.11.1918 A.I.F. Aust.

Dear Mr & Mrs Marshall

Just a few lines hoping you are all well as I am up here. I believe there has been a bit of excitement over there. Rather a set-back to the place ^{new} the old boat will come into prominence again. I heard about it in a round about way. It will make an interesting story when I come back. By the way I received a parcel recently & a letter with canteen orders enclosed. They had both been sent overseas in January from the I. W. S. F. Thank them for me will you? I get every week's K. I. News so I can keep up with news of home. By Golly! There are a lot of Pris. of War. from the Island - aren't there? I went up, the night before last, to watch the "two up" & met Dick Thompson & Alan Lamhard. They were just staying the night at the staging camp on their way through. Lamhard is in "civies" and working for the C.R.B. Old Dick might be back through here sometime as he'll be backwards & forwards. He was lucky to transfer wasn't he? Or he might have been still overseas with his cobbers. It's quiet and peaceful up here. Too much so. The only news of Jap. planes & bombs etc. we hear is on the wireless. That all happens further up. Our unofficial address, which was only used until our mail found us, is Elliott via Daly Waters. We have been up here two months more or less after spending 10 days or so at a suburb of Adelaide after I rejoined my unit. It was a pretty good 10 days though - you bet. Have you had any news of John. Give him my regards when you next write to him. Will you please. I saw young Robbie Hiddle after I left home & he seems to be coming on slowly. He is shifted to another hospital ⁱⁿ near Adelaide now. Be a change of scenery anyway. Well folk. Remember me to the Family & excuse this short note. Yours sincerely Mick. (Blaney)

TX3064 Spr. A.J. Thompson 2/9th A.A. Field Coy. R.A.E.
A.I.F. AUST.

Dear Mr & Mrs Marshall

Just a few lines hoping you are all well as I am up here. I believe there has been a bit of excitement over there. Rather a set back to the place now the old boat will come into prominence again. I heard about it in a round about way. It will make an interesting story when I come back. By the way I received a parcel recently & a letter with a canteen order enclosed. They had both been sent overseas in January from the K.I.W.S.F. Thank them for me will you? I get every weeks K.I. News so I can keep up with news of home. By Golly: There are a lot of Pris. of War. from the Island – aren't there? I went up, the night before last, to watch the "two up" & met Dick Thompson & Alan Tankard. They were just staying the night at the staging camp on their way through. Tankard is in "civvies" and working for the C.R.B. Old Dick might be back through here sometime as he'll be backwards & forwards. He was lucky to transfer wasn't he? Or he might have been still overseas with his cobbers. It's quiet and peaceful up here. Too much so.

The only news of Jap. planes & bombs etc. we hear is on the wireless. That all happens further up. Our unofficial address, which was only used until our mail found us, is Elliott via Daly Waters.

We have been up here two months more or less after spending 10 days or so at a suburb of Adelaide after I rejoined my unit. It was a pretty good 10 days though – you bet. Have you had any news of John. Give him my regards when you next write to him will you please. I saw young Robbie Heddle after I left home & he seems to be coming on slowly. He is shifted to another hospital in Adelaide now. Be a change of scenery any way.

Well folk. Remember me to the Family & excuse this short note.

Yours Sincerely Mick.

(Bluey)

DO NOT REFER TO: the name of your ship or other ships in the convoy or its escorts; the date of sailing, ports of call or probable destination; the description of troops abroad, or any other information which, if intercepted, would be of value to the enemy.



From No. TX 3064 Name: Sp. J. J. Thornton Unit: 2/9 1st Field Coy.
Date: 30 Oct 42. R.E. A.I. Aust.

Dear Mr Marshall & family.

Just a few lines acknowledging your kind answer to my letter sent some time ago. Also to thank the Fund for the Canteen Graces I received also some days back. I suppose the weather is still bad over home. The last couple of days, up here, the rain has simply poured down. Flooding the road in parts & stopping work. Today, however, is back to normal which is nice & sunny, drying up the pools quickly. The old timers up this way expect a very wet season this year, as it didn't rain so much last season. About a week or so ago, they brought in Routine Orders, that we have to drill for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour each day in our spare time. Of course the rumours didn't half fly around them.

Not Much. Common talk was that we were going to a scrap & various destinations hinted at. I think it must have been caused by the fact that some mug forgot to chuck a salute to a Col. or Brig or someone, so they thought we were getting unsoldierly & thought to remedy it by giving us a daily parade. Anyway, for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour a day we are soldiers & the other 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours we are just navvies. I was very sorry to hear about Peter Gould. It would be tough on his people, losing both the boys who joined up. It is hard to believe that so many of ^{my} old schoolmates have passed on in this war. Some of whom were death mates with me. I often look back on my last year at school & think of the piece of poetry we were taught there. It ran:-
Forty years on - when far & asunder
Parted are those who are singing today
When I look back & forgetfully wonder
What we were like at our work & our play.



From No. Name, Unit,

Date,

2

I often used to wonder just what would happen in forty years from then. But I find that it ^{did} not take forty years to find out. No - ten years were long enough before I started to find out. I am proud to say that I sat in the same class ^{with} so many heroes of today. I only hope that if ever my time comes, that I may be able to keep up traditions set by my school mates who have gone on. Where we are camped, everything is so quiet & peaceful that it is hard to imagine that there is a war on. In Palestine or rather, on the Palestine-Lebanon Border, our section once went to a dance organised in a Jewish settlement. It was while the fighting was still going on in that area, and above the dance music one could hear a continual barrage of artillery fire as our side tried to capture a French fort. It seemed strange to be enjoying ourselves so much, when, just over the hill men were most likely being blown to bits. I didn't seem to be able to get used to it at all, dancing behind blacked out windows too. The Jews didn't seem to worry as they explained that they had every confidence in our side winning. Well - I do seem to be talking a lot of tot so I'll change the subject. The rain here, has brought out a few snakes. I killed one late the other night. A 5ft gin python. Others have been killed that were much bigger. Non poisonous, - they can still cause a dangerous wound when they bite if of course it is neglected. I might say I didn't wait to find out if he was poisonous or not - I just let him have it. Well folk I must close this scrawl. Hoping it doesn't bore you too much.

I am yours sincerely
Mick.

Ag 2/4

Dear Mr Marshall & family.

Just a few lines acknowledging your kind answer to my letter sent some time ago. Also to thank the Fund for the Canteen Order I recieved also some days back.

I suppose the weather is still bad over home. The last couple of days, up here, the rain has simply poured down. Flooding the "road" in parts & stopping work. Today, however, is back to normal which is nice & sunny, drying up the pools quickly. The "old timers" up this way expect a very wet season this year, as it didn't rain so much last season. About a week or so ago, "they" brought in Routine Orders, that we have to drill for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour each day in our spare time. Of course the rumours didn't half fly around then. Not Much. Common talk was that we were going to a scrap & various destinations hinted at. I think it must have been caused by the fact that some mug forgot to chuck a salute to a Col. or Brig. or someone, so they thought we were getting unsoldierly & thought to remedy it by giving us a daily parade. Anyway for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour a day we are soldiers & the other 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours we are just navies. I was very sorry to hear about Peter Youl. It would be tough on his people, losing both the boys who joined up. It is hard to believe that so many of ~~our~~ my old schoolmates have passed on in this war. Some of whom were desk mates with me. I often look back on my last year at school & think of the piece of poetry we were taught there. It ran: -

Forty years on – when far & asunder
Parted are those who are singing today
When I look back & forgetfully wonder
What we were like at our work & our play.

I often used to wonder just what would happen in forty years from then. But I find that it did not take forty years to find out. No – ten years were long enough before I started to find out. I am proud to say that I sat in the same class with so many heroes of today. I only hope that if ever my time comes, that I may be able to keep up traditions set by my schoolmates who have gone on. Where we are camped, everything is so quiet & peaceful that it is hard to imagine that there is a war on. In Palestine or rather, on the Palestine – Lebanon Border, our Section once went to a dance organised in a Jewish settlement. It was while the fighting was still going on in that area, and above the dance music one could hear a continual barrage of artillery fire as our side tried to capture a French fort. It seemed strange to be enjoying ourselves so much, when, just over the hill men were most likely being blown to bits. I didn't seem to be able to get used to it at all, dancing behind blacked out windows too. The Jews didn't seem to worry as they explained that they had every confidence in our side winning. Well – I do seem to be talking a lot of rot so I'll change the subject. The rain here, has brought out a few snakes. I killed one late the other night. A 5 ft 9in python & others have been killed that were much bigger. Non poisonous, - they can still cause a dangerous wound when they bite if of course it is neglected. I might say I didn't wait to find out if he was poisonous or not – I just let him have it. Well Folk I must close this scrawl. Hoping it doesn't bore you too much.

I am Yours Sincerely
Mick

Dec 27th - 42.

Tx3064

Spr. A. J. Thompson

No. 1 Section

219th A. A. Field Coy

R. A. E. A. J. F

Aust.

To Pres. K. J. W. S. F. & R. S. L.

Dear Mr Marshall

Would you please convey my thanks to the above Committees for the very nice parcel I received early this month.

Not only the parcels, but the kind thoughts that accompany them, help a lot in making out Xmas in various parts of the country, quite a cheerful affair.

I only wish that our comrades in the forward areas all had as good a time as I did, here, in the M. I. this Xmas.

Anyway, I hope it won't be long before we are all back on King Is. & able to thank the various Committees personally for their grand work in helping to make us comfortable & our circumstances more cheery.

I am.

Yours Sincerely

Mike

A. J. Stouffer

ag 27/12

Dec 27th - 42.

TX3064
Spr. A.J. Thompson
No. 1 Section
2/9th A.A. Field Coy
R.A.E. A.I.F
Aust.

To Pres. K.I.W.S.F & R.S.L.

Dear Mr Marshall

Would you please convey my thanks to the above Committees for the very nice parcel I received early this month.

Not only the parcels, but the kind thoughts that accompany them, help a lot in making our Xmas in various parts of the country, quite a cheerful affair.

I only wish that our comrades in the forward areas all had as good a time as I did, here, in the N.T. this Xmas.

Anyway, I hope it won't be long before we are all back on King Is. & able to thank the various Committees personally for their grand work in helping to make us comfortable & our circumstances more cheery.

I am.

Yours Gratefully

Mick

A.J. Thompson



From No.: Tx 3064
 Name: Sgt. R. E. Thompson
 Unit: No 1 Section 2/9th Field Coy.
R. E. R. Street.
 Date: Mon 31st May 43.

USE MILITARY ADDRESS ONLY.

Dear Sir

Once again I write, to acknowledge the jolly nice little parcel I received some time ago from the "Sunds". I have been shifting about a fair bit lately so this is practically the first chance I've had, so far, to thank you. Please excuse the pencil as the pen is in the "old kit bag" & said kit bag is left well behind somewhere.

Tell the folk that the "good old camouflage net" plays a big part up this way, so keep up the good work back home.

"Blimey! I wish this "blinking" was would finish so we could get home & tune up the Grassie team at foot ball.

Well! Cheerio. Thanks again for the parcel & the spirit of the kind people who sent it. Yours Very Sincerely,

Mick

IN YOUR LETTER DO NOT REFER TO:
 The name of your transport, or other transports in your convoy . . . dates of sailing . . . ports of call . . .
 destinations, descriptions of troops, or other information which, if intercepted, will be of value to the enemy.

TX3064
Spr A.J. Thompson
No 1 Section. 2/9th Field Coy.
R.A.E. A.I.F. Aust.
Mon. 31ST May 43.

Dear Sir.

Once again I write to acknowledge the jolly nice little parcel I received some time ago from the "Funds". I have been shifting about a fair bit lately so this is practically the first chance I've had, so far, to thank you. Please excuse the pencil as the pen is in the "old Kit bag" & said Kit bag is left well behind somewhere.

Tell the folk that the "good old" camouflage net plays a big part up this way, so keep up the good work back home.

"Blimey! I wish this "blinking" war would finish so we could get home & tune up the Grassy team at football.

Well! Cheerio. Thanks again for the parcel & the spirit of the kind people who sent it.

Yours Very Sincerely.

Mick.



Ex 3066.

Mr. H. J. Thompson

R.O. 1, Section

2/7th 4. St. Paul's way

K. 86 88 St. Paul's

Mon 27th Nov 41

To Pres. K. I. W. S. F.

Dear Sir

I would like to acknowledge
with many thanks the parcels which
arrived two days ago from the "Fund".

The contents were very much enjoyed.
In fact I considered myself lucky to get
it so soon after sending, considering
that parcels from home and prior to yours
one have not arrived yet. The mail
has been rather poor lately. Of course
parcels must take their place as last
priority. The other mail comes by air, or
should do. In concluding, I wish you
would convey my thanks to the "Fund" &
Wishes Wishing to Fund every success.

Yours truly H. J. Thompson

TX3064

Spr.A.J.Thompson

No 1 Section

2/9th A A Field Coy.

R A.E. A I.F.

Mon. 29th Nov.'43
To Pres. K I. W. S F.

Dear Sir.

Aust

I would like to acknowledge with many thanks the parcel which arrived two days ago from the 'Fund'.

The contents were very much enjoyed. In fact I considered my self lucky to get it so soon after sending, considering that parcels from home sent prior to your one have not arrived yet. The mail has been rather poor lately. Of course parcels must take their place as last priority. The other mail comes by air, or should do.

In concluding, I wish you would convey my thanks to the 'Fund' & Wishing the 'Fund' every success

Your's etc. A.J. Thompson Spr

Jan. 9th '44

Tx 3064

Sgt. A. J. Thompson

M^o, Section

2/4th Aust. A. Field Coy.

R.A.C. M.B.F. Aust.

Dear Mr. Marshall

Received a canteen order recently from R.S.L. for which I would like you to pass on my thanks for same & the kind thoughts that accompanied it. This was the louisiest Xmas I've ever spent in the Army but expectedly so. The M.B.F. did a good job in providing us with a hamper each. Mine came from a Centre in "N.S.W." Although cake was mouldy & even the tinned pudding it ~~was~~ was just bad luck owing to the climate. We even had a taste of turkey although only just. Still it was turkey. While some fellows had bad luck with the bottles of green ale sent in parcels from their people most of it got through in good shape. One fellow was lucky, as his parcel with a beer bottle sticking out arrived at a field post office & the chaps there re-wrapped & re-addressed it to him. Jolly decent of them. Certainly different to other places. One fellow's missus sent him a quart bottle of rum. Arrived apparently intact but all he got out of it was the smell. Cork had jumped out en transit & the parcel was saturated. Little things like that break the monotony & cause amusement for all but the unlucky one. We had Xmas & Boxing day off. I was in another camp of only a few chaps on Boxing day so we had a few races etc. Was stiff & sore for days after. New Year's day we also had free. Spent that day "spine brushing" which is generally a Sunday treat. Well I must close now wishing Mr. Marshall, yourself, Arthur & the girls all the best for '44.

Sincerely Yours

(Mick)

A. J. Thompson

2/4th

Jan. 9th. '44

TX3064
Spr A.J. Thompson
Nº 1 Section
2/9th Aust A. Field Coy.
R.A.E. A.I.F. Aust.

Dear Mr Marshall.

Received a canteen order recently from R.S.L. for which I would like you to pass on my thanks for same & the kind thoughts that accompanied it. This was the lousiest Xmas I've ever spent in the Army but expectedly so. The A.C.F. did a good job in providing us with a hamper each. Mine came from a Centre in N.S.W. although cake was mouldy & even the tinned pudding it was just bad luck owing to the climate. We even had a taste of turkey although only just. Still it was turkey. While some fellows had bad luck with the bottles of green ale sent in parcels from their people most of it got through in good shape. One fellow was lucky, as his parcel with a beer bottle sticking out arrived at a field post office & the chaps there re-wrapped & re-addressed it to him. Jolly decent of them. Certainly different to other places. One fellow's missus sent him a quart bottle of rum. Arrived apparently intact but all he got out of it was the smell. Cork had jumped out en transit & the parcel was saturated. Little things like that break the monotony & cause amusement for all but the unlucky one. We had Xmas & Boxing day off. I was in another camp of only a few chaps on Boxing day so we had a few races etc. was stiff & sore for days after. New Year's day we also had free. Spent that day "spine bashing" which is generally a Sunday treat.

Well I must close now wishing Mrs Marshall, yourself, Arthur & the girls all the best for '44.

Sincerely Yours
(Mick) A J Thompson

10-11-44

To Pres.

K. F. W. & F.

Dear Sir,

Please convey my sincere thanks to the
K. F. War Service Funds for ^{parcel of} comforts just received.

I succeeded, where all other parcels failed, to reach
me. I am using the pack enclosed; now, to write
on. There isn't much news to write about
except that I am working inland again after a
couple of months on a job down towards the coast.

Rumours are flying & bets are being made
regarding when our leave comes. Should not
be long before I can thank you personally for
the comforts sent. In the meantime - Thank you.

Yours Sincerely

(Sf.) A. F. Thompson

Det

Tx 3864

Sf. A. F. Thompson

NO. 1 Section

2/9th A. F. Field Coy.

R. N. E. A. F. Aust.

10-4-44

To Pres.

K.I.W.S.F's

TX3064

Spr. A.J. Thompson

No 1 Section

2/9th A.A.Field Coy.

R.A.E. A.I.F. Aust.

Dear Sir.

Please convey my sincere thanks to the K.I. War Service Funds for parcel of comforts just received. It succeeded when all other parcels failed to reach me. I am using the pad enclosed; now, to write on. There isn't much news to write about except that I am working inland again after a couple of months on a job down towards the coast.

Rumours are flying & bets are being made regarding when our leave comes. Should not be long before I can thank you personally for the comforts sent. In the meantime – Thank you.

Yours Sincerely

(Spr) A.J. Thompson

Tx 3064

Spr. R. J. Thompson

W. 10 Section

2/9th West. Hill Coy.

Red E. No. 1. 1. West.

Friday 22nd Dec. 44

To Pres. K. I. W. S. I's.

Dear Mr. Marshall

I hope you will pass on my rather delayed
thanks to the Fund for the parcel & lantern order, plus the
good wishes which I received earlier. As I have been
away from [redacted] etc. there was-
n't much of a chance to write. I hope the Xmas on K. I.
this year will be a more cheerful affair than what I believe
the last one was. We won't be so bad off as far as the
beer is concerned as I believe that we are allowed about
six or eight bottles including one buckakeesh one. Apart from
that & the day off will get (if not on guard duties) Xmas will
be about the same as any other day I guess. However, that
won't worry us so long as the current rumours re. leave are
correct. So, hoping I can thank the Fund personally
in the near future. I am Yours Sincerely
Milton B. Wether.

Mick.

TX3064

Spr. A.J. Thompson

No 10 Section

2/9th Aust. Field. Coy.

R.A.E. A.I.F. Aust.

Friday 22nd Dec. '44

To Pres. K.I.W.S.F's.

Dear Mr Marshall

I hope you will pass on my rather delayed thanks to the Fund for the parcel & Canteen Order, plus the good wishes which I received earlier. As I have been way from **CENSORED** te there wasn't much of chance to write. I hope the Xmas on K.I. this year. will be a more cheerful affair than what I believe the last one was. We won't be so bad off as far as the beer is concerned as I believe that we are allowed about six or eight bottles including one bucksheesh one. Apart from that & the day off we'll get – (if not on guard duties)- Xmas will be about the same as any other day I guess. However that won't worry us so long as the current rumours re leave are correct. So, hoping I can thank the Fund personally in the near future. I am Yours Sincerely

Mick.