

## Alvyn John Sutcliffe

Alvyn John Sutcliffe, aged 30, enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF at the Melbourne Town Hall on 28 January 1942.

He was allocated to the Survey Training Depot at Burwood on 19 February (the day Darwin was first bombed) and promoted to Lance Corporal on 2 April 1942.

On 28 June 1942 he was transferred to Queensland where he was taken on strength of the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Field Survey Company on 3 July 1942.

Over the course of the next two and a half years, the unit spent many periods out along the Queensland coast where they surveyed the peninsula and coastal waters. They would then return to base and convert the survey results into maps for military use.

During this same period, the unit's name changed to 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Survey Company on 18 January 1943 and L Cpl Sutcliffe was also promoted several times. On 4 December 1942 he was promoted to Corporal, then to Sergeant on 30 July 1943 and then finally to Warrant Officer Class II (Leading Surveyor) on 2 March 1945.

On 24 March 1945, WO2 Sutcliffe and his survey company departed Australia on the US Liberty Ship SS *Charles M Russell* and disembarked at Morotai, in the Dutch East Indies, on 5 April 1945.



*Above: SS Charles M Russell*

While the main battles for Morotai had finished by this time, numerous Japanese defenders still occupied the western tip of the island right up until the end of the war. The island was also an important staging base for the planned Australian assault on Borneo.



*Above: USS LST 584 (1945)*

On 30 May 1945, WO2 Sutcliffe and his unit left Morotai on the USS *LST 584* and landed at Labuan, in British North Borneo several days later. This timing coincided with the main Australian offensive on the island, between 10 June – 3 August 1945.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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*Above: Borneo 1945-08-26. Members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Survey Company*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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*Above & below: Borneo 1945-08-27. Members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Survey Company cutting up an old, dead tree for use in the cookhouse fires.*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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On 6 December 1945, he boarded HMAS *Manoora* at Labuan and disembarked at Brisbane on 16 December 1945.



*Above: HMAS Manoora*

He subsequently travelled to Melbourne, where he was demobilised from the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF on 8 March 1946.



*Above: Australian Survey Corps Memorial Plaque at Kilcoy RSL, Kilcoy, Qld.*

Name: Alvyn John SUTCLIFFE	
Service Number	VX62141
Date enlisted	28 January 1942
Place enlisted	Melbourne, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	1 <sup>st</sup> Australian Field Survey Company
Date and ship embarked for overseas	24 March 1945 <i>SS Charles M Russell</i>
Previous military service or enlistment attempts?	–
Stated age/DOB (if known)	8/11/1911
Place of birth	Shepparton, Victoria
Marital status	Single
Occupation	Public servant
Religion	Presbyterian
Next of kin and address	Sutcliffe, Mr David, father, 18 Tiernan Street, Footscray, Victoria
Permanent address in Australia	18 Tiernan Street, Footscray, Victoria
Appearance	Medium complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, height – 5 feet 9 inches
Final Rank	Warrant Officer Class II
Final Unit	5 <sup>th</sup> Australian Field Survey Company
Theatres of war served in	Northern Australia, Morotai, Borneo
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and place wounded	–
Nature of wounds	–
Date and place died	–
Cemetery details	–
Date and ship embarked for Australia	6 December 1945 <i>HMAS Manoora</i>
Date discharged	22 March 1946
Nature of discharge	Demobilisation
Honours/medals	1939-45 Star, Australia Service Medal 1939-45, Pacific Star, War Medal 1939-45
Notes	