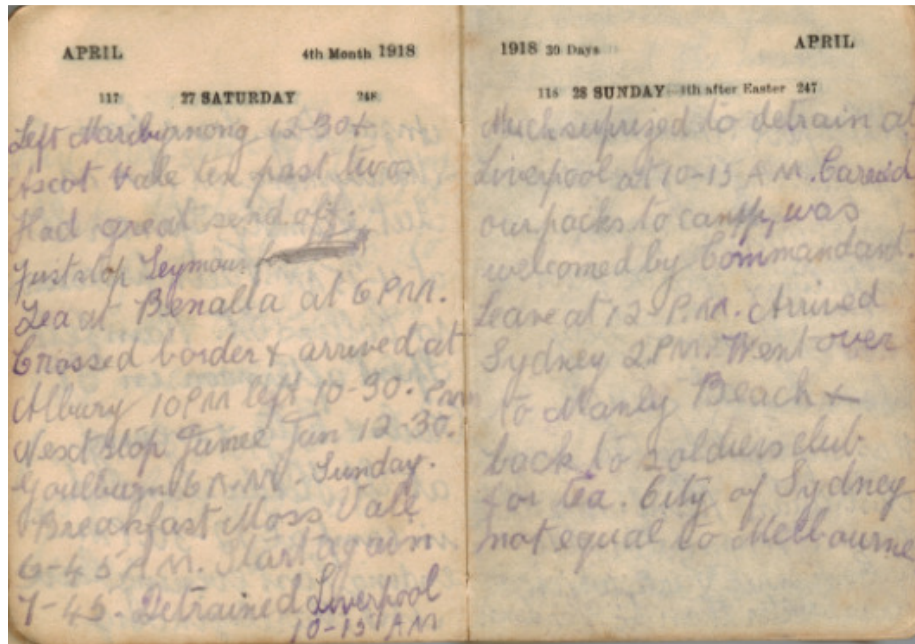


Trooper **Harold Morter**'s Australian Pocket Diary – as kept for year **1918**

Transcribed from a diary kept by **Harold Morter** during his service in Middle East, as member of the **10th Australian Mobile Veterinary Section** (5th Brigade A.L.H.) - by John Morter (Harold's grandson, via Keith).

The diary was written in pencil (of a blue'ish colour) that's faded in places – especially where facing pages have rubbed against each other.



Harold joined-up on 17th October, 1917 along with friends David Main Chalmers (known as Don) and Bill Mewburn (my *maternal* grandmother's brother). Training was at Maribyrnong, Victoria. They left Australia on transport ship the "HMAT SS Port Darwin", bound for Suez/Egypt – via Albany/WA and Colombo/Ceylon.

Also aboard SS Port Darwin were troopers Bootle & Carnie ... both of whom are mentioned in Harold's diary.



Note: This is a literal transcription – as found, with no editing. Comments in (*bracketed italics*) are mine.

Noted inside front pages: "You will find this diary pretty rough, but just put it away till I get home" ... which suggests Harold posted it home before he returned himself.

Jan 1, Tuesday.

Home on "Harvest Leave" for 17 days. (*This probably refers to helping with summer hay-harvest*)

Mar 28, Thursday.

Went home on final leave. After being in camp four months (*ie. Started training December 1917*).
(*Photograph, in uniform, taken while on home-leave – for occasion of Mother's 83rd birthday ... See below.*)

Apr 5, Friday

Full dress parade.

Photos taken in group & mounted (*The mounted photograph is in my possession ... See below.*)

Half day off. Footscray in evening.

Apr 6, Saturday.

Very little to do. Slept until three, went to Aunties & Noonea (*or is it Moonea, or ??*) to pictures.

Apr 7, Sunday

Went to Annie Young's at Ascot. Don (Chalmers) also. Had a fine time.

Apr 14, Monday

"Speak to him thou for He hears. And spirit to spirit can meet. Nearest is he than breathing. Closer than hands or feet" - *and* - "Boys flying kites have in their white winged birds. But you can't play that way when your flying words. Thoughts unexpected sometimes fall back dead. But God himself can't stop them once their said".

S.J Bottrill – 10th A.M.V.S

Apr 25, Thursday

Pay day in camp. Last medical inspection.

One of the three to do picquet (*ie. guard duty*) & stables in the evening.

Had friends out to see us & had a good time.

Apr 26, Friday

Anzac Day. Leave from Maribyrnong at 10AM. Meet family Spencer St (*Melbourne railway station*) at 11-15AM. Seen procession in Collins St. Rain fell. Spent afternoon in St. Pauls & city & evening at St. Kilda. Landed in camp at 12-30PM ending last evening leave in Maribyrnong.

Apr 27, Saturday

Left Maribyrnong 12-30 & Ascot Vale ten past two. Had a great send off.

First stop Seymour. Tea at Benalla at 6PM. Crossed border and arrived at Albury 10PM. Left 10-30PM.

Next stop Junee Jun(ction?) 12-30PM. Goulburn 6AM Sunday. Breakfast Moss Vale 6-45AM. Start again 7-45. Detrained Liverpool 10-15AM

Apr 28, Sunday

Much surprised to detrain at Liverpool (*NSW*) at 10-15AM. Carried our packs to camp, was welcomed by commandant. Leave at 12PM. Arrived Sydney 2PM.

Went over to Manly Beach & back to soldiers club for tea. City of Sydney not equal to Melbourne (!!)

Apr 29, Monday

Liverpool. Parade at 6AM. I prepared for Gov. General inspection at 9AM. Inspection and march past at 10AM. Governor very pleased with march. Was surprised by the way Australian Reinf(*orcement troops?*) marched. Leave at 1PM. Motor ride to Cetennial Park, which was better than Vic. Gardens. Vet(erinary) Corps had a fine kick-up at the march.

Apr 30, Tuesday

Bugle Call 6PM. Fall in (*3 something?*). Caught train to Sydney. March through streets to Woolloomooloo Pier and board the Pt. Darwin. Steamed from pier at 1-30 & lay in the harbour. Boats around us all the afternoon & evening. Patrol boat all night. Hammocks very peculiar looking.

May 1, Wednesday

Went through Sydney heads at 6AM. Sea very calm. Many lads sick.

Had to do Mess Orderly's job (*ie. washing dishes, pots & pans*)

Food very good. Soup, meat, potatoes, cabbage & pudding for dinner (*ie. Lunch*). Tripe, bread & butter (for) tea. Porridge, sausages, butter & jam (for) breakfast.

May 2, Thursday

Sighted Vic coast first thing in morning. Passed small boat. Cruiser following fast & caught up at 2PM. Believed to be (*HMAS*) Brisbane. Kept close by as escort. Allotted our boat positions & life belts. Passed Wilsons Promontory & Corner Inlet lights.

May 3, Friday

Still in sight of land. Believed to be Otway Ranges. Light on left King Island or Tas.

Brisbane turned at 9AM.

May 4, Saturday

Kit & general inspection. Felt a bit squeamish. A good swell on. Sports in afternoon.

Received message of Good Luck from the cruiser Brisbane.

May 5, Sunday

Sea a bit rough. On guard at Store Room & third relief. Still in the Bight.

General church parade. Heard hymns played on gramophone. Reminds one of home.

Bully beef & pickles for tea, but went good ...

May 6, Monday

Off guard at 9AM. Very tired. Had shower & change of clothes. No parade until 2Pm. No sight of land. Medical inspection in the afternoon.

Rumors of leave at Albany & Colombo, on condition of good behavior.

May 7, Tuesday

Nearing Albany, but no land in sight. Seen first whale spouting, at a distance. Began to rain at mid-day.

Trying to evade the censor & get a few letters through. Ship's commander admits good behaviour of troops. Land sighted at 2-15PM. Submarine signal & drill.

Finished cake from home. Upon mist lifting we ... (*continued next page*).

May 8, Wednesday

... came across to the anchoring place in launches, the first batch at 10 to 10AM & next about 12.

At quarter past one we steamed out & at three PM went through the heads. Many arguments in comparing harbour with Sydney.

May 9, Thursday

Up to date, the roughest day of journey. Many of the newly embarked troops sick. Washing parade & issue of pay books. First day of the new G.L (?) orders. Sighted Cape Leewin at 3PM.

May 10, Friday

Shifted to rear end of boat near Serg(eants) Mess. Sea rough and sick myself. A good down-pour of rain.

May 11, Saturday

Seas washing across the deck. No parades. Very sick all day.

May 12, Sunday

Seas a bit calmer. Church parade, but unable to attend.

May 13, Monday

Paraded sick, aching all over. Started new job as Kit Guard.

Spread awnings over deck as the weather is becoming hot. Kit & general inspection.

May 14, Tuesday

Sea very calm, & day lovely. Feeling well and able to eat. Exam of attestation papers.

(An "attestation paper" was completed by the person on enlistment and normally gives next-of-kin, employment details, marital status, age, place of birth and physical description).

May 15, Wednesday

Many flying fish around the boat. Sea very still.

May 16, Thursday

Washing day. Very busy. Letter writing. Competition for best mess table. New ration of lime-juice.

Our Corps off fatigue duty.

May 17, Friday

Pay day & life belt parade. Written 8 letters. Weather getting hot.

May 18, Saturday

Crossed the line (*the equator*), great procession & dipping. Heavy shower in morning & had shower under the awning.

May 19, Sunday

Church parade in morning. Sing-Song in evening. Beautiful sunset.

May 20, Monday

Submarine alarm. Instruction about rafts. Many thought alarm genuine. Lesson in knotting.

May 21, Tuesday

All eagerly looking for land. Lights at Ceylon Island in view at 9PM.

Very sleepless night as all were anxious to see land & obtain leave. Kits brought up from hold.

May 22, Wednesday

Breakwater at Colombo a very fine one, about 11 yards wide. Entered through gap at breakfast time.

Water very shallow(?) A very busy port. We pulled in beside an American boat & was followed by a mission boat. Many natives round the boat, diving and selling fruit etc.

Our best hopes fulfilled when we were ordered to be in uniform at 10AM, but boarded four lighters & tugged ashore at 12 midday. Colombo.

May 23, Thursday

Still inside the breakwater. Lads on duty or M.P the previous day granted leave at 8AM. Others put in morning by swimming or looking on.

Large quantity of fruit and 6 ton of tea taken on board. Natives still around the boat. Fifteen big boats inside the breakwater in the morning. Heavy rains during the day. Left harbour & passed out of breakwater at 5-30. Passed three boats by dark. Much singing during evening.

May 24, Friday

Making good way. Knotting and lecture on ropes. Changed my job for a day.

May 25, Saturday

Mayor & Sec(retary) of Y.M.C.A at Colombo sands note acknowledging good behaviour of troops ashore. Kit & general inspection. Sports in the afternoon. (*A name I can't decipher here*) won pillow-fight over water & shouted pine-apples all round.

May 26, Sunday

Church service in morning. 9th verse 6th chapter St Matthew. Sing-Song in evening and short talk by Y.M.C.A sec.

May 27, Monday

Sea rough & squally with tropical showers. Slept on deck & was awakened at 1AM with rain & was soon wet through. Many lads sick. Hoody lost light weight championship.

May 28, Tuesday

Swamped out at breakfast time by waves coming through open port hole.
(I was) Mess Orderly for the day. Showers all day.

May 29, Wednesday

Sea still rough & many lads uncertain but (I) am well. Heavy wind hinders our speed.

May 30, Thursday

Paraded sick, felt a bit crook. Mounted units to draw up a souvenir & all to be represented.
Passed big boat in the evening. Some of our lads vaccinated.

May 31, Friday

Weather finer & sea calmed down. News of American transport being sunk. Magazines posted home.

Jun 1, Saturday

Very hot. Hardly a ripple in the seas. Usual kit & general inspection. Mess Orderly for the day. Had washing taken off rigging (*Stolen??*). Sailing vessel sighted on the horizon. Arabian coast in the evening.

Jun 2, Sunday

Coasts of Africa & Arabia in sight all day. African coast very rough. Went through Hells Gates & (*Perroni Island?*) at 9:30AM. Attend communion at 6-30. Church parade 10AM. Sing-Song in evening.

Jun 3, Monday

Coast not in sight. Sighted many boats. A new issue of Magnesia. Well on in the Red Sea. Censors complain of letters containing too much information.

Pay day. 1/- (= 1 *shilling*) per man stopped for general shortages (*ie. As punishment for petty thieving ?*)

Jun 4, Tuesday

Kits brought up from below. The 1/- stopped from pay refunded on account of boys kicking up a row. Extra guards posted on hammocks. Drew our money held by the steward.

Jun 5, Wednesday

Medical inspection & lecture. Warned for guard. Land sighted in evening. Mess utensils called in. Light house (sighted) on Arabian coast in the evening.

Jun 6, Thursday

Land in sight. Preparations being made for disembarking. Blankets and hammocks handed in.

Nearing Gulf of Suez & Mount Sianai in the evening.

Jun 7, Friday

(This entry is) Written in the desert in view of the Suez Canal. Entered the breakwater at Port Suez at 8-45AM. Pulled in alongside pier & troops for England disembarked at 11-30. Egypt troops not until after dinner 2-15PM & got straight onto cattle trucks.

Had tea at 6PM. Bully (*beef*) & bread & onion (pinched from passing train). Natives stronger men than at Colombo, but very dirty. Harbour very pretty & also busy. Arrived Moasca Camp 8-45PM.

Jun 8, Saturday

Awakened by buzz of aeroplanes. Reville 4AM. Pay Books called in. Most men inoculated.

Stew for dinner – rice, onions, cabbage, bacon, marrow, potatoes. Some stew – bully beef (!!)

Weather not as hot as expected. Very poor supply of water. Each man issued two blankets & groundsheet

Jun 9, Sunday

Church parade 6-30AM. Inoculation in afternoon. Very quiet day. Hand in kit, one of each issue.

Many natives about camp selling tomatoes, cucumber (and calling out) “eggs a cook”.

Jun 10, Monday

Parade 4AM. Route march in sand, which woke us up. Short parade after breakfast. Many men faint through inoculation. (*Presumably, as a result of inoculation received the previous afternoon?*)

Burnished (*ie. polished*) up our spurs. Gresson & Weste went to hospital. (*Perhaps due to inoculation?*)

Jun 11, Tuesday

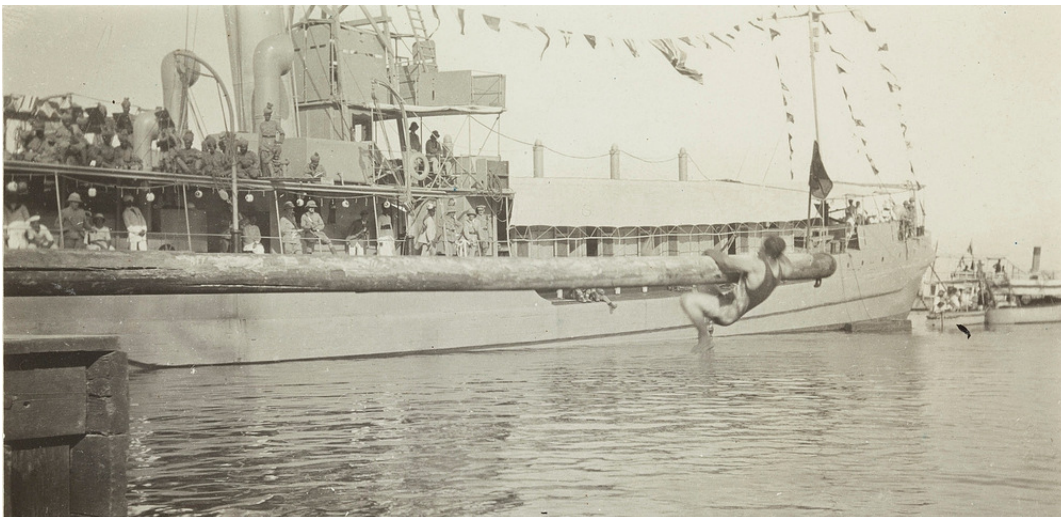
Start of Dinkum Soldiering: Reville 4AM. Fall in 4-30. Drill until 7AM. Breakfast & fall in again at 8-30. Drilled under new instructors who shook us up properly. Dismiss 10-45AM. Up before a board for the shortages of numerals (*I wonder what these “numerals” were – and what was cause of “shortages” ?*)

Jun 12, Wednesday

Parade at 4-30AM until 7AM. Swimming in a lake near the Suez in the afternoon. (*This was probably Timsah Lake, just south of Ismailia*). Late when we marched to tea, hence very little to eat.

Jun 13, Thursday

Open camp but were paraded into Ismailia to “Military Sports”. Great riding by an Arabian Tribe & buckjumping on donkeys ridden by sailors. Park in Ismailia (is) beautiful.



“Sports at Ismailia” – Photograph by J.F.Smith of the 7th Light Horse in Egypt and Palestine ... State Library of NSW

Jun 14, Friday

Usual drill in the morning, but feeling very fit.

Jun 15, Saturday

No parade after 8-30. O.C. satisfied with progress. (*Google suggests O.C = Officer Commanding*)

Jun 16, Sunday

Church parade at 6-30AM. Inoculation for cholera 11AM.

Packed up our kits etc & went to equitation (?) camp. All day preparing for guard & then was put off.

Jun 17, Monday

Don & I put on Head-quarters horses & Bill on the plough. (*Harrold joined up with Don Chalmers & Bill Mewburn – all Leongatha boys*). All our lads on fatigues. Work much the same as in Maribyrrong.

Jun 18, Tuesday

Work in lines & taking horses to the canal (*Suez*) for water.

Inspection by "Tommie Officer" – very strict !

Jun 19, Wednesday

Seen our first desert snake, over at the rifle range. Horses taken for a swim. Pay in the afternoon.

Jun 20, Thursday

Taken off our job & put on work on the line. (*"The line" would relate to line of tethered horses*).

Great fun with natives is passing trains. Went down to Y.M.C.A in evening.

Jun 21, Friday

LIMBER WAGON (*A two-wheeled cart – designed to support tail of two-wheeled gun-carriages*).

Went down to the canal before breakfast to unload limbers.

Work on railway line until dinner. Feed horses at 4PM.

Played a lark on Bill; tied him up to pole while he was asleep.

Jun 22, Saturday

No parade for mounted men. Work in morning as usual for us. Great now breakfast time about rations & better for rest of the day (? *Not clear what this means*). Shortage of water (*Presumably, for horses*).

Jun 23, Sunday

Church parade 9-15AM. Inspection of rifles (at) 10(AM). Great feed at canteen in the evening.

Jun 24, Monday

Put back on our old job. Medical exam. Tattoo at 8PM & six men off (*transport ship*) Port Darwin found A.W.(O).L. Capt. Banks (Tommie) ties his horses leg up & then is beat. (*Does this relate to punishment for AWOL – or, is he beating his own horse for some misdemeanour ?*)

Jun 25, Tuesday

CHATS - LICE

Men infested with chats put through dip also all their clothing.

Great day at canteen. A batch of "Camel Corps" arrive from the front.

Jun 26, Wednesday

Camel Corps officers go into horse lines for riding instruction – also more horses from Remount. (*Remount = replacement horses ... and the process of replacing horses*)

Jun 27, Thursday

Hard days work on fatigues, went across railway after dinner.

Jun 28, Friday

Isolation lifted but no leave for our boys. (*Perhaps isolated due to lice infestation ?*)

Jun 29, Saturday

Left horse lines and went back to B squadron for further training. Swim in the afternoon.

Jun 30, Sunday

Church parade in mounted squadron mess hut.

Jul 1, Monday

Out on general parade ground for musketry instruction.

Jul 2, Tuesday

Went across line for a walk & (to) try squirt (revolver).

Jul 3, Wednesday

Last day of Musketry Instruction. Issue of cigarettes.

Jul 4, Thursday

Commence firing at 100yds musketry also rapid firing.

Had first leave & went into Ismailia & had a look around also good swim.

Jul 5, Friday

On guard at 5-30, at Main Guard. Great polishing to escape but no luck. (*Eh ?*)

Jul 6, Saturday

Came off guard at 5-30, very tired. Guard turned out several times to "Mounted Parties" (*ie. Harold, on guard duty, was required to respond to mounted troops coming into camp*)

Jul 7, Sunday

Church parade 9AM. Expect to go down to details any day.

Jul 8, Monday

Don & I driving A.I.C limber (*I'm not sure I got those initials right*) & I received first mail of seventeen letters. Many of the lads go through gas test.

Jul 9, Tuesday

Went through our gas test in the morning & all passed (*A pass-stamp is recorded on inside-last-page of Harold's Pay Book by "Gas Officer"*). Shifted our home in the evening.

Jul 10, Wednesday

Settled in A.V.C (*ie. Army Veterinary Corps*) details, nothing much to do.

Leave at 5PM. Went into Ismailia & had a good swim in lake near the canal (*Probably Timsah Lake*).

Native Christmas in the town. (*This would be Eid al-Fitr ... the Muslim festival at end of the holy month of Ramadan ... a celebration of the end of fasting*)

Jul 17, Wednesday

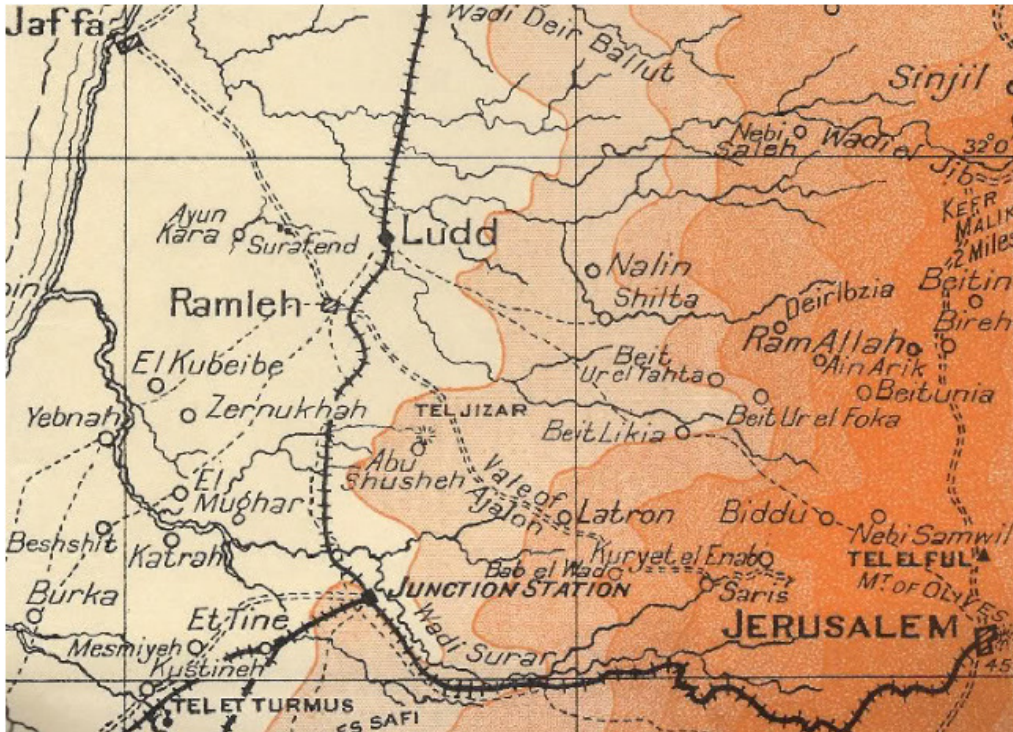
Crossed the canal at Kantarak (*perhaps El-Qantara ?*) & went up to **Ludd** & was met by N.Z Section.

No entry for July 18th ... Note: Ludd (nr Jerusalem) is a long way from Ismailia – I doubt it was covered in only 2 days on horseback ... so, more likely that following entry for July 19th was actually made sometime later.

Jul 19, Friday

The following was ordinary camp life at **Surafend** (Surafend was a Bedouin village - it now describes the area of Tzrifin in Israel – between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem). A few leaves to **Jaffa** (“Jaffa” is now Tel Aviv).

No diary entries between July 19th and September 17th ... Probably in-transit from Ismailia to Ludd = 200mls.



Ludd and Surafend ... between Jerusalem & Jaffa (on the coast)



"Watering horses at Ludd" – Photograph by J.F. Smith of the 7th Light Horse in Egypt and Palestine ... State Library of NSW

Sep 17, Tuesday

Two trips into **Ludd** with horses.

Cpl Ward, Jona, Scott, Brad, Bootle, Bently & myself sent out with the Brigade.

Sep 18, Wednesday

Camped at Agril (*Agricultural?*) College about 2 miles from Jaffa. Very pretty place.

Sep 19, Thursday

1st day in shell fire. Great gallop to outflank turks.

Tulkarm fell & brigade took 2,000 prisoners.

*Wikipedia: "The **Battle of Tulkarm** took place on 19 September 1918, beginning of the **Battle of Sharon**, which along with the **Battle of Nablus** formed the set piece **Battle of Megiddo** fought between 19 and 25 September in the last months of the **Sinai and Palestine Campaign** of the **First World War**".*

Lieut(enant) Cox killed.

14th Light Horse
(late 7th L.H.)

COX, J. P. G.
Lieutenant.

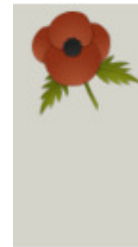
"KILLED. 19. 9. 18".

Lieutenant Cox was my Officer - I met him in Palestine. He was tall, 5' 10", fair - clean shaved - of good build.

I saw him killed at Tulkaram on 19th September, 1918. He was riding at the time, and was shot in the head, and died immediately. He was buried at Tulkaram.

Lieutenant Cox was a very good Officer. He was straight forward, and was good to his men.

Informant:- Trooper J. McDarra, 1773.
14th Light Horse.



Jona had a fall. Indian Infantry cut up.

Sep 20, Friday

Saddled all night & at 2-30AM move off. Miles of mountainous country with goat tracks.

14th Regt blow up railway and take 300 prisoners.

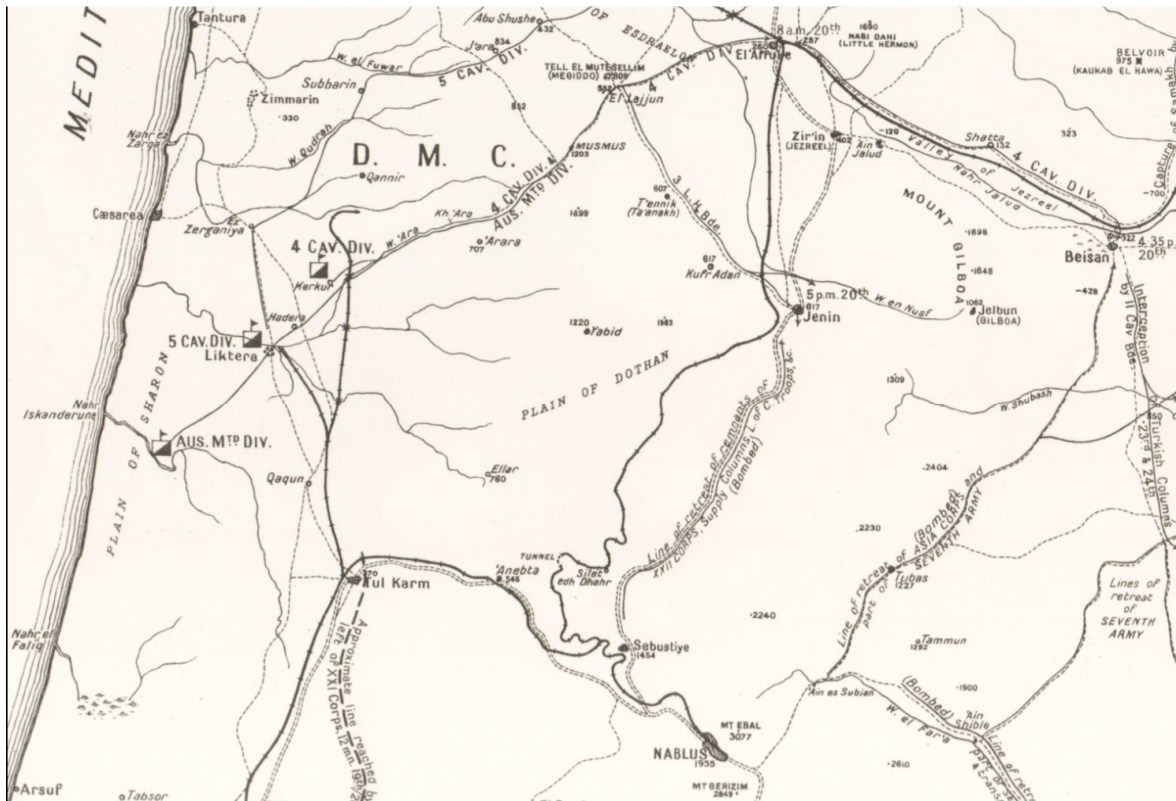
Sep 21, Saturday

Roads to Nablus strewn with transport.

Aeroplanes doing good work (Presumably, bombing enemy transport - see below).

Entered Nablus at 5PM & camp(ed) under guns, which were bombarding all night, but we all slept.

*Wikipedia: "By the afternoon of 19 September, it was clear that the breakthrough attacks in the **Battle of Sharon** by the **XXI Corps** had been successful, and the **XX Corps** was ordered to begin the **Battle of Nablus** by attacking the well defended Ottoman front line, supported by an artillery barrage. These attacks continued late into the night and throughout the next day, until the early hours of 21 September when the continuing successful flanking attack by the **XXI Corps**, combined with the **XX Corps** assault and aerial bombing attacks, forced the **Seventh and Eighth Armies** to disengage. The Ottoman **Seventh Army** retreated from the **Nablus** area down the **Wadi el Fara** road towards the **Jordan River**, aiming to cross at the **Jisr ed Damieh** bridge, leaving a rearguard to defend **Nablus**. The town was captured by the **XX Corps** and the **5th Light Horse Brigade**, while devastating aerial bombing of the Wadi el Fara road blocked that line of retreat. As all objectives had now been won, no further attacks were required of the **XX Corps**, which captured thousands of prisoners in the area and at **Nablus** and **Balata**."*



Place-names on this WW1 map include: **Nablus, Tul Karm (as Tul Karm), Jenin, El'Affule & El Lajjun**

Sep 22, Sunday

Rode 34 miles to Jinean. Lovely supply of water. (I reckon this would be "**Jenin**", which was captured on 20th September by Australian cavalry troops as part of Battle of Nablus).

3rd & 4th Brigade in town. **Terrible slaughter on the road.**



Sep 23, Monday

Camped outside the town (of Jenin) to spell the horses.

Sep 24, Tuesday

Corpl. Jona & myself also 24 Regiment men move off at 4PM with 55 horses.

Ride 12 miles out & camp with 4th Brigade.

Sep 25, Wednesday

Finish remaining 28 miles to Section & deliver horses. Had to shoot 3. **Corpl (was) sniped at.**

(As a member of the AMVC, Harold's duties included watering and caring for horses, and delivering them as "remounts" to Light Horse cavalry troops).



Sep 26, Thursday

Leave section at 10AM & when (*ie. after*) covering 28 miles (we) camp at Ledgeon (*This would be Arab village, El Lajjun*). Bedouins very keen on pinching horses. (I am) Very stiff on dismounting.

(Bedouins are traditional pastoral nomadic Arab tribes living in what is now the Negev region of Israel).

Sep 27, Friday

Move from Ledgeon (*ie. El Lajjun*) to Effule (*this would be El'Affule*) & to **Nazareth**. Lost haversack.

Sep 28, Saturday

Arrive at Sea of Galilee & Tiberias.

Sea water lovely & fresh but Tiberias is ??misquice?? (*I cannot decipher this word*).

Sep 29, Sunday

Move on with 15th Regiment. Water horses and wash in **Jordan**. (*The River Jordan runs between Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea*). Move off at 1PM & camp at village.



4th LIGHT HORSE BRIGADE WATERING HORSES AT THE JORDAN

Photograph from "Australia in Palestine" -
1st Edition owned by Harold Morter (now in my possession)

Sep 30, Monday

Still unable to pick up brigade (*Presumably, Harold lost touch with the Brigade when he was delivering horses*). Camped with transport. Lads pinching sheep.

Passed Turk & German prisoners along the road to Damascus. (I have) Ridden 150 miles since (Sept) 24th. (*In Harold's collection of WW1 souvenirs is a Turkish belt buckle [which is now in my possession – inherited from my father – ie. Harold's son, Keith]. I wonder if he acquired it around this time?*)

Oct 1, Tuesday

Moved off at 9AM. Caught up to the Brigade but lost the Cpl (*the aforementioned Jona, I presume*) & had to camp at Field Ambulance. Snipers very busy during the night. Fall of Damascus.

Oct 2, Wednesday

Passed through a village outside Damascus. The scenery beautiful.

N.Z gunners made terrible slaughter on the road.

Oct 3, Thursday

Squadron patrols came into contact with enemy. Stopped for the night & moved at daylight.

Oct 4, Friday

Camped along the roadside for a day. Moved back towards Damascus at 2PM. Had tea & put horse line down & the creek began to flood. Had to pack up & camp in a side lane.

Oct 5, Saturday

Camped in lane of an Arab village. Road very hard to sleep on. Had eggs & bacon for breakfast, & eggs and bully (*beef*) for tea. Plenty of fruit. Arabs slightly better class than Bedouins. Scenery wonderful.

Oct 6, Sunday

Living high; fresh meat issue also bread. Quarter of a goat & goat's milk & biscuits. Rain during night & awakened Arabs to get under cover. Women very hospitable, lending us rug & pillow.

Oct 7, Monday

Bootle & myself went to find the 12th Regt & 9th Mobile (ie. *Mobile Veterinary Section*).

Spent afternoon in Damascus. Seen Sheriff of Mecca & many of his men. (*This would be the Sharif of Mecca; the traditional steward, or governor, of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina*).

Hundreds of Turkish bodies still lying on the roads, had Germans burning them. (*Note: I'm reasonably sure this says "burning" and not "burying" – but I could be wrong (?) ... This sounds gruesome, but other accounts speak of the nauseating smell of unburied corpses strewn on this road – so, burning the bodies was a practical solution and no doubt considered a suitable task for German prisoners of war*).

Oct 8, Tuesday

Shifted from lane into the garden. Plenty of vegetables & fruit. Having a good spell & trying to get clean. (*I can imagine being surrounded by such death and destruction would make one feel pretty dirty!*).

Oct 9, Wednesday

News of Beirut having fallen. Arabs running the trains.

Oct 10, Thursday

Took horses into 9th Mobile. Passed Turkish hospital in an awful state. Got tibben from town. (*Tibben being a type of fodder for horses – a composition of barley straw chopped up into coarse chaff*).

Oct 11, Friday

Brad went back to Section to get mail that was supposed to be there.

Oct 12, Saturday

Mail lost sight of – only two letters arrive.

Oct 13, Sunday

Throat very sore. Had cake from Jona's parcel.

Oct 14, Monday

Paraded sick and put off duty. Temp 103 (F). Bootle went into hospital.

Oct 15, Tuesday

Very quiet day – put on duty again but still feeling crook. (*Crook = Aussie slang for unwell, sick*)

Oct 16, Wednesday

Caught a goat & took him in for the cook.

Oct 17, Thursday

General parade at 8AM to receive orders & lists for duty.

Rumours of Germany surrendering unconditionally.

Oct 18, Friday

Told off as escort to a chap on a charge. Officers quartered in a flash German building.

Oct 19, Saturday

Major moves to Div.H.Q (*ie. Divisional Head Quarters*)

Oct 20, Sunday

Rifle inspection by A.D.C of Brigade (*Title: Aide-de-Camp*)

Oct 21, Monday

Ride to Regiments & H.A.C ... *this entry recorded on previous-date page, with arrow to Monday 21st.*

Visit of Mayor.

Oct 22, Tuesday

All moved to 9th M.V.S (9th Mobile Veterinary Section), which was camped outside Damascus.

Oct 23, Wednesday

Camp very rough, but the house was Good Ho (*I remember my grandfather, Harold, using this expression – I heard it as "Good Oh", meaning OK, alright, good ... I'm not sure what house he's referring to, tho*).

Oct 24, Thursday

Rain very constant & horse lines in a bad state.

Oct 25, Friday

Went through all horses that 9th (*ie. 9th Mobile Veterinary Section*) had in paddock. (*Presumably, this means all horses held by M.V.S were checked for condition and state of health*).

Oct 26, Saturday

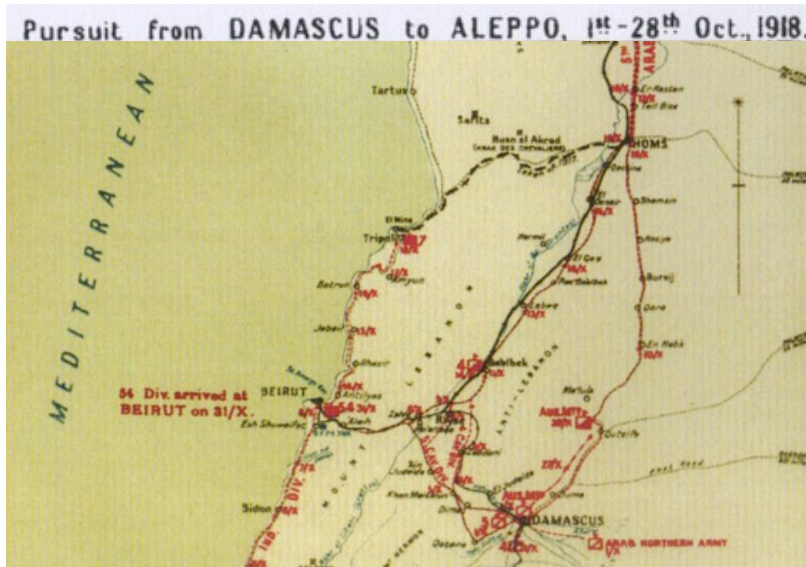
On guard over captured ponies that were being stolen. (*Opportunistic Bedouins probably the culprits*).

Oct 27, Sunday

Joined up (with) the Section about two miles along Damascus Road. Received mail & four parcels. (*I'm sure it would have been a significant event to receive news and parcels from home ... Parcels included food and things intended to provide comfort to soldiers, such as socks, cigarettes, etc*)

Oct 28, Monday

Started on our way to Homs & marched through Damascus streets. Shared cake from home with some Armenian people. In charge of 3 & a mule. (*I think this would mean 3 horses [& mule] – not 3 Armenians*)



Map shows route taken by Australian Mounted Division northward ... **Damascus – Homs – Aleppo.**

Oct 29, Tuesday

After slow travelling, stopped for a night on the roadside.

Oct 30, Wednesday

Moved out at 7AM and travelled through very rough country. Camped at Nebk (*This would be **Al Nabk**, located about halfway between Damascus & Homs*)

Oct 31, Thursday

Passed through Kara country (*this would be **Qarah**, 19kms north of Al Nabk – both now in Syria*), surrounding very barren also very little water.

Travelling most of the night. **Horse had very little water for 39 hours.**



Australian light horse **Walers**

*Australian horses, known as **Walers** (originally bred in New South **Wales**), were capable of great endurance even when under extreme stress from lack of food and water.*

Nov 1, Friday

Completed journey to Homs, town not too bad, having a large Mosque.

Had a lively swim in flooded river. (Today is) Bill's birthday (*This likely being **Bill Mewburn**, Harold's mate from Leongatha - who was my maternal grandmother's brother*).

Nov 2, Saturday

Camped alongside 8th Mobile (Veterinary Section) & had a good & much needed wash.

Don's birthday (*This likely being **Don Chalmers**, Harold's other mate from Leongatha*).

Nov 3, Sunday

Many horses coming in to our lines. (*ie. Horses handed into care of Harold's Mobile Veterinary Section*)

Nov 4, Monday

Carnie & I on dressing & kept very busy having 106 (horses) on lines. (*ie. Dressing wounds suffered by horses. One "Carnie" was on troop transport ship Port Darwin with Harold*).

Don (Chalmers) went on with spare saddles.

Nov 5, Tuesday

9th M.V.S take over 51 horses and (we) move off.

Nov 6, Wednesday

Moved our camp up to Brigade. Capt went to hospital.

Nov 7, Thursday

Very few men in Section. Ingham goes to hospital.

Nov 8, Friday

Having a decent time without an officer (*Presumably, this relates to Captain being sent off to hospital*)

(As a result, there is ...) No picquet (*ie. No guard duty*)

Nov 9, Saturday

On sick parade.

Off duty. (*Harold's Pay Book records an entry for medical treatment on 8th Nov, at 'Hommes'*)

Nov 10, Sunday

Still sick (eruptions inside) ... *Sounds like a delicate way of saying he was suffering from bout of diarrhoea!*

Went over to (Field) Ambulance for meals.

Nov 11, Monday

Rumours of Kaiser & Crown Prince (*of Germany*) bolting.

Nov 12, Tuesday

News of Germany signing armistice containing humiliating terms.

Nov 13, Wednesday

Visit of Vet Capt from D.H.Q (*ie. Mobile Veterinary Section ... Divisional Head Quarters*).

Two horses to be destroyed. (*The very fact that this event is recorded by Harold shows how much the veterinary corps thought of horses in their care - 'cos I doubt this would have been a rare occurrence*).

Nov 14, Thursday

English mail in, but very little for (the Mobile Veterinary) Section.

Rumours of being in Egypt for 15 mths after peace is declared.

Nov 15, Friday

Rain & thunder storm, but "bivvy" turned the water. (*"Bivvy" being the shortened word for bivouac – a temporary shelter*)

Nov 16, Saturday

General inspection by G.Brig & staff.

Off duty & had blood test taken. (*I wonder what this "blood test" entailed – Certainly not a blood test in the way we understand it in modern medical circumstances*)

Nov 17, Sunday

Attended church parade at "Greek Orthodox Church" (in) Homs. First since stunt began. Inside of church beautiful.

Nov 18, Monday

Visit of Brig (Brigadier) & staff – also a (Mobile) Vet(erinary Section) Lieut Col.

Nov 19, Tuesday

Practise for sports. "Bushby" jumped well.

(*"Bushby" was Harold's horse. A story told to me by my father, Keith, had it that Harold was out on a patrol in the desert when he was hit by a bout of malaria and had to lie in the shade under a bush, and his horse waited patiently by his side until he was able to ride on. But that story is not recorded in this diary.*)

Nov 20, Wednesday

Sports at Homs. Jumped Bushby & was leading for the day. 48 entries (*which suggests that Harold was a top rider amongst his peers*).

Nov 21, Thursday

Final of sports, & had a fall at third hurdle. Very stiff (*ie. unfortunate*) as I could have won easy. (!!)

Scored £3- (*ie. Three pounds, pre-decimal currency*)

Nov 22, Friday

Went into hospital with sore face (*Perhaps as a result of yesterday's unfortunate fall ?*)

Very stiff injection for anti- (*this line is unfinished*).

Nov 23, Saturday

Out of hospital, but side very sore. Rumour of moving to Baalbek. (*Baalbek, in what is now Lebanon, is back in the direction of Damascus, but to the west of the route Harold took from Damascus to Homs*)

Nov 24, Sunday

Start for Baalbek, weather fine & country not too bad.

Camped near a station & pinched a door for fire-wood.

Nov 25th & 26th

Nothing recorded for these two days ... Presumably, for duration of travel from Homs to Baalbek – 103kms

Nov 27, Wednesday

Arrive at Baalbek. Very pretty place. Camped near (Field) Ambulance.

Nov 28, Thursday

Moved to Turkish Barracks near the **Temple**.

Gave our room a good scrub with phenyl (*Phenyl being a very strong smelling disinfectant; a smell I know well from my boy scout days ... used in our bush toilets*). All animals in a stable.



Photograph of Baalbek taken in 1918 – **Temple of Jupiter** can be seen in left middle distance.

Nov 29, Friday

Had a toss out of a limber (*ie. limber wagon = a two-wheeled cart*).

Bill (Mewburn) & I (were) carting stone, etc. Went to Doc and had hot foment put on elbow.

(Hot foment = towel soaked in boiling water and wrung-out ... then applied to joint to reduce swelling. These days, we'd use ice for this purpose ... exactly the opposite treatment !).

Nov 30, Saturday

Had a look around the town of Baalbek – just like the rest a filthy hole (*This contradicts Nov 27th entry !*)

Dec 1, Sunday

Carnie went to doctor. Had a swelled head. (*Not sure if this is real – or a joke ?!*)

Dec 2, Monday

Visit of Vet Officer (*presumably, a Mobile Veterinary Section officer*)

& 4 reinforcements arrive – the first we (have) had.

Dec 3, Tuesday

Bedouins steal grain (*Grain, used as horse feed, was a scarce and valued commodity*).

Still on the sick list (*Presumably, he's still sore from fall from limber-wagon on 29th*).

Dec 4, Wednesday

Visited the ruins & spent a good half day. (*Presumably, referring to the ancient ruins of Baalbek – rather than war-caused destruction! ... Also see entry for Dec 12.*)

Dec 5, Thursday

A big mail in. Bill got bad news. (*This may be referring to Harold's mate, Bill Mewburn – brother of my maternal grandmother, but I don't know what the "bad news" could have been*).

Dec 6, Friday

Rain by the pint. Just like Aussie.

Dec 7, Saturday

Don (*Chalmers?*) got back from Tripoli – also a few reinforcements.

Dec 8, Sunday

Still raining. Sergt trying to get a cook.

Dec 9, Monday

Went to Rayak for cooker (*Rayak, or **Riyaaq**, is ~26kms from Baalbek, into what is now Lebanon*)

Bill went on driving. (*I don't believe this would refer to a motor-vehicle – perhaps "driving" the horse pulling a limber-wagon? ... See entry for Nov 29th*).

Dec 10, Tuesday

Capt. Kelly gave £1- to our mess fund (*A pool of money used to buy food/supplies*).

Had no luck with cook (*ie. An unsuccessful trip, yesterday, to Rayak*)

Dec 11, Wednesday

(Captain) Kelly started a Section cook, tucker not too bad.

Dec 12, Thursday

Sent views of Temple home (*Actually, a 30-page picture book of Ba'Albek ancient monuments – now in my possession; Addressed to Mrs T.G Morter, with inscription; "Baalbek, 11-12-18, With every good Wish for a Happy Xmas – from Harold"*)

Dec 13, Friday

Issue of stuff from Comf. Fund. (*This probably refers to the "Australian Comforts Fund"*)



Dec 14, Saturday

Cook going well, monger pretty good (*Monger, or munga, was WW1 Aussie slang for food – from the French verb 'manger'; to eat*).

Oxlade & Bootle (*ie. fellow troopers*) went to Rayak.

Dec 15, Sunday

Put on duty & swire (*swire ??*) mail in. Lads left for Beirut with horses.

Dec 16, Monday

Very cold. Coad went to hospital with Malaria.

Dec 17, Tuesday

Coad went away with Malaria (*Presumably, this means he was evacuated to better care*).

Carnie got a big tin of biscuits.

Dec 18, Wednesday

Very quiet day. Living like ducks in a pond.

Dec 19, Thursday

Weste got back from Cairo & brought our pipes, first since last Sept.

Dec 20, Friday

Don & Bill went to hospital. (*"Don" is probably Don Chalmers; Harold's mate from Leongatha*)

Dec 21, Saturday

Bill Bently came back from hospital. (*ie. This "Bill" is not Bill Mewburn, Harold's other Leongatha mate*)

Dec 22, Sunday

Carnie crook in bed. Three more reinforcements.

Dec 23, Monday

Canteen started & we get ten hens for Xmas.

Dec 24, Tuesday

Three days rations & issue of beer.

Dec 25, Wednesday – Christmas Day, 1918

Brig(adier) went away sick. Langley (Col) in-charge.

Dec 26, Thursday

Major kill(*ed?*) at station by train.

Dec 27, Friday

Rounds got free from his Court Martial. (*Google-search yields nothing on this*).

Dec 28, Saturday

Concert in evening. Carnie too crook to go. (*See entry above, for Dec 22nd*)

Dec 29, Sunday

Quiet day, nothing doing. A few letters arrive.

Dec 30, Monday

Carnie got a cake but ____ slipped. It had been 6mths on the way & was mouldy.

Dec 31, Tuesday

Carnie back from Rayak with forge. Very wet trip.

This is the end of Harold's 1918 diary

The page facing entry for 31st December is headed "Letters Home", with just one entry beneath it; "Dad 1" ... I'm sure he wrote many more letters home than this – but they're not recorded on this page.

A few pages further on is an entry headed "7-12-18" (*December 7th, 1918*), with a list of purchases; Vinegar 1/- (*1 shilling*), Onions 6d (*sixpence*), Bread 1/-, Candles 1/- ... totalling 3/6 (= *Three shillings and sixpence*).

Inside the last page of the diary it is identified as belonging to; "**No 1306. Pte H.Morter. Australian Army Vet.Corps. Anzac Mounted Division. Aust. Imperial Forces Abroad**"

Harold was kept on in Egypt for some months after the end of the war – as confirmed by a letter written from Moascar on 26th May 1919 (on Y.M.C.A letter-head).

This letter reads as follows;

Dear Annie, (*Presumably, to Annie Fairbairn Myers - - not his sister, Annie Louise*) Moascar 26-5-19

It's now quite a long time since I last wrote to you, news is very scarce here & we have been up to Jerusalem for a few day's leave. When getting back your welcome letter of March 23 was waiting for me.

Our leave came through on the 14th & we left the following day. The journey up to Ludd is about 300 miles & took us sixteen hours - at one stage the engine hit a camel & we had to get out & pull him off the line.

*Harold's diary has him in Baalbek up until the end of 1918 – and then his Pay Book records him as being in **Moascar** in early 1919 (from where this letter was written).*

*Moascar Camp is located outside Ismailia, and **Ludd** (now Lod, in Israel) is located a short distance NW of Jerusalem, towards Tel-Aviv.*

At Ludd we had to change trains for Jerusalem, and landed in the old town at midday on Friday. During our stay there the Y.M.C.A provided a splendid guide who showed us around the old city, & inside the walls. At the present time Jerusalem is made up with two cities the old & new. The old city is inhabited by the Arabs & Syrians & the new city is divided into four colonies; French, Armenian, German & Jewish.

The next ten (10!) pages describe, in great detail, all that he saw in Jerusalem ... he was obviously very impressed. *The letter finishes up as follows;*

In your letter dated March 23rd you said you thought we would not be sent back to Baalbek, but we were unlucky. What say you? Never mind, we have got over it now & can say we went right through with the Section. (*I think he means by this that he was with the A.M.V.S from beginning to end of deployment*).

During last week I received yours dated April 4th. Our mail is coming across quicker now. That Ballan chap will have a row of ribbons on him. They have reason to be proud of such a man as that, especially as he went away a private.

Mention of Ballan (small town near Ballarat) would be relevant because Annie's family came from there.

I suppose you had a good time at the social at Koorooman Hall. (*Place between Mardan & Leongatha*).

Well Annie I think I'd better finish this now. It's not half we seen (*in Jerusalem*) but as much as I can remember. Hoping this finds you well.

With best love, Sincerely Yours, Harold.

As noted by Harold in this letter, he was then returned to **Baalbek** – from where he travelled to Port Said (according to entries in his Pay Book) – from where (I'm guessing) he was repatriated to UK/England sometime around June of 1919.

Another letter I have in my possession is addressed to Miss A. Myers (*ie. Annie Fairbairn Myers, Harold's future wife – mother to Keith, my father – and hence, my grandmother*), c/o Mr F. Lester (*ie. Frank Lester, to whom Annie's eldest sister, Margaret ["Madge"], was married*), Koorooman East, Via Leongatha.

This letter is not dated but was written from training camp, Broadmeadows, which was before he went away to Egypt/Palestine ... It's signed "Sincerely yours, Harold Morter".

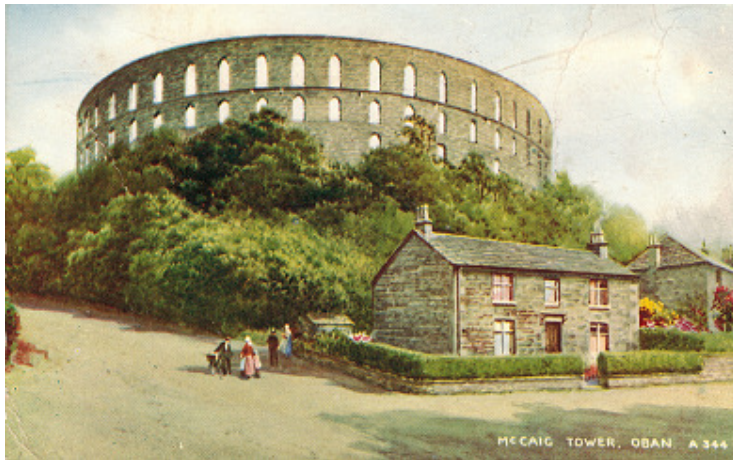
Getting Australian soldiers back home was a real challenge immediately after the end of the war – when suitable shipping was in very short supply and there were many conflicting demands upon it.

So, soldiers were offered “work experience” to make productive use of their time before a place on a ship could be found for them. As a farmer, Harold was assigned to work on a farm in Strathaven, Scotland, where he was taken in by locals, the Corson family ... *probably*, from about June 1919 through to November 1919.

Harold had such fond memories of this experience that he named his dairy-farm at Mardan “**Strathaven**” (which he purchased from his father, on his return from the war) ... and I remember my father telling me that he/Harold kept up correspondence with the Corsons for many years.

Following is a postcard sent to Harold, after the war, from a “M.H. Corson”.

On the back, it reads; *I wonder if Mr M. remembers catching the rabbit at this place ...*



Oban is located 120 miles NW of **Strathaven** – and Strathaven is 50 miles west of Edinburgh.



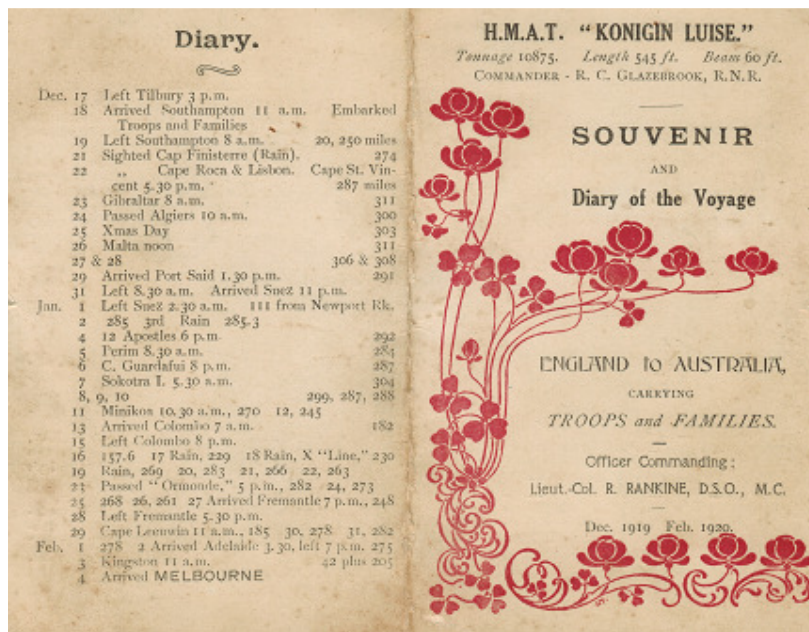
Amazingly, this exact view is still intact !



Photo taken in Edinburgh, just before returning home.

A ship to Australia was finally sorted out, and Harold left Southampton on H.M.A.T "Konigin Luise" on December 18th, 1919.

According to a souvenir Harold kept of this voyage, the Konigin Luise was a captured German Liner; "hidden for 5 years behind the German minefield [as part of] a fleet which was not game to come out and fight" ... *Cowardly blighters those Germans, is the implication.*



(In my possession)

The Konigin Luise arrived into Melbourne on Feb 4th, 1920. (*I cannot imagine what a feeling it must have been to get back home after such a long time – when you were never sure you'd get back at all.*)



Harold joined up in 1917 along with two friends from Leongatha area; (Left) David Main **Chalmers**, known as **Don** - because his father was also named David Main; (Standing) **Bill Mewburn**, who was my maternal grandmother's brother; and (Right) **Harold Morter** ... They called themselves "Leongatha Happy Three".

28/11/17

A. VET. CORPS
Rec slip attached A.V

AUSTRALIAN



MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 1306 Name (Surname) MORTER
 in full (Christian Name) Harold
 Unit Army Veterinary Corps
70767 Organized Mounted Division
 Joined on 17-10-17

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

You are hereby warned that if after enlistment it is found that you have given a wilfully false answer to any question set forth in this Attestation Paper, you will be liable to be tried for the offence.

1. What is your Name? ... MORTER Harold.
2. In or near what Town were you born? ... BENDIGO
In the State or Country of VICTORIA
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.)
Natural Born British Subject
Birth Certificate Attached
4. What is your Age? (Date of birth to be stated) ...
21 years 2 months
4 Aug 1896
5. What is your Trade or Calling? ...
Farmer
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, whose, to whom, and for what period? ...
no
7. Are you married, single, or widower? ...
no single
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address and relationship to be stated) ...
Mr Thomas G Morter
Whelans Receiving Office
VIA LEONGATHA, VICTORIA
9. What is your permanent address in Australia? ...
Whelans Receiving Office
VIA LEONGATHA
VICTORIA
10. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ...
no Regt Leongatha Exp
11. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ...
yes
12. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ...
no
13. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)—
Do you understand that no separation allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach ten shillings per day? ...
yes
14. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? ...
yes

I, Harold Morter do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allow not less than twelve shillings of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 17-10-17

Harold Morter
Signature of Person Enlisted.

* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 35 years of age.
† Twelve shillings must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted.
D. 200/127, -C. 214 - 226

Harold's enlistment form - 17th October 1917



Trooper **Harold Morter** - at Maribyrnong training camp on 5th April, 1918 – **10th Australian Mobile Veterinary Section**, of the **5th Light Horse Brigade** – A.I.F

The 10th Australian Mobile Veterinary Section, in Egypt.

It is believed with reasonable assurance (based on the consensus of 4 of Harold's grandchildren – 3 of whom grew up with him on the family farm; "Strathaven") that Harold is pictured left-most of middle row in this photo.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

B01103

Group portrait of the 10th Australian Mobile Veterinary Section, standing at ease. Australian War Memorial - Accession Number B01103 Collection type Photograph Place made Ottoman Empire: Beirut Date made February 1919

Following is result of some impressive detective work by **Cheryl May** (daughter of Audrey, whose father was Harold's cousin, George Edwin Morter[Jr]).

Harold returned home on H.M.A.T **Konigin Luise** ... along with fellow soldiers; D.E Robertson and G.B **Robertson**.

THE ARGUS, THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1920. 9

<p>SPORTING.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE TURF.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TO-DAY'S EVENTS.</p> <p>Tranrolon meet; acceptances declared for V.A.T.C. races; entries close for Rainbow races, for Avoca meet, and for Daylesford Hospital carnival; entries close for Australian Lawn Tennis championships (Sydney); bowls, V.R.A. (Melb) and president's trophy; Goals at Carlton Melbourne Athletic Club's meeting, at Hawthorn.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Racing Notes.</p> <p>By ARCHER.</p> <p>A race meeting will be held at Tranrolon to-day. As there was a record attendance at Trafalgar yesterday, a large crowd may be expected at Tranrolon. A special train will run, leaving Flinders street at 5.30 a.m., departing on the return journey at 7 p.m. Weights for the chief events are:—</p> <p>Tranrolon Handicap, eight and a half furlongs, 9.7; Melbourne, 8.4; Shilling Star, 7.9; Tunaia, 7.7; Lord Sartin, 7.0; Psyche, 7.0; Dinkaby, 6.9.</p> <p>Tranrolon Plate, six furlongs—Winnam, 8.10; Meccano, 8.1; Atangro, 8.1; Pinesdale, 8.1; Petit Noir, 7.30; Tunaia, 7.3; Mont Blanc, 7.3; Goveana, 7.0; Warham, 7.0.</p> <p>Welter Handicap, seven furlongs—Blackwood, 10.7; Melbourne, 9.12; Meccano, 8.8; Shilling Star, 8.4; Psyche, 8.10; Goveana, 8.0; Warham, 8.0; Bradford, 8.1; Verdala, 8.7; Margie Ford, 8.0; Quinlana, 8.0.</p> <p>Kenningshair, who has been enjoying a well-earned spell, will resume training at Bandwick next week.</p> <p>Acceptances (or all events to be run at Caulfield on Saturday will be declared at 4 o'clock this afternoon.</p> <p>According to a Sydney exchange over £400 was placed in Sydney at starting price on Mollie Malt for the race which she won at Geelong last Saturday. The operation appears to have been very well carried out. There were only five runners in the race, but lack of solid support on the course led to the mare starting at 4 to 1.</p> <p>On March 1, which will be the day before the Australian Cup is run, a £500 trotting cup for 2.25 or better will be decided under the auspices of the Victorian Trotting and Racing Association at a trotting meeting to be held at Richmond. The distance of the event will be one mile and a half. Nominations close on February 2. The entry fee is £2.</p> <p>A revised edition of the "Rules of Racing," compiled by Mr. C. Fort Smith from the Australian and the V.R.C. local rules, has been issued by the Victoria Racing Club. It has been brought up to December, 1919.</p> <p>For the V.A.T.C. races on Saturday (Buckley) will be suspended yesterday for the</p>	<p>DAYLESFORD HOSPITAL CARNIVAL, PONY, TROTTING, AND HACK RACES, MONDAY, JANUARY 14.</p> <p>410.—CARNIVAL HANDICAP. About 1 1/2 furlongs. Weight, 1st.; maidens allowed 7lb. Entry fee, 10/.</p> <p>42.—HANDICAP NOVELTY POST RACE. 5 furlongs. 11.2 and under; 11 yards allowed to the inch. Entry fee, 7/6.</p> <p>43.—OPEN HACK RACE. About 6 furlongs. Weight, 1st.; maidens allowed 7lb. Entry fee, 7/6.</p> <p>416.—DISTANCE HANDICAP TROT. About 1 1/2 mile. Entry fee, 10/. Bag, V.T.A.</p> <p>NOMINATIONS CLOSE TO-DAY (Thursday, 14th January), at 4 p.m., and may be made with A. J. Gray, Agent Racing Club, Russell street, or with F. W. HORNELL, Hon. Sec., Daylesford.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RAINBOW TURF CLUB.</p> <p>ANNUAL RACE MEETING, MONDAY, 20th JANUARY, 1920 (Foundation Day), Jubilee Holiday. Special train from Ararat (starting at 8.45 a.m., and leaving up at Daylesford with Servicemen morning train). See detailed time-table at railway station. £150 programmes. All stakes payable on the course. No delay. 1. Brook Harlequin, 11.2; two miles, nom. 10/. 2. Trial Hurdles, w.f.a., 69, six furl.; nom. 9/. 3. Novelty Pony Race, 11.2 a.m., 45, four furl.; nom. 5/. 4. Rainbow Cup, 6.30 and silver cup, 23.2, nine furl.; nom. 20/. 5. Registered Trot, 4.12, 1 1/2 miles; nom. 12/. 6. Flying Handicap, 4.15, five furl.; nom. 10/. 7. Open Hack Race, 4.5, six furl.; not entry; nom. 9/. 8. Ladies' Draught, 4.11 and gold bracelet, 27/7, one mile; nom. 10/.</p> <p>NOMINATIONS CLOSE THIS DAY (THURSDAY, 15th JANUARY), for Hurdle, Pony, Rainbow Cup, Trot, Flying, and Registered. Money must accompany entries, or on notice taken, V.R.C. and V.T.A. rules. Lynch's starting gate. Bookmaker's fee, 2/7. Course (ten minutes' walk from railway station). Level on a hillside table. Special training track. Sale of broods public auction, 18th January. Write for entry forms.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ARTHUR BELSWITH, Sec. Box 41. Telephone 21.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CORANGAMITE RACING CLUB.</p> <p>ANNUAL MEETING, TUESDAY, JAN. 21, 1920. (Day After Campersdown Races.)</p> <p>WILL BE HELD ON COLIAC RACEDROUSE, Essendon Entries. First Race 1.30.</p> <p>PUBLICAN'S BOOTH will be SOLD at Corner and Bourke's Auction Mart, Coliac, THIS DAY (THURSDAY, JANUARY 15), at 1 p.m. BOBT. BOWLEY, Hon. Sec.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WARRAGUL RACING CLUB. (Under V.R.C. Rules.)</p> <p>THURSDAY, 20th JANUARY.</p> <p>1.—TRIAL HANDICAP, 1/2 m., of 15 sows. For horses that have not won a stake of the value of 10 sows or over. Nom. 10/.</p> <p>2.—DISTANCE TROT, 1 1/2 miles (V.T.A. rules), of</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SOLDIERS AND FAMILIES.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Troops Due To-morrow.</p> <p>The ss. Port Macquarie, with troops, dependants, and munition workers, is expected to reach Port Melbourne to-morrow. The time will be notified in "The Argus."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Konigin Luise Passengers.</p> <p>By the Konigin Luise, which left England on December 18, the following soldiers and dependants have embarked:—</p> <p>For Demobilisation.—Lieut. R. C. Cumming, Lieut. G. F. R. Donaldson, Lieut. G. A. Johnson, Lieut. T. R. Lytton, Lieut. J. S. Myers, Lieut. J. A. Nicholson, Lieut. D. O. Shiels, and Lieut. H. Taylor, W. A. Alsham, W. G. Aitken, T. P. Andrews, J. F. Angleton, A. K. Anthony, W. Archer, H. J. Avey, W. L. Burnett, J. H. Hartlett, L. Begg, F. Benson, F. G. Bentley, N. C. C. Bertman, G. A. S. Biggill, F. Book, R. M. Bone, S. C. Bone, W. H. Booth, D. Boyd, N. Bruhn, W. J. B. Bryant, E. Bull, A. W. Bullock, K. Burns, C. H. Cameron, A. R. Campbell, R. H. Clarke, F. Cross, J. B. Cuckey, C. Culpan, P. O'Connell, A. B. Cooper, W. L. Cooper, E. H. Corrie, H. Coulson, A. T. Cowan, W. H. Cox, J. E. Craig, M. Craig, N. Crowley, R. J. Cummins, J. Dack, D. D. Duderell, L. C. Dalton, H. E. L. Davis, H. Day, L. H. Day, J. Delaney, C. J. Delastic, J. Dethridge, W. Dewhurst, R. J. Dillon, A. F. H. Dooey, A. Douglas, W. W. Dryburgh, C. Duncan, A. N. Earle, G. A. Elliott, K. J. Emble, H. G. G. England, G. C. Kyre, A. A. Farman, R. G. Fitzpatrick, G. M. Garvie, T. H. G. Gardner, G. Garle, G. F. Girdlestone, H. J. Gledstone, M. E. Good, N. O. Goodfellow, J. N. Gorry, A. G. Gray, H. W. Gray, J. H. Green, F. Greenwood, W. D. Greenwood, L. A. Hall, J. Hamerton, J. D. Hanley, C. F. Hansen, J. C. Hansen, T. Hansen, W. A. Harrison, E. R. Hayden, W. J. Heald, A. E. Healey, H. C. Heltzer, E. S. Henderson, H. D. Hill, H. Hillier, F. Holmwood, P. Holmes, W. E. Hood, S. G. Horkins, R. E. Horner, G. A. Hudson, T. F. T. Huggan, R. E. Hoon, W. J. Ince, J. W. Ingram, G. D. Johnson, J. Kelly, H. E. Kelly, M. A. Kelly, T. Kelly, A. E. Kraszti, E. E. Kough, C. Kerrie, C. W. Kerr, F. Kester, T. G. King, J. J. Lacey, W. Lambton, C. G. Locali, L. E. Lowry, H. C. Luth, F. L. R. Mackie, A. J. Marvise, H. V. Mays, A. Marchand, R. Maskell, S. B. Menadue, W. Milgate, W. J. E. Millar, J. P. Millgate, R. J. Miligan, E. T. Minter, J. Morris, H. Morter, R. P. Morrison, H. Munro, L. R. & Murray, A. M. McAllister, N. McBeaUt, F. B. McBride, J. H. McCarthy, W. T. McCarthy, H. McDonald, R. A. McDonnell, J. McEntee, H. McKay, E. E. McMillen, C. A. Ring, E. E. Roberts, G. E. Robertson, G. B. Robertson, A. J. Robins, P. Rose, D. Rosenbaum, D. Rose, T. G. Rouse, F. H. Schell,</p> <p>W. Milgate, W. J. E. Millar, J. P. Mulgate, R. J. Millican, E. T. Minter, J. Morris, H. (Harold) Morter B. F. Hoynilian, li. Munro, L. R. & Murray, A. M. McAllister, N. McBeaUt, F. It. McUrude, I. H. McCarthy, W. I. McCarthy, H. McDoushil, R. A. McDoiieil, J. McEntee, II. McKay, 1. E. McMullcn, J. J. McNcrnoy, E. T. Nielsen, W. J. O'Connor, C. J. Osborne, II. Partridge, C. Peckitt, O. W. Peebles, T; A. Pombr V. J. Pepper, W. J. Perdon, C. a. Phillips, O. Pike, 1. Pollard, A. O. Portcous, F. S. Porter, (J. D. Primrose, J. Pring, F. H. Rawlinson, L. L. Ilcudcr, E. V. Heading, L. W. 1. Redmond, II. R. Régnier, W. 11. Richer, O. A. Ring, E. E. Roberts, D. E. Robertson, G. B. Robertson, A. J. Robins, P. Ruse, D.) Upsonhutil D. Price, C. Rose, E. H. Schell</p>
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"H.Mor-ter" can be made out (split-line) as can D.E & G.B Robertson

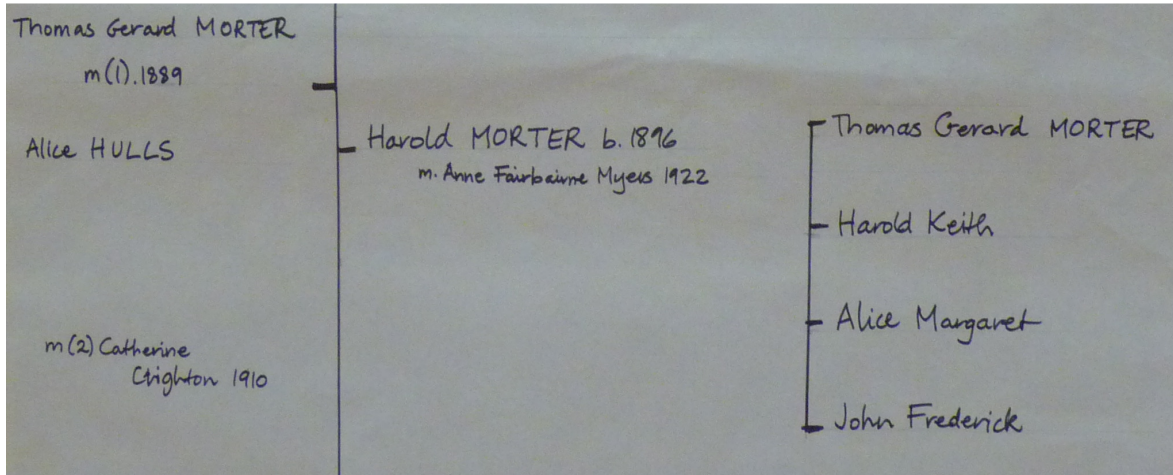
It's not clear if the two "Robertson" soldiers are related, but it's known that "G.B" are the initials of George Buchanan Robertson.



“*Welcome Home*” photograph taken outside the Robertson’s home (at 14 Ida Street, Nth Fitzroy ... this house is no longer standing) ... early February, 1920.

Mr (James) Robertson Snr on left; George B. Robertson in centre (in uniform); Sitting on running-board of car are (L – R): Unidentified soldier ; **Ruby** Morter (daughter of Henry James Morter); **Harold**; Harold’s father, **Thomas Gerard**, is 2nd from far right; and **Mabel**, wife of George Edwin Morter, is on far right.

Conjecture is that Harold was invited home by George Robertson, for home-coming celebrations – and some Morter family members gathered there too.



Harold (on right) with his brother, **Frederick Francis**; (top) sister **Annie Louise**; and (bottom) sister **Alice Doretta** (known as **Lal**).



Harold with his brother, **Frederick**



- 1) **Harold** (with sister, **Annie**, and brother **Fred**) seems to be wearing medals in this photo, therefore, this must be after the war (?)
- 2) **Harold** with **Annie(L)** & **Lal(R)** ... and his (step) **mother**; "Granny Morter" (néé Catherine Crighton) ... Taken on occasion of Mother's 83rd birthday, Easter Monday, 1st April 1918 ... as per note on reverse side.



Lal far left, **Annie** in the middle.

Lal & Annie went on to run Morter's corner store, at 153 Cochrane St, Elsternwick (now a private home).

Wheclam R.G
Via Leongatha
25.8.23.

To
The Officer in Charge.
Sir.

Would you be good
enough to forward me the necessary forms
allowing me to apply to War Medals which
I understand are lying at the Barracks to
be claimed.

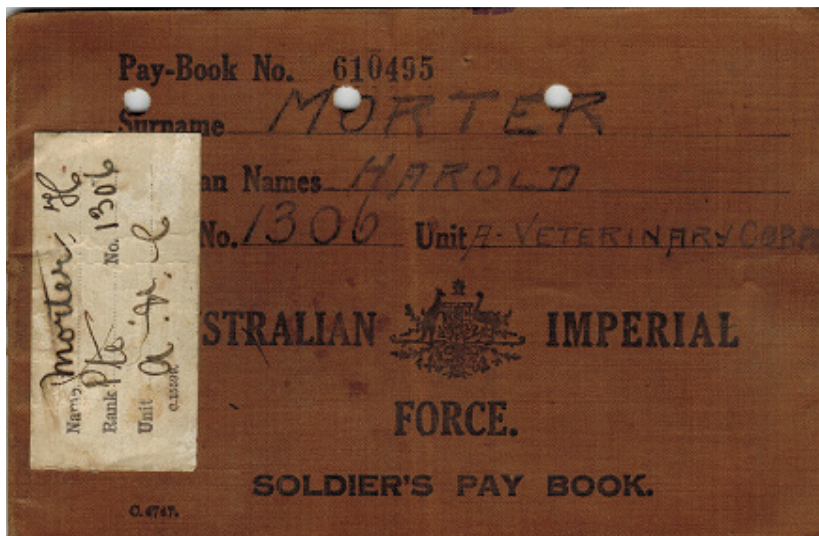
Yours etc.
H. Morter. ✓



1306 Sgt H. Morter
10th M. U. S.
5th A. L. H. Brigade.

P.S. Please inform me if I am able to obtain my
old pay book No 610,495. Would very much like to
have same. HM

As requested; Harold's service Pay Book ... recording earnings, next-of-kin, medical treatment, etc



(In my possession)



Harold married Annie Fairbairn Myers in 1922. Their 2nd son, Harold Keith, was my father.



Harold & Annie's children (L to R); **John** (called "Joe" by his father), **Alice** (known, later, as Sally), Harold **Keith** (my father, known as Keith) & Thomas Gerard (named after Harold's father – known as **Tom**).



Harold & Annie's grandchildren, in garden at "Strathaven" (L to R): (Back) **Philip, Lynette & Rosemary**; (Middle) **Stephenie, Iain, Julie, Jeanie & me/John** ; (Front-left) **Heather** and (Front-right) **Robert**.



Harold & Annie's grandchildren, on back veranda of "Strathaven" (L to R): (Standing) **Hilda & Tom, Lynette** (with friend behind her), **Madge, Heather, Julie, Robert, John/Joe, Alice/Sally, Iain, Don**; (Sitting) **Wilma & Keith, Joanne & Brendan**.

Families are: **Tom and Hilda** = Rosemary, Lynette, Philip & Jeanie; **Keith and Wilma** = John, Stephenie & Robert; **Alice and Don** (Carmichael) = Iain, Heather & Julie; **John and Madge** = Joanne & Brendan.

Missing from this photo are: (Rosemary, Philip & Jeanie) and (Stephenie & me/John Charles).



“Papa Morter” – as he was known, and is remembered, by his 12 grandchildren ... Photo taken 1958.

This document compiled by **John Charles Morter** ... son of Harold **Keith Morter**, Harold’s 2nd son/child.

John currently resides at: Unit 2, 14 Arthurson Street, Mount Waverley, VIC 3149

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