

I for one, firmly believe that a country's history is written by the hands and in the blood of its patriots, the men who love it, who put their talents without heed of self or recompense in their nation's altar and fight for it, and remain true to it during all vicissitudes.

We dropped into Port Phillip for an hour to pick up a member of the crew who had forgotten to report back to the ship in Sydney. That was Saturday midday, and that afternoon as we passed along the Victorian coast we saw the last of, to us, the best land in the world. It faded gradually away on our starboard side as we headed seawards. It is a vital experience, this farewelling your native land. As soon as land vanished one seemed to settle down to things. That night many climbed into the lower rigging and on the boat decks, looking out into the clear moonlight. Seasickness was forgotten. Bilious chaps got reckless, they could eat anything, nothing could upset them now, the training in camp had hardened them too well to be sea sick! But during the night the moon was blotted out by great heavy clouds, which a very strong wind had blown up. Dizziling rain began to fall, the boat pitched and rolled, rolling is bad enough, but pitching seems to bring the soles of your boots up to your palate. Most of us did not need reviville to waken us up on that happy Sabbath morning; fellows could be seen in ones and twos sneaking up on deck hand over mouth, in some cases a boot in hand, and when arrived at the top of the mountainous companion way, they would make one desperate dive for the side of the ship. Some got to the side in time, and some didn't, much to the regret of the "Rosuns Fatigue" detailed that morning. We soon settled down to the long voyage, classes were arranged for signalling and gunnery, and the drivers were instructed in the art of managing docile mules. "Physical Jerks" were introduced, but were always more or less a "bit of a joke." Often just as you received the order "on the hands, down," the ship's deck would rear up and meet you.

We were not long aboard before we grew intimate with the ship's crew. One member was particularly lugubrious. Everything we did was wrong. He quarrelled with everyone, he growled uncessingly. Fellows used to "pinch" materials out of his cabin, he was in charge of the Lamps, and then in retaliation, he would roar on the universe. He was a little spare chap, well into middle age, always in a state of "unshavenness," the ginger hair shewing untidily on his weather-beaten "dial." Harry Camp (poor chap! now gone into the Valley of Shadows,) was his special "bête noire." Harry was always playing tricks on the old chap, and many a "holy stone" has been flung at Harry to find a resting place in the middle of some poor innocents back.

But "Lamps" as he was now universally called, soon gained notoriety. We all knew him, and the narration of his domestic affairs always caused great interest. Eventually "Lamps" became the nickname for any growler, and some chaps still retain the dismal sobriquet.

Sundays used to see us at Church Parade, and several times each week one had that curse of the Army, Full Dress Parade. Can we ever forget those scrambles up on deck in full equipment, trying to stand upright in line while the O.C. wandered along to see if the issue of brasso or bathbrick had been put to good use on the buckles of the wattle battle carriers, or the buttons on the bandoliers?

The concerts were one of the marked successes of the trip. Securing a "possy" was the difficult thing, and many had to arrive hours before the appointed time in order to get a view, but there was always humor, in fact humor was the motto of the ship, as it proved to be of the Brigade. Many anecdotes could be related of the humor of those concerts. 'Twas was spontaneous. On one occasion we were getting fed up of seeing nothing but water, we had been "out" several weeks and one night the song was announced as "There's a Land." Hundreds of throats immediately shouted "where! where!" That same evening, a chap was giving a character sketch. He was imitating a person delivering a sermon, and his intonation was wonderful. He had the drawl, "The Oxford Bleat," to perfection. Suddenly the big arc light overhead went out, and all was pitch darkness. A yag immediately drawled, the same sing-song style, "O Lord we beseech Thee to lighten our darkness." It brought down the house.

It would take too long to detail the voyage, our doings, our amusements and our fun. Some passed the time at "Crown and Anchor," or race games, till Sergeant Mills acquired fame by raiding these villainous gambling dens, but cards were quickly introduced and the speculator soon found a way of parting with his "wad." Letter writing, boxing tournaments, sports carnivals, and reading filled in odd hours, and there were numerous fatigues to keep one occupied. One Saturday morning, three weeks after departure, we sighted Durban. We called at the pretty African Port, stayed there two days and had a splendid time. The Durban people have a soft spot in the hearts of the Seventh this was also our introduction to Miss Campbell who has toiled uncessingly for the Aussies, ever since the first transport called there.