

The 11th. March saw the balance of the Brigade making for Lobbes which was to be our last home in Belgium till repatriated, but the friends left behind in Hautmont were too great an attraction for some of the members of the 7th. so much so, that it was only on pay days that the Batteries could report a full muster.

Here again, the Aussie's love for seeing something fresh took a hold. Touring parties were off in all directions. Many a time a pass for three days to Brussell, a two hours journey, (sometimes no official passes at all) would find the holder touring through the remote parts of Belgium or the occupied territory of Germany, and even as far as Southern France and Italy, only to return 14 or 15 days later and then only perhaps, on account of the treasury being depleted.

Batches of 100 or more men continued to be repatriated fortnightly, so smoothly was the demobilization machine running that the 30th. April saw the balance of the Brigade listed on the 44th. Quota and on the 1st. May the departure from Chaleroi took place. A horse box truck as in days of yore was allotted to 16 men. The army ration lavishly supplemented by the Australian Comforts Funds goods was placed aboard for the two days journey to Le Havre - the A.I.F. base in France, - where the order on arrival was baths, changing of clothing and handing in of equipment. Here the handling of such huge bodies of humanity was a revelation in the matter of speed, the business like methods in comparison to the usual Military routine was distinctly pleasing.

After the usual stay of five or six days, blighty was reached only to stay another six to eight weeks for about to be allotted.

By a singular coincidence, the first and second Quota of the Brigade (about 200 men) sailed for Australia on the "Borda" and "Zealandia" on the 11th. May, it being exactly three years to the day that this Brigade left God's own country, Australia.

The last batch of the Brigade sailed in the "Karmala" on 2nd. July and arrived in Sydney on 18th. August 1919, and as the discharges were available immediately, it sounded the death knell from a military point of view, of the existence of the 7th. F.A.B. but the social side of the Brigade for the future, will be well cared for by the Brigade reunion clubs of Sydney and Melbourne.

We do not wish to add laudatory remarks about ourselves, and our Brigade, of which we have always been proud, but we must say, that the camaraderie of all ranks, the "esprit de corps" manifested at all times in the Brigade, will remain a thrilling memory and lead us to the fond hope that the same good feeling of kinship and comradeship may be awakened in our own loved land of Australia. And as all arms of the service then fought to conquer a redoubtable foe, so may we all, in the days of peace and prosperity, learn to foster and kindle and engender a noble feeling of brotherhood among our own people.

We went to France to fight for Australia and the Empire and we have returned with Peace and Victory to Australia.

O may we all live at peace with each other and have one ideal, one purpose - betterment in happiness and prosperity of Australia and her people.

WRITTEN BY S.W.HODGE.

With additions by E.Harding, B.C.Duckworth & S.E.Rohu.

For dates, notes etc., in compiling the above, use was made of the Brigade's war diary, and that portion of the Brigade's history by Capt. C.M. Samson, and the 27th. Battery history written by T.D. Bridger which the "Yandoo" management has much pleasure in acknowledging.

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A complete bibliography or historical list of books, pamphlets, and military, naval and troopship magazines relating to the Australians and New Zealanders in the Great War, is being compiled by Mr. T. A. Ferguson, Barrister-at-Law, 167 Phillip-street, Sydney. Notes of any such magazines or papers (preferably accompanied by copies) are welcomed by him in order that the bibliography may be as authoritative a record as possible.