

Narrow escape for airman in second crash

As an R.A.A.F. sergeant tried to bail out from his crashing plane his feet jammed in the turret. He was caught in the slipstream and could not move.

He was thrown clear just before the plane crashed, was able to open his parachute, and landed safely.

On a previous raid over Germany this sergeant had been forced to bail out at 10,000 feet and had broken one foot.



COOKS on an island of the northern coast of Australia, standing in front of the cookhouse built by themselves. Photo sent by Mrs. W. Prior, 162 Heidelberg Rd., Ivanhoe, Vic., whose husband, Cpl. W. Prior, is on the right in the front.



COMFORTS far from home are provided for Australians serving in Italy at this Australian Comforts Fund Club in Florence. This pleasant lounge-room can be converted at short notice into a theatre.

HE is F/Sgt. N. Reed, and describes his second narrow escape in a letter to his grandmother, Mrs. W. M. Reed, Glass House Mountains, Queensland. He writes:

"We took off for a night raid on Germany, and had been flying only a few minutes when one of our motors caught fire.

"The pilot could not get the fire out, and it quickly spread to one of the petrol tanks, which exploded and blew half a wing off.

"The pilot ordered us to bail out before the tank exploded, but things happened very fast.

"I was all ready to bail out and just had to toss myself out backwards.

"My body got out all right, but my legs were caught in the turret. The slipstream was so strong I could not move, so I just got dragged along through the air with my feet still caught in the turret.

"When I think of it now, I wonder how I kept so calm. Strange to say, I wasn't frightened after I found I could not get away. I just thought, 'I hope it won't be long now before I hit the ground, and it is all over.'

"Just then the slipstream tore me out of one of my big flying-boots which had been caught. Then I found I was falling free of the plane.

"While I was caught by the leg and foot the wind blew my 'chute-pack off my chest, so before I could open it I had to get the harness, which was attached to the 'chute, and pull it down from above my head.

"Just as my 'chute opened our plane hit the ground. This time I was careful to make a good landing. I didn't want to break my foot again. It was much easier to land as it was still daylight.

"The engine was the only other one to get out.

"When the wing blew off, the

LETTERS FROM OUR BOYS

Conducted by Adele Shelton Smith

THE letters you receive from your I menfolk in the fighting Services with interest and comfort the relatives of other soldiers, sailors, and airmen. For each letter published on this page The Australian Women's Weekly forwards payment of £1. For letter extracts 10/- or 2/- to paid.

plane went rolling over and over, so the rest of the boys could not have been able to move to their escape positions.

"One thing, it all happened and was over within a few seconds."

Pte. N. Milordin, an English soldier with the Central Mediterranean Forces, to his aunt, Mrs. J. M. Bell, 52 Scott St., Newcastle, N.S.W.:

"WE were with the Aussies and Kiwis for many months, fighting and living with them.

"We are proud to have had the honor to call them our comrades.

"They are grand fighters, and possess a spirit that we rarely see among other troops.

"At Cassino they were really won-

derful. But for them we would have gone hungry many times. Clothing which came off their own backs was often given to us."

Sgt. A. Gore, New Guinea, to M. Mulcahy, 142 Murray St., Perth, W.A.:

"WE have heavy rains at times, and there is always a chance of being washed out to sea. "On one of these occasions an Aussie went past on a log out into the sea.

"He was singing 'Heigh, Ho, Silver' and 'Ride Her, Cowboy.'

"He was picked up next day, unconscious, on the beach a long way off."

LAC D. N. Burnett, R.A.A.F., in Canada, to his sister, Mrs. G. A. Grant, The Cottage, Kiewa, via Wodonga, Vic.:

"THE more places I see the better I like dear old Aussie, and believe me, I have always loved it.

"All I want from life now is a nice clean bed; a wardrobe, where I can hang things and not have to dive into a canvas bag for them; a roof well above my head, so I won't have to duck every time I enter; a bathroom, and good, plain food.

"How I long to sit down to a chop and egg prepared by Mum."



ORD/ARTIFICER REG HAWKINS, R.A.N., sent this snapshot of himself, taken at sea, to his mother at 47 Railway Parade, Lakemba, N.S.W.

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