

3 Aust Field Ambulance 3/14 Aust Field Ambulance

In December 1941, *3 Fd Amb* was in camp at Warradale (SA) and available to be immediately sent to Port Moresby (NG) as part of *30 Inf Bde Gp*. They arrived in January 1942 to come under command of *DADMS 8 Mil Dist* and as the only medical unit (except the 'base' hospital) they established their MDS at Murray Barracks with an ADS at Napa Napa. *B Coy* established a dysentery hospital and in March the unit moved to Bomana with ADSs at Wards Airfield and Eriama Creek. After the Coral Sea battle, *14 Inf Bde Gp* arrived in May with *14 Fd Amb* and *5 CCS* to spread the medical load. *3 Fd Amb* moved to Eriama Creek to service the units of *14 Inf Bde Gp* in the Bootless area while the dysentery hospital expanded to become an infectious diseases hospital. With the Japanese advance south from Kokoda, considerable reinforcements arrived and *3 Fd Amb* concentrated on servicing the units in the base area under *DDMS 1 Aust Corps* and *DDMS NG Force* while other field ambulances operated in the forward area. In March 1943 a detachment moved to Bulldog to service the units working on the Wau/Bulldog road. *9 Fd Amb* arrived to relieve the unit in June and they left New Guinea. After a short period at Somerset Dam (Qld), *3 Fd Amb* assembled at Gateshead (NSW) in August 1943 where they joined *28 Inf Bde Gp* under command of *ADMS 1 Inf Div*.

In September 1943, the under-strength *3 Fd Amb* and *14 Fd Amb* were merged to form *3/14 Fd Amb* at Gateshead with many men transferring to *2/12 Fd Amb* which was being rebuilt after losing most of the unit when the hospital ship *Centaur* was sunk. When *28 Inf Bde Gp* was disbanded in December, *3/14 Fd Amb* was retained under *ADMS 1 Inf Div* before moving to Narellan in February 1944. They then moved to NT in May where they relieved *2/13 Fd Amb* in *12 Inf Bde Gp* at the 38 mile camp, under command of *ADMS NT Force*. In July, a detachment accompanied *54 Comp AA Regt* which moved to the Truscott airfield in WA. With the restructuring of *NT Force* in August 1944, *3/14 Fd Amb* was to join *2 Inf Bde Gp* and to move south to be disbanded so many men transferred to *12 Fd Amb*. However in September this decision was reversed and after recovering some men back from *12 Fd Amb* they moved to Chermside (Qld) to be rebuilt prior to moving to New Guinea. *3/14 Fd Amb* moved to Aitape (NG) in November 1944 where *3 Base Sub Area* was supporting the advance of *6 Inf Div* towards Wewak. Here they established a 50 bed MDS and took over the RAPs which were servicing the base troops, as well as manning the air evacuation posts at Tadjji airfield. By April 1945 the MDS had expanded to 600 beds and *A Coy* opened a convalescent camp on Tumeo Island while an air evacuation post was established at Dagua. This post moved to Wewak after it was captured in May and the whole unit moved to Cape Moem in July where they saw out the war.

War Diaries : AWM 52 11/12/26, AWM 52 11/12/27.
References : A.5 A.7 A.11 A.12 B.9 D.1 D.4
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4 Aust Field Ambulance

4 Fd Amb was at Bonegilla (Vic) in December 1941 as part of *4 Inf Bde Gp* under command of *ADMS 3 Inf Div*. The role of *3 Inf Div* was as AHQ reserve, available to be sent in brigade groups to reinforce any area in Australia. In March 1942, *4 Inf Bde Gp* was sent to Warwick (Qld) as the reserve for *N Comd*, allowing *7 Inf Bde Gp* to concentrate on the defence of Brisbane. The return of the AIF from the Middle East allowed Queensland to be reinforced, so *3 Inf Div* moved to defend Brisbane from the south with *4 Inf Bde Gp* covering the Gold Coast and *4 Fd Amb* moved in May to Beenleigh to service the brigade units. In July, *3 Inf Div* was re-tasked with the defence of Maryborough and *4 Fd Amb* moved to Tinana with the brigade. When *7 Inf Div* was rushed to Port Moresby (NG) in response to the Japanese advance south of Kokoda, *3 Inf Div* was moved in September to cover the area north of Brisbane with *4 Fd Amb* at Nambour and detachments at Forest Glen and Yandina. *A Coy* left the unit in October and moved to Thursday Island, then Red Island Point from where they serviced the units of *Torres St Force* before being relieved by a detachment from *19 Fd Amb* and rejoined the unit in January 1943.

In February 1943, *4 Inf Bde Gp* left for Milne Bay (NG) to join *5 Inf Div* and *4 Fd Amb* accompanied them. When *ADMS 5 Inf Div* left in July, *4 Fd Amb* came under control of *DADMS Milne Bay Base Sub Area*. From August, *9 Inf Div* staged at Milne Bay prior to their attack on Lae so in September, *4 Inf Bde Gp* joined the division and moved to protect their beachhead. *4 Fd Amb* left *A Coy* at Milne Bay and moved to Red Beach. After the capture of Lae they moved there in October before moving to Simbang in November to support the participation of *4 Inf Bde Gp* in the attack on Finschhafen. *4 Fd Amb* advanced with the brigade north from Finschhafen and by January 1944 were at Sailum, still with a detachment at Milne Bay. *ADMS 5 Inf Div* took over in February and *A Coy* rejoined the unit from Milne Bay in March before they concentrated at the newly captured Madang in April 1944.

In late 1944, Australian units were allocated to relieve US units in New Guinea and to prepare for this, *4 Inf Bde Gp* (incl *4 Fd Amb*) moved to Strathpine (Qld) in October for leave and retraining before moving to Jacquinot Bay (NG) on the south coast of New Britain in January 1945. Here *5 Inf Div* was containing the large Japanese force at Rabaul and *4 Inf Bde Gp* took over the defence of the base area from Wunung Plantation. In May, a detachment accompanied *37/52 Inf Bn* which moved to the north coast, based at Nantambu. *HQ 11 Inf Div* took over the area in July. *4 Fd Amb* moved to Rabaul in September as part of *4 Inf Bde Gp* to supervise the Japanese surrender.

War Diaries : AWM 52 11/12/28.

References : A.6 A.7 A.11 A.12 B.9 D.1 D.5
D.6 D.16 E.1

5 Aust Field Ambulance

5 Fd Amb mobilized at Bathurst (NSW) under *ADMS 2 Inf Div* and was attached to *5 Inf Bde Gp* which was in reserve behind Sydney. In February 1942 they moved to Narellan

13 Aust Field Ambulance

13 Fd Amb was mobilized with *13 Inf Bde Gp* at Melville (WA) in December 1941 and trained from there until they moved to Chidlows in April to make room for the arriving *2 Inf Bde Gp*. They had a detachment from January 1942 with *Spec Mob Force* at Bushmead, Moora and Dandaragan until that unit was disbanded in July. *13 Fd Amb* moved to Moora in June and to Dandaragan in August. The arrival of *1 Armd Div* allowed some infantry to leave WA with *13 Inf Bde Gp* leaving for NT in February 1943. *13 Fd Amb* did not accompany them and moved to Chidlows in January with a detachment at Point Walter. They moved to Gingin in March and returned to Bellevue in April. They left WA in May and moved to Woodford (Qld) where they joined *3 Inf Bde Gp* which moved to Townsville in July with *13 Fd Amb* at Muntalunga. After *HQ 4 Inf Div* moved to Cape York in September 1943, *3 Inf Bde Gp* had a multitude of potential tasks in North Queensland and *13 Fd Amb* serviced them and the base troops around Townsville until May 1944 when they were disbanded with the brigade.

War Diaries : AWM 52 11/12/37.

References : A.11 A.12 B.9 D.1 D.15 D.16 E5

14 Aust Field Ambulance

14 Fd Amb mobilized at Wallgrove (NSW) with *ADMS 2 Inf Div* and moved to join *14 Inf Bde Gp* at Greta in December 1941. Here the brigade was in reserve behind *N'castle Cov Force* in the forward positions around Newcastle. A party also left for Melbourne to help form *17 Fd Amb*. To give *1 Inf Bde Gp* some intensive training time, *14 Inf Bde Gp* moved to the forward positions north of the Hunter River in March 1942 with *14 Fd Amb* at Raymond Terrace, *A Coy* manning the ADS at Salt Ash and *B Coy* the MDS at Cardiff Heights. When the Coral Sea battle turned back an invasion convoy headed for Port Moresby (NG) in May, reinforcements were needed so *1 Inf Bde Gp* returned to the forward positions and *14 Inf Bde Gp* left for Port Moresby in May. *14 Fd Amb* arrived in June and set up at Bomana Mission to support *30 Inf Bde Gp*. *A Coy* established a measles hospital at Murray Barracks and in July a detachment moved across the Kokoda Trail with *39 Inf Bn* to establish an airfield at Buna. However, the Japanese landed at Buna before they arrived and the *14 Fd Amb* detachment at Kagi assisted with the early casualties. By August another detachment was working from Isurava, then Eora Creek before withdrawing with *Maroubra Force* towards Port Moresby along with *2/6 Fd Amb*. While maintaining its HQ at Bomana, *14 Fd Amb* manned dressing stations at Ilolo and Uberi and many staging posts along the Kokoda Trail to support the then advancing troops of *7 Inf Div*. After Kokoda was recaptured, a heavy section from *HQ Coy* moved there in November. The main body of the unit moved to Soputa in December with *B Coy* at Popondetta. By January 1943 the unit had concentrated at Dobodura and they returned to Port Moresby in February.

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14 Fd Amb moved with *7 Inf Div* to Ravenshoe (Qld) in March 1943 before being assigned to *ADMS Yorkforce* in April when they moved to Kuranda to relieve *19 Fd Amb* which was leaving for Merauke (DNG) with *11 Inf Bde Gp*. By June, *6 Fd Amb* had arrived so *14 Fd Amb* moved to St Ives (NSW) to join *ADMS 1 Inf Div*. In September 1943, the under-strength *3 Fd Amb* and *14 Fd Amb* were merged to form *3/14 Fd Amb* at Gateshead with many men transferring to *2/12 Fd Amb* which was being rebuilt after losing most of the unit when the hospital ship *Centaur* was sunk.

War Diaries : AWM 52 11/12/38.

References : A.5 A.11 A.12 B.9 C.15 C.17 C.19
C.21 C.37 C.38 D.15

15 Aust Field Ambulance

When the army mobilized in December 1941, *15 Fd Amb* was already in camp at Seymour (Vic) with *15 Inf Bde Gp*. Here *3 Inf Div* was in army reserve, ready to send brigade groups wherever they were needed. They moved to Hume Weir in March 1942 and when *3 Inf Div* was tasked with the defence of Brisbane from the south, *15 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Casino (NSW) in May. After *1 Aust Corps* was rushed to New Guinea to stem the Japanese advance south from Kokoda, *3 Inf Div* moved to cover Brisbane from the north so *15 Inf Bde Gp* (incl *15 Fd Amb*) moved to Caboolture in September. They had detachments at Elimbah and Kilcoy before moving HQ to Cooroy in December, leaving a detachment at Caboolture.

After the Papuan campaign many units needed rest, so *15 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Port Moresby (NG) in February 1943 with *15 Fd Amb* to relieve *2/1 Fd Amb*. After fighting off the Japanese attack on Wau, *Kanga Force* was expanded with units of *15 Inf Bde Gp* moving to Wau from April. A *Lt Sec of A Coy* moved there in April with the rest of *15 Fd Amb* arriving in May/June. They looked after the axis of advance through Missim towards Salamaua with the MDS at Bulolo, ADS at Missim and many staging posts along the evacuation route and medical posts such as Wampit covering the flank towards the Markham Valley. When Salamaua and Lae fell in September, *15 Fd Amb* moved to Salamaua before returning to Port Moresby for a rest. In January 1944, *15 Inf Bde Gp* was assigned to *7 Inf Div* to relieve *25 Inf Bde Gp* in the Ramu Valley and moved to Dumpu. *15 Fd Amb* relieved *2/6 Fd Amb* manning the MDS at Mene River, the ADS at Kesawai and the many staging posts supporting the attack on Shaggy Ridge. As the advance moved towards Bogadjim the ADS and posts moved with the forward units and when Madang was captured, *15 Fd Amb* moved to Saidor in April before settling at Madang in May. They returned to Australia with *15 Inf Bde Gp* in August 1944 and after leave reassembled at Mapee (Qld).

In late 1944 Australian units were tasked to replace the remaining US troops in New Guinea with *2 Aust Corps* to take over on Bougainville. *3 Inf Div* was tasked to advance south towards the Japanese base at Buin and *15 Inf Bde Gp* moved to the base at Torokina (NG) in January 1945. In April, *15 Fd Amb* moved to Motupena Point where *15 Inf Bde Gp* was