U.S. War Department, *Instructions for American Servicemen in Australia, 1942* (excerpt), p. 3

**Australian Army**

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**THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD**

YOU and your outfit have been ordered to Australia as a part of a world-wide offensive against Hitler and the Japs – a drive that will end in Tokyo and Berlin.

You’re going to meet a people who like Americans and whom you will like. The Australians have much in common with us – they’re a pioneer people; they believe in personal freedom; they love sports; and they’re out to lick the Axis all the way. But there are a lot of differences too – their ways of living and thinking on all sorts of things – like tea, central heating, the best way to spend Sunday, or saluting officers and such. You’ll find out about all those, but the main point is they like us, and we like them.

Since American troops first landed in Australia, the Australians have gone out of their way to welcome them and make them feel at home. Australian newspapers have used up newsprint (and it’s scarce) to print baseball scores and major league standings and home town news – and even American cooking recipes for housewives. The Government has made American money legal tender in the country and set up special exchange rates for American soldiers. And Australian audiences, at theatres and concerts, honor our national anthem by rising when the Star Spangled Banner is played.
No people on earth could have given us a better, warmer welcome and we’ll have to live up to it.

There is one thing to get straight, right off the bat. You aren’t in Australia to save a helpless people from the savage Jap. Maybe there are fewer people in Australia than there are in New York City, but their soldiers, in this war and the last, have built up a great fighting record. For three years now, they’ve fought on nearly every battle front of the war; they’ve suffered heavy losses in Crete, Libya, Greece, and Malaya; and they’re still in there pitching. The Australians need our help in winning this war, of course, but we need theirs just as much. You might remember this story when you get into an argument about “who’s going to win the war”: Not so long ago in a Sydney bar, an American soldier turned to an Australian next to him and said: “Well, Aussie, you can go home now. We’ve come over to save you.” The Aussie cracked back: “Have you? I thought you were a refugee from Pearl Harbor.”

But this isn’t supposed to be an Emily Post on how to get along in Australia. It’s simply a short guide book to give you a quick picture of what the Australians and their country are like, and what you may meet there.
EXCEPT for the 70,000 or so primitive “Abos” who roam the waste lands, the Australians are nearly 100 percent Anglo-Saxon stock – English, Irish, Scotch, and Welsh who through courage and ingenuity made a living and built a great nation out of a harsh, empty land. They built great cities, organized a progressive democracy and established a sound economic system, for all of which they’re justly proud.

And they’re proud too of their British heritage and to be a member of the British Commonwealth but they still like to run their own business and they take great pride in their independence. They resent being called a colony and think of themselves as a great nation on their own hook, which they are. And it’s natural that they should find themselves drawn closer and closer to Americans because of the many things we have in common. They look at the swift development that has made the United States a great power in a few generations, and compare our growth with theirs. Nearly 40 years ago, an Australian statesman said of the United States: “What we are, you were. What you are we will some day be.” And just a short time ago Australian War Minister Francis Forde said: “We feel that our fate and that of America are indissolubly linked. We know that our destinies go
or anyone else. He doesn’t miss a chance to spar back and forth and he enjoys it all the more if the competition is tough.

Another thing, the Digger is instantaneously sociable. Riding on the same train with American troops, a mob of Aussies are likely to descend on the Yanks, investigate their equipment, ask every kind of personal question, find out if there’s any liquor to be had, and within 5 minutes be showing pictures of their girls and families.

One Aussie, a successful kid cartoonist, who got himself transferred to an American unit for a week, could have run for mayor and been elected after 2 days in camp. He knew the first name and history of every man and officer and had drawn portraits of some of the officers.

Being simple, direct, and tough, especially if he comes from “Outback”, the Digger is often confused and non-plussed by the “manners” of Americans in mixed company or even in camp. To him those many “bloody thank you’s” and “pleases” Americans use are a bit sissified. But, on the other side of the fence, if you ask an Australian for an address in a city you happen to be, he won’t just tell you. He’ll walk eight blocks or more to show you.

There’s one thing about Americans that delights him. That is our mixed ancestry. A taxi driver told an American correspondent about three soldiers he hauled about one night: “One was Italian, one was Jewish, and the other
told me he was half Scotch and half soda,” said the hacker, roaring with laughter.

There’s one thing you’ll run into — Australians know as little about our country as we do about theirs. To them all American soldiers are “Yanks” — and always will be.

Australians, like Americans again, live pretty much in the present and the future, and pay pretty little mind to the past.

If they are still in effect, you might get annoyed at the “blue laws” which make Australian cities pretty dull places on Sundays. For all their br cereziness, the Australians don’t go in for a lot of drinking or woop-pitching in public, especially on Sunday. So maybe the bars, the movies, and the dance halls won’t be open on Sundays, but there are a lot of places in America where that’s true too.

There’s no use beefing about it — it’s their country.

IT’S THE SAME LANGUAGE TOO. We all speak the same language – the British, the Australians, and us – our versions of it. Probably the only difficulty you’ll run into here is the habit Australians have of pronouncing “a” as “i” – for instance, “the trine is lite tod.” Some people say it sounds like the way London Cockneys talk, but good Australians resent that – and it isn’t true anyway.

Thanks to our movies, the average Australian has some working knowledge of our slang, but it’ll take you
Queensland and Tasmania, have had Labor governments continuously for the last 20 years.

AUSTRALIA'S DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS. In many respects Australia is the most democratic government in the world. Certainly in the short space of 150 years, it has made many notable contributions to social legislation in which it has pioneered. It developed the famous Australian Ballot; it set up one of the first central banks in the world. Incidentally, much of the credit for its founding—it’s called the Commonwealth Bank—goes to an American immigrant to Australia, King O’Malley, a bearded Californian who became one of the nation’s political leaders early in this century. Australians like him for his impatience with ceremony and remember him for his phrase about stuffed-shirt officials—“gilt-spurred roosters”. Also the nation pioneered in social security and workmen’s compensation laws and developed a unique and workable system of industrial arbitration courts which have helped to reduce strikes and disputes to a minimum.

Education in the lower schools is furnished by the state authorities and nearly everyone goes to the same government school—education being free and compulsory between the ages of 6 and 14. The present Prime Minister, John Curtin, was educated through what we would call