

Well, you remember we left Dumbea one morning. The Mayor turned out with his retinue all dressed in native array. They offered us a Highland Hilly Billy band, but we only wanted the Padre with his harmonica. At our head was a quartet of batmen carrying a huge photo of Bob Semple. All along the promenade were tropical fruit trees, and the Officers shinned up the palm trees and throw the boys coconuts and bananas. Our equipment was a bit in the way so we throw it in a heap and carried the fruit instead. This was quite safe as Hirohito had telegraphed to say that they would not be attacking until Tuesday. After an hour or so we had a meal served by local spinsters and took up the trail again finally to land up at a spot alongside the Oua Tom. There amidst cheering the Head Man announced that we had broken the road record established years ago by a local poacher who had stolen a rabbit and was chased from Noumea by the local cop. We had a bit of trouble with the electric light here and as a result the electric stoves were not in use, but we found that the gas ones worked quite well. The view from there was not too good so the Head Man shifted us to a delightful little spot up the road. The batmen offered to do the cooking and fatigues while the Officers started putting up the mens' mess shelter so the men lounged around in the luxuriant grass and swam in the big pool which fringed the camp. There were no problems about eating. When we wanted meat we simply lassoed a deer or two or shot a cow in one of the paddocks around us. The food position was first class. We just let the boys wander through the ration store and sort out what they fancied. They then took it to the cooks who prepared it according to individual suggestions. There was always too much food so rarely was the demand for a second helping; in fact many chaps didn't bother to have more than one meal a day but preferred to stay in bed and read the local morning paper. Nobody ever bothered to get the man up as we were all too fit and after all our history books prove that one white man in 1668 was as good as ten Japs. At night the Padre would go to the piano and swing "St Louis Blues" while the M.O. played an accompaniment on the jaw bones of a deer which he had run over in his car. The R.S.M. would give his version of 'Nicky, Nanky, Nock' in French while the 2 i/c would tap dance in the most modern style. Despite our protests the C.O. opened a Wet Canteen and as no one wants to deprive the Wharfies at home of their quoto the boys limit themselves to 1 pint per day. We posted a man at the gate with a 'Welcome to all Meals' sign and if it was not for the casuals who drifted in we would be hard put to it to store our surplus food. The Heads instituted a plane ferry service to N.Z. but the results were most disappointing as the lads simply refused to go preferring to stay with the local girls. They stated that if the N.Z. girls wanted to see them they will have to come over here to God's Own Country, New Caledonia, the place we have learned to love so well.

 SOCIAL NOTES.

Remember, Major Beechey, there's a catch in every revolver - the safety catch.

A recent visitor to R.H.Q. from 204 was 2/Lt. McIntyre. The purpose of his visit was never discovered but a good time was had by all.

A Sig. Sgt recently lost his beer coupon. After a fruitless search he concluded that it must be deeply interred.

The Adjutant was seen to return to camp on a recent evening with a towel under his arm. Questioned later he said that he was returning from his first swim on the island. All ranks are urged to follow this example of cleanliness.

We learn that a very popular 204 Officer has been transferred. In commemoration of his services a handsome edifice has been built and named "Chrystall Palace".